DISCUSSION CHAPTERS

MEMBERSHIP MODELS IN NAMIBIAN COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES

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1. Introduction

This booklet contains three discussion chapters on membership in communal conservancies of Namibia. These chapters responded to concerns by the CBNRM practitioners on membership and legitimacy issues of conservancies. The three chapters will give an inside on the current operations on the ground in terms of membership. They will also highlight suggestions and recommendations to improve membership within the Namibian conservancies. The third chapter is mainly based on the outcome of a workshop that was held in April 2007 and was attended by 17 conservancies, which is a third of the country's conservancies.

THESE CHAPTERS ARE:

A. LEGAL ASPECTS OF CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP
   BY BRIAN JONES

B. MEMBERSHIP AND THE LEGITIMACY OF CONSERVANCIES
   BY JOHN HAZAM

C. THE VIEW OF CONSERVANCIES MEMBERS ON MEMBERSHIP
   BY SELMA LENDELVO
A. LEGAL ASPECTS OF CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP

By Brian Jones,
Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) CBNRM Policy Advisor

1. Provisions in the conservancy legislation

It is important to note that neither the legislation nor the regulations define conservancy membership. The regulations require the application for conservancy registration to be accompanied by a register containing the names, identification numbers and addresses of the members of the "community residing in the area to which the application relates" and who are represented by the committee. There is no provision for this register to be updated and the regulations do not stipulate that registration is a requirement for membership. They simply stipulate that a register of members has to be submitted with the application [Reg. 155B (2)]. The regulations also stipulate that the constitution must contain:

"the criteria and procedure for being recognized as a member of the community represented by the conservancy, provided that no-one may be excluded from membership on the grounds of ethnicity or gender" [Reg. 155B (3) (e)].

The regulations therefore provide for the conservancy constitution to stipulate the criteria for membership. As a result there is some degree of variation in the definition of membership between conservancies. Most use age and residency as the main criteria for defining membership (e.g. all adults over 18 who have been resident in the conservancy for more than 5 years). Some constitutions stipulate that
prospective members need to apply to the conservancy committee for membership and agree to the objectives of the conservancy. The idea that people should register as a conservancy member and agree to the objectives of the conservancy is a principle that is promoted by some CBNRM support agencies, but is not a legal requirement. This means that there is a large degree of legal flexibility regarding the definition of conservancy members.

Proponents of the voluntary approach to conservancy membership argue that to establish a common property resource management system over wildlife and similar resources, it is important for residents to agree to the objectives of the conservancy and make a commitment to upholding them. Further it is important for the conservancy management committee to know who the members are when benefits are distributed. Those who do not adhere to the wildlife management plans and regulations of the conservancy should be excluded from benefit and ultimately from membership.

There are a number of counter arguments to the above approach on membership. First it is argued that everyone is a member of the community and it is divisive to exclude some people and include others. Some people may be excluded because they do not know how or where to register as members and so they do not benefit. In some areas of the country such as Caprivi where the Traditional Authority has played a major role in forming conservancies, it has been reported that residents believe they are members of the conservancy because they fall under the Traditional Authority concerned. They have thus not seen the need to register as a member.

A further problem with the system of registration is that the initial registration lists required for conservancy registration are often not updated. According to some of
these lists the conservancies do not have a majority of residents as registered members. This situation presents problems for the credibility of the CBNRM programme, because it can be argued that conservancies are undemocratic and are being forced on communities by a few people. In reality many more people might actually consider themselves members and might be members in terms of the definition in the conservancy constitution, but this is difficult to demonstrate if there is a register that does not contain their names.

2. Provisions regarding members for community forests

The provisions for membership of community forests under forest legislation are different to those for conservancies. Under the Forestry Act, No. 12 of 2001 (GRN 2001 Section 15):

"The Minister may, with the consent of the chief or traditional authority for an area which is part of communal land or such other authority which is authorized to grant rights over that communal land enter into a written agreement with any body which the Minister reasonably believes represents the interests of the persons who have rights over that communal land and is willing to and able to manage that communal land as a community forest"

This paragraph effectively defines the members of the community forest as the persons who have rights over the communal land where the community forest is being established. This could include people resident in the area as well as people living elsewhere who have traditional rights to the land.
Under the forestry legislation the approach to membership is inclusive and is not voluntary. Everyone with rights over that area of communal land is deemed to be a member.

3. Some personal comments

The conservancy approach, and indeed the legislation, was based on common property resource management theory and practice which suggests that the users and/or beneficiaries of resource use need to be defined. Without such definition, according to Ostrom (1990:91).

"So long as the boundaries of the resource and/or the specification of individuals who can use the resource remain uncertain, no one knows what is being managed or for whom. Without defining the boundaries of the CPR and closing it to 'outsiders', local appropriators face the risk that any benefits they produce by their efforts will be reaped by others who have not contributed to these efforts. At the least, those who invest in the CPR may not receive as high a return as they expected. At the worst, the actions of others could destroy the resource itself".

If everyone is able to benefit from the conservancy by means of residence in the area, what incentive is there to manage wildlife sustainably? Individuals can benefit without any commitment to conservation, and become passive recipients of benefits without doing anything to build up wildlife numbers. If the conservancy approach is to be more meaningful than just a mechanism to channel benefits to people then the right to benefit has to be conditional on appropriate behaviour and actions. If an individual's actions are inappropriate (e.g. poaching), then there needs to be the opportunity to withdraw the right to benefit. To do this, you need to know who is a
member and who is not a member. I would also suggest that members need to have
made some form of commitment to appropriate behaviour and this comes through a
conscious decision to become a member. We have to remember that the point about
conservancies is to provide incentives for sustainable natural resource management
- benefits are an incentive for this, not the end in themselves.

At the same time though, we need to recognize a few practical problems in
implementing this approach:

a) Communities themselves seem to equate general "community" membership with
conservancy membership and have clearly found it difficult to exclude what they see
as a "community" member from benefit simply because individuals have not formally
become conservancy members. This seems to be the case particularly in Caprivi,
where people seem to think for example, that if they fall under the Mayuni tribal
authority then they are automatically a member of the Mayuni conservancy. Perhaps
we need to spend more time explaining the need for some form of formal
membership at the time of forming conservancies and need to link it more to
receiving individual benefit. Everyone potentially benefits from a community project—
poachers, non-poachers, members, and non-members, so what is the incentive to
become a member, when you can free ride? Part of the problem comes from the fact
that in most common property resource situations as described by Ostrom and
others, individuals are resource users and direct beneficiaries of use (e.g. fishermen,
users of collective water irrigation schemes, Alpine cattle grazers, etc.). There are
clear links between management and benefit. With wildlife and conservancies, action
(management) is expected to be mainly at individual level – don't poach, don't graze
your livestock in the wildlife zone, etc. – but individuals don’t benefit much. We have
to find ways to address these issues.
b) The problem of registering individuals in large conservancies such as Uukwaliudhi and Salambala. Who has the time and resources to do this? Either we discourage conservancies with large membership numbers or we bite the bullet and throw resources at a full registration campaign and do it properly.

c) Community membership itself is porous and particularly in the north-west, there is not necessarily a hard and fast definition of who is in and who is out, who has access to grazing and who doesn't. Access is negotiated from time to time as needs arise and changes over time. "The process of defining boundaries and rights to communal resources by farmers in Damaraland exhibits a certain conceptual and practical flexibility which has its counterparts in other areas of communal life such as kinship, settlement patterns, economic strategies and politics. These sociological constructs are lived as a total, whole and unbounded environment in which expenditure and the practicalities of survival are the grounds of improvised action, rather than as rule-bound domains of 'social life'" (Rohde et al 1999:17). In other words people don't necessarily follow formal rules such as those contained in conservancy legislation or constitutions, but negotiate access to resources as needs arise.

However, I don't believe the issues raised by Rohde et al negate the need for definition of boundaries and of conservancy members. The implication is that space has to be left for conservancies themselves to negotiate who is in and out over time. Membership can still be defined and exclusive rights of access enforced, but membership will not necessarily be static and shouldn't be. We need to be aware of the changing rights of access to grazing over time and space that will affect conservancy membership and land management. There is a much bigger debate here over the extent to which formal rules governing access to resources (through
institutions such as conservancies) are meaningful or whether everyday on the ground negotiated access is more important and realistic. Again I don't think the choice is between one or the other, but formal approaches such as conservancies need to take into account the on the ground realities and be flexible enough to accommodate them.

4. Recommendations

I think sufficient flexibility can be maintained if we retain the status quo of voluntary membership, criteria for membership defined in the conservancy constitution, and registration of members. This means that as with the current approach, conservancies that wish to make all residents automatic members may do so. They would however, have to register those residents. *I think what should change is that updating the register and reporting to MET on membership changes should be included as a requirement in legislation.* This will provide the necessary incentive for conservancies to update their membership registers. This has several advantages. By registering, individuals will indicate acceptance of the rights and obligations of conservancy members and acceptance of the conservancy objectives. The committee will be able to suspend rights or membership if individuals carry out poaching or break other conservancy rules. The committee will know who is a member and who is not in order distribute benefits, and will know who should vote and attend AGMs and to whom the committee is accountable. MET and other service providers will have sufficient information to know whether a majority of residents have registered and whether the conservancy has general support in the community.
References:


B. MEMBERSHIP AND THE LEGITIMACY OF CONSERVANCIES

By John Hazam,
Legal Assistance Centre

1. Introduction

The current Conservancy legislation requires that with an application, a copy of the register of names of members be included. The legislation is silent about how membership is obtained. However, the ‘model’ constitution proposes that qualifying members should indicate in writing that they accept the rights and obligations within the constitution, and existing conservancies have used their membership list of signatures as such. This is currently how Conservancy membership is obtained – by individuals confirming their acceptance of membership by their individual signature.

I would like to propose another method for obtaining membership – that of “collective consensus”. [I want to separate the issues of obtaining membership from maintaining membership lists. There can be many good, practical reasons for maintaining membership lists (identification, voting, budgeting etc). One can use ‘collective consensus’ to obtain membership and also maintain membership lists.

For the purpose of this discussion I will illustrate what I am proposing with the following example: Collective membership is obtained automatically by all qualifying residents (those meeting age and residence criteria for instance) within the boundaries of the Conservancy, IF and only IF, after an extensive and intensive consultation process of public meetings held under the auspices of the TA (and open to representatives of Land Boards, Regional Council and the MET), the TA determines that the entire community has reached a consensus to
apply to become a Conservancy. (This would require a very high majority of adult residents to agree, and that % could be prescribed). [In order to fulfill the principles of common property management, the Conservancy Constitution must make provision for suspending or disqualifying members from membership rights (such as; attending meetings, voting, and receiving benefits) if they fail to uphold the objectives, obligations and any bylaws of the Conservancy].

My reasons for proposing this is that I believe that the collective consensus approach to membership will solve some of the problems that we have experienced in the programme and perhaps some others that we can anticipate. Therefore, below I first give examples of problems and then I try to present what I see as some of the strengths and weaknesses of the 2 approaches to obtaining membership.

2. Problem Statement

1. Conservancies have no powers over ‘non-members’.
On my first field trips to Salambala Conservancy in July 1999, I learned that 4 non-members were compromising the ‘core wildlife area’ of the Conservancy by keeping their cattle inside that area and using a key waterhole intended for wildlife. But because the non-members residents ‘sat outside the tent’ of the Conservancy, they could not be sanctioned. Six years later the cattle are still there. [This is a problem presented to me by Conservancy members themselves].

2. Some members want to give benefits to non-members
Some members of Conservancies want to distribute benefits to all residents of the Conservancy and not just signed members. “That is the African way”. In one area some signed members even felt it wasn’t necessary to sign to
become a Conservancy member because they were “all members of the same community”. [This problem was presented to me by Conservancy members themselves]

3. A Conservancy was ‘declared’ that did not fulfill legal requirements
In Uukwaluudhi Conservancy the population density was so great that obtaining and maintaining a membership list was so impractical that it was ‘declared’ as a Conservancy without following the legal requirement for a membership list. In my mind, the legal status of that Conservancy could be challenged. [This problem was brought to me by both Conservancy members and support organizations].

4. Conservancy legitimacy & authority is vulnerable without consensus.
In rural African societies consensus is usually preferred to majority rule. It appears that in 50% of our Conservancies, members make up a minority of the adult residents. Not only do we lack an explicit and legitimate process by which a small minority submits to the authority of a collective consensus, but the lack of a significant majority (or even a simple majority in 50% of Conservancies) leaves them vulnerable to the simplest of challenges. [This problem is my own perception, however the population and membership numbers are from the State of Conservancy Report (p12) see more below].

3. Discussion

Individual Commitment
I genuinely like the concept of an individual having to make a personal decision to join a group and to indicate that in some public way. But does that inexpensive,
once in a lifetime act, necessarily translate into some kind of untiring participatory ‘commitment’? Does that brief act signify more commitment than a public show of hands where everyone can immediately see and feel a public consensus has been reached. Do most of today’s members regularly participate in meetings, pass on or seek information, demand accountability? If I am honest with myself, I think not.

We have reports from several sources of a disappointing level of knowledge about the Conservancy and its activities, as well as failures to meet quorums, hold AGMs or provide financial records. I think that as in any membership group there are a few activists, a majority of passive followers, and a few shirkers. In fact, in Conservancies where adult members and non-members are roughly equal, I expect that we couldn’t distinguish between the behaviours of the majority of those respective groups.

Individual Opt-out

The obverse side of the coin of individual commitment, is that we have legitimized the position of those who have taken a conscious decision to ‘opt-out’ of Conservancy jurisdiction. In many Conservancies theses non-members residents make up a majority. But even in Salambala, where the membership rate is very high, the Conservancy has no jurisdiction, no power over the 4 non-member residents in their core area, because the individual membership process has legitimised their individual opt-out.

Collective Consensus

I contend that a formal process of collective consensus brings an added legitimacy and authority, because, if properly done it is perceived as representing not just the
will of a self-selected group (which is often a minority), but it represents the collective will of everybody within the boundaries. **There is no one outside the jurisdiction of the Conservancy.** The Conservancy’s objectives, plans and by-laws are binding on everyone, even the minority that may not agree.

This is not just some theoretical, impractical or untested proposal. **This is how ‘Conservancies’ have been formed in Botswana since 1993, 12 years ago.** In Botswana’s Chobe Enclave, where this collective consensus approach was used, 2 residents moved their cattle into a newly designated ‘Conservancy’ tourism zone in 1994. The ‘Conservancy Committee’ requested the chief of the relevant village (who was an ex-officio member of the Conservancy anyway) to instruct the owners to remove the cattle from the tourism zone. Although the chief at that time was particularly weak in his personal authority, the immediate compliance by the owners was due to their recognition of the legitimate collective authority of the ‘Conservancy’ and how it was arrived at. [It is critical that the process by which consensus is reached is perceived as legitimate by all residents and local authorities. It is best to agree on the process with stakeholders before hand].

I believe that collective authority is greater than the sum of its parts (its number or % of members). And I think that **when there are serious challenges to Conservancies, whether from within or without, that that collective authority will be the critical ingredient in a successful outcome.** We should be thinking hard about such things as resettlement and land-use planning activities led by MLR and leasehold allocations by Communal Land Boards, etc, when we think about the membership process.
A downside to the collective-consensus approach is there has to be a significantly high majority to justify the establishment of a Conservancy. Where such a collective consensus is not obtained, then there can be no Conservancy. Looking at the figures in the section below, it appears that few registered Conservancies have achieved a significant majority.

Legitimacy

Most of us have probably assumed that the registered members in Conservancies make up a healthy majority of adult residents. But that does not appear to be the case when I use the figures from the ‘members’ and ‘people’ columns on p12 of the State of the Conservancy Report. I arbitrarily assumed that 50% of the ‘people’ column were adults, (which I think is both reasonable and fair for this crude exercise). [I also excluded Uukwaliuudhi’s data for obvious reasons]. But the results are disappointing. Of the 28 Conservancies whose data is thus listed, 14 of the 28 Conservancies do not have membership rates (% of adult residents) that reach a simple majority of 51% [which might be the lowest acceptable benchmark even in Western societies]. Only 9 of 28 have membership rates of 2/3 or higher. [I think that at least 2/3 (if not higher) would be required in the African context to achieve consensus]. 9 Conservancies have membership rates of 1/3 or less! Will Conservancies with such low membership rates be perceived as having legitimate authority to prescribe developments and to zone activities for its non-member residents, and will they command respect from outside planners and authorities? N’A Jaqna Conservancy is trying to defend it area from resettlement schemes. According to the figures in the SoC Report, Conservancy members there represent about 22% of adult residents. Will that be perceived as a position of strength?

4. Summary
In summary, although I too feel the attraction of the individual act, I doubt that it translates over a lifetime into markedly different behaviours by the majority of members. More critically, I think that the individual ‘opt-out’ and lack of healthy majorities have left most Conservancies without sufficient power and legitimacy to defend themselves against current and foreseeable challenges from both within the Conservancy and from outside.

On the other hand, I think that a collective consensus approach to membership explicitly legitimizes the authority of the Conservancy over all residents (even those who may oppose the Conservancy). Additionally, I think that the collective consensus process legitimizes the Conservancy’s voice in the eyes of outsiders as well because of the necessarily large majority needed to reach consensus. However we will have to work harder to reach the high majorities that consensus will require, and we may have to accept that we will not achieve such consensus in all ‘emerging conservancies’.
C. THE VIEWS OF THE CONSERVANCY MEMBERS ON MEMBERSHIP

By Selma Lendelvo,

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1. Membership registration

Registration of members is practiced by most communal conservancies in the country. Resulting from the registration process are lists of all adult community members aged 18 years and above. Based on the views of community members, this process is not done with the intention of exclusion but rather to protect the adult inhabitants and to have control over their contributions to the activities of the conservancy. This practice is also seen as a process to enhance active participation within the community as well as ensuring that registered adults take the responsibility over their actions. Membership registration tend to be a safety-net for community members as new comers to the community can only be registered once they have stayed for a specified period (mostly 3 – 5 years). Therefore, the argument that poor people and marginalized groups are left out of conservancy benefits and decision-making was not viewed in the same line at community level.

Reason for membership registration:

- Voluntary declaration for participation;
- Produce active participation;
- Have control over illegal actions;
- Give a sense of pride and identity;
- Acts as a safety net for residents;
- Prevent against passive recipient; and
- Have control on the community dynamics (eg. Death, new arrivals, interest)
Membership registration in most conservancies focus on the adult population (18 years and above) of the conservancies; for the following reasons:

- Eligibility to vote as per National law;
- Ability to make independent decisions;
- Ability to perform any kind of work;
- Ability to stand for his/her actions in terms of illegal activities;
- Ability to take up any position in the conservancy leadership;
- In the position to enhance/acquire new skills.

The conservancies acknowledged the difficulties in the process of registration and updating of membership lists. It emerged that for most people that are not registered are the reason not because they are unwilling, but rather due to logistic problems such as reaching the conservancy offices. Most community members find it difficult to travel to the conservancies' offices for registration. The other challenge to registration is the perception that being within the conservancy boundary, one is already automatically a member of the conservancy. This reduces the effort among residents to ensure that they are registered. Some conservancies indicated the political cautiousness, as some community members fear that when they register their names will be used for political campaigns. Only a minority of people have indicated in different conservancies of their unwillingness to become members.

2. Membership and Benefits

The workshop participants felt that community members are not well sensitized about the different levels and kinds of benefits of the conservancies. Membership should be directly linked to the benefits of the programme. However, it emerged that the current registration of members is not linked to benefit distribution.
This is because even unregistered community members do receive benefits. Three important types of benefits have been identified as financial, environmental (Biodiversity) and social benefits. Not all benefits are tangible or directly affecting individual residents. There are those benefits that are indirectly affecting all residents irrespective of whether they are registered members or not such as meat distribution.

The most important benefit categories in successful conservancies are currently meat and cash payouts. Most conservancies get quotas for game from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism that allow them to utilize their game annually. Contrary to the membership registration, meat is distributed to all households (entire community) within the boundary of the conservancies and not only to those registered. This suggests that all community members are beneficiaries of the conservancy. The entire community also benefits irrespective of who are members or not in terms of benefits aimed at schools, health centres, agricultural improvement projects and other livelihood improvement activities such as fuelwood, poles for construction, rangeland management are supported. These activities which ensure that all community members benefit, are also outlined in the missions and goals of most conservancies striving at improving the natural resources base and livelihoods of the entire community.

Cash payout is another level of benefits that is practiced in few and financial sound conservancies and is mostly given to registered members. In smaller conservancies where registration rate is close to or 100%, cash is distributed to all households. In larger conservancies, such as Nyae Nyae conservancy, cash is only paid out to registered members. In some conservancies, registered members are required to produce membership cards to qualify for the cash payout. Therefore, the cash payouts and other extra benefits (eg. preference to jobs) to registered members
should be seen as an incentive for active participation. Cash payouts were not highly favoured during the workshop as there are other better means to utilize the conservancy money that will benefit the community best. This practice is said to create a dependence and passive recipient syndrome which in turn has a negative effect on the community.

3. Annual General Meetings and membership

Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are the highest bodies of decision-making in conservancies. Members of the conservancies are expected to participate in the decision-making process of the conservancies. This suggests that registered members of the conservancies are the ones to take decisions at the AGMs on behalf of the entire community. In order for an AGM to continue with its deliberations, registered members need to form a quorum. AGMs are not easy to control and sometimes unregistered members do participate in the AGMs. Some conservancies also found it difficult to call off an AGM even if it did not meet the required number of registered members but had large attendance by unregistered community members. AGMs are the most important decision-making platforms of conservancies and they should take place every year.

During the workshop it was evident that most conservancies are finding it difficult to have their AGMs taking place annually. Most of the conservancies, their last AGM was in 2005. Meeting the stipulated quorum was the major challenge. Most of the conservancies' constitutions have set up unrealistic figures for the quorums such as two-thirds or half of the registered members. These figures are not only unrealistic in terms of numbers but also logistically. Most conservancies only have one vehicle and several trips have to be driven in order to bring people together. The other
trouble is the lack of interest of community members to attend meetings. Those conservancies who did not regularly hold their AGMs indicated that their annual activities were affected as some activities needed to continue with the approval of the community.

Therefore, there is a need for many conservancies to revisit their quorums and this calls for constitutional amendments. In order to amendment the constitution, one needs a quorum as well. A proof of attempts for organizing an AGM and could not reach a quorum should be provided to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) for their intervention and assistance to the conservancies.

4. Legislation and membership

Presentations by MET and LAC indicated that the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996 provides that conservancies define the membership criteria and procedure themselves. During the discussions, it came out that the Act and its regulations were not properly explained to the community members during the initial stages of conservancies. It was also argued that support organizations focused a lot on the tool box that contained templates. This is particularly evident with the current membership scenario, which happen to be similar for most conservancies in the country.

The ideal situation should be that the community members come up with a skeleton of membership (as was referred to in the workshop) which is then submitted to MET for approval before it is put in practice. MET is to see if that model does not discriminate against anybody or go against any other country law.
5. Membership Scenarios

In order to ensure that all community members receiving benefits from the conservancy are considered as conservancy members, two tiers of membership is proposed. This is to ensure that the issue of legitimacy of conservancies is address. The different levels of membership are also practiced in various associations and organization with details of types of roles and benefits. The same can also apply to conservancy because there are those community members who do not wish to be active members of the conservancy but rather report any incidents such poaching, game that is hurt etc.

Therefore, the two tiers of members will consist of household and individual levels of membership.

1. **Household level membership:** This is an inclusive type membership where all residents living and/or those with user rights within the conservancy boundary are automatically members. However, a minimum years one has to live in the conservancy before qualifies to become a members will be defined by conservancies themselves. This level of membership helps to ensure that no members of the conservancy are excluded. This level of membership will also encourage all community members to support initiatives of the conservancy and reduce conflicts among members.

**The process:**

Use available structures to develop a register of every household within the conservancy boundary or user rights for the specified period. These structures will differ from area to area but in most cases they could be development committees, the Traditional Authority, blocks/section conservancy committee members. Registration of households can also be
done during the meat distribution process. This will allow the conservancies to have necessary information such as the size of households, nature of household members (disability or orphans), number of community members under the age of 18 years and also those who are 18 years and above. This will help the conservancies to keep record of people expected to register.

It is very essential for households to be recorded during the meat distribution process and amount of meat is recorded per annum or for any other benefit. For those households that could not be reached during that year, reason can be supplied. For example, some households maybe abandoned or people traveled or refuse to accept the meat etc. Keeping such data can be used both nationally and internationally to indicate the impact of conservancies on food security of a large part of residents. This does not only address the impact of the conservancies on the community but also show that the conservancy represents a larger percentage of the community.

2. **Individual level of membership**: Register all willing adult (18 years and above) community members. These are people who are willing to be directly and actively involved in all the activities of the conservancy. This level of membership qualifies for incentives for active participation as well as general conservancy benefits.

*The process:*

This practice should continue as it is done currently, where willing adults (both male and female) approach the conservancy offices for registration. However, a record of activities they are involved in should be kept. During the
workshop, community members felt that Microsoft Access to be introduced to conservancies for updating of membership lists.

3. Exclude community members from being conservancies' members due to their actions. For example:
   - Poaching, stealing of public goods
   - Disrupting conservation efforts and community meetings
   - Other unaccepted acts
   - Already existing traditional and government laws
   - Social pressure.

6. Recommendations and conclusions from the workshops
   - Registration of membership to continue and therefore, workable approaches for updating membership lists should be identified. MET should also make updating of lists a legal requirement.
   - AGMs should accommodate all community members to vote or make decisions even they are not registered members
   - Conservancies should be allowed to benefit from other natural resources not only wildlife. Also, looking into all aspect of rural development
   - Membership criteria be defined by conservancies. Therefore, most conservancies need to amend their constitutions that outline the membership criteria and procedures.
   - There is a need for vigorous awareness and clarifications on the Nature conservation Amendment Act of 1996 to the conservancies and it suggested that the Legal Assistant Centre (LAC) do that.
• In order to increase the interest among community members of conservancies, they should be sensitized about the different types of benefits (Social, Financial and Environmental benefits).
• The integration of community forestry and conservancies to be done speedily.
• Households structures and living conditions to be considered in benefit distributions plan.
• There is a need for a national research be conducted in order to come up with a clear picture of how membership should be improved in conservancies.
• Conservancies showed high interest in the Microsoft Access database training that was conducted to them and requested that it be conducted in more details. NACSO to liaise with private sector for the donation of computers to conservancies.

7. Conclusions
The following conclusions were made from the discussions of the workshops:

1. **Lack of security**: The Act does not address the security of community members and those with user rights within the boundary area. The Act is flexible in terms membership and therefore conservancies developed the membership registration as a safety-net for its members. As much as I support the flexibility of the legislation in terms of membership, I still believe that the law should give a kind of security to those within the conservancy boundary.

2. **Different levels of membership**: To cater for all sectors of the community that are benefiting from the conservancies. Different levels of conservancies will help address the issue of legitimacy and ensure that the correct figures about who supports and benefit from the conservancies. These levels
will also ensure that minors and marginalized groups are not excluded from membership.

3. **Improvement of the membership registration**: This process of membership registration is highly favoured by all conservancies and therefore, feasible and effective ways need to be determined. The Microsoft Access or any other means to improve the updating of lists to be introduced to conservancies.

4. **Amendment of constitutions**: A number of recommendations from the workshops call for amendment of constitutions.

5. **Current membership scenario does not provide grounds for exclusion**: Constitutions do not provide to deregister someone or exclude them in case they are involved in criminal activities etc. However, there should be a means to exclude those community members from being conservancies members when they are involved in activities that are hindering the activities of the conservancies.