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Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

September has been a month of celebrations! First and foremost, celebrating Botswana's 50 years of Independence – here's to the next 50 years, Botswana! PULA!

We are also celebrating our partnership with Safari Destinations, who this month celebrated their own 10th Birthday. This partnership came into its own with the launch of the Community Bus which will support the transport needs of various community organizations. Additionally, Safari Destinations has championed the creation of the Safari Bed Bank which brings many suppliers together to support civil society through donation of bed nights.

Finally, we also welcome our new volunteer, Josh McDonald, who has hit the ground running to support Tumie Matlhwane documenting, profiling and making sure that the impact of our partners' work in the community is known as broadly as possible.

We are delighted and proud to be part of this community and to be in a position to truly support our civil society partners into the future.

The entire TFI team wishes everyone a wonderful Boipuso Weekend and happy reading!

Ruth Stewart, Director of Travel for Impact

Month at a Glance



Welcome to Craffhood!



WAR begins yearly SAR initiative: Program Sees Tremendous Success



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Launched in 2013, Travel for Impact (TFI) is an independent social enterprise aimed at linking the travel industry with local community projects in Northern Botswana. With each night spent with one of our travel partners, at least USD1 is donated to Travel for Impact. These donations are then distributed to local community projects. Since launching, TFI has made partnerships with a number of community organizations and we continue to grow.

For more information, please visit our website at travelforimpact.com or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram

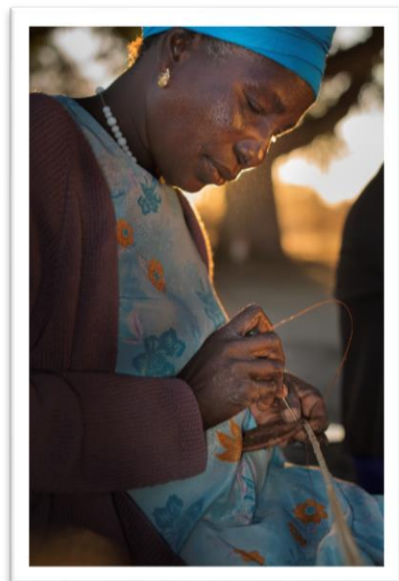




Boseja group



Handcrafted bracelets



Shakawe Group

Women



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Crafthood-unite.com

Crafthood

Crafthood is an independent initiative launched by Travel for Impact and seed funded by Southern African Regional Environmental Program (SAREP). Crafthood is a centralized marketing and sales platform for weavers in the District. The aim is to support weavers in establishing an independent livelihood, and in turn, support immediate needs within their household.

Welcome to Crafthood!

We are incredibly excited about this new concept! This initiative has already established valuable partnerships throughout the region and we presently support four formal centers in the North West of Botswana: Shorobe Basket Co-operative, Ngwao Boswa, Ngamiland Basket Weavers Trust, Shakawe Craft Center and one informal weaving group, Boseja Weavers.

To date, we have supported the management and refurbishment of the centers, diversified products, and encouraged new branding. Additionally, in order to tell their amazing stories, we have developed posters illustrating the basket story, profiling the skilled women behind these beautiful creations.

Sales are slowly increasing and as we gather steam and develop trust between the centers, we only see this increasing. We look forward to highlighting our work in this area and having a positive impact on local enterprises – predominately women.



Women



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WoMen Against Rape (WAR)

WoMen Against Rape (WAR) was established in 1993 in response to a prevalence of gender-based violence in the district of Ngamiland. WAR is a crisis centre that deals with society's most vulnerable: women and children. Since their inception, they have handled over 600 cases of violence and shelter women and children.



'The Whisper Game' - Sedie Junior Secondary School

Women Against Rape begins yearly SAR initiative: Program Sees Tremendous Success!

This month, Women Against Rape began their Students Against Rape (SAR) initiative. This year-long project aims to bridge the gap between parents and children, as well as to educate both on their legal rights and responsibilities. SAR ultimately aims to reduce incidents of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) by strengthening and encouraging open communication.

This year, the SAR initiative has been assisted by several international consultants. WAR welcomes Alana, from Canada, as well as Ariane and Eva from Germany. These volunteers are aiding the existing team and the intercontinental diversity has resulted in an innovative and exciting program.

After meeting with Kgotlas, the SAR team goes into schools throughout the region and puts on presentations, activities, and discussions. These demonstrations have been attended by over 500 students throughout the community and the numbers are only expected to increase over the next several weeks.



Moeti Junior Secondary School



Tsodilo Junior Secondary School



Shashe Ward Kgotla



*Tsodilo Junior Secondary School
Assembly Point*

Culture & Heritage



Polokong
an effort to assist Maun's destitute elderly

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AGLOW - Polokong

Despite tremendous efforts to provide social security to the country's most vulnerable populations, hindrances such as walking long distances, and some day-to-day activities present many challenges for the elderly. AGLOW-Polokong aims to change the lives of these individuals by making home visits, providing basic necessities, and giving loving attention.

Vera's Story

Under the blowing leaves of a mophane tree, Vera leisurely sits weaving a basket. She has a conversation with Lesang, a volunteer for AGLOW, and tells us about her life (and who this special basket is for).

Vera: You found me weaving, I am now trying to wet the reeds.

Lesang: Could you please give us the story of your life while you are still weaving?

Vera: I was born in Seronga, that's where my parents came from. I moved to Maun when I had two children. I had four children and up until now I have lived in Maun where I am getting an allowance from the government "tandabala" (pension).

Lesang: Now do your children ever help you out?

Vera: They normally don't help me out, no. I am given food by you which is the food I survive on and my neighbor also sometimes gives me food and then I get my pension from the government.

Lesang: Do you know what our group is called?

Vera: No! All I know is I am a part of it, that's all. What is it called?

Lesang: Ehe! It is called Aglow

Vera: What? Agolo??

Lesang: Yes! Aglow. It is a community group for the elderly. How happy are you to be a part of this?

Vera: Me!? I am so excited to be a part of it because you take care of us, you pray with us and we are no longer struggling...

Lesang: Amen!

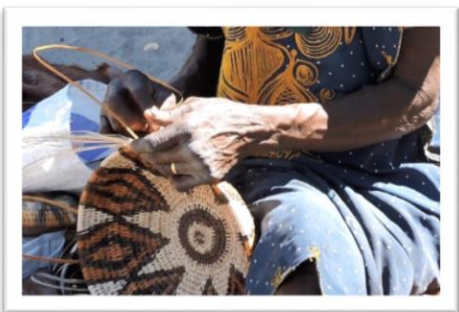
Vera: You pray for us and now I am even getting better and this fills my heart with contentment and I can dance too even though my legs seem to be failing me now. (She chuckles)

I say thank you Lord I am still alive. This group really helps because I am also given clothes and some of my children wear the clothes too.

While discussing the basket:

My eyes are now becoming weak and I can't see well but I'm trying to make this basket like I did when I could see. I started learning how to weave from a tender age. So this skill was acquired from my mother. I am making this basket as a thank you to Lesang because she has become my friend.

*names have been changed



Children



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Bana Ba Letsatsi

Bana Ba Letsatsi (BBL) is a rehabilitation centre that offers a place of safety and support for vulnerable children. The organization provides daily meals, clothes, transport, medical attention, and hygiene facilities, as well as counseling, skills training, and also reintroduces children to the structure of education. BBL has helped many children reintegrate and it continues to be a safe haven for children throughout the community.

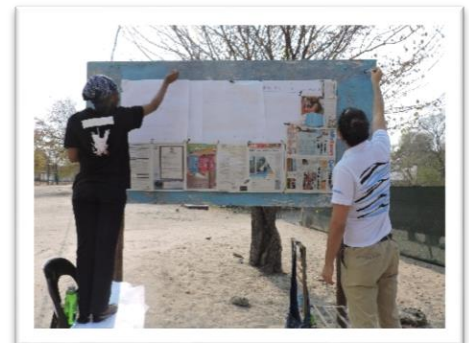


Celebrating BOTS 50!

This month, in celebration of BOTS 50, the wonderful staff at Bana Ba Letsatsi painted the grounds the iconic Botswana Blue, White, and Black. Renovations included repainting the sign, gate, fence, tires, and rocks.

Two of TFI's staff, Tumie and Josh, were invited by BBL staff members, Nametsegang and Sophie, to help paint the front sign. A combination of Nametsegang's focused eye, Sophie's steady brush, Josh's long reach, and Tumie's gift of managerial delegation, resulted in a skillfully crafted homage to the country's flag.

Like much of Maun, BBL would like to show their support and pride for this beautiful country and celebrate 50 years of Independence.



Conservation

MAUN ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY



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maunanimalwelfare.com

Maun Animal Welfare Society (MAWS)

Founded in 1998, MAWS aims to protect Botswana's wildlife through domestic animal care. In order to accomplish this goal, MAWS offers free veterinary services to low-income villagers across Botswana. In addition, they also reunite and rehabilitate lost, found, and stray animals. MAWS is actively preventing the transmission of diseases from domestic animals to wildlife.

Spike's Story

I arrived in Maun on a Friday, and after dropping my bags off, Tana and I immediately headed to the MAWS clinic. I was greeted by many excited barks, but one doggy in particular stood out. He was jumping up and down, excitedly barking, desperately trying to get my attention. His name was Spike and he instantly stole my heart.

Spike had originally been admitted to the previous vet for poisoning, but was kept in-house for an extended period because an abscess developed on his forearm which subsequently burst. He was actually my very first patient at MAWS, and was with us throughout my stay. Every day, twice a day, we had to clean his wound and make him swallow 3 types of medications. I also asked that from then on, he was to wear an Elizabethan collar because Mr. Curious was continuously licking the burst abscess, making it very difficult for the wound to close.

During one of my routine check-ups on my third day at Maws, I was quite alarmed at his general condition, which seemed to have rapidly deteriorated from the night before. Unlike the Spike I was used to, he was subdued, unwilling to play and had very pale gums. That is when I decided to treat for Ehrlichia, since many dogs here are affected by this tick-borne disease. Sure enough, he was back to his bouncy, playful self within a couple of days! I kept him in for a total of 3 weeks, until the wound, that was originally about 4cm long, looked like just a tiny scrape on his left foreleg. During his stay with us he also got neutered - but only once I was sure he was strong enough to undergo the anaesthesia.

He was discharged the day before I left and went back home to his loving owners, as a very healthy, naughty and attention-seeking little pup who I will definitely miss!

Daphne, Volunteer Nurse at MAWS

Fast Fact:

Botswana has the largest elephant population on the continent!



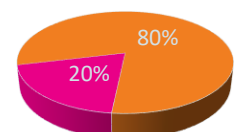
Source: <http://www.botswana.co.za>



Spike aka Mr. Curious

This September, MAWS vaccinated and/or sterilized nearly 200 dogs and cats, helped 26 walk ins, and facilitated more than 400 inpatients!

September Patient Breakdown



■ Cats: 38 ■ Dogs: 156

Local Events



LIVE2LEAD

October 14, 2016

LIVE2LEAD is an annual exclusive simulcast event hosted by John C. Maxwell Partners around the world. LIVE2LEAD is a half-day leader development experience designed to equip attendees with new perspectives, practical tools and key takeaways.



Maun 101 Cultural Festival

October 14-16, 2016

There will be stalls to buy, traditional activities to be undertaken such as canoeing, song/dance, traditional beverages, arts and crafts. All of this will promote cultural sport tourism in Botswana.



Maun International Arts Festival

October 22-30, 2016

Participants from all over the world will be performing a wide range of artistic expressions including Comedy, Poetry, Live Music, Dance, Hip Hop, Visual Arts, Theatre and Creative Writing.

If you would like your event featured in our 'Local Events' section, please contact us.

Travel Partners

Travel for Impact is fortunate to work with some amazing travel organizations that are making a real difference. This section highlights some of the impact that our travel partners are making throughout the community.

Say Hello to the New Community Bus!

On September 23, 2016, as part of the 10th anniversary celebration, Safari Destinations unveiled a new community bus. This bus, a collaborative effort between Safari Destinations and Travel for Impact, will go a long way in supporting the local community.

Lorraine Potter, Managing Director at Safari Destinations was particularly excited about this initiative as it gave her an opportunity to give back. "Botswana is so much about community!" she said, "It's part of [the] culture and this [bus] really represents that". Furthermore, as an employer, the bus allowed her to give her staff "something that [they] can be a proud of; something that they can be a part of".

This excitement was mirrored by several of Travel for Impact's partner organizations; the recipients of the community bus.

"Full of joy! I am full of joy!" said Lesang from AGLOW - Polokong, an organization that provides the elderly with necessary care. 'Full of Joy?' I asked. "Yes, full of joy because this is a very big relief in our organization; no worries anymore of transport; no worries of how we can help the elderly." Lesang went on to explain how lack of transport was making it difficult to take clients to the hospital, deliver food, or perform other day to day activities. "[This] is going to make the work easier. Thank you!"



Lesang wasn't the only one excited about this unveiling. Taboka, Executive Coordinator from Bana Ba Letsatsi (BBL), an organization that offers a place of safety for orphans and vulnerable children, described this unveiling as a "beautiful beginning for our kids." Due to a lack of adequate transportation, some of BBL's kids walk up to ten kilometres either to school or to BBL. This has a negative impact on their education; however, Taboka believes this bus will lead to an improvement in their education and states that we "shall see their fruits very, very soon." Taboka couldn't help but express her gratitude: "We are thankful and we are so, so, so humbled!"

Travel for Impact would like to thank the dedication and generosity of those who supported this initiative through their relationship with Safari Destinations and their USD1 per bed night contribution.



Announcing the arrival of Bed Bank For Charity

Travel for Impact and Safari Destinations are very excited to announce the ‘Safari Bed Bank’ – an exciting and innovative new venture to help raise awareness and funds to local community projects in Northern Botswana. The Bed Bank encourages suppliers to donate bed nights to Safari Destinations, who in turn sell these bed nights on, passing the proceeds to Travel for Impact to support charities with their core costs. Both Travel for Impact and Safari Destinations would like to express their gratitude to the following companies for their generous support of the Bed Night Bank:

&Beyond

African Bush Camps

Belmond Safaris

Letaka Safaris

Mochaba Camp

Ghoha Hills

Meno a Kwena

Okavango Expeditions

Wilderness Safaris

Sanctuary Retreat

Safari Life

Safari Guide Services