

ANNUAL CONSERVATION REPORT

MESSAGE FROM OUR MD

Rachel Harris



Like many of us, the aim to 'make it through 2020' was a real focus of this year. COVID 19 almost financially ruined EHRA. At the point that the borders were closed and lockdowns were enforced, we had enough funds in the account to cover one months' running costs.

It was an incredibly scary situation to find myself in as the person responsible for running an organisation.

However, thanks to the support of so many amazing donors, companies and foundations, EHRA is still here and going strong. Thanks also has to be extended to the brilliant family at EHRA: everyone played a part in EHRA's survival and most worked harder than ever before. After the initial shock, we got proactive and everyone started fundraising as hard as possible, even going on the TV!

My initial request for donations overwhelmed all of us, with over 2 million Namibian dollars raised over a short period of time.

We even managed to have some volunteer teams, mainly from Namibia, until the borders opened again. To have the support of our community was inspiring. Our volunteer teams were not just a way to raise funds, we need the manpower to do our core work: practical conflict mitigation and building huge stone walls. Without the volunteers this was incredibly difficult. We started to work with teams from the communities and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) staff, plus our Elephant Guards assisted us.

We were limited on the time we could spend in the field during the initial lockdown, and this resulted in us losing track of the Ugab River West Population for a month. These elephants surprised us and moved somewhere they have never gone in the past 17 years: over 150km east out of their normal homerange.

By the time we were able to track them down, 3 breeding females had been shot illegally on commercial farms. This was devastating for the team, and was a direct result of the COVID outbreak.

More than ever, this spurred us to raise the neccessary funds to ensure that we could cover our core functions at all times. As a result, EHRA assisted the MEFT in 'pushing' the elephants off the commercial farms. When I gave the instruction to our Field Manager, he took this task on with gutso. Having visited the farms where this happened afterwards, I had no idea just what a monumental task this was. Determination prevailed! The elephants luckily came back to the relative safety of the communal areas in the west.

This situation brought with it a realisation that we have to find solutions for commercial farmers living with elephants as well as for communal residents. We immediately started with PEACE Projects for people living on the farms and deployed tracking teams for a period of 5 days at a time over two solid months to track, count and identify the 'other' elephants that migrate through these areas. The Field Team has now identified a further 83 elephants.

We were also very fortunate to secure funding from NUII Ice Cream through the kindness of WildArk. NUII has sponsored the building of our Education Centre, and our plans are to create the first Environmental Education Centre in the southern Kunene Region as well as having a great space to conduct our PEACE Projects. As you will see, the building is impressive and almost completed! In 2021, NUII will also provide funding for 40 solar water pumps, taking their total donation to an incredible NAD3million!

What we achieved during these challenging times has been immense. I am incredibly proud to lead this group of strong, dedicated conservationists and super nice people. We will continue to provide effective mitigation strategies for people living with free-roaming elephants and we hope in turn to conserve these special populations of elephants in Namibia.



INDEX

EHRA'S IVIISSION		
	Core Projects	
	New Projects	
2020 ACHIE	EVEMENTS	
BRIEF OVERVIEW	OF OUR ACTIVITIES IN 2020	
ELEPHANT ID & N	MOVEMENT STUDY	
	Elephant status	
	Concerns	:
	Area of operation	
HUMAN-ELEPHA	NT CONFLICT MITIGATION STRATEGIES	:
	Water Point Protection Program	,
	Solar Water Pump Program	
	Alternative Elephant Dam Program	
	Conservation Action	
PEACE PROJECT	PEOPLE AND ELEPHANTS AMICABLY COEXISTING	
	Education and Training	
	Elephant Guard Program	•
	Education Centre	;
COMMUNITY PR	OGRAMS	:
	Community Vegetable Garden	
	The Ondjou Ladies project	:
COMMUNICATIO	NS	
COLLABORATION	IS	:
EHRA EVENTS		
	EHRA Team building	
	COVID-19 Certification Course	
	Skills development training	
	Saying goodbye to old staff & Welcoming new staff	
FINANCES		
	Launch of new fundraising campaigns	
	Cash flow	
	Partners and donors	
	-	

EHRA's Mission

PROMOTING A PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND ELEPHANTS

It is our mission to minimize the pressure on rural communities living with the elephants and to ensure the desert-dwelling elephants' long-term survival through a community-based holistic approach, which includes education, research, development and physical protection methods.

Core projects



Water Point Protection – Teams of volunteers work directly with the local communities to protect vulnerable water storage facilities by building stone walls around them. This allows the elephants to drink but prevents damage to tanks, pumps, windmills or pipes. Since 2001 we have protected over 250 water storage facilities.

Elephant Movement & ID Study - We track and monitor the elephants of the southern Kunene and northern Erongo Regions. We believe that accurate data on elephant ID, numbers and movements are paramount to effective and sustainable elephant conservation and conflict management.





Education & Training – The PEACE Project (People and Elephants Amicably Co-Existing) provides education seminars that focus on empowering community members, tour guides, conservancy game guards, school learners and teachers with knowledge of elephant behaviour so they can stay safe during elephant visits and live without fear.

New projects

ELEPHANT MIGRATION CORRIDOR PROJECT

Solar Water Pump Program – Beginning in 2020, we identified key water points people share with elephants. To operate diesel water pumps and to provide water for elephants is a financial burden rural farmers often cannot carry due to lack of finances. We plan to replace a minimum of 25 diesel water pumps with solar pumps in our partner conservancies (Sorris Sorris, Otjimboyo, Ohungu, Tsiseb, Ojetu), partner communities (Otjiperongo, Okaserawe) and key commercial farms. Water points will be effectively protected to prevent elephant damage. We know this change greatly improves tolerance towards elephants.

Alternative Elephant Dams Project – Drought influences elephant migration and pushes our study animals and other elephants onto eastern commercial farms, where they risk getting shot illegally. EHRA's Elephant Corridor Project envisions to protect core elephant habitat and secure migration routes between east and west, along the length of the Ugab River. We assume that movement onto commercial farms is predominantly motivated by water, as vegetation availablity west of commercial land seems similar. By providing additional water points for elephants along their migration route on communal lands (and with distance to villages), we aim to eliminate the need for elephants to cross the communal-commercial land boundary (Figure 1).

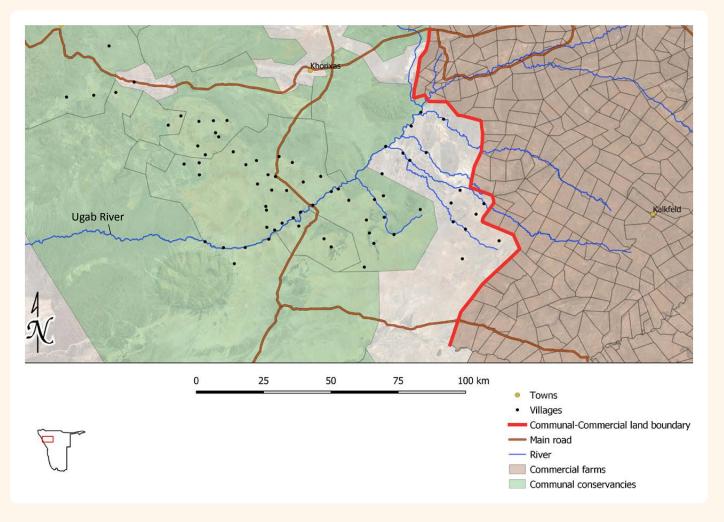


Figure 1 Communal and commercial farms within EHRA's project area. (Christophe Pitot, EHRA)

2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

Brief overview of our activities



We hosted **84** international,

28 Namibian volunteers and

2 Namibian university interns.

We conducted over **110** days of elephant patrol.





We tracked and identified **83 new** elephants in new areas.

We conducted **14 educational** PEACE Projects with **277** participants.





We built **5** protection walls and **1** new elephant dam.

We replaced **3** diesel water pumps with **solar water pumps**.



ID & MOVEMENT STUDY

ELEPHANT MONITORING

EHRA conducts 5-day patrols every other week of the year and additionally to these regular patrols, we had small teams of researchers and trackers located in high conflict zones to collect ID and movement data on the unknown populations. Initial home ranges and herd interaction of the different populations could be established (Figure 2).

The aim remains to know the total number of elephants plus herd breakdown to provide authorities with the correct information necessary for sustainable elephant and conflict management. The elephants roaming between the eastern commercial farms and the communal farms are highly alert and will avoid contact with humans. All tracking had to be conducted on foot. *This is an ongoing project.*

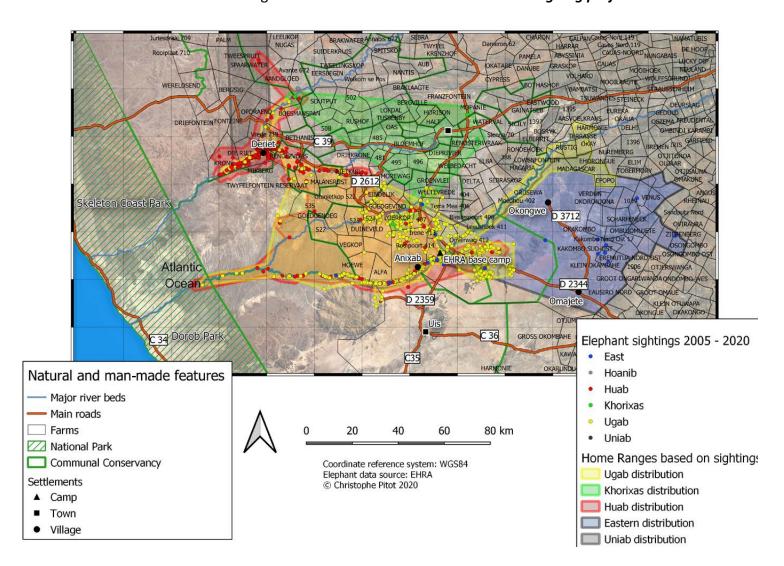


Figure 2 Elephant distribution 2005-2020, southern Kunene and northern Erongo Region, Namibia (Christophe Pitot, EHRA)

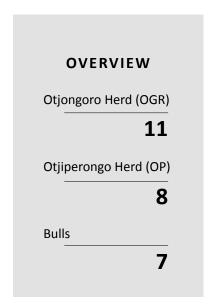
Elephant Status

DIRECT SIGHTINGS

All information provided below was obtained from direct sightings of the elephants. ID information includes detailed photographs of both ears, tusks, the body and tail. Certain individuals had been collared by the MEFT, which aided in recognition and matching processes.

The comparison of age and sex in elephants (graphs) shows low numbers of adult cows and adult bulls. Each herd contains 6-12 individuals and some herds were seen interacting.

Eastern Population



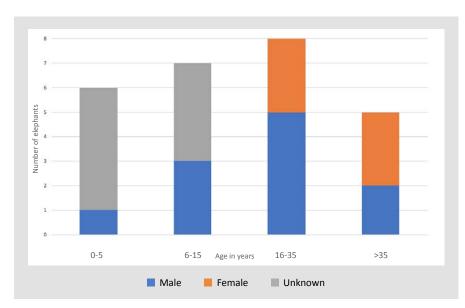
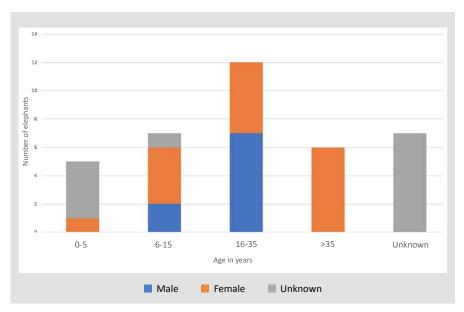


Figure 3 A comparison of the age and sex of elephants in the Eastern Population.

Khorixas-Fransfontein Population



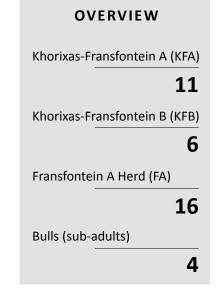
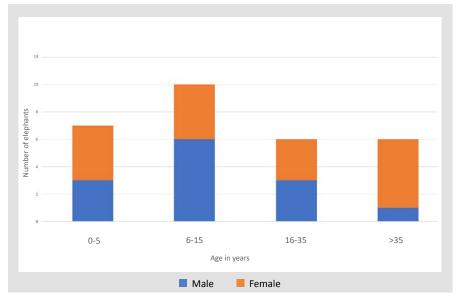


Figure 4 A comparison of the age and sex of elephants in the Khorixas-Fransfontein Population.

Resident Huab West Population



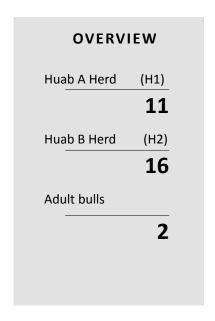
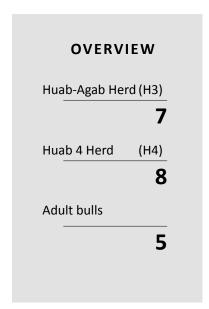


Figure 5 A comparison of the age and sex of elephants in the resident Huab West Population.

Non-Resident Huab Population



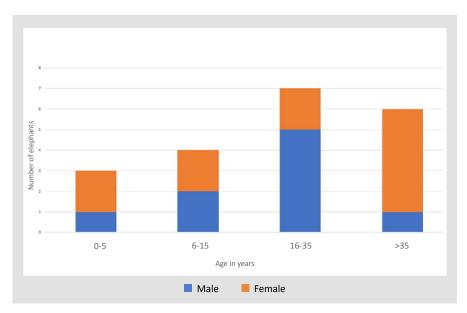


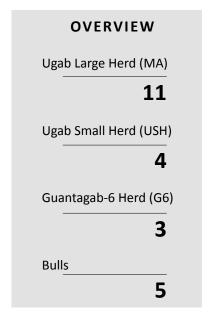
Figure 6 A comparison of the age and sex of elephants in the non-resident Huab Population.

CONCLUSION

The resident Huab River population seems stable and the ratio between both sexes and all ages is healthy. This particular area is a tourism hot-spot which justifies the conservation of this elephant population.

In comparison with populations that live in high human-elephant conflict zones, the Huab resident elephants are relaxed animals that seem to thrive even through the challenging environmental conditions of prolonged droughts.

Ugab West Population



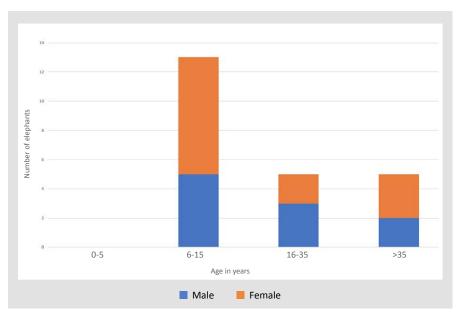


Figure 7 A comparison of the age and sex of elephants in the Ugab West Population.

UGAB WEST POPULATION TREND

2010 - 2020

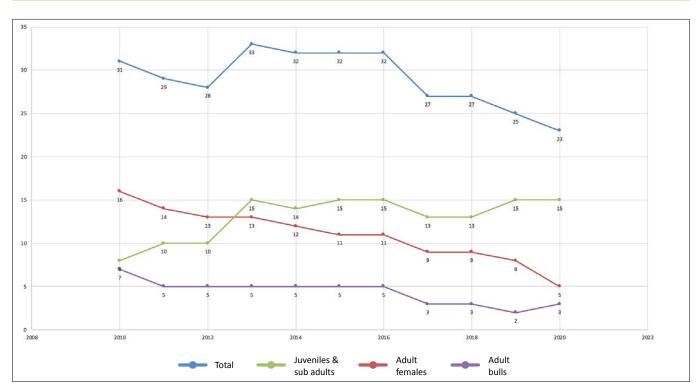


Figure 8 Ugab River west elephant population trend 2010 - 2020



A WORRYING TREND

The Ugab River West (resident) population saw a drastic decline in adult females.

16 adult females died since 2003. **Today, only five adult females remain.**

Concerns

Ugab West Population

ALL ADULT FEMALES DECEASED

Guantagab-6 Herd lost five adult females since 2010. Since May 2020, the herd has no adult member. The matriarch got shot illegally due to HEC on commercial farmland. The remaining herd members were taken in by Ugab Large Herd (MA).





DECLINE IN BULLS

Since 2017, three adult bulls over the age of 25 years were shot, two of which were destroyed as problem animals and one as a trophy. Another young male of 19 years was shot as a problem-causing animal.

One male over 30 years of age remains in the Ugab River West area (B2). Males in a normal populations only begin to breed when they are older than 30 years of age.

The lack of breeding bulls is of major concern.

CALF MORTALITY

Since 2014, calf mortality in the Ugab West population stands at 100%. The last surviving calf was born in June 2014 (MA-4/A2). Since then, nine (9) newborn calves died at or shortly after birth. The last newborn death in the Ugab River West population occurred in January 2020 (mother MA-3). The last newborn death in the Huab / Aba Huab resident population occurred in October 2020. **The causes for these deaths remain unknown.**



Area of operation

EXPANDED PROJECT AREA

Due to human-elephant conflict escalation towards the east of our core project area, we expanded our field of operation to include the eastern communal lands and commercial farms.

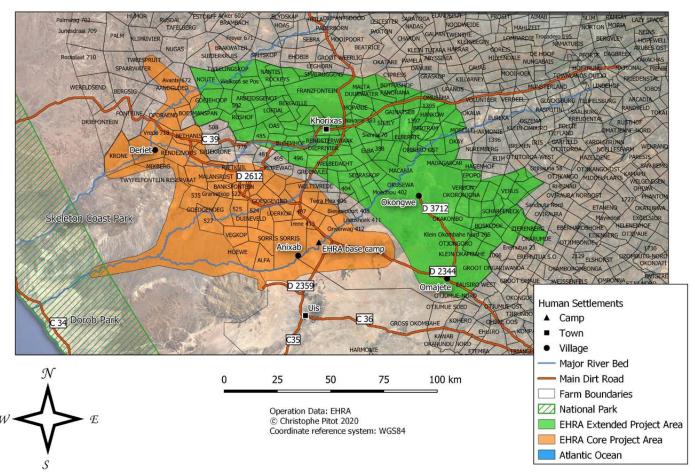


Figure 9 EHRA's core project area and extended project area.

SURVEYS OF COMMERCIAL FARMS

We conducted several surveys and meetings with commercial farmers who experience high levels of human-elephant conflicts. Jointly with the MEFT, we explored alternatives for mitigating conflicts in this specific area.

The conflicts here are complex and require multi-facetted solution approaches. We visited farms that have successfully implemented conflict mitigation strategies and farms that experience daily conflicts. On the latter, financial losses are immense and elephants are not tolerated.

Photo right: Rachel is visiting the farmer of Hirabis North who is successfully deterring elephants from his farm.





HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Water Point Protection Program



PROTECTION WALLS

The building of protection walls is still one of our core activities and proven conflict mitigation methods.

In 2020, our activities were greatly compromised, so we constructed fewer walls than we had hoped to complete.

We built 5 walls.

Solar Water Pump Program

RELIEVING FINANCIAL PRESSURE

It can be expensive to live with elephants, and rural communities have to pay the price. Operating diesel water pumps costs a lot of money, and providing water for elephants is too expensive for most people (especially pensioners.)

We started to replace diesel pumps with solar pumps which makes a huge difference to the residents. The attitude towards elephants changed dramatically. *To be continued in 2021.*

We installed 3 solar pumps.



Alternative Elephant Dams



The old dam at
Otjiperongo is in the
middle of the village
and too high for
calves to reach the

BUILDING ELEPHANT DAMS

In Otjiperongo, elephants exhibit high levels of fear towards people. They only come to drink and feed at night.

The elephants need to walk through the village to drink at a dam that is too high for calves to reach. We built an alternative elephant drinking dam away from the village and at the bank of the river.

This means that elephants can drink peacefully and people aren't at risk of meeting elephants in the village.

We built 1 new elephant dam and restored 1 broken dam (Anixab)

Conservation Action

PUSHING ELEPHANTS INTO SAFE ZONES

Jointly with the MEFT and local conservancies, we pushed the Ugab west elephants away from the commercial farms, which is a high conflict zone, and west down the Ugab River - back into a safer area.

As elephants have been illegally shot on commercial farms, this action likely saved elephant lives.

We assisted the MEFT twice in such operations.



PEACE PROJECT

PEOPLE AND ELEPHANTS AMICABLY COEXISTING

Education + Training



EDUCATION DESPITE COVID-19

Although our activities and interactions with people were highly restricted in 2020, we are proud that we were able to conduct 14 PEACE Projects with a total of 277 participants.

As conflicts with elephants continued to occur, our projects were key to keep the peace and reduce fear.

We further conducted outreach via social media and the local radio to share elephant safety knowledge.

PROJECT NUMBERS

School Learners

60

Rural farmers and goat herders

30

Communty members

136

Commercial farmers

24

277



PROJECT LOCATIONS

Otjiperongo, Ondama / Omatjete Area, De Riet Farm/ Doro !nawas Conservancy, Omungambu, Ozondati, Okondomba/ Ohungu Conservancy, Ontverwag / Sorris Sorris Conservancy, Kunene, Erongo and Otjozondjupa Regions, Radyn, Bok Pos, Gelluk Pos, Omisema, Omao wozongaku/ Ohungu Conservancy, Okapereke Village, Ongejama Tjovike Village, Anixab and 13 commercial farms.

Outcome & Feedback

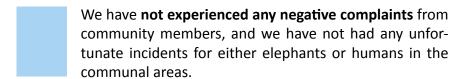
BY SHANNON - PEACE PROJECT MANAGER

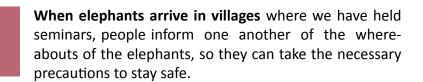
Since the first community seminar we conducted this year, we have experienced positive attitudes from our attendees. We have introduced the concepts of conservation and protecting Namibia's wildlife to community members, and most have accepted it.

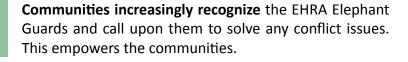
Most of our attendees have been young people between the ages of 18 and 30. They have been open to conserving wildlife, living amongst elephants and making a sustainable living from wildlife. In our second seminar, we had a 70-year-old man who was not very keen to live with elephants. He left the seminar with a clear change of perspective towards elephants. He is a respected member of his community, and we are confident that what he learned about elephants and the importance of their conservation will resonate far beyond him into his village and further.

The major accomplishments in the area where PEACE has worked to date include:

A change of heart from a conservancy leader who was anti-elephant and who was part of the "no-elephants" group. He is now willing to work with EHRA and support our conservation efforts.











PROJECT PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK:

"My grandmother is always shouting loudly at the elephants when they come to our house.

I will tell her not to do that anymore. We must clap our hands".

- PEACE Project participant, November 2020 -

"I have now seen it with my own two eye's that elephants are peaceful animals. They have always been innocent, and we humans are guilty of their deaths."

Elephant Guards

Elephant Guard internships

EHRA'S COMMUNAL ELEPHANT GUARDS

EHRA launched the Elephant Guard program in September 2019 with 2 intense training intervals. The candidates were chosen by the relevant conservancy or headman and had to prove good work ethics, commitment and the application of learned skills and knowledge.

The Guards helped immensely help throughout the COVID-19 crisis, as they assisted their community members during elephant emergencies, shared their knowledge and worked to reduce fear and intolerance.

During lockdowns and gathering restrictions, some shared information via the local radio!



HERMAN

OTJIMBOYO

CONSERVANCY



GOTLIEB
OHUNGU
CONSERVANCY



REJOYCE OKONGWE AREA



HELMUT

OTJIPERONGO

AREA

The Guards further kept the EHRA office informed about elephant whereabouts and conflict escalations. We are very proud of the men and woman who became protectors of their elephants and their people. This project is of utmost importance and we aim to expand it throughout our project area. The goal is to train and employ an Elephant Guard in each conservancy or village cluster. More info on the Elephant Guard program: www.ehranamibia.org/elephant-guard-training

Education Center

The building of our Education Center

NAMIBIA'S FIRST COEXISTENCE SCHOOL

Our newly-built education center will become the base for our educational PEACE Project. Namibians will enjoy a cool, shaded and fully-equipped center that will create

> a bridge between people and their elephants. An info center and EHRA office are also being built at the site.



Most materials come from the locality and we use as little cement as possible. The design of the roof enhances airflow to cool the building during hot days. We aim to complete the center by mid-

2021. For further information, please visit www.ehranamibia.org/nuii-peace-project



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Community Vegetable Garden



Colin is the Community Garden Champion, appointed by the community.

COVID-19 RELIEF #1

As our partner communities depended largely on tourism as a source of income, we decided to assist them with the construction of a community vegetable garden.

The garden will be elephant-proof, protected by a sturdy wall plus a barrier of pointy rocks.

We are guiding the community through an entire cycle of building, planting, compost preparing, maintaining, harvesting and preparing the soil for the next batch. The aim is that the community owns the entire process.

The Ondjou Ladies Project

COVID-19 RELIEF #2

The Ondjou Ladies have always made and sold beautiful art & craft items at the side of a very busy tourist track. Of course, the income through their business stopped overnight as the world entered a global lockdown. We promoted the sale of their unique products in the town Swakopmund at the coast.



COMMUNICATIONS

EHRA was presented on several media channels in 2020:

TV	BBC NEWS - UK Rachel Harris, EHRA MD nTV Auslandsreport - Germany Christin Winter, Program Manager ZDF Volle Kanne - Germany Christin Winter, Program Manager ERONGO TALK - Namibia Rachel Harris, EHRA MD	
Radio	Hitradio Namibia Radio Wave Radio NOVA Local Otjiherero Channel	
Print	Republikein (Afrikaans) Namibian Allgemeine Zeitung	
Social Media	FB Interview: What does the giraffe say? Rachel Harris, EHRA MD FB / IG: Elephant Education Shannon Diener, PEACE Project Manager	



PATHWAYS CONFERENCE, KENYA

EHRA's MD Rachel Harris, Directors Hendrick Munembome and Dr Betsy Fox represented EHRA during the 2020 Pathways Conservation Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

NAMIBIAN ELEPHANT MANAGEMENT PLAN

As a recognized leader in elephant conservation in Namibia, EHRA contributed valuable data and insights to Namibia's elephant management and conservation action plan.

COLLABORATIONS

NAMIBIAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NUST)

EHRA has been taking NUST students every year since 2014 to allow them to complete their practical part of their degree in conservation or ecotourism. EHRA and NUST decided to join forces and collaborate on the planned Kamajab Corridor project.

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT)
Daure Daman Traditional Authority
Conservancy partners (Sorris Sorris, Otjimboyo, Ohungu, Tsiseb, Ojetu)
University of Namibia (UNAM)
Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE)
Mr Frank Bockmuhl
ATC Namibia
Futouris
Gebeco



EHRA EVENTS

Team Building



EHRA TEAM BUILDING

Every business understands the importance of good communication within a team. EHRA's team is growing in number and ethnic diversity.

We therefore promote team building events to enhance communication and performance, and above all, happiness at the work place.

COVID-19 Certification Course

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AT EHRA

Lloyd Ulrich is a certified tour guide and COVID-19 instructor. He conducted a COVID-19 safety training for the entire EHRA staff.

This certification course was essential for us to continue to operate and host international and national volunteers at our camp.

This also means that every EHRA employee knows how to handle COVID-19 emergency situations.





Skills development training



KABWATA KANGUMBE

Safari Engineering CC sponsored our Camp Manager Kabwata Kangumbe to attend a two-week training program at their workshop in Windhoek.

Kabwata has always been passionate about auto mechanics, and his skills have excelled through this course. We are very grateful for this opportunity and know our vehicles are in very competent hands!

Saying goodbye...

SABINE KÜHN

We were very sad to see Sabine go. She was our marketing expert and took our PR to the next level. But she has got all hands full with her own company and we wish her only the best!



MARKUS SHIWEDA

We regret to say farewell to Markus. He has been our field manager and greatly contributed to EHRA's conservation achievements. He moved on to live in Germany with his family and we also wish him only happiness and success.



Welcoming...

SHANNON M. DIENER

We are very happy to have welcomed Shannon to our team in February 2020. She is our new PEACE Project Manager. She graduated with a MSc in Natural Resource Management from NUST and as she speaks the Otjiherero language, Shannon is perfect for the job.



AREND VAN HOLLAND

Arend became our Finance Manager. With his expertise and kind personality he fits perfectly with the team and helps to coordinate all admin behind the scenes.



HERMAN KASONA

Apart from being a Community Elephant Guard, trained by EHRA, Herman is now employed as our Volunteer Assistant. His knowledge and passion for elephants and conservation, and his kind, funny nature make him a wonderful addition to our volunteer team.



ANNA SHEEHAMA

After completing her 6-month internship at EHRA in 2019, then graduation from NUST with a Diploma in Nature Conservation, Anna joined EHRA as our Program Assistant. Gentle and hard-working, she will be an asset to our team!



FURTHER NEWS

We are happy to welcome Chris Pitot and Christin Winter back to the team. Their love for Namibia and EHRA was too strong to stay away. Overall, we are very grateful to have such a strong team of such diverse skills and knowledge. This team makes all of our achievements possible!

FINANCES

Launch of fundraising campaigns



BONFIRE ONLINE SHOP

Usually, our **EHRA T-shirts** sell out like hot biscuits after each volunteer group.

With applause from volunteers and EHRA friends worldwide, we established an online shop on the Bonfire platform. Here you can buy EHRA T-shirts, tops and hoodies and support our conservation work!

REMEMBERING VOORTREKKER

Our VOORTREKKER T-SHIRT COLLECTION was launched on Voortrekker's death day in June 2020. We remember this beautiful icon and the tragic way his life ended. Voortrekker was known by the local people as an old gentleman, by elephant enthusiasts as a magnificent legend, and by us and other conservationists as a gentle soul that still had a very important role to play in elephant society.

The sale of the t-shirts

raises funds for the continuation of our projects.

LINK:

https://www.bonfire.com/ store/ehra/



Photograph of Voortrekker by Christophe Pitot; Illustration by Christin Winter



ADOPT AN ELEPHANT

Just before Christmas, we launched our Adopt an Elephant campaign. For a minimum of GBP 50 you can adopt an elephant and get a fantastic info package in return.

This campaign raised major funds for our work, giving us a head start for 2021!

www.ehranamibia.org/adopt-an-elephant

ADOPTION PACKAGE:







ACCESS TO EXCLUSIVE CONSERVATION UPDATES



PRINTABLE PHOTO OF YOUR ELEPHANT

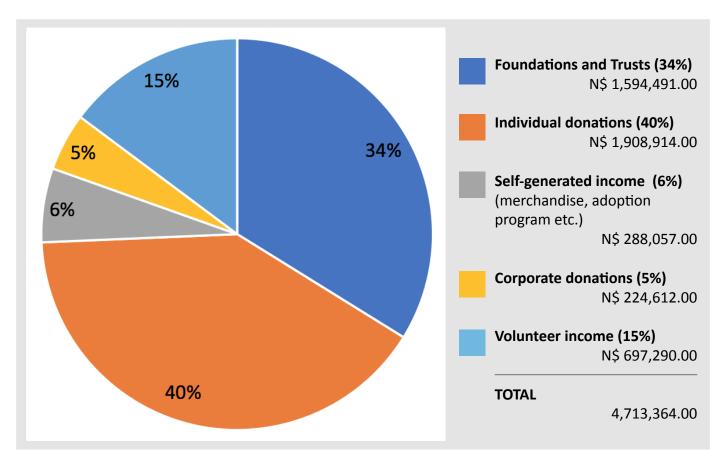
OTHER CAMPAIGNS

Voortrekker Art for EHRA: Artist Christine Lambert created a beautiful drawing of Voortrekker and a limited edition of prints wwas auctioned off over her website. Thank you so much!

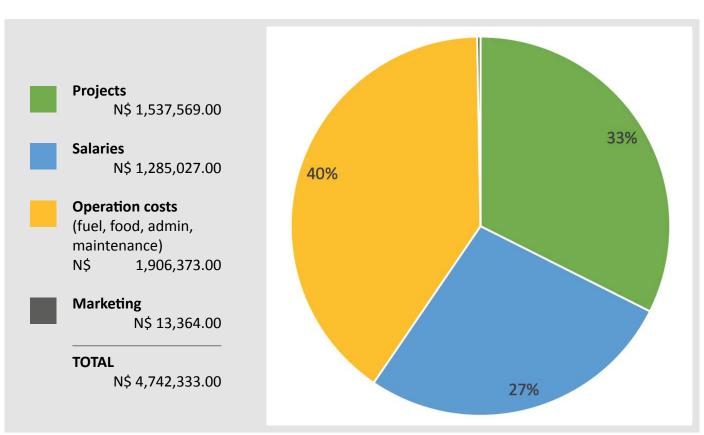
Match your donation: On 4th December 2020, the German Bank Kreissparkasse matched all donations made to EHRA to 50€. Over 3000€ in donations were generated that day. Aktionsgemeinschaft Artenschutz (AGA) organized this for us. Thank you!

Cash flow

INCOME



EXPENSES



Partners and donors



As a Namibian NGO, EHRA totally relies on donations and the income from our volunteer project. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our main source of income ceased overnight as the world closed its borders.

However, thanks to our fantastic network of previous volunteers, we were able to raise enough funds to continue our work and expand our projects into new areas.

It is with immense gratitude, that we address our partners and donors who supported us through one of EHRA's most challenging years:

Wild Ark
NUII Ice Cream UK
International Elephant Foundation
Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V. (Hand-in-Hand Fonds)
Zoo Miami Foundation
Swakopmund Rotary Club
Cayman Islands Rotary Club
Rotary Club Wyk auf Föhr
Ohorongo Cement
Balance Wine
Aktionsgemeinschaft Artenschutz e.V. (AGA)
Stiftung Farald von Wedekind Foundation
BBC

Our international and Namibian volunteers Individual donors





Help us protect elephants

Each donation helps us to continue our important work:

A/c name: EHRA

Bank: NEDBANK NAMIBIA,

SWAKOPMUND

Account number: 11000105416

Branch code: 461052 SWIFT code: nedsnanx



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ELEPHANT-HUMAN RELATIONS AID

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@Elephant-Human Relations Aid, 2021.