



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA



CHARM-EU

Connections to Nature & Inclusive Conservation in the Mnisi Community of South Africa



Meet the Team



Grace

**BA Environmental Science &
Conservation Biology**

Los Angeles, California



Nina

BA Creative Business

Hamburg, Germany



Sam

**BA International
Studies**

The Hague, Netherlands



Leon

BS Management & Technology

Munich, Germany



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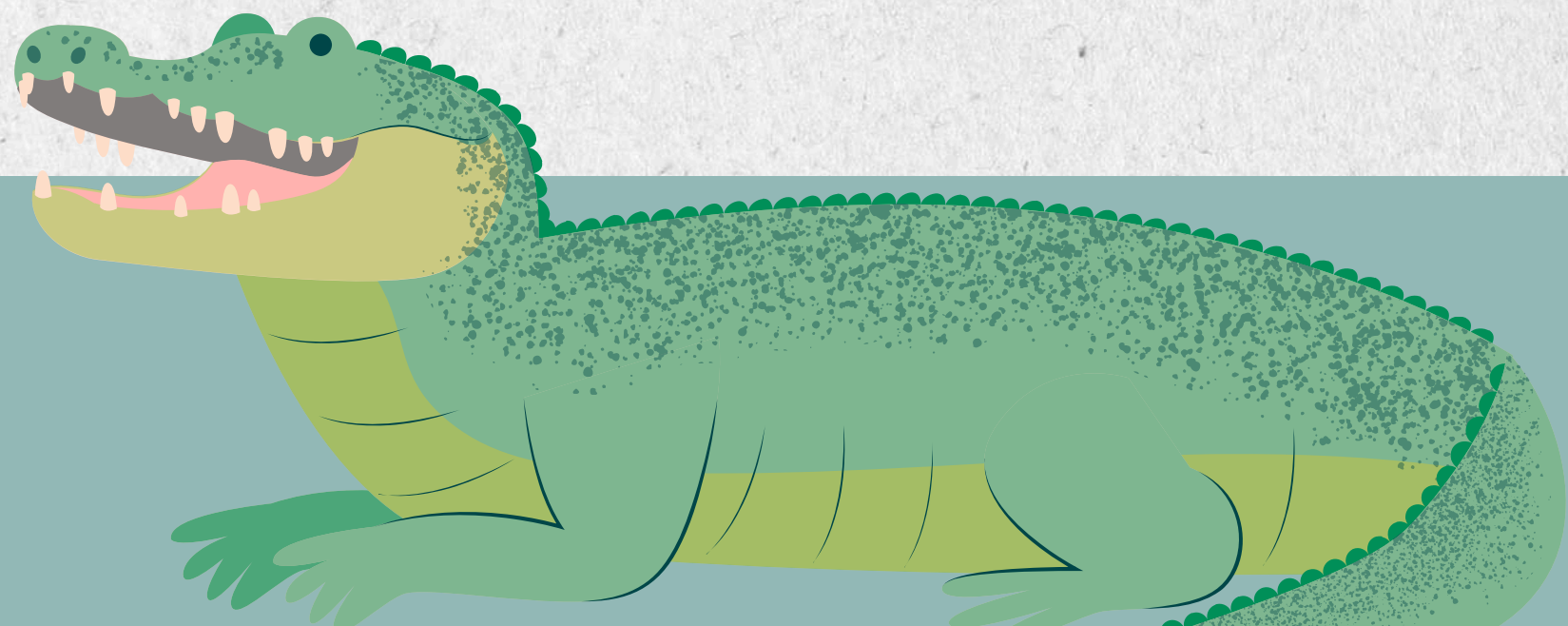
Introduction

- Deep **historical injustices of colonialism and apartheid have dispossessed** the communities surrounding Kruger National Park of their native land, **separating them from many of the benefits of nature** (Carruthers, 1995)
- Lack of rural awareness campaigns on documenting **Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)** in SA (National Research Foundation)
- **Inclusive Conservation** is necessary to **blend traditional knowledge and modern conservation management** (Chilisa, 2018)
- **Intergenerational knowledge transmission** is invaluable (Mdhluli et al., 2021)



Group Research Question

In what ways can the preservation of traditional ecological knowledge within the Mnisi community advance sustainable ecological conservation?



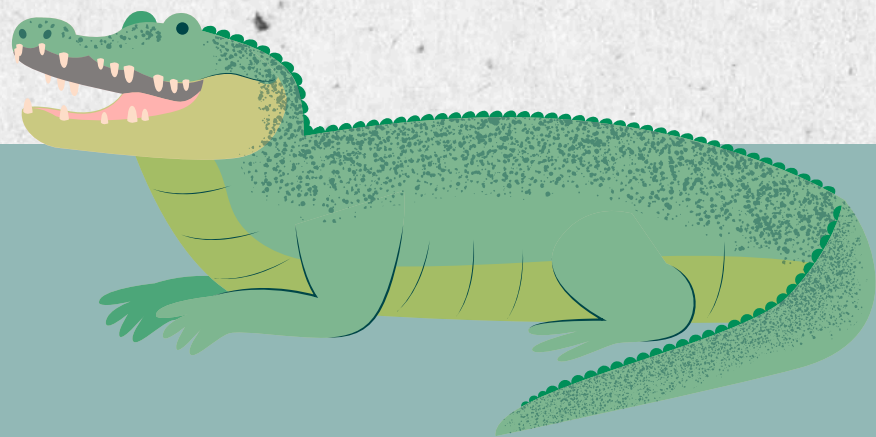
Individual Research Topics

Sam: *Integrating Traditional Healing into allopathic Healthcare, fighting medical staff deficit and preserving traditional knowledge*

Leon: *Inclusive Conservation Approaches at Manyeleti Game Reserve*

Grace: *Empowering Youth Voices on Nature through Community Mapping and PhotoVoice in Sigagule, South Africa*

Nina: *Implementing intergenerational knowledge sharing into community-led spaces*



Participatory Rural Appraisal

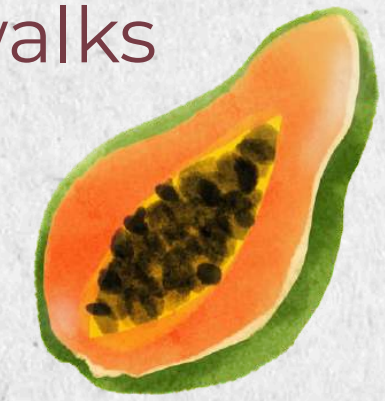


Methodology

Participatory Mapping



Transect walks



Photovoice Missions

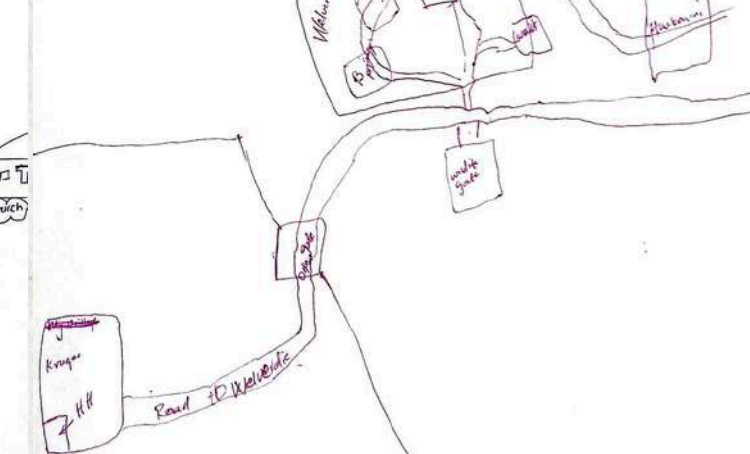
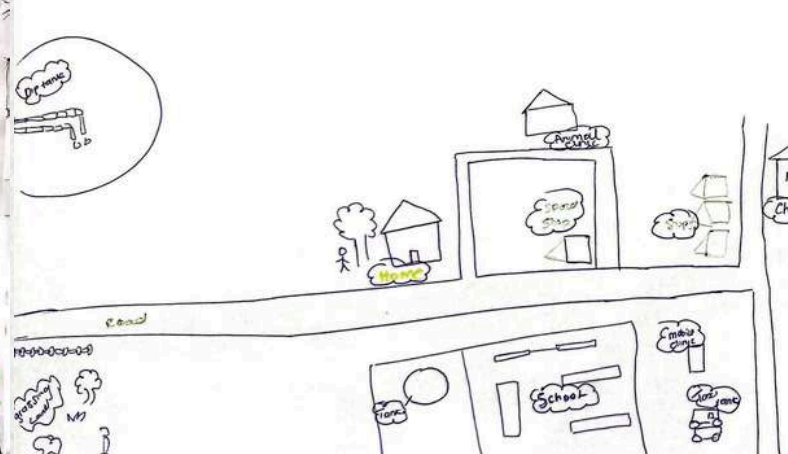
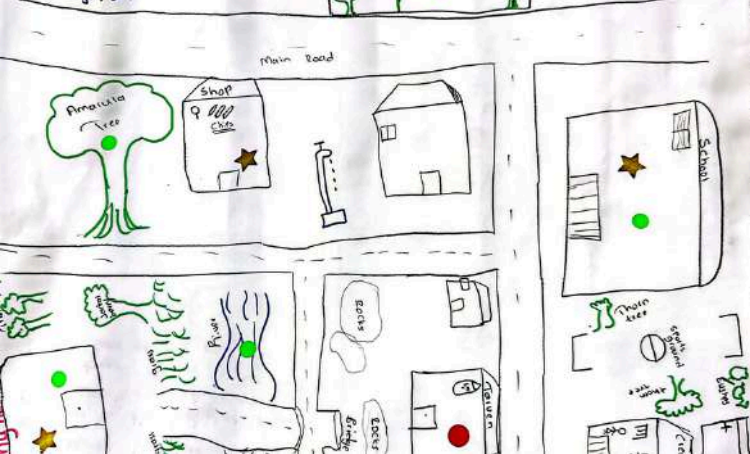
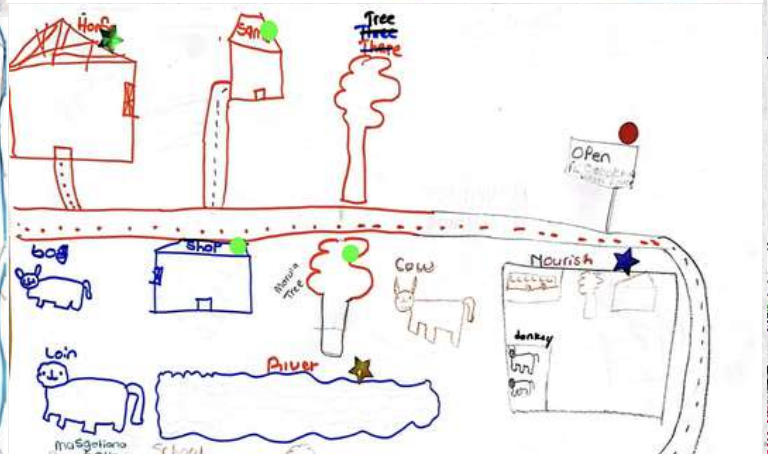
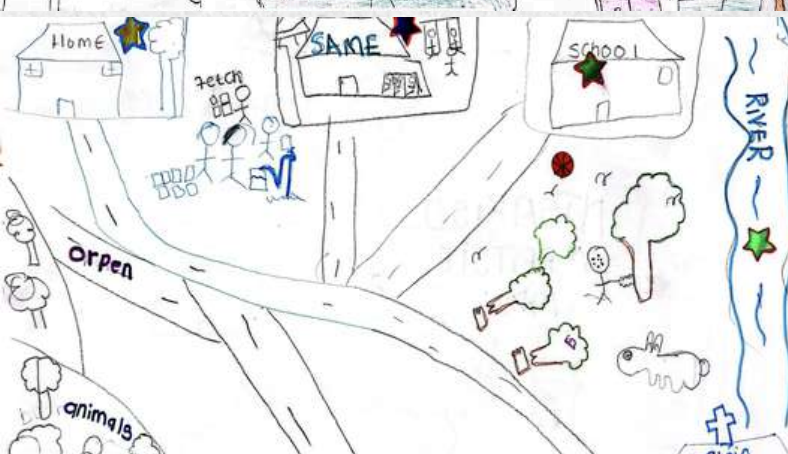
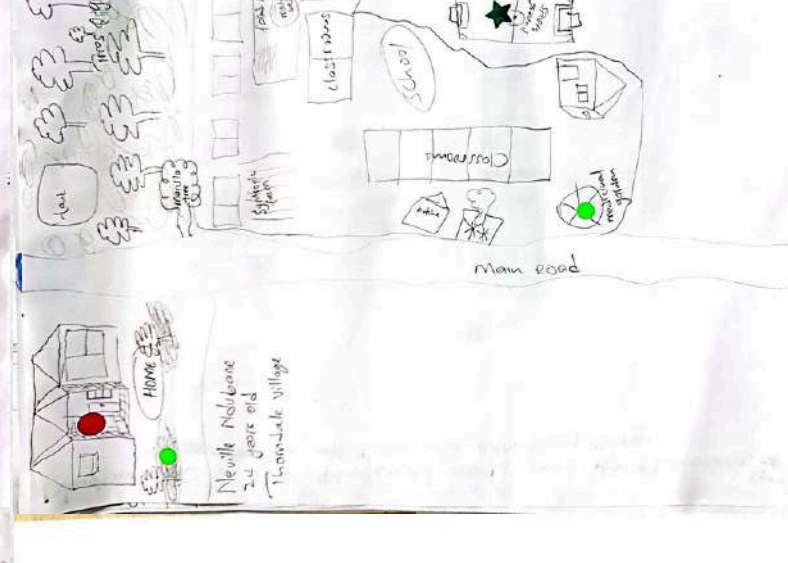
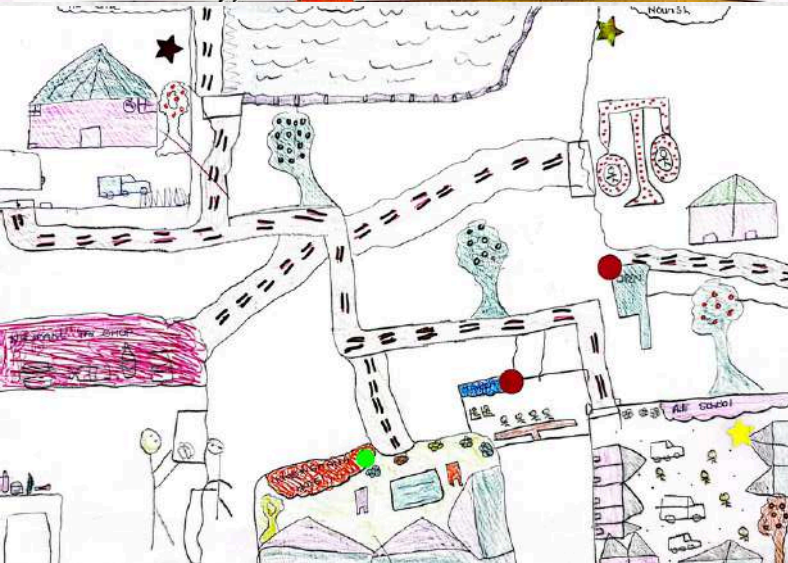
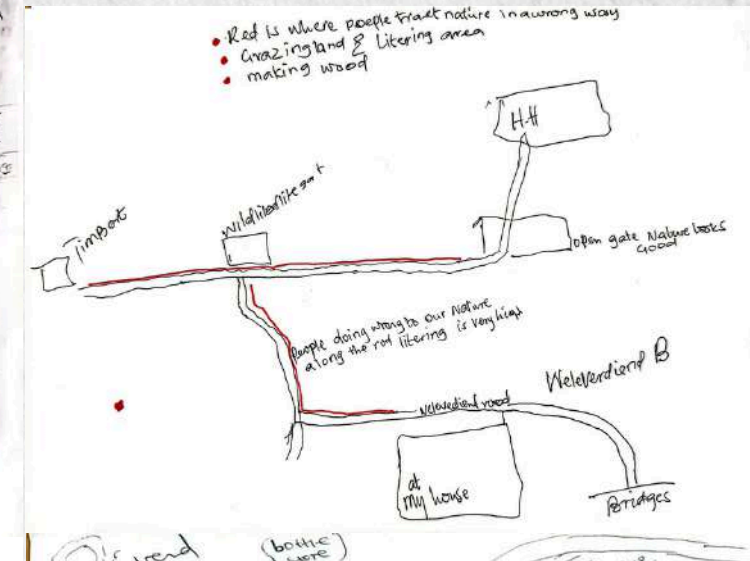
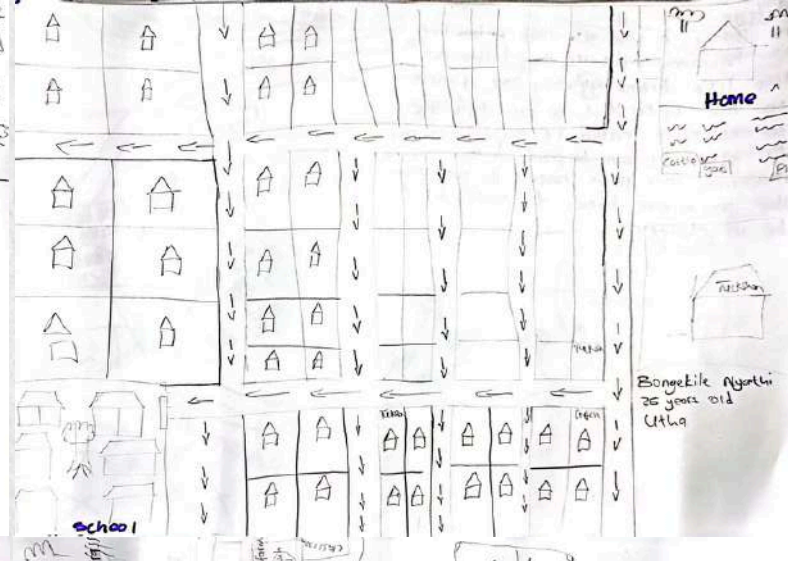
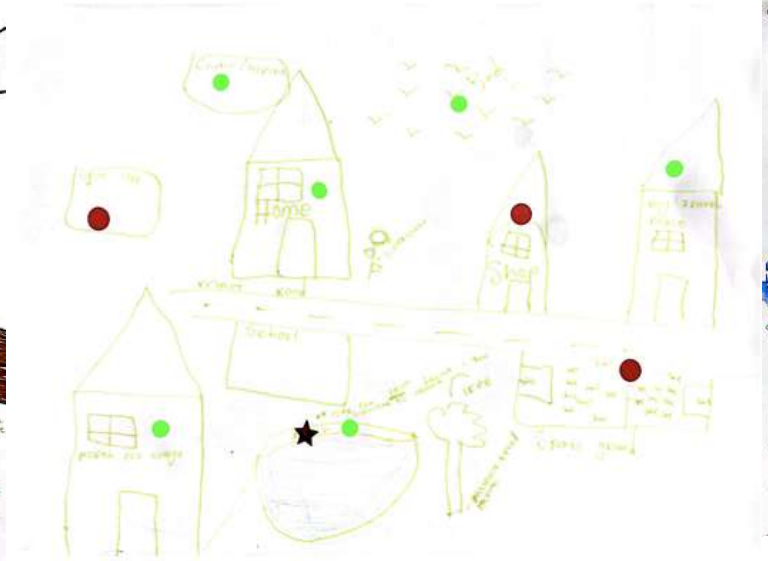
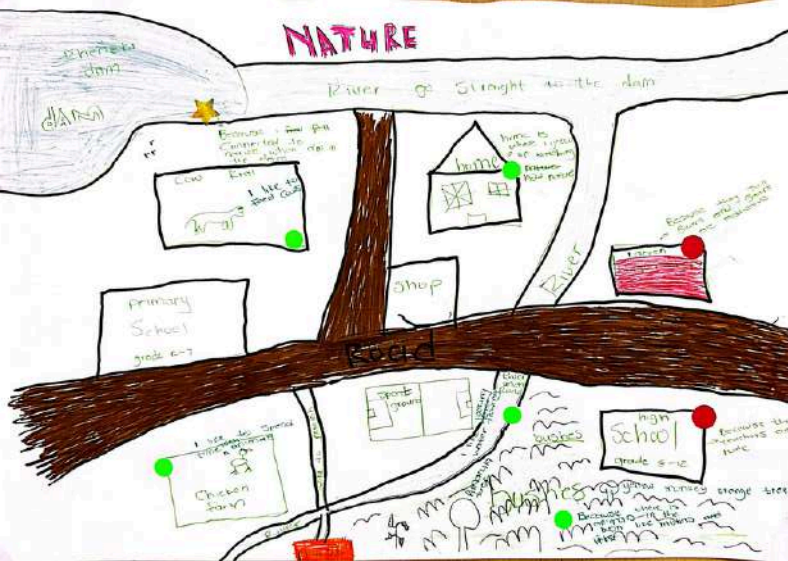
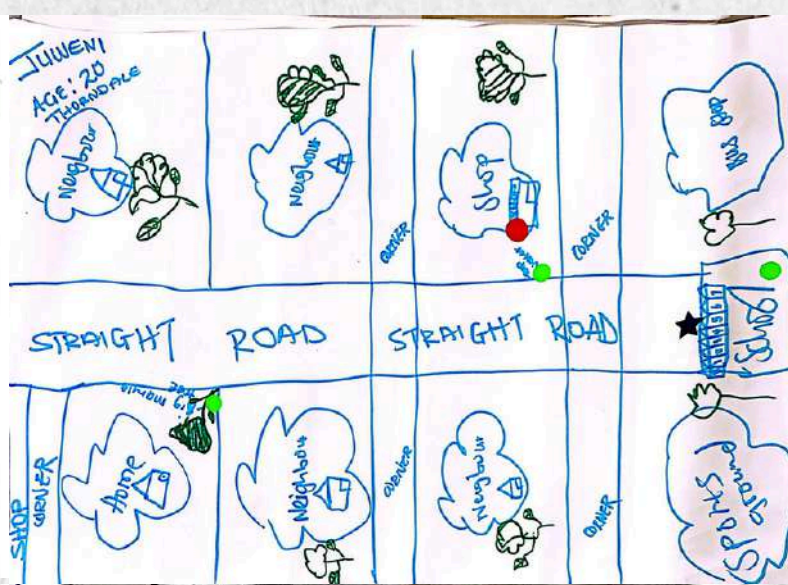
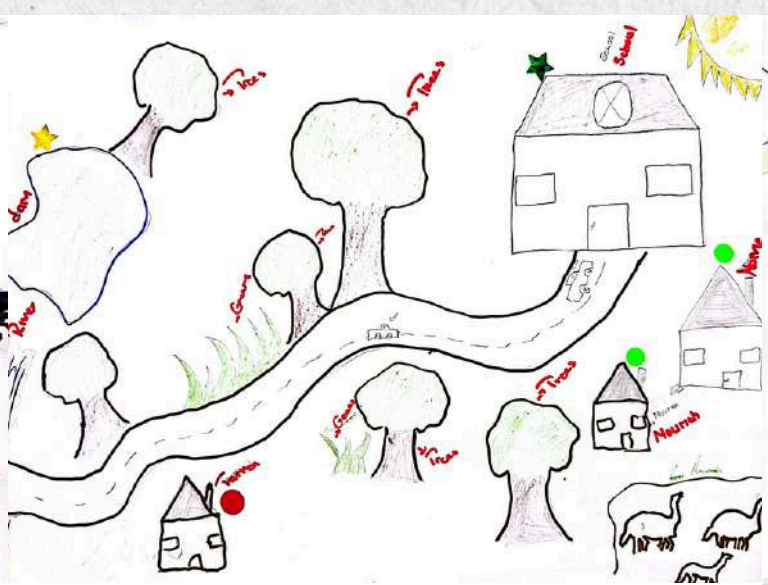
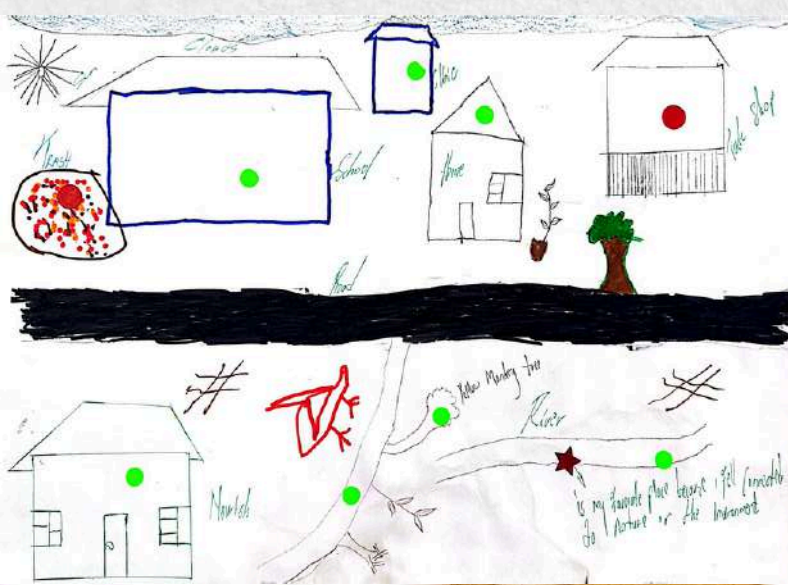


Key Informant Interviews





Our Research Area



How do YOU define NATURE?

"being connected to real life"

"Nature is an ongoing process. There are certain seasons, some to plant, and some to harvest"

"You just have it. It is something that is always there"

"free food"

HOME

"We grew up in nature"

"a place to feel connected to my ancestors"

"without nature there would be no life"

"the habitat place that we live in where there are fresh trees, clean water and taking care of our environment"



Community Mapping



Wolverdiend Community Members



HH Research Station Staff



Abundant Village Interns



Nourish EcoVillage Youth



Key Insights



Home is synonymous with Nature for many



Everyone defines nature differently



Trees, homes, water sources and livestock serve as key natural landmarks for community members



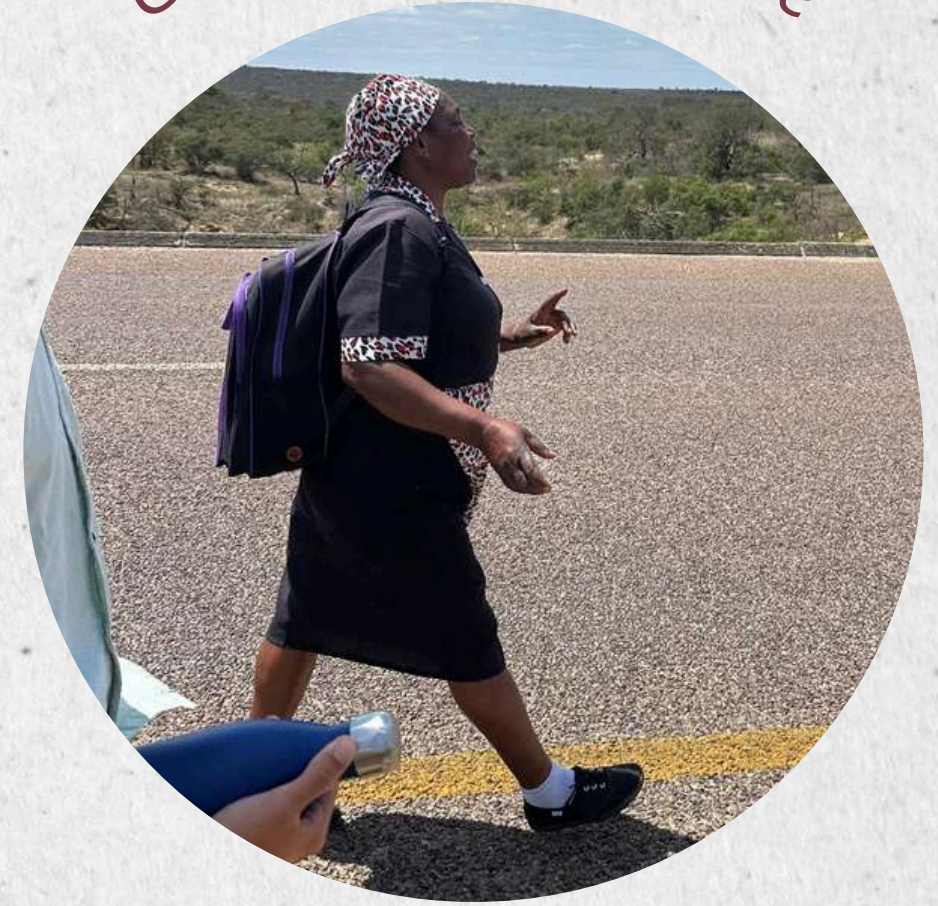
*Livestock, such as cows, pigs, chickens, and goats, are focal points of local households and allow community members to feel **participatory** in shaping the nature surrounding them*



*Taverns are a space where youth feel **unsafe & disconnected** from their natural environments*

Transect Walks

Gogo Joyce in Sigagule



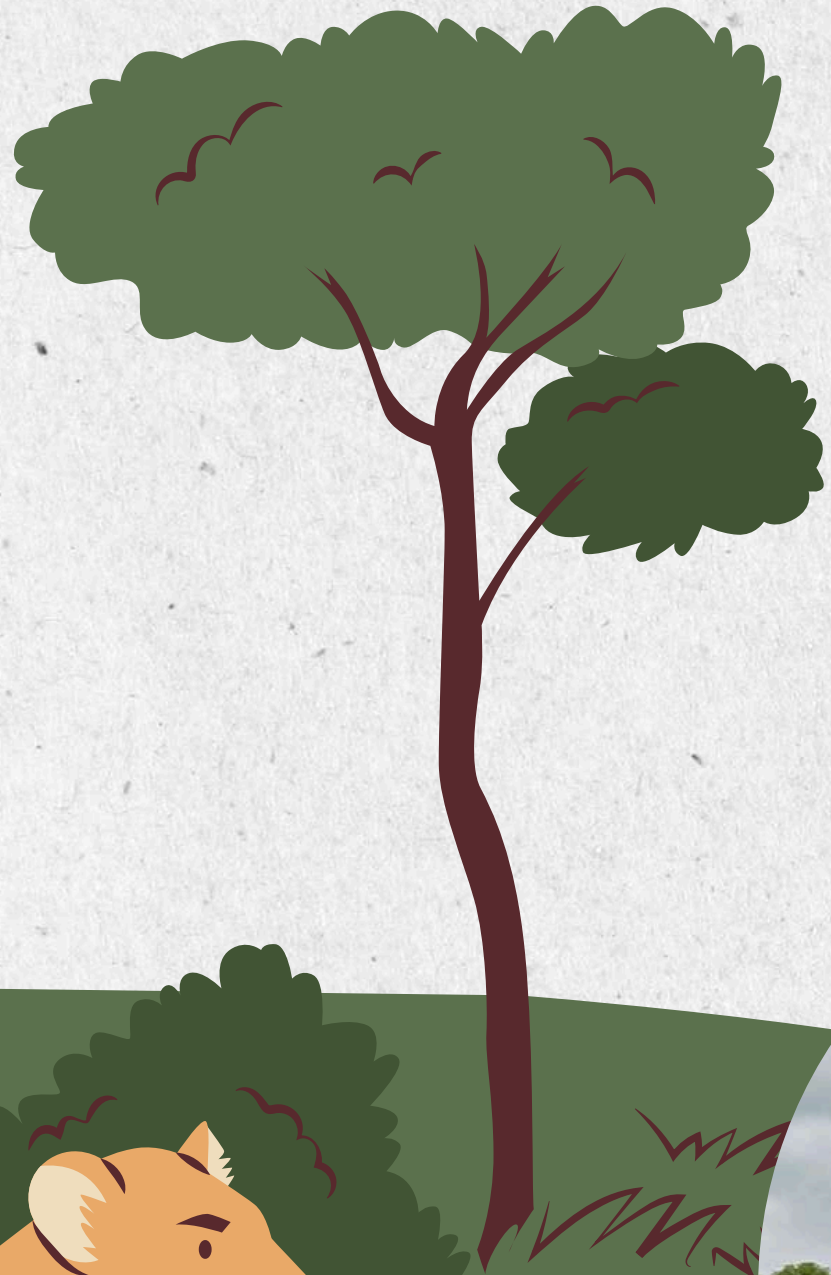
Gogo Renkie in Thorndale



Rector in Werverdiend



Mbuso in Werverdiend



Key Insights



*Elders hold rich **traditional knowledge** on plants for food, medicine and spiritual purposes.*



*Most own **livestock** (i.e. Cattle, Goats, Chicken) and have their own **gardens***



***Water scarcity** is a big challenge due to poor infrastructure (even though dam and boreholes are close to the village)*



***Changes in Landscape** over time include **Fences** around reserves and wildlife*



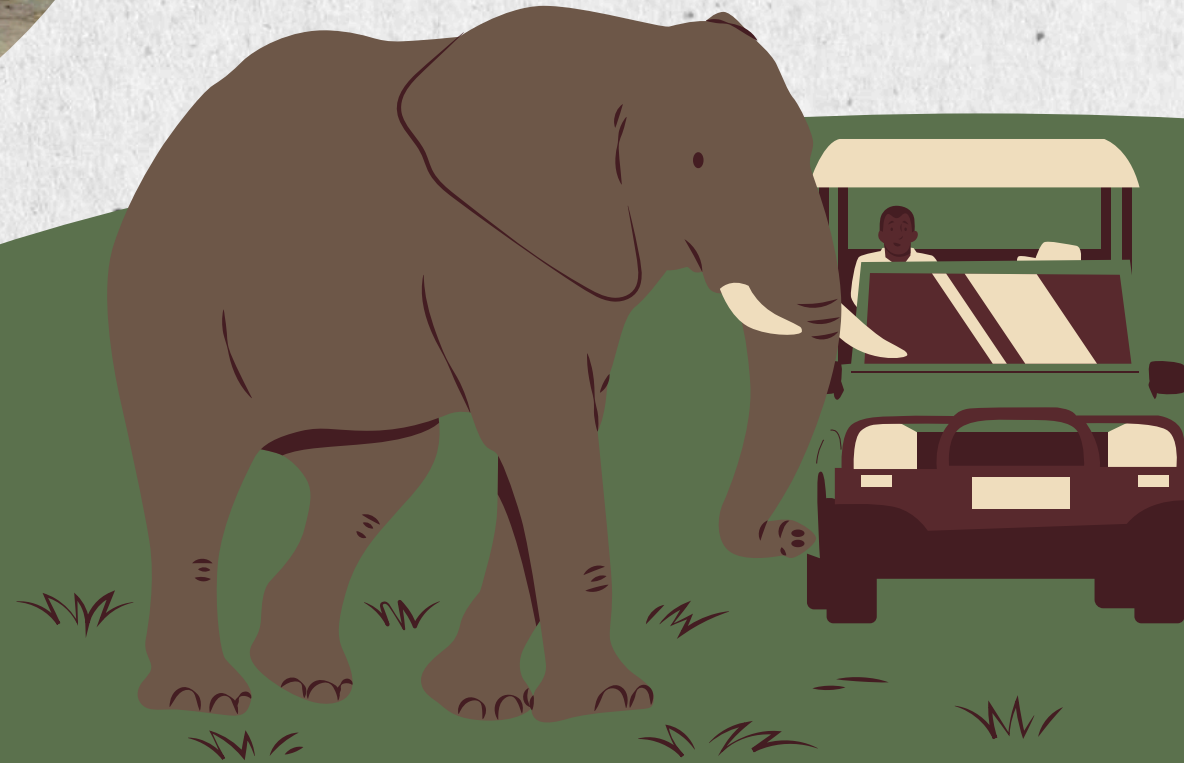
Younger generations are less connected nowadays to traditional (plant + healing) practices

PhotoVoice Missions

Abundant Village Intern Team



Nourish GreenKidz & Ubuntu Girls Club



Key Insights



Water sources serve as a space where youth seek out connection to nature



Trees, such as papaya, mango, and marula, are important to the landscape of local communities.



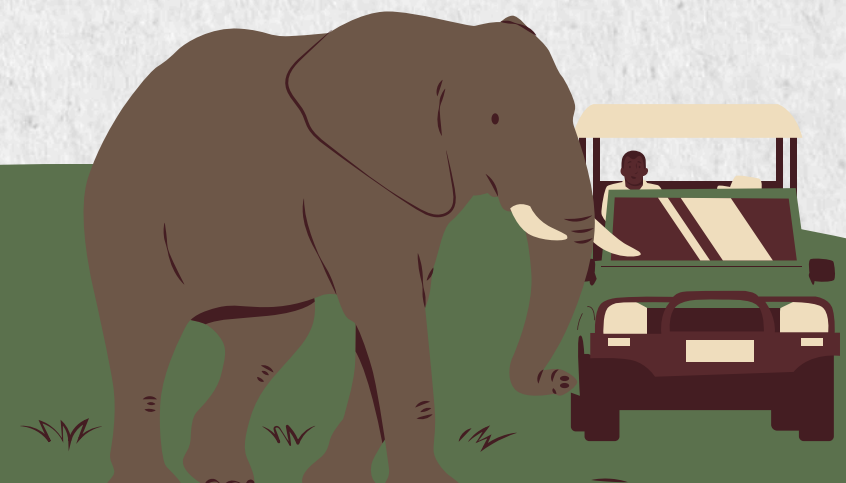
Litter and Dump Sites create visual disharmony for youth and their environment



Constant exposure to alcohol & its affects, as well as packaged goods and processed foods, creates disconnect to nature for youth



The community is closely tied to their Pets and Livestock.



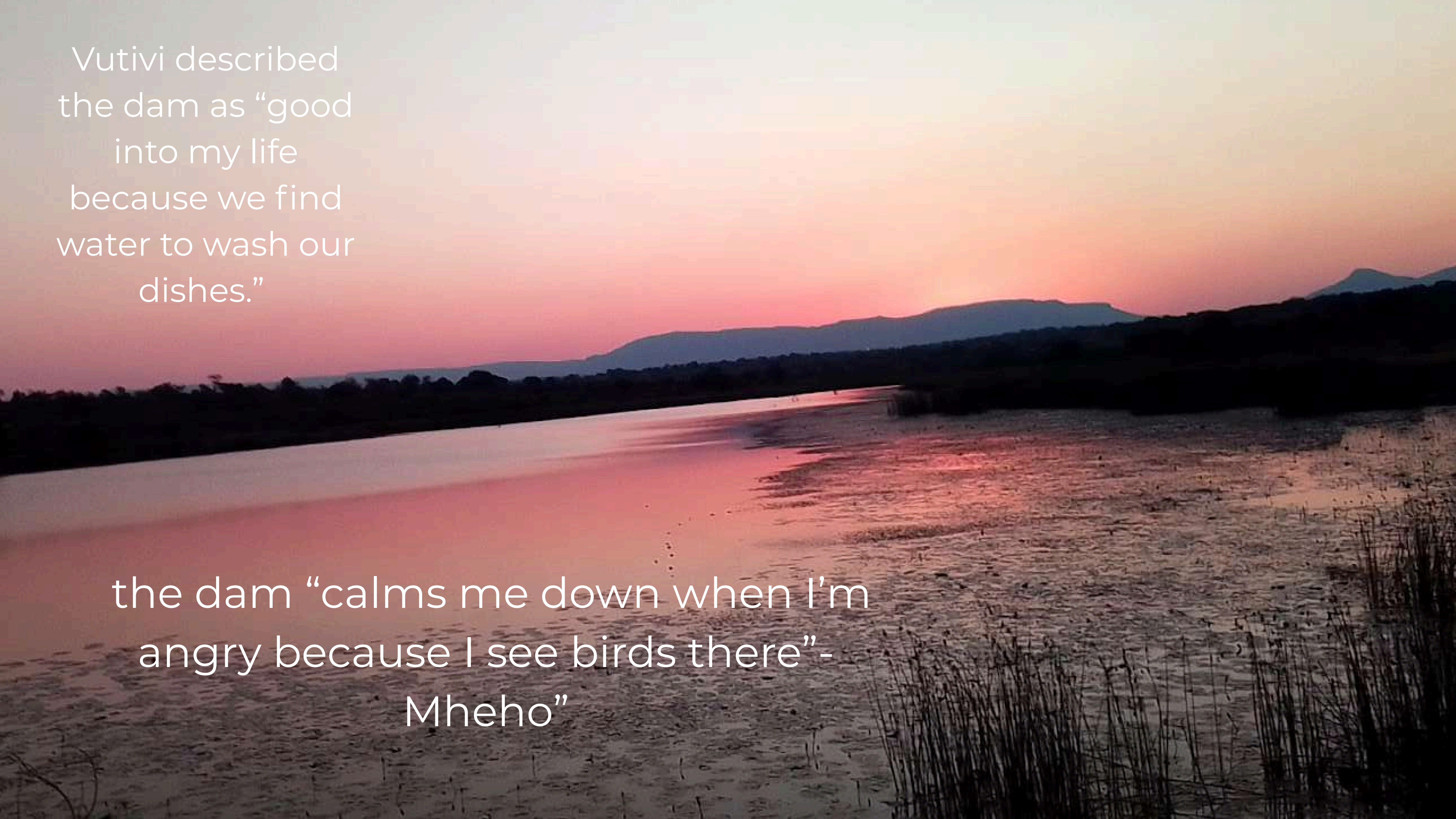
PhotoVoice Highlights

Connections to Nature



Disconnections to Nature



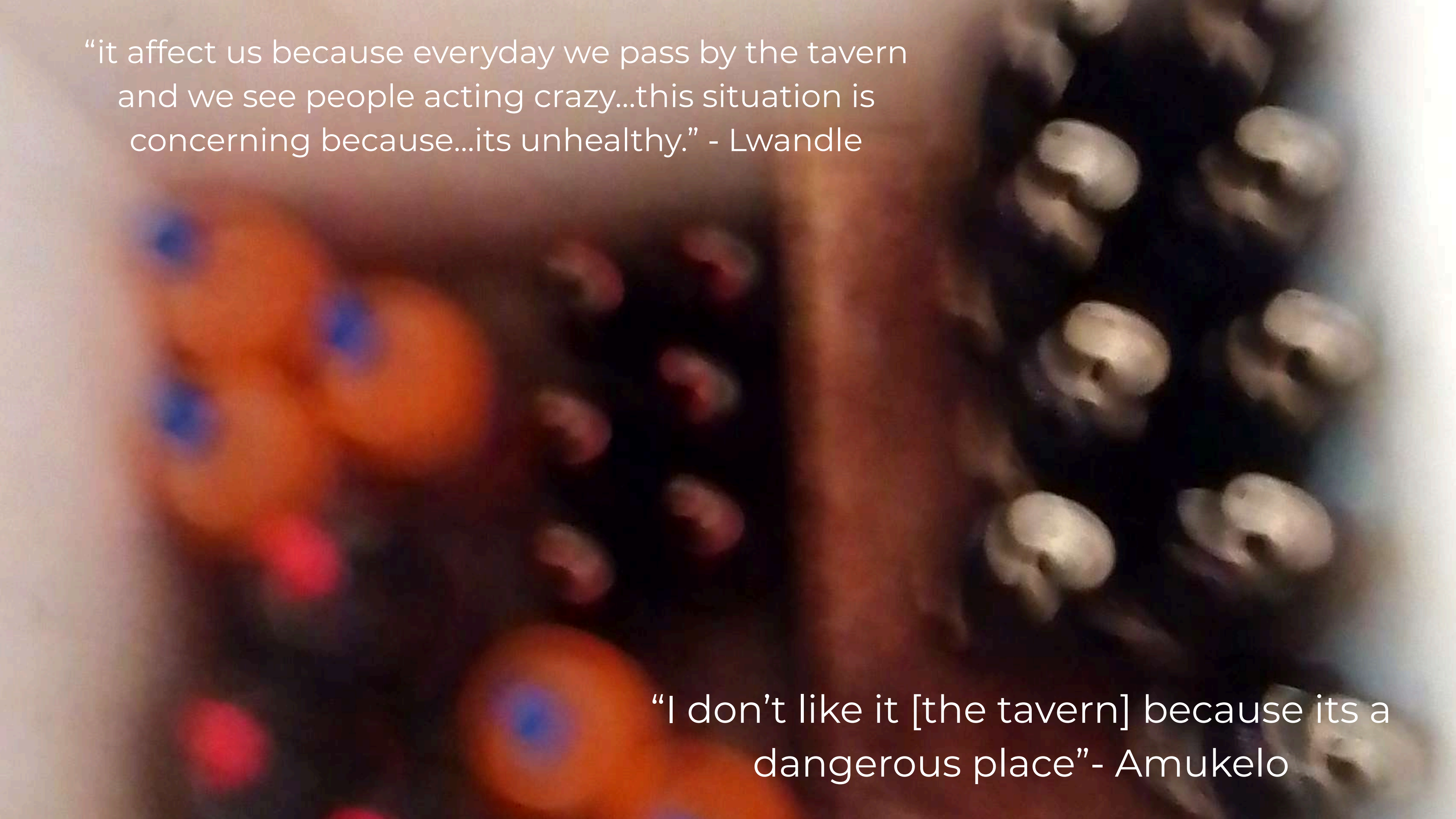


Vutivi described
the dam as “good
into my life
because we find
water to wash our
dishes.”

the dam “calms me down when I’m
angry because I see birds there”-
Mheho”



“As long as I have to plant and nurture it and show it love, it can grow itself... So that's how I felt that connection”



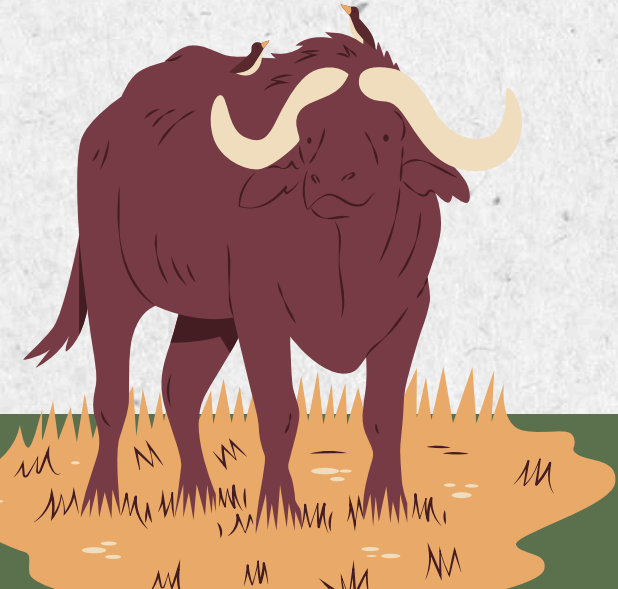
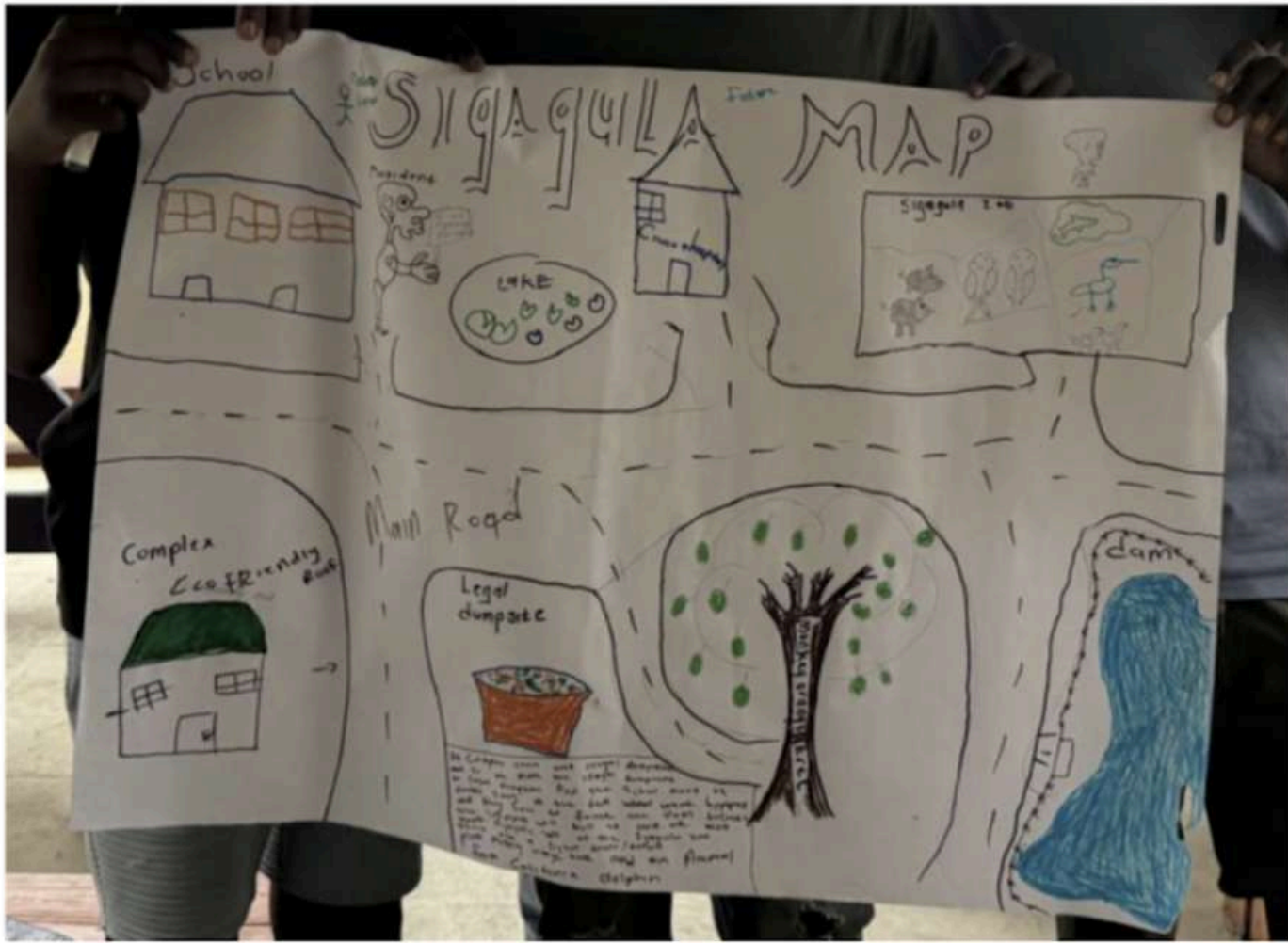
“it affect us because everyday we pass by the tavern
and we see people acting crazy...this situation is
concerning because...its unhealthy.” - Lwandle

“I don't like it [the tavern] because its a
dangerous place” - Amukelo

“I feel disconnected because nature is clean. Littering is not part of nature”



Future Mapping



Key Insights



Youth Voices advocate for spaces that promote environmentally conscious missions, such as Recycling Centers



*Youth dream of a Zoo in their community, highlighting **inaccessibility of wildlife, despite proximity***



Youth and elder perspectives align in many shared visions for the futures of their communities



Sharing Symposium & Photo Gallery



Sharing of Research Findings + Photo presentation by 2 Youth Participants



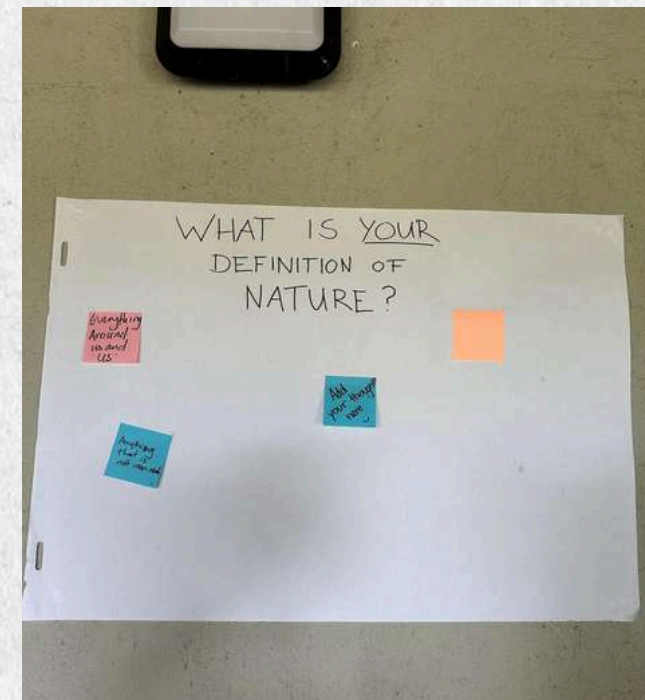
Bilingual Trifold as a summary for all attendees to take home



Exhibition of Photovoice, Visualized Transect Walks, Community Maps



Fostering exchange between youth and local traditional leaders



Collective Findings

Traditional Healing

*Traditional healing is lacking **recognition**. A **One Health Approach** offers opportunities for its integration into environmental and health practices.*

Intergenerational Spaces

*More **intergenerational spaces are needed** to support the transfer of TEK and preserve **local heritage**.*

Participatory Research & Youth Voices

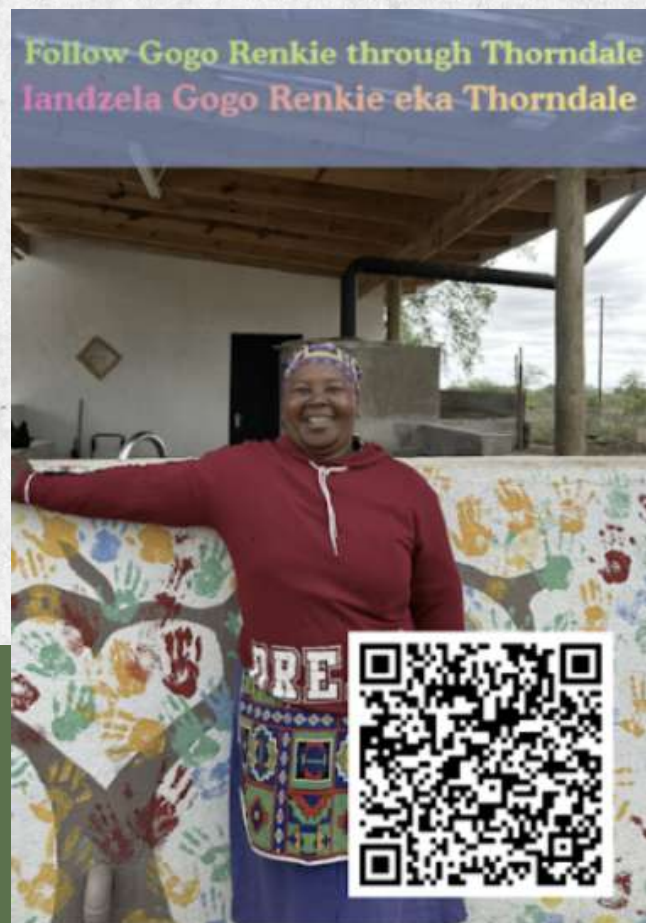
***Participatory research** methods are needed to integrate **local youth voices** in conservation policies and interventions.*

Inclusive Conservation

*Western conservation understanding hinders the integration of TEK. More **community involvement** and **shared decision-making** is needed.*

Final Products & Impact

Virtual Transect walks



Awareness on the Mnisi Community and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Sharing Symposium & Photo Exhibition



Sharing research findings

Empowerment of local youth voices

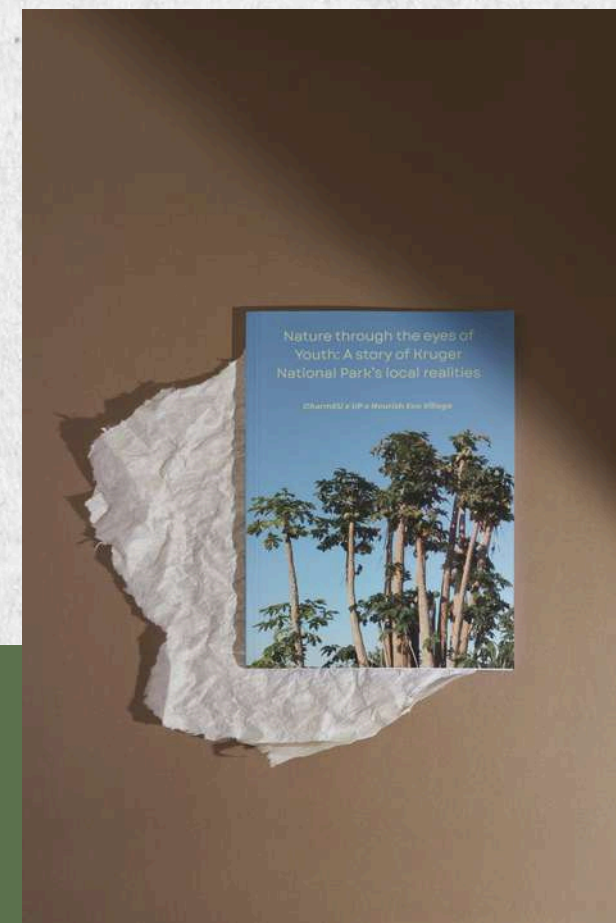
Encouraging exchange between Youth & Tribal Authority

Website Photo Gallery



Longevity of research

Photovoice & Transect walk booklet

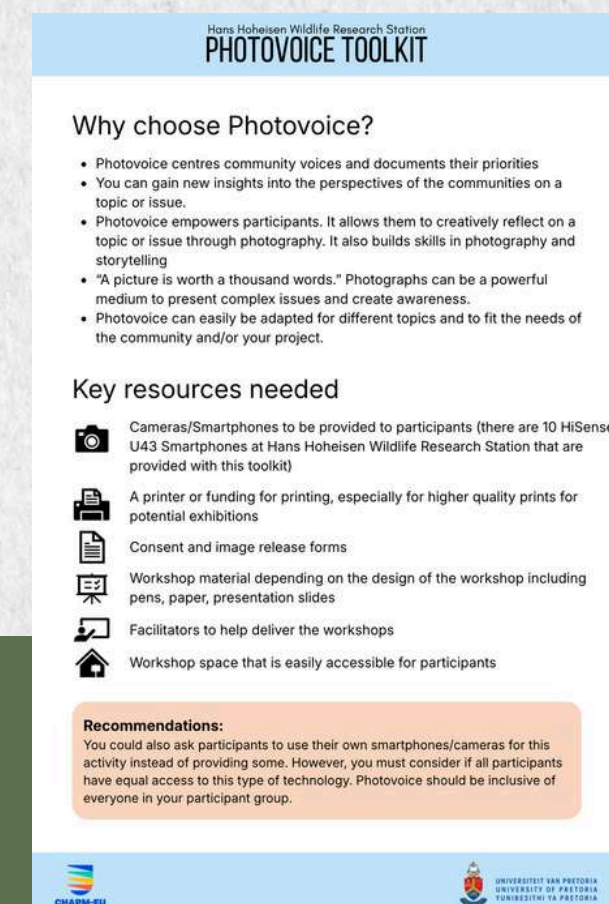


New funding opportunities

Empowerment of YouthVoices

Awareness on Youth Perceptions on Nature and local challenges to be addressed

Toolkit Photovoice workshop

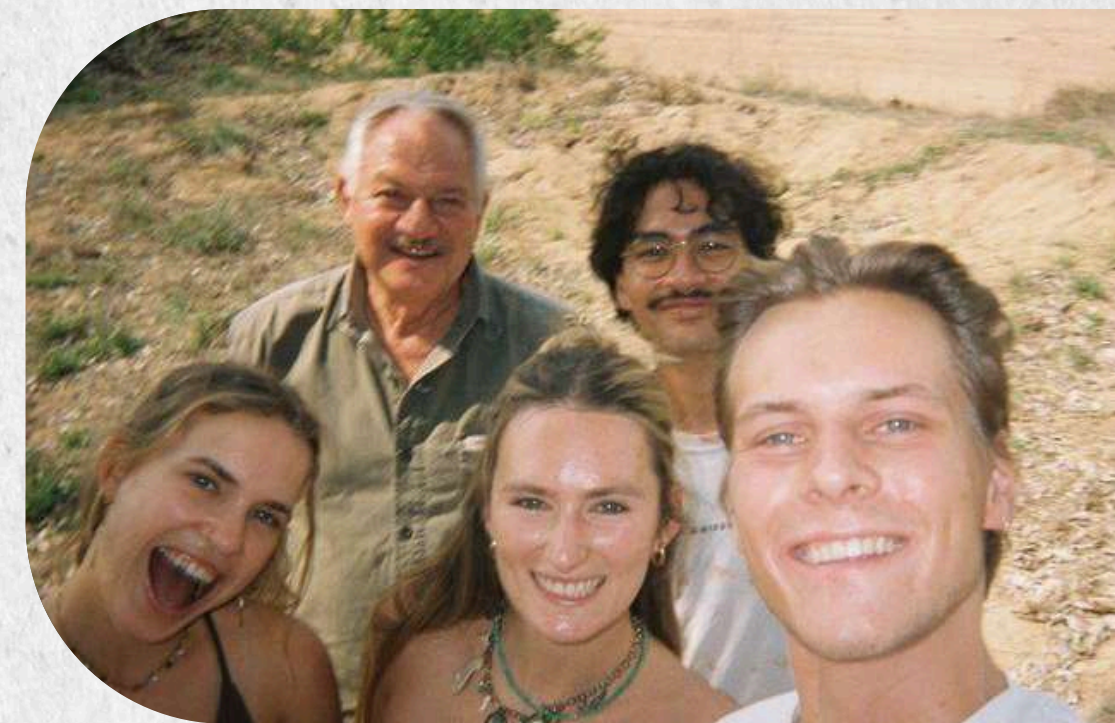


Promotion of participatory methods

Future Research and Community Engagement

Thank you!

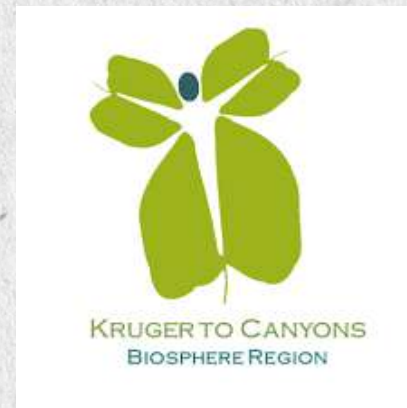
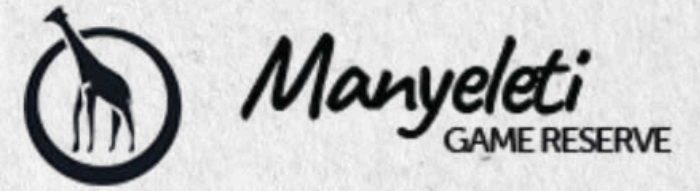
Questions are welcome!



THANK YOU!



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And everyone who doesn't have a logo!