HELP SPONSOR A COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Conservation Education & Community Support Programme
Onguta Primary School
Onguta Village, Ehirovipuka Conservancy, Kunene Region, north-west Namibia

Introduction:

The Namibian Lion Trust is dedicated to empowering communal farming communities in carnivore-conflict zones, to better manage and protect their livestock, ultimately mitigating conflict and reducing large carnivore persecution. Through Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation and Conservation Education programmes, the AfriCat Foundation and the Namibian Lion Trust have contributed substantially to uplifting communal farming communities since 1997. Thanks to dedicated donors and sponsors, 20+ nocturnal ‘bomas’ have been built to date, a larger number upgraded as well as improvements to rural schools in the !Khoa di //Hoas and Ehirovipuka Conservancies.

One such school in the Onguta Village, Ehirovipuka Conservancy, which offers a pre-school class (ages 5-6 yrs.), and grades 1-3 to approximately 50 - 60 students, was recently upgraded from dilapidated tented classrooms with sand floors, where the students were exposed to extreme heat and dust, to durable structures built from Shipping Containers.
The Onguta traditional leader, Headman Fanuel Ndjiwa, is a conservationist, a visionary and an exemplary leader; in addition, he is committed to the Namibian Lion Trust Livestock Protection Programme (LPP) and instrumental in minimizing the persecution of large carnivores in his area.

Our mission, to further support this pro-active community, brought about the Onguta Development Programme: The site for the school was selected by the headman and his community and soon a playground was built, with materials donated by farmers and businesses (old tyres and metal poles), the painting and hard labour undertaken by 18 students of the Private School Swakopmund (PSS).
Through generous donations locally and abroad, we were able to open the doors to the new school in July 2019.
The Onguta Project commenced end 2017, but due to unforeseen circumstances the project was delayed. Furthermore, thought was put into the logistics of the project, with vast distances between the market-place and location (Windhoek is approximately 600km from the Onguta Village) and rough, rocky terrain hampering progress. It was decided to move away from the traditional 'Bricks & Mortar'-style building, to a durable structure that better suits the conservancy conditions.

AfriCat teamed up with a Namibian company, Cowboy's Trading & Rental Solutions, based in Swakopmund; ‘Cowboy’, his wife, Ulla and son, Marco, set up camp close-by and within 14 days, their well-trained Team completed the Onguta School using prepared shipping containers; solar-powered lights and running water made for many smiling faces.

The Onguta School boasts a kitchen (which includes hot & cold water, two large basins and a refrigerator, kindly donated by ‘Cowboy’), a large dining area (which may be used as a community gathering place, if need be), two classrooms, boys & girls bathrooms (with flush toilets, basins and showers), library and computer rooms, a staff room and principal’s office as well as the reconstructed playground. The solar panels have been strategically placed on the roof and the solar system, including a set of batteries and regulator, are housed in a separate room.
The Namibian Lion Trust, AfriCat and the Onguta community are sincerely grateful to Cowboy’s for their workmanship and dedication to the Project; this is not Cowboy’s first rodeo (pun intended) in far-off places: they have used such shipping containers to build a camp for a Rhino anti-poaching unit in the Etosha National Park, as well as entire contractors-villages and hospitals.

Sincere thanks to all who contributed to this programme.
Conclusion:
A proper education has the potential to enrich a life and to change the lives of others, for the better. By building the Onguta Community School, there is hope that we can leave behind, a generation that will foster a close bond with nature.

Onguta School Development Fund:

Substantial funds were raised by AfriCat UK, as well as an independent donor via Stichting SPOTS, Netherlands; these helped us achieve our first target of N$ 1 Million to start phase 1 of the Project.

The Namibian Lion Trust, however, needs an additional N$ 1 Million to settle our outstanding bills with ‘Cowboys’ – we have 4 months in which to raise this amount. Please help support this project.