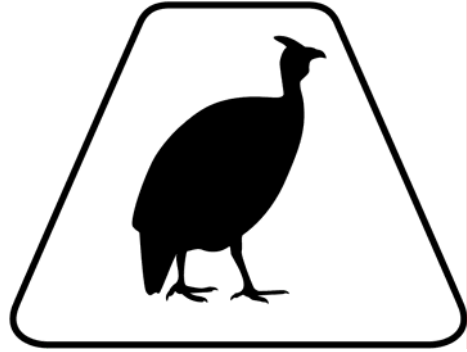


Conservancies in Informal Settlements



ESTABLISHING CONSERVANCIES IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS, OR A VILLAGE IN A RURAL AREA

We must keep in mind that many townships developed as informal settlements (squatters) in rural towns and big cities. With this there is an arrearage in environmental management and that the infrastructure is not suitable for environmental and waste management or suitable sewerage systems.

With man's need for food and shelter there is no emphasis on managing the environment and litter is a part of life in all areas and it must be managed. The lack of environmental education is also to blame for a lot of the environmental problems in these areas. An unhealthy environment causes diseases like TB, diarea, cholera, and numerous other deadly diseases. Aids victims need a healthy environment, with clean and healthy food to build a resistance, but can it be said in certain areas?

- **Identify Area of Informal Settlement's**
- **Local Councillors must be in to project**
- **Work through ward committee's** (get info from council)
- **Get names and make contact with local leaders**
- **Do not do show how**
- **Respect their aspirations**
- **Start environmental education** (involve local schools)
- **Keep all documentation simple** (constitutions and management plans)

HOW DO I GO ABOUT FORMING A CONSERVANCY IN A INFORMAL SETTLEMENT , OR A RURAL VILLAGE,?

The whole idea of a conservancy is the involvement of the community, without that, we can forget to have any successes in the sustainable management of the environment.

When we approach a community we must have the right attitude towards what

we intend doing. We must believe in the concept and we must know how to go about. The main thing is, be trustworthy.

Steps to take when you intend to work with a community;

1. Meet with the municipal manager and find out if there is not a similar project running in the community.
2. Make contact with the political leaders of the area (Tribal leader, councilor, and the local council head.)
3. Explain the concept and get his “blessing” to form a conservancy and motivate him to be on the community meeting. (This could mean political mileage for him. Give him the opportunity to say a few words on the mass meeting).
4. Visit some of the other members from the community as well and explain to them how the conservancy will work.
5. Get a community leader to arrange a meeting with the community for a certain date and time. (It is very necessary to get a representative audience when you do your information session)
6. If you have a camera and you have access to a slide projector and electricity take a couple of slides of the area before your talk (environmental problems etc.) and use this as an impact to your talk, this always works. Areas that you can look at is the landfill area, illegal or irresponsible dumping, health threats, bad environmental management, items that are in the landfill that can be re-used and recycled, yards, domestic stray animals, and other things you think which will make an impact on your talk. It is also good to show or talk about positive things in the community.
7. In the rural villages you can address the importance of wildlife management and the financial benefits organised hunting and tourism can bring to the community. You can discourage the hunting by dogs to ensure that the mentioned hunting can take place.
8. In your talk put emphasis on the negative things in the area and the influence it has on the community. The people must feel threatened if they see the bad things. We must remember that in some areas the majority of the people from the community are illiterate and they must be convinced that the establishment of a conservancy will be to their benefit. The negative influence an unhealthy environment has on their children always makes an impact. The influence that an unhealthy environment have on recovering from diseases
9. Emphasise how the co-operation in the community can benefit them and upgrade the environment. Show or inform them about the benefits of a conservancy. If they are interested then we do the following

After establishing a conservancy a constitution must be drafted. After this, hold a workshop with the community, do the following! Divide the community into a workshop situation in different groups to do the following;

- List the environmental problems of your area. (Make it short.)
- Out of the groups we list these problems in order of urgency.
- How would you as the community, solve these problems!
- The groups unpack the idea and decide how the community can solve these problems on their own, without any resources and funding. This exercise yields incredible results.

The syllabus of the basic environmental management course ;

- Water management: The importance of the right utilisation of natural water resources as well as the water that is supplied by the local authority.
- Greenbelt/open space management: How to get people around an open space involved in the management of this important space.
- General environmental management: Inform the community on the importance of a clean and healthy environment.
- Yard management: How to plan a yard so that the maximum can be generated out of the soil, where to put the chicken pens, the dog kennel etc. Types of food gardens and the irrigation of it from harvested water.
- Domestic animal care: Pet care as a health risk and how to overcome that, cattle and other stray domestic animals are a threat to the greening of a town, identifying of pet and other domestic animal diseases and basic animal husbandry.
- Litter management: How to utilise litter to generate money by means of recycling and manufacturing of utensils or toys out of litter and to make compost for the food gardens. To create awareness of mismanagement of waste and litter.
- Tourism In Informal Settlements: Foreign and urban South Africans tourists like to visit informal settlements to experience the way of life in these areas. Emphasis is placed on service, the product they want to sell, and an environment that will attract visitors to the township. Traditional food is always a winner, the food must be served traditionally and the service must be excellent and the place they eat must be very clean and neat. Most communities are aware of this and are practising it. Foreigners are very fussy. An unhealthy dirty community, with a violent history will not attract tourists.

Tourists bring money into a community. (Tourists do not owe the community anything and this must be remembered.)

You can adapt this syllabus to you circumstances and the area. The training is to give some form of guidance to the community.