

1994. Developing Basarwa Research and  
Research for Basarwa Development  
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Gaborone: NIR

**KURU DEVELOPMENT TRUST,  
NYAE NYAE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION,  
INTERNATIONAL LINKS.**

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This session included presentations highlighting different institutions and areas of concern that should form part of the emerging Basarwa Research Network.

**KURU DEVELOPMENT TRUST**

Mr Kamana Phetso, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Kuru Development Trust (KDT), represented this organisation. The Trust was established in 1986 as an indigenous organisation for self-development. The concept of self-development includes the awareness of one's own abilities and rights, as well as the acquisition of skills and material help towards change.

The word "Kuru" comes from Naro, meaning "to make", or "do" something.

Kuru is run by a Board of 12 Trustees, who represent the local community. The Trust employs some 40 people, including a co-ordinator, technical staff, a financial advisor, and people in the training areas. Around 500 people are involved in various self-help projects, and 400 children are enrolled in pre-schools in the districts. A training centre has recently been established, and in the first six months, 500 people participated in its activities.

Kuru Development Trust is running a large number of projects.

a) The Art project is perhaps the best known. This project involves nine artists working in paper, oil on canvas, mono prints, coloured lino prints and lithography. The artists have participated in several international exhibitions and won international prizes.

b) The pre-school programme assists seven pre-schools in the district, and gives in-service training to teachers of these and other schools in the area. Mother-tongue instruction is an important component.

c) Arts and Craft production includes silkscreen, sewing, and purchasing craft work from individual producers in the district.

d) Other economic activities include a livestock development programme, a tannery, a leather workshop and a large cochineal project, producing natural dye for the world market.

e) The cultural centre comprises a number of activities, central of which is language tuition, developing a dictionary and teaching materials in Naro, literacy classes and training in traditional and modern skills. A small library and museum have recently been opened.

Based on their own experiences, members of the Kuru Board and staff are also liaising with people in other settlements, providing advice and support in self-help activities.

**NYAE NYAE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION OF NAMIBIA**

Joe Pfafe gave a presentation on the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation, which was established in 1991, but is based on a long period of contact between researchers and the local Ju/'hoan communities who live in the geographical area called Nyae Nyae (in Bushmanland in NE Namibia, adjoining the Botswana border). A local grass root organisation called the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative works closely with the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation. The Development Foundation runs an office in Windhoek, and a training centre in Baraka (Bushmanland).

The basic organisational structure of the foundation is made up of a Board, and a Management Committee with representatives from the Farmers Cooperative, the Baraka Manager and the Coordinator in Windhoek.

Political awareness and economic development have been core activities. From 1991, infrastructural measures, education, skills training, health programmes and income-generating activities have been incorporated, in order to meet the needs and expectations of the Ju/'hoan communities. These activities go together to form an Integrated Rural Development Programme.

The overall objectives of the Development Programme are self-sufficiency of each community and self-reliance of the Farmers Cooperative, to be brought about by means of:

- a) legally defined and enforceable rights to manage natural resources in the region;
- b) support for education, training and communication;
- c) planning, implementation, evaluation and revision of plans; and
- d) independent research

A prerequisite for achieving the objectives is a formal education background. A village schools project, adult education, primary health care, education and skills training have been started.

The objective of the Village Schools Project is to provide basic education for grade 1 to 3 learners at community level and

- to use the Ju/'hoan language as a medium of instruction;
- to train Ju/'hoan teachers;
- to develop relevant curricular material in Ju/'hoan;
- to build school facilities close to communities; and
- to enable Ju/'hoan children to join governmental schools in grade 4 as confident and critical learners.

Thomas A. Dowson, Rock Art Research Unit, Witwatersrand University informed the workshop of forthcoming exhibitions in the Johannesburg Art Gallery and the Wits Art Gallery, and an accompanying symposium, "Images and Texts of Peoples, Politics and Power", to be held from the 4th to the 7th of August, 1994. The symposium will discuss such questions as how the Bushmen of Southern Africa are depicted and how they are represented. He announced that all are welcome to attend, and it is still possible to send abstracts if seminar participants would like to give papers. The art exhibition will travel to other countries in Southern Africa and to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Prof. L.P. Vorster, University of South Africa (UNISA) provided information about the 4000 Bushmen living in Schmidtsdrift, west of Kimberley. They are soldiers of the disbanded 31 Battalion of the South African Defence Force (SADF), and were brought there from Namibia in 1990. Most of them come originally from Angola, recruited by the SADF during the fighting there.

They represent two language groups (Kxoe, a Khoe (Central Family) language, and !Xu, a northern Bushman language). These languages are mutually unintelligible, and Afrikaans is used as the language of communication.

They are settled on an (SADF) farm in Army tents. Although their situation is beginning to change and a Trust is being formed for their benefit, they are still insecure and very uncertain as to their future. A Bushman Council has been formed in cooperation with the SADF. There are no women on the Council as they do not speak Afrikaans. There is a school with more than 900 students, and a clinic, which is run by the SADF but which has Bushman health assistants. Some residents are earning money through arts and crafts or working on nearby farms. A tracking and hunting organization exists, and members are sometimes invited to go to nearby farms to hunt jackal.

During discussion, seminar participants voiced concern for these Basarwa who have had to move from Angola to Namibia to South Africa. These people feel alienated in Schmidtsdrift, and are often resented by the local people there. Vorster and Prof. J.W. Snyman (also of UNISA) both emphasised the sensitivity of the issue and the need for political decisions to be reached.

## INTERNATIONAL LINKS

Ansu Datta, Director, NIR, discussed the international links now existing between NIR and various NGOs and universities. Included were:

- 1) Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Cooperation.
- 2) Germany: the Friedrich Ebert Foundation
- 3) Canada: IDRC and the University of Manitoba (particularly the Faculty of Social Sciences)
- 4) USA: USAID, and the University of Florida (particularly the Dept. of Education)
- 5) UK: British Council, ODA, Universities of Manchester (education) and Birmingham (gender)
- 6) Sweden: SAREC and SIDA
- 7) Norway: Norwegian Inter-Universities Council (NUFU), University of Tromso (including grant for this workshop)

Regarding Basarwa studies, Datta noted that it is unrealistic to expect help from all the countries listed above. However, Norway has been helpful, especially with its support of the RAD programme, and the Universities of Oslo and Tromso are known to be interested. Also, it is a good sign that representatives of neighbouring countries are attending this workshop, as this can be mutually beneficial. Datta feels there is a need to draw up a plan of future action. Contacts with Kuru Development Trust and Nyae Nyae Development Foundation, which have been forged here, will be useful.

## CONCLUDING SESSION: TOWARDS A PROGRAMME FOR SAN/BASARWA RESEARCH

Patrick Molutsi, Chairman, observed that the overview given by Dr. Datta brought the proceedings over to the final item on the programme: a discussion of ways and means towards a broad programme of research on and with the Basarwa. He opened up the discussion by commenting on the international links mentioned by Dr. Datta that can be very useful in the future.

Sidsel Saugestad cited the Native American Studies in the United States and Aboriginal Studies in Australia as examples of multidisciplinary programmes which could provide inspiration as well as practical guidelines for the task ahead in Botswana. At a later stage, such centres can be approached for cooperation in training programmes.

Kenneth Good said that before international links can be utilised, better use should be made of local opportunities. Departments such as Sociology, Economics, Political Science and Law must take the lead in initiating research and teaching schedules, assisted by the Department of History, and centres like NIR and the Democracy Project.

Among the first steps should be the introduction of San/Basarwa studies into appropriate courses in these Departments. He mentioned as an example PS201, Botswana Politics, in PAS. Undergraduate students taking the 'internship' courses that exist at third and fourth year level can be encouraged to take up a topic on San research. Master's degree programmes which are now widespread at UB can promote further vital San research.

Datta commented that the ball is in the court of the University of Botswana, and that a structure must first be established, following which an agenda and timeframe could be put forward. At that point, financial support can be solicited.

Molutsi and Datta described the set-up of the present steering committee which consists of representatives of various University departments. This steering committee should be made permanent, to serve as the University's link with other research institutions, first on a regional basis and later internationally.

There was active discussion following the chairman's suggestion that some broad areas of research be identified. The following areas were mentioned:

- a) Khoesan languages, including sociolinguistics (language use), and the need to develop standardised terminology for languages, dialects and place names;
- b) Basic socioeconomic data on Basarwa as an identifiable group, according to indicators that can compare them to national averages (looking at topics such as gender issues, access to cattle, health, and literacy rates);
- c) Economic activity, marketing, (need for baseline data);
- d) Land rights;
- e) Attitudinal studies, investigations into relations between Basarwa and rest of the population;
- f) Education, particularly adult education.