



# 2023

## Annual Report

Knyphausen Foundation for Sustainability, Nature Conservation and Education

The non-profit Knyphausen Foundation for Sustainability, Nature Conservation and Education, founded at the end of 2015 and based in Lütetsburg in Lower Saxony, is involved in educational work for children and young people on the subjects of nature conservation and sustainability in Botswana.



### Purpose of the Foundation:

The aim of the Knyphausen Foundation is to sensitize and inspire children and young people for their environment. The aim is to raise children's awareness of the importance of nature and encourage them to take responsibility for themselves and their environment.

Another focus of the foundation are educational measures and trainings for young adults Safari Guides as multipliers to improve the educational standard in the region, to found and establish new professions in the field of environmental protection and education as well as to strengthen local partners.

Foundation founder:



Since a trip to Botswana in 2012, Theda Gräfin Knyphausen has not let go of the beauty of the country.

She first started working for a Mobil Safari operator and in 2015 founded the Knyphausen Foundation.

Of every Safari booking received, 3% is forwarded to the Knyphausen Foundation.

Theda Gräfin Knyphausen develops foundation projects in cooperation with local partners and supervises the work directly on site.

She lives and works in Maun/Botswana.

*„I would like to support the children and young people in Botswana in appreciating and preserving the environment that surrounds them. I focus above all on education and training to bring about lasting changes in the thinking and behaviour of children and young people“.*

## Legal and organisational conditions:

The Knyphausen Foundation is a private, legally independent foundation.

The foundation serves purposes of the promotion of youth and old people's welfare, the promotion of purposes of education and vocational training including student assistance, the promotion of purposes of nature conservation, landscape conservation and environmental protection, the promotion of purposes of animal welfare as well as the promotion of purposes of development cooperation. It was established in Lütetsburg in 2015 in accordance with the Foundation Act of the State of Lower Saxony.

**Organs:** The organs of the Foundation are the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees.

**Board of Directors:** Theda Gräfin Knyphausen (Chairwoman)

Benedikt von Kontz

**Foundation council:** Tido Graf Knyphausen

Alvo Graf Knyphausen

**Management:** Theda Gräfin Knyphausen

Benedikt von Kontz

**Processing:** Jasmin Kolta

**Tax recognition:** The Knyphausen Foundation is a non-profit corporation and is exempt from corporation and trade tax in accordance with the exemption notice of the tax office Norden.

## Funding priorities:

The aim is to create sustainable structures for environmental education in Maun in order to provide children and young people in the region with the necessary technical, social and design skills in the fields of environmental protection and sustainability, which will enable them to participate in shaping the future, according to the motto: "People only protect what they know and appreciate".

## Partner countries:

In 2023, the Knyphausen Foundation will be supporting projects exclusively in Botswana. Joint projects and collaborations with partners in other African countries such as Namibia, South Africa and Uganda are planned for the future.

## Target groups:

The direct target group is children and young people from the Maun region, most of whom come from socially disadvantaged families.

The extended target group are the local partner organisations with whom one works in the individual projects on site. These are structurally strengthened and are helped to develop independently.

The indirect target group includes the teachers of the participants in the Junior Ranger Programme. The Knyphausen Foundation works closely with them and the teachers take up environmental protection topics of the project and integrate them into their lessons. This benefits the pupils who do not participate in the foundation's program.

## Cooperation structures:

The Knyphausen Foundation operates locally in Botswana. The founder of the foundation, Theda Gräfin Knyphausen, is in close contact with local partner organisations, training institutes, schools, teachers and education officers.

Due to the personal contact with all actors, it is possible to react quickly and directly to the needs of the target group and to adapt the projects accordingly.

## Partner organisations:

The Knyphausen Foundation and the Dutch foundation StartUp4Kids Botswana, which is based in Maun, have been working closely together since 2020. Together, they have been running various environmental protection and educational programmes for children and young people, such as "Happy Green Botswana", and offering further training and workshops for young trainers who run the Junior Ranger programme with the children and young people. The young Junior Ranger trainers are largely responsible for implementing the extracurricular educational units and organising the camps.

The team consists of a project coordinator who is supported by eight local volunteers for certain activities.

Another cooperation exists with the local organisation Elephants for Africa, with which the Knyphausen Foundation offers educational units on the topic of "Biodiversity and elephant conservation" in camps lasting several days for the junior rangers.

Together with the local NGO "Woman against Rape", the Knyphausen Foundation offers workshops on "Children's rights and child protection" for the Junior Ranger trainers.

## Network & Partnership:

The Knyphausen Foundation is networked with the staff of EUROPARC Deutschland e.V., the umbrella organisation of Germany's National Natural Landscapes, the Brandenburg Nature Watch and the Bavarian Forest and Black Forest National Parks, which have been organising and implementing extracurricular programmes with children and young people on environmental education topics since 2008.

The scholarship holders complete their training as professional safari guides at the local trainer EcoTraining, one of the most respected providers in southern Africa. For over 20 years, EcoTraining has distinguished itself through the highest quality of its programmes and trainers. The demanding lessons in theory and practice take place in different wilderness camps.

The Knyphausen Foundation has a regular exchange of content with the teachers of the local schools who take part in the weekly environmental & conservation education units as well as in trainings on waste separation, recycling and waste avoidance as well as sustainable vegetable cultivation and school gardens (project Waste Management and Sustainable Nutrition). The aim is to integrate further topics on environmental protection into the curriculum in the future.

The Knyphausen Foundation is also closely networked with local NGOs in the fields of environmental protection, animal welfare, human rights and education.

### 1. YOUTH WELFARE:

## Project "Junior Ranger Program" all year 2023

Together with the partner organisation Future Explorer Youth Society (FEYS), the Foundation established a Junior Ranger Program for children and young people at the beginning of 2017.

This takes place on a regular weekly basis at the participating schools in Maun (currently 14). Most of the participating children and young people experience the local fauna and flora for the first time in their lives and deal intensively with topics of animal and environmental protection.

For the Junior Rangers, camps lasting several days are also offered in the national parks and game reserves in Botswana, where they can then experience community in nature and deepen their knowledge.

Participation in the program is free of charge, so that it is also possible for children from socially disadvantaged families.

All extracurricular educational events and camps within the Junior Ranger Program are organised and carried out in cooperation with young local Trainers.

- **Junior Ranger Program from February 2023**

After a longer holiday break, the Junior Ranger programme starts again.

The trainers visit the partner schools once a week, the children come together in small groups and go through the topics of "biodiversity, animal welfare, waste avoidance, recycling and native plants together.

The school gardens established in 2021 are regularly maintained again and vegetables are newly planted. The new theme "Growing organically produced vegetables and sustainable nutrition" has become an integral part of the programme.

- **Vegetable growing project starts, all year 2023**

The project "Sustainable Nutrition for Children, Youth and Young Adults" has been an ongoing project of the Junior Ranger Programme since its start in April 2021.

The project was financially supported by the Lower Saxony Bingo Environmental Foundation until the end of 2021. As a start-up aid, five school gardens with vegetable beds and fruit trees could be established at the primary schools Thito, Andrew Willow, Gxhabara, Thamalakane and Mathiba.

In 2023, four more gardens were created at the Moremi, Botswelole & Matlola primary schools and the Bana Ba Letsatsi orphanage.

From the very beginning, the children learn everything about sowing seeds, the right soil, marking out beds and watering them, how to use tools for gardening, the importance of insects for plants and pollination, and how to grow tree seedlings in pots. The theoretical educational units complement the practical work in the gardens. In addition, the trainers teach the Junior Rangers

how to process the vegetables and fruit they have grown themselves for a balanced diet. The Junior Rangers come together in small groups once a week for the extracurricular educational sessions with their trainers.

All Junior Rangers are trained to implement what they have learned on their own property at home with as little effort as possible and are supported by older participants of the project as well as the staff of the association.

The harvested vegetables and fruits are distributed to the children of the programme and their families.

The vegetable garden on the association's premises supplies the trainers of the partner organisation. In addition, it serves as a project garden where the trainers can conduct educational sessions on nutrition and horticulture.

Our goal is to expand the project and establish school gardens at all schools participating in the Junior Ranger programme. We hope that as many children and young people in the region as possible will learn to grow vegetables for their own consumption and to process them for a balanced diet.

- **Biodiversity and animal welfare project, all year 2023**

The "Biodiversity and animal welfare" project, which was funded from July 2021 to June 2022 with financial support from the Schmitz Foundations, has become an integral part of the Junior Ranger programme.

The trainers deal with the complex topic of biodiversity and species conservation with the children every week in the educational units.

The young conservationists can look forward to many exciting excursions and camps lasting several days, during which experts from the fields of elephant and cheetah conservation, for example, give talks.

- **Exchange with German Junior Rangers, all year 2023**

In 2020, a personal exchange between eight junior rangers from Botswana and German junior ranger groups was planned in the Bavarian Forest National Park. Due to the Corona pandemic, this meeting had to be postponed. It was postponed a second time in 2021 and then the trip was unfortunately cancelled altogether in 2022. The planned exchange project on the topic of "Biodiversity and Migratory Birds" had to take place differently. The Junior Rangers in Botswana worked intensively on the topic and created posters and posters that were sent to the German children as photos.

- **Booklet Launch "The Land around us", 04.07.2023**

The new booklet "The Land around us" is the fourth educational material on environmentally relevant topics published by the Knyphausen Foundation. We are pleased to announce that it was presented to the public on 04 July in a festive setting at The Duck Café in Maun.

The expert Cornelius van der Post, who this time together with Pete Hancock provided us with text and photo material for the booklet, will be there in person and will give a short talk about the booklet. Representatives from the Ministry of Education, journalists from the local press, teachers from the environmental working groups of the schools participating in the project, as well as many private interested people are invited. Our team of trainers and representatives of the Junior Rangers will of course be present.

The handy pocket-sized booklet will accompany the Junior Rangers on their next excursions into nature. Every child in the Junior Ranger programme receives a booklet free of charge.



### • **Happy Green World Botswana, July 2023**

Under the motto "Happy Green World Botswana", the junior rangers took part in an art workshop last week.

Here they very creatively made new things, such as purses or toys, out of various waste materials. The upcycling was a lot of fun and at the same time they learned more about how everyone can contribute to avoiding unnecessary waste and protecting the environment and resources.

### • **World Ranger Day, 31.07.2023**

Around the world, rangers play a very important role in conservation as they perform a variety of tasks to preserve nature, such as monitoring protected areas, observing wildlife, preventing poaching, involving local communities in conservation, helping communities resolve human-wildlife conflicts and supporting tourism. The latter are particularly important issues in Botswana. World Ranger Day is celebrated every year on 31 July to thank rangers worldwide and to recognise the valuable work they do to protect nature. The day also commemorates rangers who have been killed or injured in the course of their work - which can sometimes be dangerous. This year, the Junior Rangers Botswana are raising awareness about the importance of preserving the environment for their own future with a tree planting campaign.

We are proud of our young rangers, who are committed to their work and support them in their shared vision of a healthy and clean world worth living in.

In a small video message, the Botswana Junior Rangers greet the young rangers from Germany on this special day.

### • **New participants in the Junior Ranger programme, August 2023**

The Junior Ranger programme is very popular with children and young people from Maun. In total, over 180 participants now take part in the weekly environmental sessions and the multi-day camps in the bush, which take place several times a year.

Since February 2023, 10 more children from Matlola Primary School have been able to take part in the Junior Ranger programme. This was made possible by the Children organisation. Here, children decide on the project applications and which children's aid projects are to be financially supported in a children's advisory board.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Children's Advisory Board of Children!

(<https://www.children.de/partizipation-kinderbeirat>)

### • **Junior Rangers continue planting, September 2023**

Our Junior Rangers have become real professionals when it comes to gardening and planting. Together with the trainers, they plant new beds and seedlings, compost garden and vegetable waste and grow young plants from the seeds of harvested vegetables.

Our aim is to establish school gardens at all schools participating in the Junior Ranger programme and to transfer the project to other schools in Maun.

### • **Environmental Awareness Conference, November 2023**

Last Tuesday we organised our annual environmental conference together with our partner organisation Startup4Kids, all Junior Rangers and many guests. This year's theme was "Save the Planet" and the Junior Rangers led the conference with many contributions, presentations, performances and performances. The Junior Rangers shared with the audience their thoughts, feelings and plans to save the planet as a generation of #ChangeMakers. It was very moving and inspiring!

Over the past few weeks, the children have also been preparing for the conference by making artworks from recycled rubbish.

These were exhibited during the conference and were also available for purchase.

We are delighted with the many guests, the great contributions from our Junior Rangers and the fact that our environmental protection programme is playing an increasingly important role in Maun's public life!

## 2. EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING:

### Projects further education

#### • **New scholarship holders, January 2023**

We have great news at the beginning of the year!

Thanks to private donors, we are able to provide scholarships for three young women to train as professional safari guides.

Kaone Ndozi (28 years), Kunyanda Kavinja (24 years) and Tiny Mohermanegi (20 years) will start their 33-day intensive course in Jao Village on 15.01.2023. The first 2 weeks are dedicated to learning the basics theoretically. The knowledge is complex and the three have been hard at work for a few weeks preparing themselves with the help of special textbooks. Then comes the practical part where they will spend two weeks exploring and studying the wilderness of Botswana on foot, by motorboat and by mokoro (a dugout canoe about four metres long). Okwa Sarefo, an excellent guide and long-time instructor with our partner EcoTraining will teach and accompany them.

The driving test is also a prerequisite before finally taking the official exam to become a professional safari guide at the BWTI (Botswana Wildlife Training Institute).

#### • **Scholarship holders start practical part of their training, February 2023**

Our three scholarship holders have started the practical part of their training to become professional safari guides. They are travelling with their trainer Okwa in the pan-handle region. Among other things, they are learning how to behave properly on foot in the bush and what precautions to take when encountering animals in the wild, e.g. not to disturb a mother elephant with her young.

Theda will meet the three on 12.02.2023 and accompany them on their last practical stage.

#### • **New trainer team, April 2023**

We are very happy to welcome a new team of trainers!

In the future, 12 committed young people will run the Junior Ranger Programme with now more than 140 children at 14 schools in Maun. The team change has come about because all of our previous trainers are no longer able to participate in the Junior Ranger programme due to a change of job and/or location. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their great work over the past years! With their support, we were able to implement two major projects, the garden project and the biodiversity project.

We wish you much success and joy in your new jobs!

Eight of our new trainers came together on 15.4. 2023 to get to know each other better and to report and share their first experiences in the training sessions with the Junior Rangers.

Project topics such as waste separation, biodiversity as well as environmental and animal protection are at the top of the educational units with the Junior Rangers. But the topics of child protection and children's rights have also become an integral part of our programme.

We are very happy about the good energy between the trainers and the motivation of the new team to hit the ground running!

• **Child protection workshop for the new trainers, 18.05.2023**

The topics of child protection and children's rights are an integral part of our educational units for the Junior Rangers.

We want to support the participants of our projects in developing into self-confident and strong people who take responsibility for themselves and their environment. Knowing one's own rights is an important prerequisite for this.

Non-violent communication and actions towards children have only recently been enshrined in law in Botswana. Awareness of children's rights must be built up in society through all levels of society. Our aim is to support this process.

Therefore, we offer professional workshops on child protection for our trainers.

Last week, our trainers participated in a one-day child protection workshop conducted by Theda Gräfin Knyphausen together with Katja Visser from our partner organisation Startup4Kids.

It is great to see that the new trainers are growing together into a strong team!

• **Garden workshop for the new trainers, June 2023**

It's that time again: the Junior Rangers are planting new vegetables in their school gardens!

Our trainers therefore took part in a gardening workshop last week to support them and learn all the basics about planting vegetables.

For example, sustainable growing includes using mulch to save water, how to avoid using chemicals in the garden by replacing chemical pesticides with organics like herbs and citrus, and how to use compost instead of fertilisers that can ruin the soil.

In the past, the Junior Rangers have been dedicated to tending the school gardens and have been very proud of the yields.

What started as an emergency project in the Corona Pandemic, we have made a permanent part of our Junior Ranger programme.

Our goal this year is to grow more school gardens and to raise awareness of the idea of home-grown vegetables and sustainable food in Maun.

### 3. NATURE CONSERVATION, LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:

## Project „Waste Management“ in 14 Schools in Maun all year 2023

The Knyphausen Foundation's "rubbish project", which was further established in 2017, will remain an integral part of the 14 schools in Maun participating in the Junior Ranger programme in 2023. In addition to the participation of the respective Junior Rangers, the other pupils of the environmental working groups (20-30 children) also take part and take care of separating the rubbish every week. They are supported by the Junior Ranger trainers.

#### 4. ANIMAL PROTECTION:

## Project "Elephants for Africa" and project to protect endangered animal species

- **Cooperation with Elephants for Africa, September 2023**

The Knyphausen Foundation cooperates with the organisation Elephants for Africa, which actively promotes the protection of African elephants,

(<https://www.elephantsforafrica.org/>) and has made the booklet "The Mammals around us" available to the schools with which EfA works on projects.

The children were enthusiastic and learned to identify mammals with the help of the booklet during their environmental workshops in Moreomaoto.

The educational material will also be used in other regions of Botswana.

Further joint projects are planned for the coming year with Elephants for Africa and the local NGO Cheetah Conservation Botswana.

Further camps lasting several days are planned in Makgadikgadi National Park for the participants of the Junior Ranger Programme under the supervision of Elephants for Africa education officers on the topic of "Human-Wildlife Conflict", among others.

#### 5. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION:

## Support of local young trainers

The Knyphausen Foundation has been cooperating with the charitable foundation StartUp4Kids since 2021. The "Happy Green Botswana" project was founded and expanded together.

There is a regular dialogue to establish joint projects for extracurricular educational work in the region on the topic of environmental protection and sustainability.

Together, young people are supported in their vocational and further training. Workshops and training courses are regularly organised for them on specific environmental topics and on working with children in nature with experts. In this way, both foundations aim to create local career prospects in the field of environmental protection.

The Knyphausen Foundation plans to convert the temporary project positions of the two Junior Ranger Coordinators into permanent positions in the long term with the help of third-party funding.