

Centre for
Applied
Social
Sciences



**A PROTO-CAMPFIRE INITIATIVE IN
MAHENYE WARD, CHIPINGE DISTRICT:
Development of a Wildlife
Utilization Programme
In Response To Community Needs**

By
J. H. Peterson, Jr.*
1991

University of Zimbabwe

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INTRODUCTION

Mahenye ward lies in the lowveld at the southeastern edge of Zimbabwe, adjacent to Gonarezhou National Park which forms the wildlife resource base of the area. Beginning in 1982, Mahenye ward's wildlife utilization project preceded other similar projects in the country, demonstrating the possibility for communal area management of indigenous resources before Campfire became government policy. Mahenye's wildlife utilization project is unusual in the extent to which it developed without external support or technical assistance. It was essentially a local response to local needs based on local possibilities. It has attracted little attention compared with larger externally assisted and subsidized projects in Nyaminyami and Guruve Districts. The Mahenye story is much more fascinating in detail than this brief account can reflect. The author hopes he will be forgiven for the mistakes of over simplification and omission.

Primarily a one ward project, the Mahenye project remains relatively informally organized and operated. It is a pre-Campfire success in a district which has only recently developed a Campfire programme and which can be followed by other wards and districts. Mahenye has influenced an interest in Campfire in adjacent wards and districts, and proven that community support for wildlife can be strong and long lasting inspite of lack of consistent support at the district level. The major problem experienced by the Mahenye wildlife utilization programme was first gaining and now maintaining the support of the district council. Mahenye is a success story which deserves careful attention because it raises the question of whether there is room in Campfire for ward-level success stories.

THE SETTING

Gazaland District

Gazaland District lies primarily on the eastern side of the Save River and bordered by Mozambique in the south and the uplands of the Chimanimani Mountains in the north. The headquarters of the District is in Chipinge, the trade centre of prosperous white farming lands in the uplands adjacent to the Chimanimani Mountains. Here large commercial holdings produce tobacco, maize and coffee. On the lower slopes are extensive tea plantations. In sharp contrast to these prosperous, well watered, commercial farms are the lowlands of the Save River which flows through dry and over-utilized communal lands. A portion of the Save River lowlands is devoted to a major, marginally successful, irrigation project where the population is even greater than the surrounding communal lands. Surrounding the irrigated fields the vegetation is even scantier from the impact of the large human and animal population. In the communal lands surrounding the irrigation scheme, grazing is an important supplement to subsistence agriculture in this most drought prone area. Much of southern Gazaland appears overpopulated by both people and animals. In the dry season, the bare soil and scarce goat-cropped bushes make the area resemble a desert. The impact of people and animals throughout the Save River is threatening an ecological disaster as the annual rains wash more and more top soil into the river before the grass can sprout. Even the irrigation scheme is endangered by the rising levels of silt in the river. The more remote and less inhabited two southern wards of Gazaland stand in contrast with more vegetation and fewer people and domestic livestock.

Mahenye Ward

Mahenye ward forms the south end of Gazaland District on the eastern side of the Save River forming a narrow wedge of communal land between the Gonarezhou National Park and the Mozambique border. The highway bridge over the Save River north of the ward is almost two hours drive from the District Council Offices in Chipinge. The main settlement in Mahenye lies some 45 kilometres further south by a improved dirt road which still becomes impassable to all but four wheel drive vehicles at times in the rainy season.

The inhabitants of the ward are part of a larger group of Shangaan people who migrated to Zimbabwe from South Africa's northern Transvaal, settling around the confluence of the Save and Runde rivers in what is now the Gonarezhou National Park. They form part of the Shangaan related peoples inhabiting the

southeastern lowlands of Zimbabwe, the eastern lowlands of Transvaal Province in South Africa, and adjacent areas of Mozambique. The Shangaan originally inhabited the immense lands of both the Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe and Kruger National Park in South Africa, being displaced from both areas for the establishment of parks to protect wildlife rapidly vanishing from the white commercial farms and the more densely inhabited agricultural communal lands of South Africa and what was Southern Rhodesia. Traditionally the Shangaan practised some agriculture largely cultivated by the women. But their primary subsistence was from hunting and large scale fish drives on the region's major rivers. Already by the late 1950's, the salt content of the Lundi was increasing yearly and the Shangaan fish catches were on the decrease through the use of water by upstream irrigation on the sugar estates (Wright 1972:41).

Gonarezhou National Park

In 1966, much of the area inhabited by the Shangaan people in Zimbabwe was incorporated into the Gonarezhou National Park (Wright 1972:325) and the people were compulsorily evicted. Initially, parts of the area were designated as safari areas for controlled hunting. But in 1972, the entire area was put into the park. Today the park parallels the southeastern lowveld border with Mozambique extending some 140 kilometres south from the Save River towards the South African border reaching the Mwenezi River except for an area along the border. The park reaches approximately 40 kilometres inland from the border, thus forming an extensive and lightly patrolled buffer zone along the Mozambique border.

Prior to removal from the park, a small Seventh Day Adventist Mission station and school had been established among the Shangaan people near the confluence of the Save and Runde Rivers by the Rev. Francis Stockil (Stockil 1987; Wright, 1972:40). At this time, the people moved freely through this area from Mozambique to South Africa. Located in the area was a recruiting post for the Shabani mine in the Midlands, and a store. The school and the small trading store provided a centre of activities for the people. The removal of the people from the park resulted in a loss of this mission school and store, leaving the Shangaan people even more isolated. Further, their removal divided a unified people, placing them into three different administrative units in two different districts belonging to two different provinces. Mahenye ward contains some Shangaan communities originally on the east bank of the Save river joined by others from within the park. This ward is part of the Gazaland District within the Ma: caland Province. Shangaan people who moved north and

west came within the Sangwe Communal Land and the Matibi No. 2 Communal Land respectively, both part of Chiredzi District Council, Masvingo Province. The group moving into the Sangwe communal land included Chief Chitsa who was reduced from a chief who was owed allegiance from surrounding chiefs to a sub-chief in another chief's territory. A smaller group of people moved south into Mozambique.

A HISTORY OF CONFLICT

Loss of Land and Hunting Rights

The recency of the loss of their traditional homeland had a continuing impact on the people's attitude towards the park, its land and animals. Special problems were created by placing people who considered the park as their homeland on all sides of the park. These people profoundly resented the loss of their homes and hunting lands to the park. The District Administrator at the time, Wright (1972:341) wrote "they have good reason to be embittered ...". They were intimately familiar with the lands of the park and with the animals who inhabited it. While this report will focus on people of Mahenye ward, it must be remembered that until 1966, they were part of other Shangaan peoples who were displaced to other lands along the borders of Gonarezhou Park.

Given their marginal geographical position, the Shangaan people were ignored by the colonial government during most of their history. Their dispersal following the establishment of the park continued the pattern of their being a marginal and neglected people. But isolation and governmental neglect were not entirely a disadvantage. There was not only no school, but no other government presence. As a result, the Shangaan continued their traditional subsistence activities. But now they were outside the park utilizing for subsistence animals both within and without the park. In either case, their hunting and fishing was illegal. But with the changing of the legal status of the land, the Shangaan saw their hunting and fishing as taking back what the government had stolen from them. Realistically they had no real alternative but to continue their subsistence patterns, given the marginal nature of their land for agriculture. The Shangaan estimate that even in good years agriculture cannot provide all their food, and they inhabited a drought prone area. Raising livestock is important to their subsistence economy. Manufacture of reed matting is another way to supplement their income. Seeking work in urban areas is another. The more traditional way is poaching.

The loss of their homelands only intensified the Shangaan people's status as an outsider or orphan community, not linked with neighbouring peoples or with government. Efforts to force them to change only strengthened their view of themselves as resisting government control and administration. They "bucked the system" of government ownership of their lands and wildlife and continued to poach animals for a living. During the 1970's the war for independence gained in intensity. The Shangaan strongly resisted the colonial government's attempt to collect them into "protected

villages", and many people fled to Mozambique to join related peoples there.

Independence and a Desire for Land Restoration

A major theme in the War for Independence was the land issue: the displacement of people from their traditional lands. For most native Zimbabweans, this displacement was from areas taken over by white commercial farmers. But the Shangaan were displaced by a National Park created for the benefit of animals and for the white tourists and land owners who enjoyed the parks and safari areas. For the people of Mahenye, the land issue in the War for Independence was seen as their right to regain their homes in the National Park. Indeed, clear promises were made to the Shangaan people that independence would mean a restoration of their hunting rights and their land (Wright 1972:394)

Immediately after independence the new government reduced the role of the chiefs in communal lands by the establishing the position of elected councillors to District Councils. This was partially a response to the compromising role played by some chiefs appointed by the colonial government during the war for independence. The Shangaan people did not support the reduction of the chief's role, but they did wish to use the new system of government. They saw that by cooperating with the new government and electing a councillor he could work to get their land back.

The election of Cde. Finious Chauke as councillor is indicative of Mahenye's unified approach to issues. Cde. Chauke is a cousin of Chief Mahenye and was one of his supporters before he became chief. He lives only two kilometres from the chief in the northern part of the ward, thus facilitating close communication. As the people saw it, the government wanted the people to be represented by an elected councillor rather than by their chief. Their solution was to elect as a councillor a man known to be close to the chief. The people understood that the war was for land, and their land was the park. If the government wanted them to have a councillor rather than a chief, they would do so. But the government had something they wanted, their land.

The Conflict Intensifies

The people of Mahenye were disappointed to find little interest on the part of government officials in returning Gonarezhou National Park to the people. In response to questions of why the land could not be returned to them, they were informed that the government needed the foreign exchange

brought in by the tourists who came to see the wildlife. This response by government was an added incentive to poach the animals in the park. If there were no animals in the park, then there would be no reason for tourists to visit. Without tourists, there would be no need for a park, and the government might return the land to the people. Poaching was thus intensified after the war. If the people were not to get the land back at least they should be able to get the wildlife.

The communities surrounding the parks clearly supported poachers. One of the most notorious poachers was known to be from the Mahenye community. But at the same time, Mahenye accused Parks officials of having no effective control over the wildlife who came from the park to eat the crops of the community. Legally, people in the communal areas are not allowed to kill wild animals. This responsibility lies with National Parks officers who respond to complaints by eliminating specific problem animals. This is called the Problem Animal Control (PAC) Programme. But it was practically impossible for Parks to respond to requests from the Mahenye community. With no government presence in Mahenye, there was no way for the people to make a formal request for assistance. Although the park lay immediately across the Save River from the community, the park is in a different district and a different province. Formal requests for assistance with problem animal control had to go from the community to the Gazaland District Council in Chipinge and from there to the Manicaland Provincial Warden in Mutare. Then the request was forwarded from the Manicaland Provincial Warden in Mutare to the Provincial Warden in Masvingo and then to the Warden of Gonarezhou National Park to take action. This was a lengthy process for people whose crops were being eaten by elephants and livestock being eaten by lions and hyenas. Thus, little effective assistance was given in controlling problem animals.

To the local people, Park officers seemed more interested in protecting animals and arresting poachers than in protecting the people from the animals who were invading their fields and kraals. Since National Parks officers could and did cross the Save River to raid their villages and arrest people for poaching, the people of Mahenye found it incomprehensible that National Parks officers refused to simply cross the river in response to urgent requests from people suffering serious losses and personal threats to their lives. On the other hand Parks officials were less than enthusiastic about providing crop protection for a community which they saw as actively raiding the animals in the Park they, as Parks officers, were employed to protect. They took the position that if the poaching ceased, it would be possible

to deal with the problem animal control needs of the Mahenye community.

In the two years following Independence, problems between the parks and the community continued to get worse. The conflict was complicated in the post-independence era because the Park still had a white warden, David Scammel. Thus the land issue and the animal protection bias of parks seemed to be a continuation of the racist pre-Independence policy of a colonial regime. It is not too strong to say that the sight of a National Parks uniform and all that it represented was repugnant to the people of Mahenye representing oppressive white policies.

A CRITICAL MEETING IN MAHENYE

In 1982, the Mahenye Councillor requested the Gonarezhou Warden come to Mahenye to discuss the problems between the park and the community. Mr. Scammel requested that Clive Stockil accompany him to this meeting. Stockil was the grandson of the Rev. Stockil who established the Seventh Day Adventist mission with the Shangaan people before they were removed from the park. Stockil spent a great deal of time in his childhood at his grandfather's mission station. Both here and on his father's farm, he only had Shangaan children as playmates. Today he is one of four white Zimbabweans who speak the language of the local Shangaan. After the mission closed, Stockil continued to visit the people of Mahenye. He was now a commercial farmer living only 40 kilometres west of the Save River in the Chiredzi area. But Stockil was also a licensed professional hunter and an honorary officer in the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management. Thus he was a logical person for the Warden to invite to accompany him and to serve as a translator at a Mahenye ward meeting.

Stockil remembers noting on their arrival in Mahenye that there were sixty to seventy men waiting for the meeting, but no women or children. This indicated a most serious meeting. The Councillor began the meeting by severely criticizing the National Parks and the Warden for the difficulties the people of Mahenye were experiencing from crop raiding animals. As he continued to speak, the men loudly encouraged him to speak more strongly. In turn, his attacks on the National Parks and the Warden became even more aggressive. The meeting was accomplishing nothing.

To cool things off, Stockil suggested that the Warden leave the meeting and allow him to talk with the people to try to identify the issues in an argumentative atmosphere. Stockil said that at the time he believed that the land was the major issue at stake, and that there was no point in arguing this since it was beyond the control of everyone present. Stockil explained to the people of Mahenye that he had been asked to come by the Warden. But he was acting as a liaison person and as a translator, not as a Park employee. The community agreed that they knew who he was and agreed to present the problem as they saw it.

A Mahenye View of the Issue

The Mahenye elders, some of whom were as much as seventy-five years old, said, "We cannot even speak Shona, but we want you to hear our side of the story." They went back in history:

Traditionally, the men were all hunters and fishermen - outdoorsmen. They took pride in their hunting. A man's responsibility to hunt was an integral part of their social system. They had a set of basic conservation principles to which they adhered strictly. When the rules were broken, the offender was dealt with severely by the Chief. Wildlife were essential for the survival of the people and to their way of life. "We did not destroy the wildlife or over shoot it," the elders said. The men's role in hunting was supplemented by agricultural work done by women. But agriculture only supplemented hunting and fishing. Even in the best years agriculture was not adequate to provide enough food for the people without hunting and fishing.

"The white men came and said that the government owned all the fish and wild animals. The game we had been using for hundreds of years, we were now told belongs to some strange government we could not see. We were now poachers. We were told we couldn't use the animals, our own way of survival, our only way of feeding our families. To keep on living, we had to kill animals. So our own local rules were destroyed by the government, and we had to ignore the government rules to survive. The whole system broke down. For ninety years, we have had to survive illegally. Then in addition, we were displaced by the park. Now we lost our land as well as the use of the animals. We don't see the government policy working there in the park. Even though it is a park, there is less game than before. National Parks came and culled 2000 elephants. We never wasted animals like this."

"The conflict between us and the Parks is over the wildlife. We were displaced and we don't have the game we used to have. We have to depend on our agriculture. We must grow our crops to survive. Their animals cross over the river and eat our crops. We have no food when our crops are eaten, so we have to eat their animals or we would starve. If they would control their animals, we could grow our crops. Then there would be no poaching."

Stockil recalls that as he listened to the elders in Mahenye, he was surprised that their major complaint was over wildlife not land. He found their arguments both logical and unanswerable. Stockil did not believe the wildlife problem was as irreconcilable as the land issue. National Parks policy accepted that the animals from the park should not eat the crops of the people in the adjacent communal lands. But it was difficult if not impossible for the people or the park officials to completely protect the crops. The problem was one of responsibility and accountability. The people in Mahenye referred to the animals as "their animals" since they

belonged to the government and came from the park onto their land.

Could Wildlife be Managed Like Cattle?

Stockil wondered if perhaps wild animals might be treated as cattle under local ownership as had been the policy with wild animals on white commercial farms since 1975. He discussed the idea using the example of cattle. Many people had cattle and understood the idea of cattle ownership. Cattle could be used for purchasing a wife, to settle a debt or to purchase food. But everyone understood that cattle occasionally damaged crops. This was accepted for the benefit which cattle brought. Cattle were easy to exchange for money. The owner simply decided which cattle he wished to sell, drove them to market, quoted a price and the buyer paid for it.

Stockil discussed cattle ownership with the people and then asked them to suppose that the wildlife which came out of the park and crossed the river were theirs. "Suppose that parks said that you owned the animals which came on your side of the river." The people objected, asking "How could you own an elephant or take it to market?" Wildlife were different from cattle. But as a professional hunter, Stockil was accustomed to selling safari hunts. He suggested, "Suppose I found a buyer for your cattle and brought him to your village and he only wanted to shoot the cow and take the horns home and you kept the meat. Would you sell a cow in this way if I brought the buyer?" The people agreed that they would. Stockil then asked the elders to suppose that the buffalo and the elephants which crossed the river from the parks were like cattle which they could sell if a buyer came to their village. Suppose the people got the meat from the animals and the buyer wanted only the horns or the tusks. Stockil asked, "Could you live with wildlife if they were yours to sell like this?"

In asking this question, Stockil was drawing on his knowledge of earlier wildlife management experiments such as Operation Windfall through which the meat from elephant culling had been returned to people in the local area. He was aware that where animals were shot for Problem Animal Control, the meat was usually distributed to the local community. As a licensed professional hunter, he took clients on hunts for animals in the lowveld. He knew there was a potential market for elephants for safari hunters. The question he posed for the people of Mahenye was would they allow elephants to come into their area if some of the elephants were theirs to sell?

The old men replied that they had always lived with wildlife without killing all the animals. They had proved that they could live with wildlife. They would not mind

having some animals around if they could sell some of them as they sold their surplus cattle. But the elders said that this idea was impossible because the government would never do it.

Stockil said that it was not impossible, but it might be difficult. Stockil knew that the people wanted the Park returned to them. This might be impossible. But it might not be impossible for the community to own the animals which crossed the river from the park. Some of these animals needed to be killed by National Parks under PAC to protect the people and their crops under existing policy. But would the government issue a permit for private individuals to hunt these elephants for a fee, with the benefits to go to the community? It would be important to show that the community was committed to protecting wildlife if they were given the rights to the wildlife on their side of the river. The community discussed this matter, and the Councillor spoke for the community asking Stockil if he could go to the authorities in National Parks and see if they might be interested in this idea. The Warden from Gonarezhou returned to the discussion, and Stockil put forward the idea which had developed. The Warden said this was beyond his responsibility, but that the idea was not impossible.

NATIONAL PARKS APPROVES A ONE YEAR TRIAL

Stockil went to Harare and talked with the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Management, Dr. Graham Child. Dr. Child was aware of the political issues over land and the role of national parks in a newly independent nation. He was also aware of the continued poaching pressure on the animals in Gonarezhou and of the decrease in illegal hunting which had followed the Windfall experimental programme where benefits of animal culls were distributed to local people. Dr. Child offered a one year trial. Stockil would receive a permit from Parks for shooting two elephants in Mahenye in the 1982 hunting season. Both animals must be sold to foreign clients paid for in foreign currency. Further, the members of the community would be expected to demonstrate willingness to cooperate with National Parks if this programme were to be successful.

In April 1982, Stockil went to the United States to locate hunters interested in hunting two elephants in Mahenye as part of his job marketing other commercial hunts in the region. He located two clients but they could not come until August. Stockil returned to report to Mahenye the results of his trip to the United States, and to make sure the community understood the need for some elephants to be found by the hunters when they came in August. There was a discussion about the hunt and the quota. The people agreed to the hunt and believed a quota of two elephants was reasonable. But while some people were interested in the experiment, others were very sceptical.

An incident occurred while Stockil was in the U.S. which threatened the tenuous understanding between the people and Parks officials. The National Parks anti-poaching unit carried out a raid on Mahenye moving into the community one midnight and remaining for two weeks searching for evidence of poaching. Eighty-one arrests were made for poaching everything from elephants to fish. It was clear that poaching was a way of life for many people in the community and that Parks officials had reason to suspect people from Mahenye provided support for major ivory poaching activities in Gonarezhou. On the other hand, this raid was a reminder of previous government raids and suggested to the people of Mahenye that National Parks personnel were not to be trusted.

The First Successful Hunt: Observing Tradition

In August 1982, the two hunters came from the U.S. and successfully hunted two elephants. Over five hundred villagers came for the meat. Traditional customs were

observed in the meat distribution following a safari kill. The tail is cut off to prove ownership. The people are notified and travel to the site. Twelve young men are selected to go forward and remove the skin and the ivory and place these in the truck. The trunk is removed and presented to the chief. This is not a choice piece of meat since it is very tough. As the official hunter in the eyes of the community, Stockil gives the Chief a report on the hunt and reviews the progress of the wildlife programme. The butchering of the animal takes some time. The meat is put in small packages and distributed through the sub-chiefs. In this way, the traditional leadership of the community insures the equitable distribution of the meat, and this process involves the traditional leadership in the community wildlife programme. While this takes place, the people gossip and catch up on all the news, and discuss the wildlife programme and its benefits. This formal community distribution of the meat in Mahenye resembles the formal distribution of Campfire revenue at Chikwarakwara ward, Beitbridge District (Child and Peterson 1991) and stands in sharp contrast to the sale of meat from culling operations in other districts. This distribution of the meat through the formal leadership structure of the local people affirms that the wildlife belong to them as a community, not as individuals. It incorporates the wildlife into open and public community celebration, in direct contrast to the hidden and private poaching of meat.

A Zimbabwe national television documentary was made a few years ago of a problem animal control operation. The presence of a crippled animal caused the other elephants to behave aggressively endangering the people. Killing the problem animal was required. When the traditional butchering started, the television camera people refused to film this as being too orderly and not of sufficient interest. They requested that everyone go at the animal in a free for all, hacking it up with axes and large knives. This may have made exciting television, but it reflected how urban news people thought rural people acted, not how they actually acted. Traditional butchering is an orderly process carried out under the direction of traditional authorities with an equitable distribution of meat to everyone. This practice continues in all safari hunts in Mahenye.

Poaching Declines

The distribution of the meat was an immediate demonstration of the potential of the programme. Later in 1982, the National Parks anti-poaching unit again raided Mahenye and this time found much less evidence of poaching. The success of a practical programme of wildlife management and utilization as an alternative to poaching was

demonstrated. There was clear evidence of the immediate benefits of the new programme for both the National Parks and the Mahenye community.

MAHENYE EXPANDS ITS COMMITMENT CREATING A WILDLIFE KRAAL

The Save River forms the boundary between Mahenye ward and the National Park. But in the south, just above the confluence with the Runde, the Save River is split by Ngwachumeni Island which lies within Mahenye ward but along the border with the park. This long low island is five kilometres in length and almost two kilometres wide at the widest. The island is covered with magnificent riverine forests, with many trees and birds characteristic of Mozambique. It is a unique habitat of great natural interest. It was the home of seven villages with about one hundred people who used the loose alluvial soil for their fields of maize. These villages were closest to the park and contained many people who were evicted from the park in 1966. Some of the people in these villages continued to live off the wildlife in the park.

In the first hunt of August 1982, Stockil noted that most elephants moved from the park to Ngwachumeni Island. Elephants often moved to the island after dark and returned to the park during the day. He suggested that if the people would move off the island, more wildlife would move onto the island. The island would become the community's wildlife kraal. This would have to be a decision of the people. People of the Mahenye community were living on this island long before there was a national park. Local people point out certain massive trees where their parents and grandparents sought refuge in major floods in 1920 and in 1947. There is no question but that the island belongs to the Mahenye people. Yet life on the island had become more difficult. Annual floods were increasing as a result of silt build-up in the river bed from deforestation upstream. The Chief pointed to the most recent major flood of 1974. Since the bottom end of the island is accessible from Mozambique, the island was less protected by the Zimbabwean army post from attacks by terrorists from Mozambique. Possibly the anti-poaching raid reduced the attractiveness of living on the edge of the park to poach. But there is no doubt that the determining argument was that the island could be better used as a wildlife kraal for the benefit of the entire ward.

Later, Councillor Chauke took Stockil to the island where not one of the seven villages remained. In fact, all the huts had been pulled down and nothing left standing. This was a major decision by the people of Mahenye to expand the idea of preserving wildlife for their potential benefit. The location of the island as well as its vegetation make it ideal for attracting elephants during the dry season. In the future, it also has great potential for photographic and naturalist safaris.

Further Decline in Poaching and An Expanding Hunting Quota

Mahenye's support of the wildlife programme was further demonstrated by a continued decline in poaching. In June 1983, the Anti-Poaching Unit of the National Parks again carried out an unannounced two week raid on the Mahenye community. This time, in the entire time, they were able to make only eight arrests, all were only for illegal fishing.

In the hunting season of 1983 and the years following the annual quota was successfully sold and hunted. The reduction in the poaching in the park and the vacating of Ngwachumeni Island resulted in an increase in wildlife in the area. Following National Parks ecologists' estimate of elephant populations, the hunting quota was increased from two to four elephants in 1986. In the absence of humans, other species were moving onto the island resulting in buffalo and nyala being added to the quota. The 1990 quota was four elephant bulls, one buffalo, one water buck, one nyala, and one hippo.

TRACKING THE MONEY IS HARDER THAN TRACKING THE ELEPHANTS

The community continued to enjoy the meat from these annual hunts as an immediate reward. But under the 1975 Wild Life Act, ownership of wildlife remained with the national government acting through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management. National Parks issued a permit for Stockil to hunt, but the fees from these hunts went to the national treasury. This money was available to the people of Mahenye only through a proposal for the use of the money. Under existing legislation, the proposal had to undergo a lengthy approval process including the Gazaland District Council, the Ministry of Local Government, and the Department of National Parks. Then the project would be funded through money sent to the District Council to expend in behalf of the project.

Gazaland District Council had 22 wards (later 30 wards) represented by elected councillors. In addition, Gazaland District Council has the seven traditional chiefs as members of the council. The Mahenye Councillor suggested projects to the Council which would only benefit the Mahenye ward. The Council did not act on these proposals and without Council approval, the proposals went no further. From Council records, it is not clear that the ideas from Mahenye were ever put into a written proposal until 1986. Instead, the District Council sent forward proposals which involved projects not directly benefiting Mahenye (Stockil 1987:10). But National Parks policy required that the bulk of the revenue from wildlife be returned primarily to projects in the producing wards in order to encourage protection of wildlife. Thus while the District Council and the Ministry of Local Government approved the proposals, National Parks did not approve.

Proceeds to the Producer Community or to the Entire District?

The situation was frustrating to the people of Mahenye and to Stockil who had persuaded the community to consider harvesting the animals and felt obligated to see that the community received the benefits from the safari hunting. With no wildlife in their wards, the other councillors did not understand why the return of wildlife revenue to the producing ward was important to maintain a sustainable wildlife programme in Mahenye. Some councillors did not understand that this was not government funds since they came from the national treasury, but funds produced by selling wildlife. Many of the councillors did not understand that under the law, Parks could not approve projects which diverted major portions of the revenue produced from wildlife to areas which did not support a wildlife population. National Parks was asked if it

would be possible for a proposal to be submitted directly to them by Mahenye ward, since Parks issued the hunting permit. But Parks said this was not possible under existing law. But National Parks also made clear to the Gazaland District Council in 1986 that \$30,461 was in the treasury awaiting proposals and that the "major portion should be utilized in Chief Mahenye's area."

This deadlock had to be resolved in the Gazaland District Council. The major interest of many councillors from outside Mahenye continued to be how much money was involved and how much would there be available if the money was divided into projects for all wards? Representatives from Mahenye tried to explain the issue in terms of cattle since this was the basis on which the wildlife programme first became understandable in Mahenye. They proposed that all funds from the cattle sold throughout the district should be put in a pot and divided with each ward receiving an equal share. They pointed out that wildlife were Mahenye's cattle. Other wards with lots of cattle had no wildlife. They had no wildlife because they choose to have cattle. They kept all the proceeds of their cattle sales to themselves. All livestock is equal and should be treated the same. If Mahenye's livestock in wildlife was common property belonging equally to all the people in the district, then the livestock in the form of domestic cattle in other wards should also be common property belonging to everyone throughout the district.

**GAZALAND DISTRICT COUNCIL AGREES:
PROCEEDS TO THE PRODUCER WARD**

Chief Musikavanhu from the upper end of the District had not said a word in the entire discussion. But at this point, he spoke up and said, "My children, what we have heard is the truth. We have no claim on this money. We did not sleep in the fields to protect the crops from elephants, as the people from Mahenye did. The elephants are theirs, not ours." Interestingly, a similar statement was made by a respected chief in the Beitbridge District Council discussion of revenue distribution (Child and Peterson 1991). Chief Musikavanhu's statement following the discussion of wildlife being like cattle was convincing to the majority of the Council. In 1987, the Gazaland District Council gave full support to Mahenye's wildlife efforts and did not question the funding of projects from the wildlife proceeds for Mahenye.

District Council approval for allowing the funds from wildlife to be expended for Mahenye projects came three and a half years after the initial meeting in 1982. A written proposal from Councillor Chauke for the Mahenye community in January 1986 requested 1. completion of their school, 2. building a cattle dip, and 3. providing a grinding mill. The council approved these priorities and the proposal went forward through channels to the Ministry of Local Government and then to National Parks. Finally in February, 1987, National Parks called the Gazaland District Council to set up a meeting to present the cheque to the community for the approved projects. This was five years after the first meeting in February 1982 when the Mahenye community agreed to request Parks let them sell their wildlife like cattle.

Chipinge District Council was the first in Zimbabwe to commit the Council to the principle that proceeds from wildlife should go to the producing wards. This important principle remains a source of conflict in many district councils where Campfire programmes are being implemented. Where this principle is being violated, commitment and support for Campfire in the critical producer wards is often lacking.

**MAHENYE RECEIVES A CHEQUE:
ATTITUDES CHANGE TOWARD WILDLIFE**

The patience of the people of Mahenye cannot be overstated as a major factor in the success of their wildlife programme. For five years, the income from the Mahenye hunts had been deposited in the national treasury. The people of Mahenye only benefitted through the distribution of the meat from the animals killed. The need for the proceeds from the wildlife to be used for a school was so obvious that the delay was difficult to understand. Since the people were not receiving any direct benefits for expensive hunting safaris, it seemed that someone else was getting the money.

In February 1987, government officials and representatives of National Parks came to Mahenye for a community meeting at which the Chipinge District Administrator presented the first cheque from wildlife revenue. Stockil was asked by the community to chair the meeting in recognition of his role in facilitating the wildlife project. Over three hundred people attended and listened to speeches about the importance of this example of wildlife utilization and local initiative. The cheque for \$33,461 was accepted by Councillor Chauke for the community. But as usually occurs in Mahenye community meetings, a respected elder who was not an office holder was asked to make a summary response. He said, "I'm speaking in behalf of the people. We want to publicly make an apology. We were almost convinced that this thing was a trick by Mr. Stockil and the ward Councillor. We enjoyed the meat we got from the elephant hunts. But we were sure we got the meat and you got the money. Now we have gotten the money and know our suspicions were wrong. We publicly apologize."

Councillor Finious Chauke, who was councillor through 1989, recalls the community feeling leading up to the presentation of the cheque. "There was a problem with suspicion. Many people were beginning to believe that there was a plan to fool us and to extend the park boundary to take even more of our land. Some people were afraid that this wildlife programme would just lead to our removal from here. I tried to assure them that the delay was just the way government was and that we would actually receive the money. But when the cheque finally came, the people's patience was very thin. The people were also a little alarmed when the cheque was presented and then it went back to Chipinge. But then three months later, when the materials finally began to arrive for the construction of the school, the people were very happy. The people looked at Stockil as their security in this project, and after the materials began coming, they were no longer suspicious of him." In terms of the change from 1982 to 1990, Councillor Chauke observed that "Wildlife

changed from something in which we put no value. Wildlife was something which we had to use, something which was part of our way of life. It was important to our survival as a community. But wildlife had no actual value. Now wildlife has value since wildlife can be exchanged for other things."

Gazaland District Senior Executive Officer Mlambo also commented on the shift in community attitudes. He said that in 1981, the people of Mahenye did not want to hear anything about a wildlife programme. They believed that National Parks deprived them of their right to hunt. Communication was very bad between the people and Parks officials. The community feared that if they established a game park, National Parks would just come in and take the land. They remembered that National Parks had come and moved their villages and their homes and deprived them of their right to fish and hunt. They hid whenever a park employee came. They did not want to see National Parks uniforms or talk to the "game people." There was a strong sense of unity in the community because the community was against the National Parks. Cde. Mlambo gives Stockil credit for the acceptance of the wildlife programme by the people of Mahenye. But he also emphasizes that there was not just a change in attitude on the part of the people of Mahenye, there was also a change in the attitude of National Parks officials. Previously, National Parks only applied the law as it was written. There was no attempt to understand the community and to work with them. Cde. Mlambo says the attitude of the community towards wildlife had really changed beginning with the presentation of the first cheque.

DEVELOPMENT IS MORE THAN A WILDLIFE PROGRAMME

The Mahenye's Continuing Efforts to Build a School

The transition from wildlife being a problem to wildlife revenue forming the basis for sustainable community development involves more than a wildlife programme. It involves all other aspects of a community's aspirations and efforts at self-development. Wildlife were important to Mahenye traditionally as food and income through poaching. The wildlife programme initially meant a source of meat openly and equitably distributed throughout the community. But major impetus was given to the wildlife programme in Mahenye by the programme's early linkage with another priority of the Mahenye people, the need for a school. The wildlife project and the school project became like two separate donkeys hitched to the same scotch cart carrying the Mahenye people into a future based on self-development.

The wildlife programme in Mahenye developed gradually and at first almost by accident. During this same period, the Mahenye people were making more deliberate efforts to develop a school. There had never been a school in Mahenye, and the people who had moved from the park had been without a school since their removal in 1966. The development of schools and clinics for the rural population was one of the major goals declared by the new government of Zimbabwe in 1980.

A key person in the development of the Mahenye school was the first teacher sent to the community in 1981. Cde. L. Masango was one of the few people from Mahenye to have received a higher education, made possible by Assembly of God missionaries from Canada who sent him on to one of their secondary schools. As the first grade teacher, Cde. Masango started a school under a tree with some 22 pupils. There was no building for classes or housing for teachers. The government provides the salaries for teachers and teaching materials. But it is up to the local community to provide the buildings for the school and the housing for the teachers. In Mahenye, there was very little with which to work in building a school. The people of Mahenye are very poor. There was and is almost no money in the community. There was no way the people could contribute money for a building fund as in some communities.

As soon as Cde. Masango arrived, he began talking with the people about building a school. As things are done in Mahenye, he first talked with the Chief. Then after the Chief talked with other leaders, a community meeting was called. Here the idea of building a school was agreed upon by the community. The people would begin by making and burning

bricks for the school. The total number of bricks was estimated. There are three vidcos in the ward, and each vidco was assigned 12,000 bricks. These were further assigned to the sub-chiefs who in turn assigned numbers of bricks to kraal heads to be burned in each locality. Then the bricks were carried by hand to the school site. In 1982, a second grade teacher was sent to the community, and the bricks were almost finished for the first block of three classrooms. Then, a mission donor provided the window frames, and government provided the timber and doors and roof. This enabled the completion of the first block of three class rooms in 1982. The community continued to make bricks and completed the walls for the next block of classrooms. The government continued to provide additional teachers as the students completed the lower grades and as the numbers of students increased.

While the school project and the wildlife project were going on at the same time, they were not directly related. But Cde. Masango points out that when Stockil visited the community on wildlife business, he often lent a hand with the school project. Since there was no truck in the community, Stockil used his to haul sand from the river to the school construction site. When the first safari hunt was successful, the people were so happy with the meat that there was no thought of a use for the revenue. But as the hunting continued, the people began thinking that if they received money for their wildlife, this could pay for the materials needed to complete their school. By 1984, it was obvious that the completion of the school was the community's first priority and that this is where the revenue from the wildlife should go. Thus years before money from wildlife was used to complete rural schools in other districts, this decision had been made by the Mahenye people. But development was delayed until the District Council recognized the need for expending the money coming from wildlife in Mahenye on projects in the ward.

Cde. Masango observed that the hardest time in the school project was the delay between the completion of making the bricks and the arrival of materials a few months after the community was presented with the first check from wildlife for the school project. Then carpenters employed by Council arrived to supervise construction which was completed by 1988.

The success of the Mahenye community in developing their school received further support through a proposal to the US Ambassador's fund for community self-help. In 1990, \$8400 was received for the first furniture in the school, some 80 desks and benches. Stockil helped develop this possibility and wrote up the proposal, thus demonstrating continued linkages between wildlife and educational development.

Cde. Masango said that the school project was a result of cooperation by the whole community. Everyone discussed the project and was involved. The Chief, the Councillor, the sub-chiefs and Vidco chairman, all the elders, the women, everyone discussed the matter and helped. All the options and alternatives were discussed openly. Continuing community discussion all along was important.

Remaining Educational Needs

At the Mahenye School, there are still only eight classrooms. In 1991, there are eleven teachers and over 500 pupils. Three large classes still meet under the trees. Additionally, there are only two houses for eleven teachers. At one point, plans called for the use of wildlife revenue received in 1990 include construction of a new Chipote school in the northern part of the ward to serve the population north of the newly designated wildlife area. A classroom block and a staff house here would be more accessible to children in the northern part of the ward, and relieve crowding at the existing Mahenye school.

Given the key role played by Mr. Masango, it is obvious that in isolated communities the return of educated local people can stimulate development and provide an example to the school children of the value of education. It would seem worthwhile for priority to be given to transfer back to isolated schools trained teachers who grew up in these communities and who speak the local language. But reportedly it is difficult to accomplish such transfers.

There is an awareness of the need for conservation education. There are conservation traditions of long standing known to the community elders and to which the people relate. Everyone is aware that the school was made possible by the wildlife. But the present wildlife programme and past traditions need to be related in the curriculum. Since all but one teacher come from outside the community, there is a need to identify elders who understand the community traditions and bring them and their knowledge into the classroom.

It is impossible for most children from Mahenye to go to a secondary school when they complete the seven grades taught in the community. The nearest secondary school is almost 40 kilometres away, and it is no longer recognized as a boarding school because most students live within walking distance. Students from Mahenye have to locate housing near the school and walk home 40 kilometres each way each weekend. Few families in Mahenye have money for school fees and for boarding a child with a family near the school. It has been

suggested that funds from wildlife could help pay the costs of some top students attending secondary school. Students might even be selected on the basis of interest in wildlife and conservation. Alternatively, funds from wildlife might build a facility where students from Mahenye could stay while attending secondary school.

MORE LAND FOR WILDLIFE: COORDINATING WARD AND DISTRICT PLANS

Planning at ward and district level was not always well coordinated. In 1982 when Mahenye was beginning to experiment with a wildlife programme, the District Council was studying the development of a large unoccupied block of land in Mahenye ward for a cattle grazing scheme. By 1984, the Gazaland District Agritex staff developed plans to turn an area of 200 square kilometres (10,000 hectares) in the middle of Mahenye ward into a grazing scheme. This land is uninhabited because it generally lacks access to water and is rolling forested hills. Reportedly wire for this scheme was purchased in 1986, and funding to implement the scheme was received in 1987. Planning a grazing scheme in an area where a wildlife programme was being successfully implemented reflects a lack of coordination between ward and district levels, and a lack of technical assistance related to wildlife available to either ward or district.

Agritex Has Limited Training in Land Use Planning for Wildlife

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement is the Ministry charged with land use planning in communal areas of Zimbabwe. Agritex planners generally emphasize farming since they have little training in other forms of development. Areas not suitable for agriculture tend to be designated for cattle. The feasibility and requirements for wildlife utilization as a form of development is outside the training of most Agritex personnel. Only a few training schools for agriculture and technical extension workers have successful wildlife demonstration projects (Mlezu Institute of Agriculture 1990).

Mahenye Plans to Commit More Land to Wildlife

The people of Mahenye questioned the idea of turning the area into a cattle project and requested that instead, the area be allocated as a wildlife area. As evidence accumulated of the proceeds from wildlife, the District Council began to have second thoughts about the grazing scheme, and agreed to reserve this area for wildlife. However, responsibility for land use planning of this area for wildlife still remains with Agritex and as of 1991, these plans have not received input from specialists in wildlife management.

The interest of the people of Mahenye in devoting more land to wildlife, and the support of this proposal by District Council, is notable. In 1966, these people were displaced

from the National Park in favour of wildlife. Only 20 years later, they requested that a large section of their land be allocated for wildlife. At a time when wildlife areas and National Parks throughout Africa are coming under pressure from human populations, this decision by a local community to first create and then expand a wildlife area for their own use is a significant measure of the potential of the Campfire programme approach.

Ironically, following the designation of this area for wildlife by the Gazaland District Council, and the loss of Mahenye cattle to Mozambique terrorists, a wealthy individual from the communal lands across the Save River in Gaza/Komanani District (Chiredzi) began grazing a herd of some 500 cattle in these lands of Mahenye ward. Because of the past relationships between the people formerly occupying Gonarezhou a claim could be made that these grazing rights were sanctioned by tradition. Use of common lands for grazing by wealthy individuals living elsewhere takes place at the expense of the local people and environment. This is a problem in other districts such as Bulalimangwe. Local level management of resources is impossible if non-community members have unrestricted use of grazing lands.

A Lack of Understanding of Bureaucratic Methods at the Ward Level

In discussing the requirement for District Council to make plans and give authorizations for activities in Mahenye, Chief Mahenye asserted the right of the people of Mahenye to make plans for their own land and his responsibility to speak for them. He said that he was the one with the authority to "put poles in the ground." Chief Mahenye helped persuade the people living on Ngwachumeni Island to move to another part of the ward. In this instance, they literally took up the poles where they were living and put them elsewhere. Thus literally, putting poles in the ground is the action resulting from decisions about land use. In another context Chief Mahenye also said, "Why do we need a letter. We make our own plans. We are the people of Mahenye."

Unfortunately, there is a negative side to this view about the community making their own plans. This lies in what seem to be weak links between the community and the District Council. District Council staff do not seem to always be well informed of community plans, nor is the community always well informed on Council plans. The plans for the grazing scheme show that there was a considerable lag time between Council and community thinking on significant development issues. Community plans do not often seem to be presented in writing to the District. The informal oral style of communication

which is sufficient for communication within a small homogeneous community is not sufficient for linking this community with the District Council and administration.

The Lack of Technical Input on Wildlife Alternatives

The lack of clearly formulated and written plans at the community level, and the lack of understanding of wildlife potential by Agritex at the district level is not solely a failure of either the community or Agritex, but the absence of input to the Mahenye community or the Chipinge District by experts in wildlife resource assessment and utilization. Such technical input was important in the development of community-based technically-sound wildlife planning in Kanyurira ward, Guruve District, and other districts in the Zambezi Valley. Districts in the southeastern lowveld have not had such input from National Parks or non-governmental organizations such as the World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF). In 1991, WWF responded to a long standing request to provide technical assistance through a resource inventory of Mahenye ward. This should contribute to written plans for discussion by the ward and the District.

Community Losses to Mozambique Terrorists

A major factor contributing to the continuing isolation of the people of Mahenye and the lack of technical assistance has been the continuing security problem. Mahenye has experienced raids from the terrorists in Mozambique for years. Toward the end of 1987, just as the money came from the wildlife and the future looked bright in Mahenye, terrorist raids intensified. Almost all the community's cattle were driven back into Mozambique. In early 1991, the people still did not feel secure although the last terrorist-attributed murders occurred in July and September 1990. Often as a result of attacks, parents were afraid to send their children to school. As a result of these raids, the people are without livestock or resources to permit them to send their children to secondary school outside the community. The losses sustained by the people of Mahenye through terrorist raids underscores the need for wildlife funds to assist students in going to secondary schools, or to make some direct payments to households so parents can assist their children in going to secondary school. The Zimbabwean army still maintains security posts at the border south of the Mahenye school and community. But it will take a long time for the people of Mahenye to recover from the loss of life and resources which the terrorists have taken from them. The revenue from wildlife is the only off-setting benefit received by the Mahenye people in recent years.

Other Needs of the Mahenye Community

The school is the first and major community project. Its completion remains the community's first priority. But other projects have been identified by the community. Second only to the school in the Mahenye proposal of 1986 was a request for a grinding mill for maize. This project was funded from the initial grant of money in 1987, and the mill established in 1989. Unfortunately, the mill is apparently too small, often breaking down when used for extended periods as is necessary when shipments of drought relief arrive. Funds are needed to upgrade the size of this mill to meet the demands placed upon it. Unfortunately, it seems that unlike the Beitbridge District Council (Child and Peterson 1991), the Chipinge District Council did not turn over to the Mahenye community the operation of this community project, purchased with revenue produced by wildlife in the community. Apparently, there are questions about what happened to the revenue from the mill, and the project remained at a standstill in 1991. The failure of the District Council to permit the community to operate the mill was a missed opportunity to help the community learn the principles of formal committee operation.

Two other important developments identified in early community discussions were improvement of the road to a level permitting bus service and establishment of a clinic. Road improvements began in 1982 and have continued with gravelling of the road and installation of culverts. This is a continuing process. Although buses now reach the Mahenye community on a biweekly basis, heavy rains still stop bus service in the rainy season. A small clinic has been established in Mahenye meeting for the first time a community need for local medical service.

The people of Mahenye have apparently not put any new proposals forward since 1986 since their school development is not complete and the grinding mill is not operating successfully. Councillor Chauke observed in 1990: "So far, all the funds from wildlife have gone to community projects. But we have been discussing personal compensation and crop damage. These are things we need to consider in the future." Unfortunately at this same time, the District Council was already considering allocating funds from wildlife taken in Mahenye to another ward.

Plans for Expanded Sustainable Development

There has been discussion in Mahenye about longer range plans both for developing the wildlife potential and for

sustainable community development. A continuing problem is the low and unpredictable rainfall. Agriculture is incapable of providing sufficient food for the people except in unusually good years. The people of Mahenye are aware of other irrigation schemes in the low veld and have given thought to such a plan for their ward. Such a scheme would take in water upstream from the newly proposed wildlife area and transport it across this area to a fenced irrigated agriculture area further south. In this way, the ward could produce sufficient maize for the people, and even have maize for compensation for those whose crops were damaged by wild animals. As part of this plan, the new wildlife area would be developed to expand the wildlife potential of the ward and hence the hunting quota. The people have also thought about developing tourism beyond hunting safaris. Some of these proposals would also involve Mutandahwe ward to the north.

DEVELOPMENT OF INTEREST IN MULTI-WARD WILDLIFE PROJECTS

Immediately north of Mahenye ward is Mutandahwe ward which has a short common border with the northeast corner of Gonarezhou National Park. Much of this border area is occupied by Mathlanga Island in the Save River, which like Ngwachumeni Island in Mahenye ward, offers special possibilities for wildlife development. Initially, in a community meeting in Mutandahwe ward, the people voted against a wildlife programme. But in 1989, a quota elephant was shot upstream of Mahenye in Mutandahwe ward, and the people in Mahenye agreed that the money from this elephant should go to the upstream ward. As a result, the people in Mutandahwe became interested in wildlife, invited Councillor Chauke of Mahenye to meet with them and voted to form a wildlife committee. Councillor Chauke observed that it was important to encourage participation in Mutandahwe to prevent jealousy because wildlife revenue came only to Mahenye. These joint plans were delayed because in the recent elections, both Councillor Chauke and the Councillor from Mutandahwe were defeated. Further the chief died who had jurisdiction over Mutandahwe. Thus plans will have to begin again in 1991 with the new officials.

Interest in the wildlife project in Mahenye ward has been noted by the people across the Save River from Mutandahwe ward in Sangwe Communal Land of the Gaza/Komanani District (Chiredzi). This communal land is on the north side of Gonarezhou National Park, and some of the people in this area originally lived in the park as did people from Mahenye to whom they are closely related. Councillor Chauke of this ward, who is also Vice-Chairman of the Chiredzi District Council, closely followed developments in Mahenye. Even though his ward is in a different district and province than Mahenye and Mutandahwe, these three wards form a continuous band of communal lands on the north and east end of Gonarezhou National Park. The possibilities of cooperative wildlife efforts seem natural since they share the same resource base in Gonarezhou National Park.

Mathlanga Island in Mutandahwe ward lies not only on the border with Gonarezhou National Park, but also on the border with the Sangwe Communal Lands. This island could be used to set up a combined ostrich/crocodile operation under the joint operation of the district councils and the two wards. Ideas such as this are well beyond the scope of the informal community wide arrangements upon which the Mahenye ward wildlife project operates.

THE ROLE OF THE GAZALAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

The unit of local government in Zimbabwe is the District. The District Council is the lowest level of government with governmental powers as opposed to advisory powers. As shown by Mahenye's efforts to use money produced from wildlife in the ward on projects in the ward, a ward-based project ultimately needs the support of the District Council. But the Gazaland District Council's involvement in wildlife is not limited to the 1987 decision.

Gazaland District and Wider Programme Development

The Mahenye wildlife programme did not develop in isolation, but was part of an evolving programme for decentralized wildlife management in communal lands being developed by the Department of National Parks (Environmental Consultants 1990:10-12). The success of Mahenye and similar programmes contributed to the development of the Campfire programme. By 1988, Zimbabwe Trust, a non-governmental organization active in community development, established a Wildlife Community Development Programme and began holding workshops to familiarize District Councils with this development.

The Gazaland Senior Executive Officer and the Mahenye Councillor attended early meetings on the Campfire programme both to report on the Mahenye programme and to learn of new developments. The most important of these was a workshop on Campfire in 1989 in the lowveld also attended by representatives from Beitbridge and Chiredzi districts. Both Beitbridge and Chiredzi Districts began developing plans for wildlife programmes, while Gazaland district began making plans to expand the scope of the Mahenye ward wildlife programme by requesting "appropriate authority" for the District to administer its own wildlife programme.

Central to the Campfire concept (Environmental Consultants 1990:7-9) is the delegation of "appropriate authority" for managing wildlife to the District Council of an area considering wildlife management programmes. Where such authority is assumed by the District Council, the Council is responsible for directly managing the wildlife and the resulting revenues. The lengthy delay process in receiving revenue is bypassed since revenues pass directly from a commercial operator or a joint venture into Council accounts. A ward-based wildlife programme could not have such authority, since only a District Council is authorized to receive funds for local governmental activities. "Appropriate authority" was needed not just to simplify receipt of funds, but the

expanded ideas for multi-ward development and expansion beyond simple safari hunting require a more elaborate organization. Up to this time, all activities in the District had been carried out under hunting permits issued directly to the commercial firm through which Clive Stockil worked. Gazaland District needed the authority to establish a more effective organizational framework for a wildlife programme involving more than hunting quotas and revenues.

In October 1989, the Gazaland District Council began plans for entering the Campfire programme. The Senior Executive Officer and Councillor Chauke reported on the Beitbridge meeting. As a result, the Council (Resolution 760-89) approved a request for appropriate authority, plans for wildlife planning to begin in both Mahenye and Mutandahwe wards, established a wildlife steering committee at District level, and accepted in principle a proposal for a joint venture including the commercial sector and Gaza/Komanani District.

The request for appropriate authority was submitted by the Gazaland District Council in November 1989. Unfortunately, since this was a new programme involving more than one ministry, the actual gazetting of appropriate authority was delayed until April 1991. Other factors also resulted in delays in planning at both ward and district level. First, delay occurred while the plans were discussed in late 1989 and early 1990 for the joint venture between the commercial sector and Gazaland Gaza/Komanani Districts. The October 1989 Campfire meeting stimulated consideration of joint wildlife projects between the two districts. Three meetings were held to discuss a proposed joint venture (Environmental Consultants 1990:20). Ultimately, Gaza/Komanani District decided to develop independent programmes. These meetings were important for both districts in investigating the various alternatives for district level wildlife programmes. But the failure of the joint endeavour left Gazaland without a valid proposal under consideration.

A second complication was the widespread transition in leadership in Gazaland District in 1990 and 1991. New ward councillors elected in the two producing wards, and a new chief was being selected for one ward. The failure of Mahenye to return Cde. Chauke to the District Council had further consequences. As Vice-Chairman of the District Council, he had represented the Council at all Campfire meetings. Thus Mahenye lost an experienced representative to Council and Council lost the only Councillor with any knowledge of Campfire. This was to prove especially critical since in this same election, a number of other new councillors were elected to the District Council, and a new Chairman was elected in the Council. There were also major changes in

administrative personnel. A new Acting District Administrator was appointed, and served less than a year before being replaced. The former Projects Officer with responsibility for the wildlife projects was given a new assignment, and the Senior Executive Officer who had worked closely with the programme was sent on leave for professional development. As a result of these changes, the entire process of educating the District Council on the principles of Campfire which took from 1982 to 1986 was slowed down.

Problem Animal Control from the Perspective of District Council

The Gazaland District was involved in Problem Animal Control well before the Mahenye ward wildlife project was started. Elephants leave the Gonarezhou National Park and cross the Save River into both Mahenye ward and Mutandahwe ward. Sometimes elephants migrate across Mahenye ward into Mozambique and across Mutandahwe ward and the adjacent ward before crossing into Mozambique. SEO Mlambo points out that the concept of using the meat and the money from Problem Animal Control activities in the ward where animals were killed was an old one. Prior to independence, District Administrators had the responsibility for supervising such wildlife control. But the District is dependant on the National Parks for carrying out PAC. District Council records show a continuing correspondence on PAC problems. In 1982, the year that permission was first given for hunting two elephants in Mahenye ward, a total of nine elephants were killed through PAC in Gazaland District. The same lengthy channels which prevented timely response to ward requests for PAC also resulted in fragmented and incomplete reporting of PAC results at the District level. While the records reflect continuing requests for protection from elephants, crocodiles, lions and hyenas, there is rarely a clear record of what animals were killed and where they were killed. This situation is not unusual in Districts without a wildlife management programme. There is record of hides from elephants, buffalo and hippo being turned over to the District Council for sale. But it is difficult to determine how many animals these represent or the total income from these sales. It is clear from correspondence with the purchasers that better processing of skins and storage would result in a higher income.

Apparently between 1982 and 1990 a minimum of nine elephants were shot on PAC in the southern three wards of Gazaland District during the same time that twenty some elephants were shot on hunting quotas. While the total revenue from these PAC efforts is not known, the revenue was minimally \$28,000 which is one-third the revenue from safari

operations. Put another way, if the PAC kills from 1982 to 1990 could have been attributed to a hunting quota, the total wildlife income would have been greatly increased.

SEO Mlambo indicated that training of local people to be game guards was very important and needed. Not only would they protect the game from poaching, but better accounts of PAC operations would result, and better processing of hides and ivory could be expected. Cde. Mlambo is aware that other districts have found that the ivory taken from their districts through PAC was not always accurately logged to their credit by National Parks. A careful recording of PAC results by wards is need for better management of the animal population and revenue.

District Benefits from Safari Hunts

Benefits to the District have not been limited to Mahenye, although the major benefits in 1987 went to Mahenye as described. The 1987 allocation of \$33,000 included a request from Mahenye for a dip tank. But Veterinarian Services advised that this investment was not worthwhile for a cattle population which had survived without such protection. Accordingly, the funds for the Mahenye dip tank were used in 1987 and 1988 to increase the work on the Mahenye school and to build two classrooms at Chishuma School, Mutandahwe ward. In considering projects for the second cheque of \$28,000 from safari hunting in Mahenye, the following projects were reported in April 1991 as underway in 1990 - 1991:

Mahenye ward:

- Mahenye school,
an additional staff house \$ 3,140
- Completion of the staff house, Mahenye
school and construction of a new Chipote
school to serve the population north of
the designated designated wildlife area... \$ 11,440

Mutandahwe ward:

- Chisuma school, completion of
staff houses and classroom block \$ 9,000
- Chisuma Clinic \$ 5,420

This budget was the work of the newly elected District Council and shows a reversion to the pre-1986 Council policy of shifting money to projects outside of Mahenye. By July 1991, the Gazaland District Council had prepared a revised budget for use of wildlife revenue which allocated all the second cheque of \$28,000 in funds earned by wildlife in Mahenye to Mutandahwe ward.

There are important reasons for the expansion of the wildlife programme from Mahenye ward to Mutandahwe. Long range development will be more successful if based on both wards. But development of support for a wildlife utilization programme in Mahenye demonstrated the importance of community participation in decision-making and even active community involvement in school construction. There is less evidence of such efforts in Mutandahwe. Will the people of Mutandahwe associate the construction projects in their ward with wildlife to the extent that this occurred in Mahenye?

The people in Mahenye know that a quota elephant was shot in Mutandahwe in 1989 and agreed that the proceeds from this elephant should go to Mutandahwe. As Beitbridge Council (Child and Peterson 1991) demonstrated, some reallocation of funds within producer wards may be a useful strategy to increase the number of wards able to have a community project. But this reallocation by Beitbridge District Council only involved PAC revenues. In this case significant revenue is going outside the ward which produced the revenue. It is ironic that funds generated in Mahenye went to a school in another ward, when the people of Mahenye did not have money to send their students to board at a secondary school in the ward receiving the funds.

While no long range plans were developed, there were signs that the Gazaland District Council was becoming more closely involved in planning for the 1991 safari season. The Council approved the formation of preliminary plans for the 1991 safari season to include: a joint venture agreement for wildlife operations, lease agreement for the development of a campsite and access road in Mahenye, application for a crossing place to Gonarezhou National Park for non-safari tourism, and development of an intensive food production plan to compensate people for crop damage. Additionally, the Council has already begun to think of the Chipinge Safari Area in the more northern part of the District as a possible future development.

While these plans show a positive interest of the District Council in expanding the wildlife utilization programme in the district, the taking of all funds from the primary producer ward and assigning them to projects in another ward clearly violated the basic principles of Campfire. Unlike many districts which initiated Campfire projects and received appropriate authority in 1991, Gazaland has a long standing successful programme operating at ward level with the full cooperation and active support of the people. While this project area is small in terms of the total district, the District Council supported the ward level wildlife programme by returning revenues to the producing wards in 1987. Many district-wide programmes have yet to

achieve the village level support and impact that has been achieved in Mahenye. What remains is for Gazaland to develop a long term plan building on this ward programme which will provide for wider sustainable development yet maintaining local level support and decision-making in resource management and benefits.

KEY FEATURES OF THE MAHENYE WILDLIFE PROGRAMME

Certain key feature of the Mahenye wildlife programme can be summarized as follows.

Importance of Small Homogeneous Producer Communities

Mahenye suggests that wildlife projects can be implemented most easily on the basis of small homogeneous wards. Mahenye is notable in the degree to which it has operated on the basis of consensus. Mahenye's sense of being an orphan community abandoned by government and oppressed by the National Parks contributed to community unity. In Mahenye the post-independence governmental structures of councillor and vidco chairmen did not develop as alternative leadership positions but were simply incorporated into the more traditional structures. The vidco chairmen and the councillor were fully cooperative with the chief and sub-chiefs, and both elements were actively involved in the wildlife and school projects. Decisions are reached by sequential reference to the leadership and then to general community meetings. Since the chief and councillor widely consult the elders and the general community, consensus seems to prevail in all issues. While committees may be formed, such as a wildlife committee, these committees reportedly do not act on issues unless there is community consensus. This creates a potential for the community to work together in any area of common interest. The unity of the community was clearly a factor in the transition from a community in which poaching was important to subsistence to a community with a high level of support for wildlife management. Similarly, it was community unity which closely tied progress in the wildlife programme to development of the school. Perhaps only such a unified community could have continued to support a wildlife programme when benefits were continually delayed.

Dominance of Oral Community-Wide Decision-Making

A community accustomed to working through such an oral community-wide method of decision-making, however, has difficulty in communicating community plans to established bureaucracies in a modern government. Community plans and needs must be communicated to the District Council. Verbal reporting by an elected Councillor, even when supported by the Chief, is no substitute for a formally structured committee with minute books documenting discussions and with written reports to the District on committee decisions. Likewise, there is no substitute for written ward plans which can be circulated and made a part of District-wide planning. The

consensus model which was unusually successful in implementing a ward based wildlife programme is less successful when the programme expands to other wards, and where rational plans are required at District Council level for both programme development and distribution of benefits. Unfortunately, because of the past educational neglect and the absence of any technical assistance, Mahenye has a major disadvantage in communicating written plans to the District Council. Stockil has provided this function for the past eight years. But under bureaucratic procedures, it is difficult for him to be both a technical advisor to the community and a contractor doing business with the community. Without his assistance or similar assistance from another source, the effort put by Mahenye into their wildlife programme may be of little benefit to the community.

Mahenye's problems demonstrate a continuing critical need for assistance to local wards in establishing local institutions to manage their natural resources in a style compatible with modern bureaucracies. Similarly, the continuing shifts at the District Council level suggest that technical assistance to council and council administrative officers is also needed. Where major NGOs are not involved in technical assistance, the problems faced by Mahenye demonstrate a chronic lack of technical support for Campfire initiatives at the community and the District level. Mahenye and the Chipinge District Council both need assistance in natural resource management and in local institutional building.

Importance of the Role of The Safari Operator/Hunter

Stockil's close relationship with the Mahenye community is generally acknowledged by all to have been critical in the development of a wildlife utilization programme. But it is easy to overlook the fundamental principles involved in this relationship. First Stockil was as much a good neighbour as a business partner. Many people had stories of how he had assisted in the school project and had personally assisted people in the community. At one point before any benefits had been received by the community and elephants seriously damaged local crops, Stockil personally put up money for crop damage. The relationship between Stockil's family and the Mahenye people go back three generations. He is one of the few outsiders who speaks the local community language. Indeed, the programme began when he was called upon as an interpreter.

This relationship between a local safari operator and a local community is not unique. A similar relationship was important in the early development of the Campfire programme

at Beitbridge (Child and Peterson 1991), in the development of the Guruve District's safari operation, and in the initial Campfire developments in Bulalimangwe. Important in all these cases is an ability to speak the local language, local residence and perception of a long term mutual interest.

Importance of the Distribution of Benefits in the Producing Unit

Mahenye demonstrates the importance of some immediate distribution of benefits from wildlife programmes. For the first five years of the programme, the only benefits distributed was in the form of meat. But in a relatively small community, the meat distribution reached every household in a publicly supervised and equitable distribution. Further, these meat distributions formed an occasion for total community gathering at which the status of the wildlife programme was reported to the people. As a public ceremony and a community ritual, the distribution of meat in Mahenye and the distribution of cash benefits in Chikwarakwara ward, Beitbridge District (Child and Peterson 1991) have clear similarities also shared with the household distribution of money in Kanyurira ward, Guruve District (Environmental Consultants 1990:18). The public distribution of benefits of wildlife programmes in which some benefits reach the household level seem critical for building continuing support for wildlife programmes in the producer wards. It is not just the benefits reaching the household level which is important. It is also the public gathering of the social unit representing the wildlife producer unit, with formal reporting of the programme progress and distribution of benefits. Mahenye became very suspicious after five years of distribution of only meat. Only when actual materials for projects began reaching their community were their suspicions met. As Campfire projects evolve into more complex programmes with increasingly complicated benefits, the retention of the confidence and loyalty of the producer communities remains a major challenge.

The Roles of the Ward and the District

The Mahenye wildlife programme demonstrates the important complementary functions of the producer community and the District Council. Mahenye demonstrated that a successful wildlife programme can be developed and maintained at ward level over an eight year period without significant input from District Council except for overseeing the expenditure of funds. In Mahenye, a simple hunting operation could be coordinated at the ward level through traditional oral communication and social controls. Mahenye also demonstrates

this approach is limited to direct and simple contractual arrangements such as hunting permits within a single ward, or local producer unit, where the return to the ward remains primarily through simple physical development projects. Even so, the programme would probably not have been successful if the commercial operator had not been knowledgeable of the community and willing to provide a broad range of non-contractual technical assistance. The operating framework for this relatively informal programme began to prove inadequate as it generated interest in multi-ward programmes, returns from sources other than simple hunting, and investment in longer range community development efforts.

While the Gazaland District Council did not play a major management role in the conceptualization and development of the Mahenye programme, the support for the programme through the decision to return revenues to the producer community in 1987 was absolutely critical. Without the decisive vote permitting the funding of projects in the community in 1987, it seems probable that the project would have soon ground to a halt as the community people tired of cooperating in a programme in which others reaped the primary monetary returns. In the distribution of benefits since, the District Council has returned to the pre-1986 position of apparently refusing to return the majority of benefits to the primary producer ward. Only time can determine how long people in a producer community will support a programme in which major returns go to other producer communities or indeed outside the producer communities entirely.

The importance of District Council action to acquire appropriate authority and to begin preparing for a wider wildlife programme in Gazaland is evidence from this case history. Since the Gazaland District Council has yet to formalize an agreement for a wildlife programme under their newly acquired appropriate authority. It remains to be seen the degree to which the Council can continue to support continued community involvement at the ward level, and the degree to which fuller Council involvement results in an increasing centralization of the wildlife programme at Council level. Can the advantages of greater Council involvement result in expanded programme development without weakening the sense of community participation and decision-making which was essential in initiation of the Mahenye wildlife programme?

The Importance of the Campfire Association

The Mahenye project started and developed primarily in isolation from similar efforts taking place in scattered areas of Zimbabwe in the early 1980's. Contact between representatives of Mahenye and of the Gazaland District

Council did not occur until 1988 when workshops were being held on Campfire by the Zimbabwe Trust. Participation in these early meetings permitted the Mahenye experience to stimulate other districts, and in turn, exposure to broader possibilities directly influenced Gazaland District Council to seek appropriate authority to institute a more ambitious programme.

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THE AUTHOR AND THE RESEARCH METHOD

Professor John H. Peterson, Jr. is a social ecologist specializing in natural resource development. He first visited Zimbabwe in April 1989 on an Academic Specialist Grant from the U.S. Information Service to advise on curriculum development. At that time, he visited Guruve as this district began the first year of operation in a district level safari operation. In February 1990 he joined the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, as a Fulbright Visiting Lecturer in the Master's programme in Tropical Resource Ecology. In addition to instruction, Peterson undertook research on the early implementation of Campfire in a range of districts where he has participated in district council, ward and vidco meetings in the districts described in this report as well as all meetings of the Campfire Association. From January through August, 1991, Peterson continued as a Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, devoting full time to research on Campfire. In addition to his own field work, Peterson made extensive use of official documents and field reports and papers by others involved in Campfire research and implementation. The Mahenye community received special attention in Peterson's research since it had been largely ignored as interest in Campfire turned to larger projects which had formally received appropriate authority. Individuals and references consulted are listed in the references section.

In the United States, Peterson is a Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Mississippi State University. He has been involved for many years in the development of the communal lands including heading the planning staff for a tribal council over an American Indian reservation. In ecological studies, Peterson has researched the multiple use of forested grazing lands by cattle, wildlife and timbering interests. From 1980 - 1984, Peterson served on the Grazing Lands Committee of the U.S. Man and the Biosphere Directorate, which promotes international research into grazing issues under the U.N. Man and the Biosphere Programme.



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