

Vol. 4, No. 1

# THE GOLDEN MOLE

NaDEET's Endemic Newsletter



September 2006

## NaDEET CENTRE FIRE

On 16 June in the late afternoon the main building of NaDEET Centre was ablaze. After several hours of fire fighting and with the help of our neighbours, we were able to put out the fire and contain it as much as possible. Unfortunately the majority of the building burned down including our storerooms and kitchen which contained the most valuable items. To this day we also unfortunately do not know what caused the fire on that tragic afternoon.

In the past few weeks and months we have fought a hard battle to rebuild the main building and to have NaDEET Centre operational again. This has only been possible with the generous support we have received from all of NaDEET's friends locally and around the world.

Thank you!



NaDEET Centre after the fire

## NaDEET CENTRE IS REBORN

After contacting the insurance company, the NaDEET team sprang into action. We needed to clean up, build a temporary classroom, find a building team for the reconstruction, source materials and funds and develop a new building plan to improve on past mistakes.

### CLEAN UP

We were very fortunate to receive assistance from NamibRand Nature Reserve and Tok Tokkie Trails to clean up after the fire. After two days all the rubbish had been removed and the salvage was stored. The site was ready for a new building.



Cleaning up

### TEMPORARY CLASSROOM



The tented classroom

With the loan of a large party tent from Electro Repairs, we set up a temporary classroom in the middle of the accommodation units. In order to start having classes again by the second week in July, we were very grateful to receive many donations including chairs and tables from Cymot-Greensport and kitchen and classroom supplies from private individuals in Namibia. Lastly we also temporarily set up our new solar system to have lights and electricity for our new fridge and freezer. Although the circumstances were not ideal, NaDEET staff and the visiting groups made the most out of the temporary classroom and set to the task of learning about the environment and sustainable living.

### NEW DESIGN

Although the old main building was much loved the way it was, the fire did give the opportunity to now improve upon the original design. The three major changes were to put on a corrugated iron roof, to raise the structure to install wooden shutterboard floors and to turn the Centre ninety degrees.

Since we built the original main building, we have struggled with the roof. Initially we first had a simple double layer shade cloth roof. This was wonderful as it gave a very open feeling and was very cool throughout the year. Unfortunately it was not waterproof which became a problem as several groups got completely soaked. We then added a plastic sheet underneath the shade cloth to keep out the water. Regrettably this plan did make the Centre extremely hot. It was therefore decided to build a strong enough roof structure to support a corrugated iron roof. Over time we will monitor the effectiveness of this roof.

The installation of a raised wooden floor has given us several benefits. It is much easier to clean, everything can stand straight and we could build into the dune and therefore rotate the Centre. This allowed us to directly connect the kitchen with the solar deck improving our cooking facilities. We also moved our small garden house and compost to the North-eastern side to be adjacent to the kitchen. This has allowed us to directly re-use our grey water from the kitchen sink for a small herb and vegetable garden.

The Golden Mole is produced by

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www.nadeet.org

NaDEET is a registered non-profit trust in Namibia.

Trust Certificate #: T168/ 2003

Trustees: C. Berker, E. Dürr, D. Klein  
Director: V. Keding



## RECONSTRUCTION

The reconstruction of the main building was done by Richard Dreyer, who has built much of Wolwedans Lodge, together with a small building team also from Wolwedans. In less than three weeks, the main building super structure was essentially done. At that time the building team had other commitments and had to leave.



1. Planting the poles 2. View of NaDEET Centre with tented classroom & half finished main building 3. Starting on the side walls

Photos: R.Dreyer

NaDEET was then very fortunate to have two volunteer carpenters/ craftsmen to finish the inside and the finer details. This included installing the plumbing and kitchen counter, building shelves for the storerooms, constructing a fat trap for the waste water and building a shelter for our fuel-efficient stoves. A new team of workers was employed to paint the roof, move the garden house and finish cleaning up all the materials and the salvage from the fire. Andreas Keding, from NamibRand Nature Reserve, kindly installed all the electrics and the new solar system.



The new main building of NaDEET Centre

## MOVING IN & FIRST GROUPS

As planned, on the 1 August we moved into the new main building and took down the temporary classroom. Several days later we already had the first group in the new Centre. During all of our August groups we were still busy completing the decoration and learning materials for the classroom- for example the library. We immediately felt many of the strengths of the new building and could fix the small things that were not quite right. We still have some work to do over the coming weeks to make the Centre truly feel alive again but this will also come with time and with the coming and going of different schoolchildren.

## OFFICIAL RE-OPENING

On 26 August, NaDEET proudly hosted the NamibRand Nature Reserve Annual General Meeting (AGM) in our new main building. The meeting was well attended by all NamibRand stakeholders. We decided to have a small re-opening of the Centre prior to the meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity as most of the NamibRand Nature Reserve community was there to celebrate with us. As CEO of NamibRand, Mr. Albi Brückner officially re-opened the Centre by congratulating it on its work and wishing it well for the coming years. He then unveiled our new plaque that has been mounted under the original plaque (which was luckily saved during the fire).



Albi Brückner and Viktoria Keding  
Photo: A Keding

## THANK YOU

On behalf of everyone at NaDEET, I cannot express how grateful I am to everyone who has helped us through the past two months. This fire which at first caused so much destruction has created an extremely positive experience for us all. It has been amazing to receive such strong support from all of our NaDEET friends and to gain an even greater vote in confidence in our work than before. It is only with this support that we had the strength and energy to rebuild and continue with our work as quickly as we did. Thank you very much for your generous support during this time!

Viktoria Keding



## OTHER NEWS AT NaDEET

Due to the fire, several activities and projects that were on NaDEET's agenda had to be cancelled or postponed. One of these activities is the *Bush Telegraph* youth magazine. We have not had adequate time to seek funding for this project nor have had time to develop any new issues to date. This month we will however produce one issue-instead of the usual three- in conjunction with a water pollution book project. On the next two pages are some of the main projects we completed prior and in spite of the fire and reconstruction.

### NaDEET AT-SCHOOL-PROGRAMME

In 2005, we received funding to implement an "At-School-Programme" as a pilot project. It is not only very important to NaDEET that learners have a positive environmental learning experience at NaDEET Centre, but that they also take their new skills and knowledge home with them. It is desired that participants extend their environmental learning and take action for their local environment. The At-School-Programme aims to support and assist learners and schools to take meaningful action.

For this project, Dr. Frans Aupa Indongo Primary School, a school located in an informal settlement in the outskirts of Windhoek- Namibia's capital- was selected to participate. The children are all from a very poor background and live mostly without electricity and running water in their homes. This school was selected as the principal, Mr Lewin, had brought the grade 7 class to NaDEET Centre for the past two years and has shown interest to integrate environmental concepts at his school.



House right next to school

The aim of the action project, implemented in April 2006, was to bring awareness to the rest of the school and the local community of the environmental projects done at NaDEET. This included solar cooking, water saving and recycling. The children worked very hard to make posters and to prepare different recycled items

from rubbish in their area. Mr Lewin invited all of the teachers from his school, principals and teachers from his neighbouring schools and the local community. Participants were given demonstrations on water saving, recycling and solar cooking. The group saw how a solar cooker and solar oven work, as well as, many examples of homemade recycling.

The action project was very successful and extremely rewarding for NaDEET staff. It was wonderful to visit the learners after they had been at NaDEET Centre and to see that they had applied what they learned back at school. The At-School-Programme was a very positive experience for all involved. The teachers and learners had reflected on activities at NaDEET Centre and had not only applied them in their own context, but they built upon them. The natural environment in and around the school has also clearly been improved through this action project. I strongly believe that under the guidance of the principal the learners and teachers will continue to make a positive change in their lives and benefit their local environment. Thank you very much to Greenwich World Hunger for sponsoring this project.



Mr. Shipanga demonstrating a solar cooker

Viktorina Keding

### GROUPS @ NaDEET CENTRE

Since March this year we have had sixteen groups participate in the environmental education programme at NaDEET Centre. Of these groups, 63% were returning schools bringing new learners. We also had several new schools/ groups come to NaDEET. This included two groups of underprivileged, street children from Windhoek's informal settlements, a local primary school and the Peace Corps Namibia National Diversity Tour. In addition we also were proud to host a group of first year students from the Windhoek College of Education. As it is also NaDEET's aim to build the environmental education capacity in Namibian teachers, this was a wonderful opportunity to interact with young student teachers. We hope that the Windhoek College of Education will continue to bring their students to NaDEET as part of their syllabus. In the coming two months we still have several groups booked mostly from our own local region. NaDEET Centre will then be closed in December and January for the Namibian summer holidays and will re-open on the 1. February 2007.



The "Young Scientists"- April 2006



## 2006 EEASA CONFERENCE IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE

This year's Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) conference took place during the second week of August. The conference was hosted by Belvedere Technical Teachers' College in Harare, Zimbabwe.

During the four conference days, I attended different environmental education sessions presented by educators from the Southern Africa region. Most presentations were about environmental education at schools and the work place, and environmental education on a broader level in society. Although I had expected more presentations on environmental education at centres similar to my work at NaDEET, I was able to share some of NaDEET's experiences. The presentation that I enjoyed the most was by Ms. Phiri, a primary school teacher in Botswana. Her presentation was "The view of grade 4 pupils towards their environment" and the positive results she got from the pupils.

There were also field trips to the different environmental projects in Harare for participants to be exposed to actual environmental education work in Zimbabwe. I went to a recycled paper making one called "The Recycle Papermaking Project". It was an interesting project to see and to gain more skills on how to make new products out of paper. The project aims to manage littering in the township of Harare and at the same time create jobs for disadvantaged people. This project really amazed me.

The highlight at the conference for me was the conference motto "Environment for Everyone" "Everyone for the Environment" because there is no way how we really can live a happy life if the environment is not providing for us.

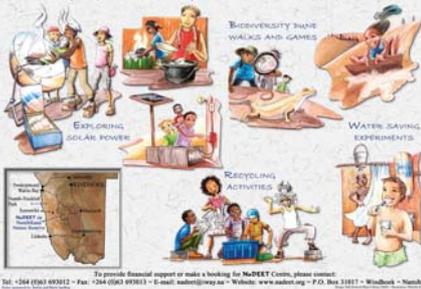
NaDEET also had a small stand at the conference that was shared with other Namibian stakeholders that attended the conference. There the NaDEET materials were on display. Next year's conference will be held in Durban (South Africa) combined with the World Environmental Education Congress which is being held in Africa for the first time. Be there in Durban to share your experiences ([www.weec2007.com](http://www.weec2007.com)).

*Michaella Phemelo*

Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust - NaDEET Centre



Helping Namibian Youth to build their future!



## IMPROVED AND UPDATED NaDEET INFORMATION

Since the beginning of the year, NaDEET has been fortunate to receive funding to develop new and updated informational materials. We have produced an 8 page A5 colour brochure about NaDEET and our activities with an emphasis on the Centre. The brochure also tries to put our work into context of the Namibian environment and its problems. Currently available in English and French, the brochure will also soon be available in German. We hope that it will give potential donors and supporters a much better understanding of our work.

To complement the brochure we have also developed a large colour poster of NaDEET Centre. Although this poster is available to all- it is designed to increase awareness of NaDEET in Namibia.

Lastly we have also printed some t-shirts to market NaDEET and increase awareness about solar cooking.

Thank you to all of our sponsors for the various projects- Namibia Nature Foundation's Namibia Environment Fund-Danida, Barry and Marie Spelling, Hauser Excursion and Safaris Unlimited.

*Viktoria Keding*

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to Sarah Bittenbender for all your help last year in November. A special thank you to Marion Briner and Lukas Arbenz who not only helped put out our terrible fire but also helped rebuild our new Centre. Thank you to Hugo Panabieres and Lea Bizallion for adding the finishing touches.

## E-MAIL VERSION OF Golden Mole

If you have received a paper version of this newsletter and would like it e-mailed instead, please send us an e-mail with your e-mail address. Thank you! [nadeet@iway.na](mailto:nadeet@iway.na)

## THE MOLE FILE

### Fact No. 3: "Juicy Termites"

The main food source for the Golden Mole is the termite. In the Namib dunes, a species of termites survives from the roots of ostrich grass. Termites are not only a good source of protein but have a high fat content providing much needed moisture to the Golden Mole.



Share Net

# NADEET thanks our 1 March through 12 September 2006 donors:

We would like to give a special thank you to all of our fire-relief donors. Without your support we would not have been able to rebuild NADEET Centre so quickly. On behalf of all of us at NADEET, I extend my deepest gratitude.

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Anonymous	Mr and Mrs Annette & Uwe Fischer	Mrs. June Owen-Smith
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Mr Peter Fasching	Mr Otto Mühr	Dr. and Mrs Martin & Uta Zelm
Mrs. CA Ferreira	Mr Hans Olivsen	Mr and Mrs Fred & Tinka Zeitvogel

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## A special thank you to:

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Christiane and Marianne Berker	Lydia Ellis	Caia and Jan-Peter Petersen
Elinor and Marc Dürr	Jürgen and Dorothé Klein	Bernard and Mayda de Winter

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## A special thank you to the following people for your extra effort to help rebuild NADEET Centre:

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Mr Lukas Arbenz & Ms Marion Briner	Mr. Richard Dreyer	Mr and Mrs Nils Odendaal & Danica Shaw
Mr and Mrs Peter & Annelis Briner	Mr Peter Dunning	Mr and Mrs Wulf & Renate Paulick
Mr and Mrs. Albi & Antje Brückner	Mrs Anne Gschwender	Mrs. Gesche Roxin
Mr Stephan Brückner	Mr Andreas Keding	Wolwedans building team and staff
Mr and Mrs Ingrid & Burkhard Dobiéy	Mr. and Mrs Reinhard & Dorle Keding	

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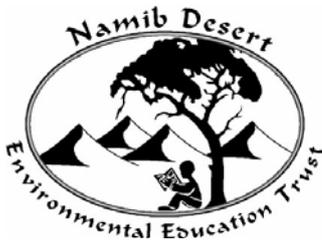
### Dear NADEET Friends,

As you all know, the past three months have been extremely strenuous. I have tried my best to keep careful record of all who have helped us to rebuild NADEET and who have supported us in general. We have received many different kinds of donations that it was not always easy to keep track who they came from. If you have donated to NADEET and your name does not appear here or on page 6, I apologise in advance and ask you to please send me a short e-mail so I can rectify the oversight.

Thank you!

Viktoría Keding, Director





A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES, ORGANISATIONS & GROUPS:

ABC stationers  
Abenteuer Afrika  
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**Thank you very much! Your help is greatly appreciated!**