



# Community Village on Farm Rustig

*abundant lifestyle  
in a natural environment*



September 2020

Prospective villagers pamphlet

*Dear Reader!*

*We are living in a rapidly changing world where we are being challenged in many unexpected ways. Challenges might feel uncomfortable at times, but they also give us great opportunities which we might have not thought of, or dared to initiate before.*

*There are solutions in the universe for us to find - we just need to recognize or imagine them and step towards these opportunities.*

*In such times, we asked ourselves: 'what exactly makes us happy'? Freedom, good food, friends, fresh air, space, spending time with like-minded people, a meaningful pursuit, sleeping under the stars ... were some of our answers.*

*This led us to realise that a way to create the above would be to live in a village, on a farm, in the form of an "Intentional Sustainable Community".*

*In our beautiful Namibia, we are many, wanting to live a happy life, in nature, enjoying a sustainable and abundant lifestyle. But only few can afford a farm ... and if indeed we can, an isolated and difficult life with never enough hours in the day often ends up being not so joyous...*

**BIG**  
things  
often have small  
beginnings



*We intend the village to enable a co-existence of old and young, a life in a sustainable and regenerating environment, sharing the workload, endeavouring to grow organic food, living and working according to permaculture principles and enjoying each other's support in all of life's facets.*

*Our founding team came together early in 2020... in time for the Covid crisis. As of September 2020, we are 5 families, mostly german-speaking Namibians, involved in the process of converting our common dream into reality!*

*Now that we are clearer on the way forward and have done some of the paperwork to give structure to the dream, we are ready to open up to new villagers.*

*The purpose of this document is to share our ideas, so a larger public can have a first impression on what we are setting out to create, how we see the village functioning, etc.*

*And although there is still much to learn and explore, if what you read here talks to you, please get in touch :) !*

*The founding team*

# Vision

We are a thriving community living an abundant lifestyle in harmony with our natural environment.

# Mission

Our eco-village is based on permaculture principles, enabling lifestyle balance, respectful freedom, meaningful connection to nature, ourselves and each other.

We are a passionate and energetic team which takes ownership in creating the world we want to live in. Through this process we experience uplifting transformation in our own lives.

We inspire and support others with our knowledge and wisdom enabling them to create similar sustainable safe havens around the world.

# Aims

The *Farm Rustig Village* is (according to our knowledge) the first intentional community in Namibia:

We create a peaceful haven for a vibrant community of young and old in our sustainable village. For some it will be a permanent family home, for others it will be a part time option, until they move there permanently.

All activities on the farm have as little negative environmental impact as possible, while we strive to regenerate the land!



## Location

We envision that the village will be situated within a 1.5 hours drive from Windhoek, in a scenic and quiet area where the landscape is inspiring. Dordabis, Kalahari, Seeis, Nina, Hochfeld, Summerdown are the potential areas where we are most keen to find land.

The farm should have enough vegetation to provide firewood and shade and also have enough ground water to grow food without using too much irrigation. The farm should have at least one good borehole. Once we have found the perfect piece of land for our project, we are open to various options on how to acquire it - long term lease, part purchase, full purchase, etc.



## Housing

Our homes will be built essentially using recycled material and natural occurring resources such as wood, rock, clay and sand. With these materials, we can build stunning modern homes with all the compelling comforts.

Grey water systems, dry toilets, solar panels, passive housing techniques, all will be experimented and encouraged. The houses may be fenced in if you wish so.

We will have communal work and social areas.

The homes are within easy walking distance to the central communal area. However, we will also plant hedges and build palisade screens in order to ensure privacy for the inhabitants, where needed.

In the first village, the houses do not need to be uniform. Rather, we want to explore the use of different materials and building styles in order to add to the knowledge base of what works best.

Some houses may be earthship structures, some hexagonal, some rondavels, some domes, some standard rectangles, even some container housing, some built into the dunes ... the possibilities are endless, as long as the constructions blend into the essentially recycled and sustainable concept. We will also pay attention to harmonising them visually.





## Permaculture

A further goal is to follow the permaculture principles, allowing the villagers to live off the land, using sustainable but also regenerative agricultural practices, to generate healthy foods.

We will follow the concepts of nutrient cascading, i.e using the waste of one part as an input in another. Examples include using coffee grounds to grow mushrooms, the waste of that is chicken feed, whose waste in turn is a lick for cows and a base for the meal worms we will grow, to feed our fish, whose waste in turn fertilises the veggies in our greenhouse.



## Income, trade, exchange

The idea is to be as self-sustainable as possible so we can produce as much of what we need for ourselves. Yet we are no island, and would still fit in the larger society, which also means having the financial means to interact with future potential villages and/or the classical marketplaces.

To generate income there are many creative possibilities!

Some ideas are:

- volunteerism based tourism
- hydroponic barley system to feed sheep
- cutting grass for own use and to sell
- offering educational courses and online classes

- offering accommodation to long stay tourist interested in such a concept
- sell of excess produce of vegetable, milk products etc. to neighbours or a local market
- organizing festivals
- selling of arts & crafts to be sold
- riding excursions
- donations and much more

All villagers will contribute some working hours to the community, in some form or capacity. The goal is to have as little input for a maximum output for the community.

Although everyone is expected to work some hours for the community, we are also free to continue with our own private activities, separately from the community.

Income generated within the community will be managed by all, for the benefit of all; while privately generated income - outside the community - remains that individual's privilege.



# Membership

According to research by Martin Seligman, humans are happiest when:

- They live in a **trusted community** of max 50-70 similar people
- Have **time for family** and friends
- Have a **high level of equality** in terms of wealth, culture, rituals and values
- They are in tune with and **close to nature**
- With **meaningful employment** (something meaningful to do)
- If they can **give back** to nature/others

It is exactly in light of the above that we want to build our own intentional community on a farm, and these needs drive our vision and mission.

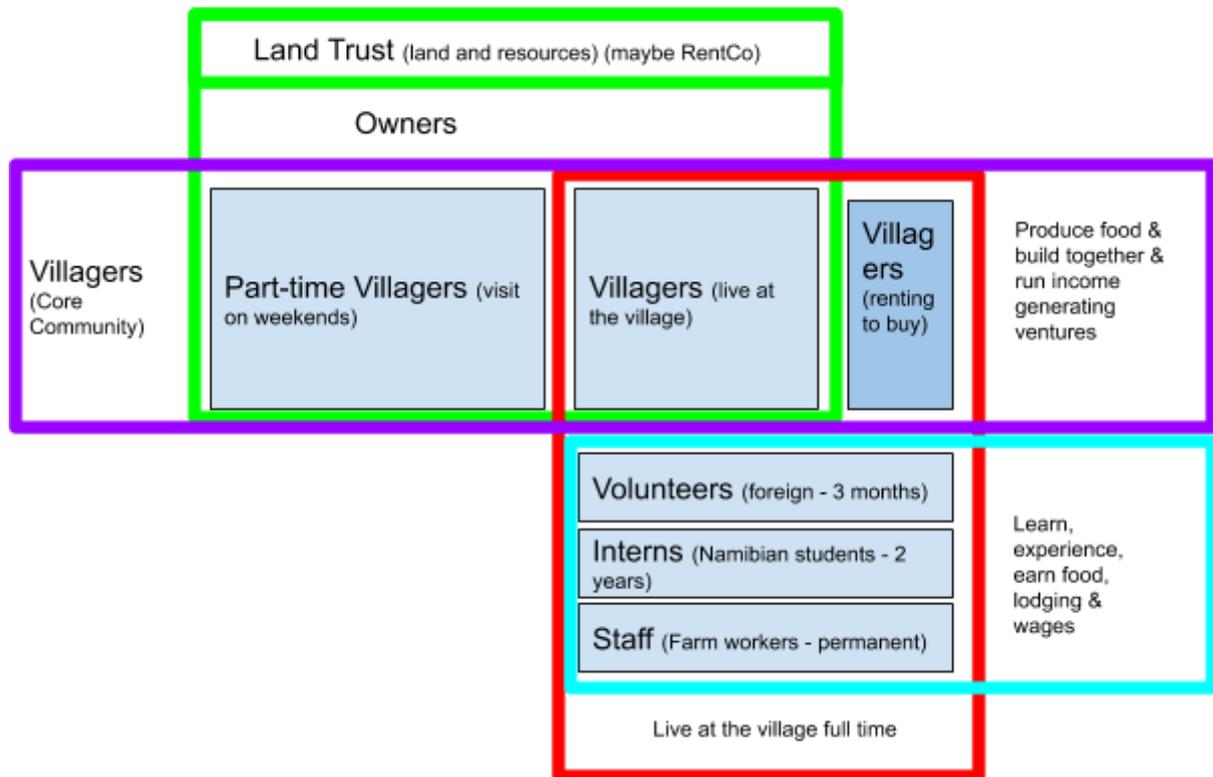
Ideally we intend to start off the community with 10 to 12 parties - one party being either a family, a couple or an individual.

To ensure the stability of the community, all villagers need to feel at home with the vision and mission of the village, and will have to go through a selection process to join the village. Our aim is not to be exclusive but rather to ensure villagers have sufficiently common values, goals and approaches to 'gel together'. Within this common life vision, variety, different walks of life, complementary skills and valuing of everyone's uniqueness will be a strength.

Once part of the community, decisions will be taken on a consent basis following a structured process where everyone's voice is heard.

Decisions are only implemented if everyone is ok with them and only if they forward our mission. We do not follow a democratic process where a minority can be continuously overruled!

There are well researched processes to follow to enable consent decision making, and our founding team is getting training in and practicing this wonderful method which ensures everyone's point of view is taken into account, until all can fully agree or at the very least consent to a decision taken by the group.



Size of blocks does NOT reflect the number of people...

## Structure

Our high level envisioned operational structure has two main components:

### 1. A Land Trust

The land trust is the custodian of the land, it manages ownership, resources and infrastructure.

- a. **Owners** are those that have a share in the trust.
- b. All shares in the trust are equal, there is not one share which has a higher value than the other. The value of the land and infrastructure is split amongst a limited number of equal shares.
- c. Legal entities can be owners but the controlling shareholder must be a villager of the community.
- d. Outsiders cannot have ownership control.
- e. If a villager passes away or wants to leave the community, then he/she can sell the share, but the

new owner must apply for villagership and must be approved by the community prior to joining. In this way the community can ensure that only villagers, that fit into the community, will live in it.

2. **The Village Co-op** manages the operations happening at the village. It handles all aspects, such as, but not limited to: work, production, income of the shared projects, events, visitors, accommodation, school, etc.
  - a. **Villagers** are all those adults and kids over 12 years old who live full time or part time in the village.
  - b. Villagers are approved after a transparent and fair application and selection process.
  - c. Each adult villager has a voice at the village co-op.
  - d. Our decision making follows the consent process.
  - e. The village should consist of a well functioning ratio of young vs old and those that actively work at the village vs the part time villagers.
  - f. For the sense of community to develop and grow, each villager needs to work in and for the co-op for a certain amount of hours per week / month - depending on the fact if he / she is a full time or part time villager. Every party will have a specific fulfilling role to play.
  - g. There will be a levy to be paid to the co-op either in “time dollars” and “real dollars”. The “real dollar” levy is used to compensate those who work more than others in/on the village. It allows those that cannot be at the village (i.e only want a weekend house) to still contribute significantly by paying their share in “real dollars” only.
  - h. Those villagers, who might not have the capital to join into the land trust, can rent a house and pay their way through with “time dollars”.

- i. Once the village's ventures are fully operational, the needed income for the community can be earned through these communal businesses and thus villages will no longer be required to pay a cash levy. On the other hand, those that only come on weekends will still need to pay a cash levy to pay those that do all the work, whether these are the villages themselves or paid farm workers or farm managers.

Parties interested in becoming owner of the land trust and / or a villager, can apply to become villagers, and existing villagers must then approve the new villagers, who also have to go through a probation period.

## Owners / Villagers contribution

Acquiring land can be prohibitively expensive, but as a group it is possible. In order to be able to buy a farm and build infrastructure, each owner family will contribute N\$ 1.5 million as a startup contribution. We also wish to make it possible for villagers, who are a great fit and have valuable skills, but may not have as much money available to join. Talk to us about how we can do this.

During our startup a monthly family contribution of +- N\$ 2,000 is envisaged to provide start-up capital.

Much of this can be earned back through the production happening on the land.

# Thank you

We are laying the foundation for the first intentional community in Namibia and are now ready for more villagers to join us on this exciting venture into an abundant lifestyle in harmony with each other and nature.

Please have a look at our webpage <https://ecovillagenam.org/> and contact us for any further information, or give us a call:

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