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NAMIBIA

CASE STUDY

Mining Community Turns to Tourism

A conservancy creates jobs and boosts income for a former mining community



Photo: Lysius Uusiku, RISE Namibia

The Tsiseb Conservancy Information Center is the first stop for tourists visiting the area.

Several former miners now work as guides, leading visitors on trips to see ancient rock art, nearby Brandberg Mountain — the highest peak in Namibia — and wildlife, including desert-dwelling elephants.

Challenge

After the tin mines closed in the early 1990s, the Namibian community of Uis and surrounding area experienced large-scale job losses, and families were split up when ex-miners were forced to seek work hundreds of miles away. The

community, located on the edge of the Namib Desert, was desperate to create jobs and support businesses locally to revitalize the small town and surrounding settlements.

Initiative

USAID helped the community form and register the Tsiseb Conservancy to manage wildlife in the desert surrounding Uis. With USAID support, the conservancy developed tourism and wildlife management plans and established a tourism information center that also houses other local businesses.

Results

Both the conservancy and the tourism it has cultivated have created jobs and increased income in the community. Tsiseb has established a lodge, campsite and hunting enterprise catering to tourists, which employ 16 local people and contribute \$21,000 a year to the local economy. Several former miners now work as guides, taking visitors on hiking trips to see ancient rock art, nearby Brandberg Mountain — the highest peak in Namibia — and wildlife, including desert-dwelling elephants. The conservancy has negotiated deals with other local tourism operators, which promises to increase its tourism profits even more. With its well-organized management committee representing all sectors of the community, Tsiseb Conservancy is one of the area's leading drivers of development and economic growth.

Telling Our Story

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