

Participation of basin stakeholders through transboundary river basin institutions

a case study from the Okavango River Basin

**Felix Monggae
KCS- Botswana**

What is the Every River..



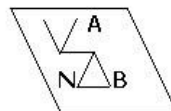
ACADIR
Angola



- The ***Every River has its People*** project is a unique initiative of shared river basin management approach.
 - It is “people centered”
 - Looks at the management of the river basin in its entirety
 - Realizes the ecological diversity and the uses thereof, both existing and potentially



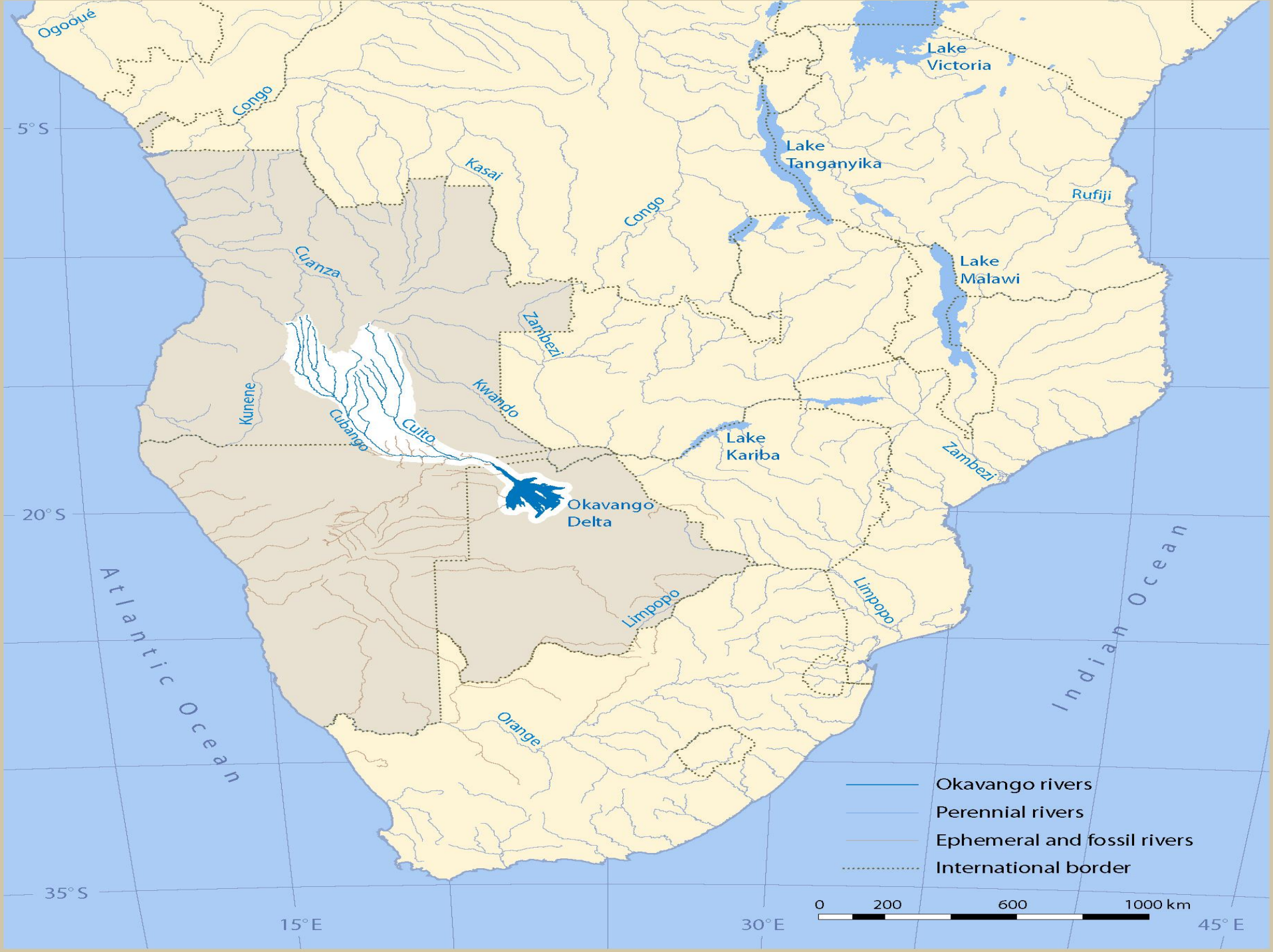
Project Under
the auspices of:



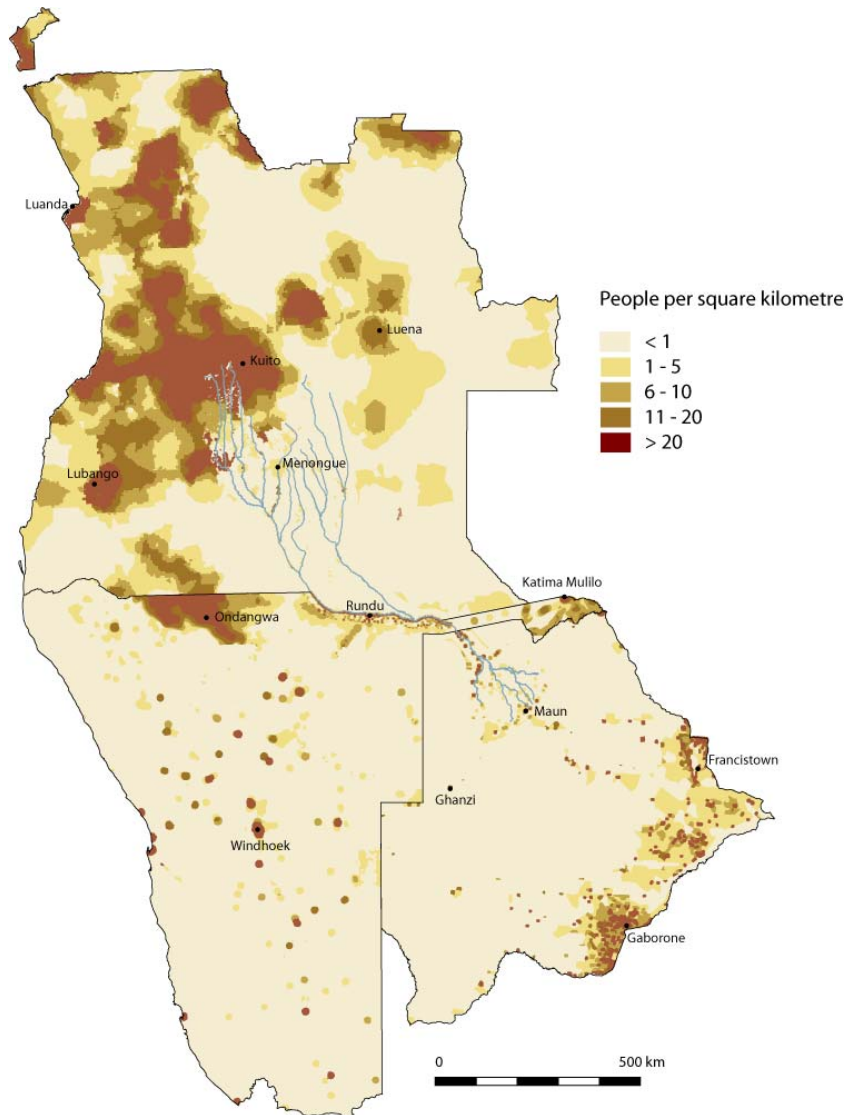
OKACOM

Funded by:





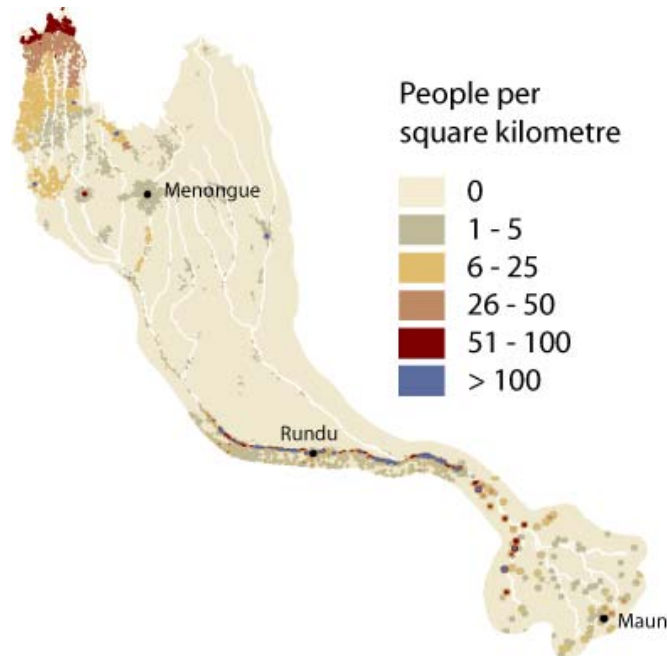
Remote from centres of influence and markets



Okavango basin supports
some 600,000 people

Okavango basin
Commission established
(OKACOM) between the
three countries to advise
the governments on the
management &
development of the basin

The Okavango is comparatively pristine



Angola issues are different



Legal framework within the basin

International Framework

- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
- United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- Helsinki Rules of 1966
- United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigable Uses of International Watercourses (UNCSTW) - United Nations (UN) International Law Commission's (ILC) 33 Draft Articles
- etc

Regional Framework

- **Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems in the Southern African Development Region (1995)** – the aim is to develop the policy to monitor use of shared watercourses and formulate strategies for the development of shared watercourse systems.
- **The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM), 1994** which is an agreement between Angola, Botswana and Namibia to ensure that the water resources of the Okavango River, as a unique watercourse are managed in an appropriate and sustainable way for the benefit of the trio partners,

Actors in basin management

- Levels
 - Local
 - Catchment/sub-catchment
 - Provincial/Basin
 - National
 - Transboundary/Regional
- Stakeholders of basin
 - Managers
 - Users
 - Regulators
 - Facilitators
- Interests
 - Competing uses
 - Complementary uses
 - Single vs multiple uses
 - Sovereignty and national development
 - Room for collaboration?

From Conception to Implementation

• A **reconnaissance** stage

- Info **gathering** and **interpretation** eg Community workshops, exchange visits, consultancies, existing material such as OKACOM material

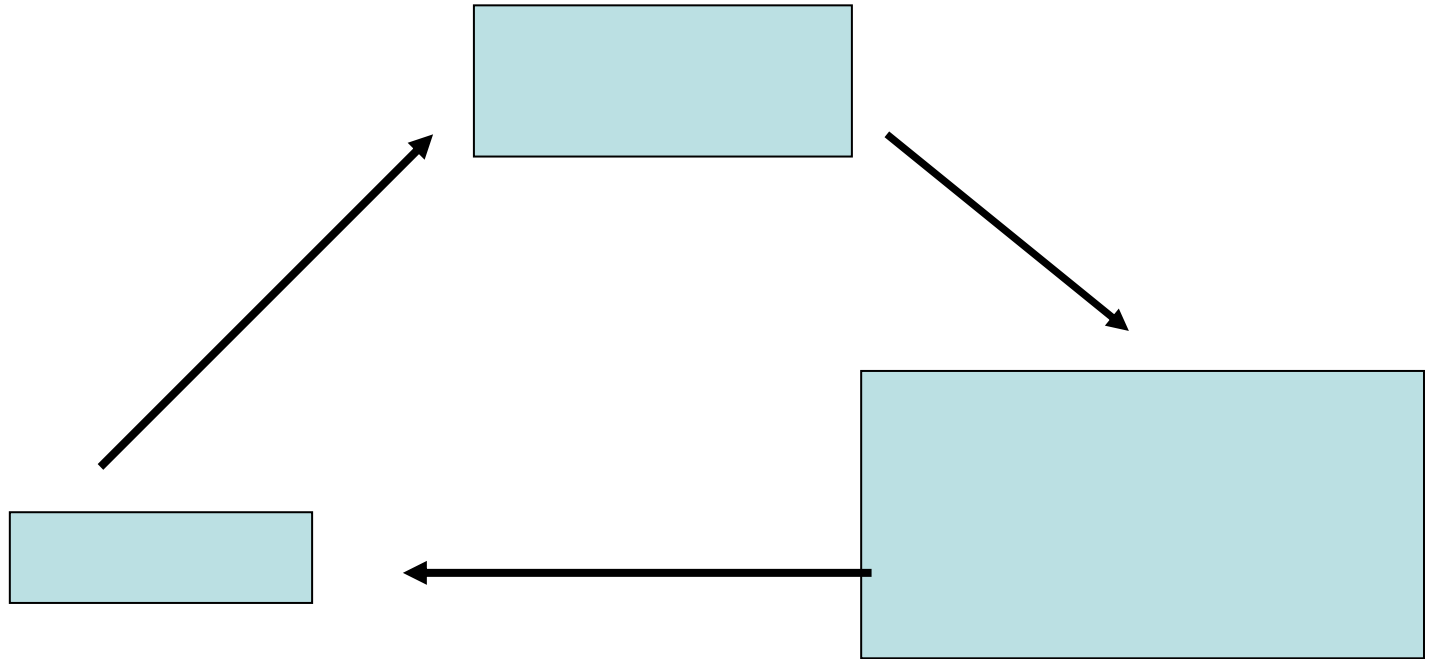
- Info **distribution** and **sharing** - eg interaction with communities thru BWF, workshops, training & OKACOM pamphlets, Booklets, book, web site, etc

- **Links** with Relevant institutions eg OKACOM, Governments departments, other NGOs and other initiatives

- **Formulation**/CBOS, trusts, consevan
cies, watch dog role

- Conception
(ideological formation)
- Inception
(Consultation and partnership
identification)
- Implementation
(Achievements &
challenges)

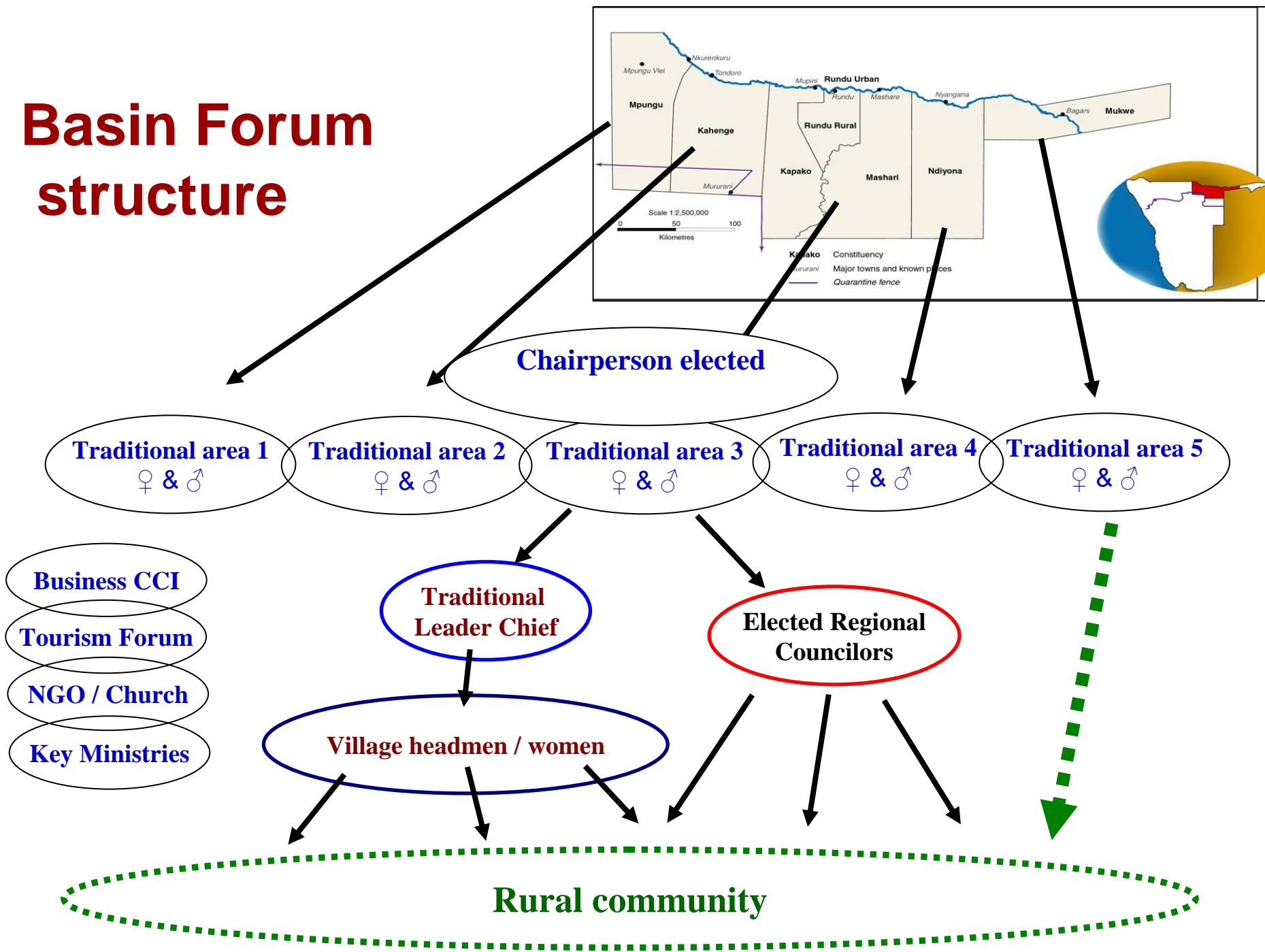
Basic learning Feedback Loop



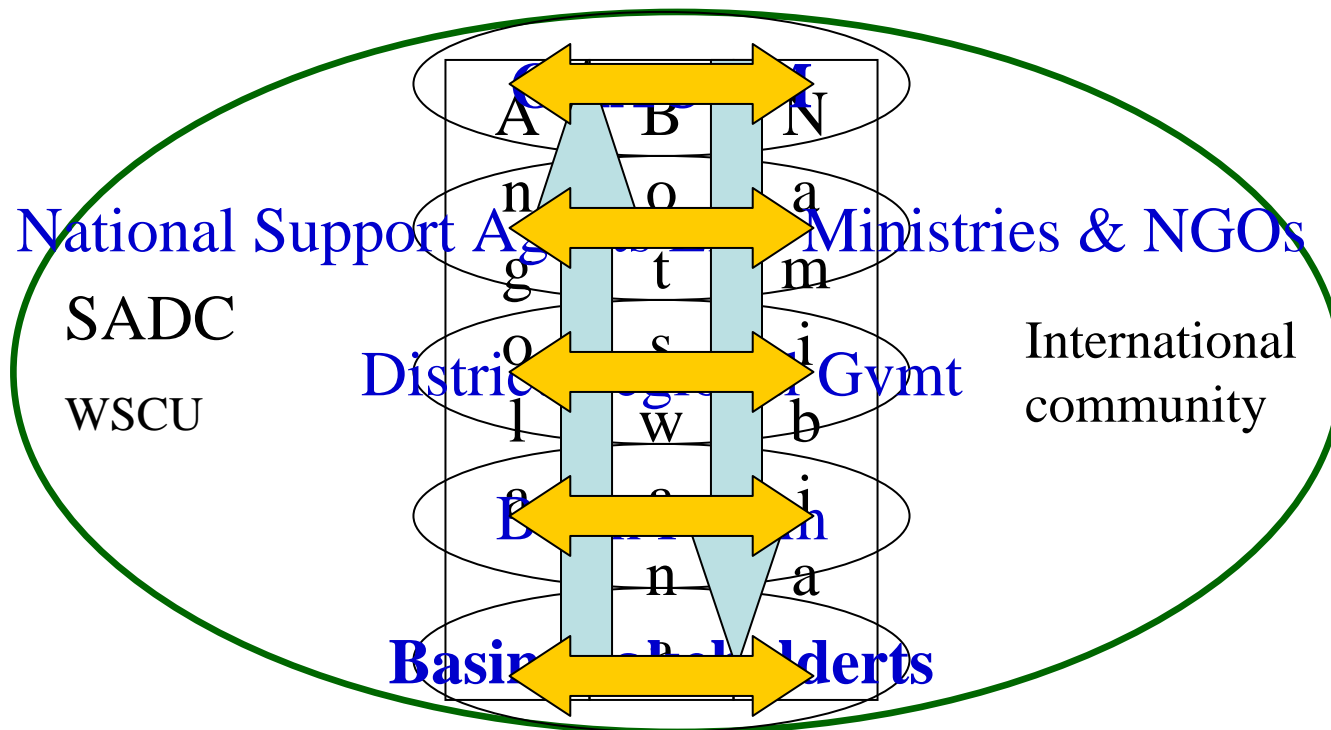
Basin-wide Stakeholder Forum

- ✓ Established in each country as local-national levels
 - 10 per country, 2 per traditional authority, report to chief & RC
- ✓ Established at Basin-wide level
- ✓ Quarterly meetings held on a country level
- ✓ Basin-wide meetings held twice per year
 - national chairs in contact more frequently (attend national events)
- ✓ 1st Forum meeting with some Commissioners -2003
 - initial discussions of roles & expectations - chair of BwF to attend OKACOM meetings, Forum to invite OKACOM to events
- ✓ Forum feeds back to stakeholders via Traditional Authorities, village headmen and via elected Regional Councillors, and by making extensive use of local radios where possible
- ✓ Forum members also help drive and facilitate ERP programme

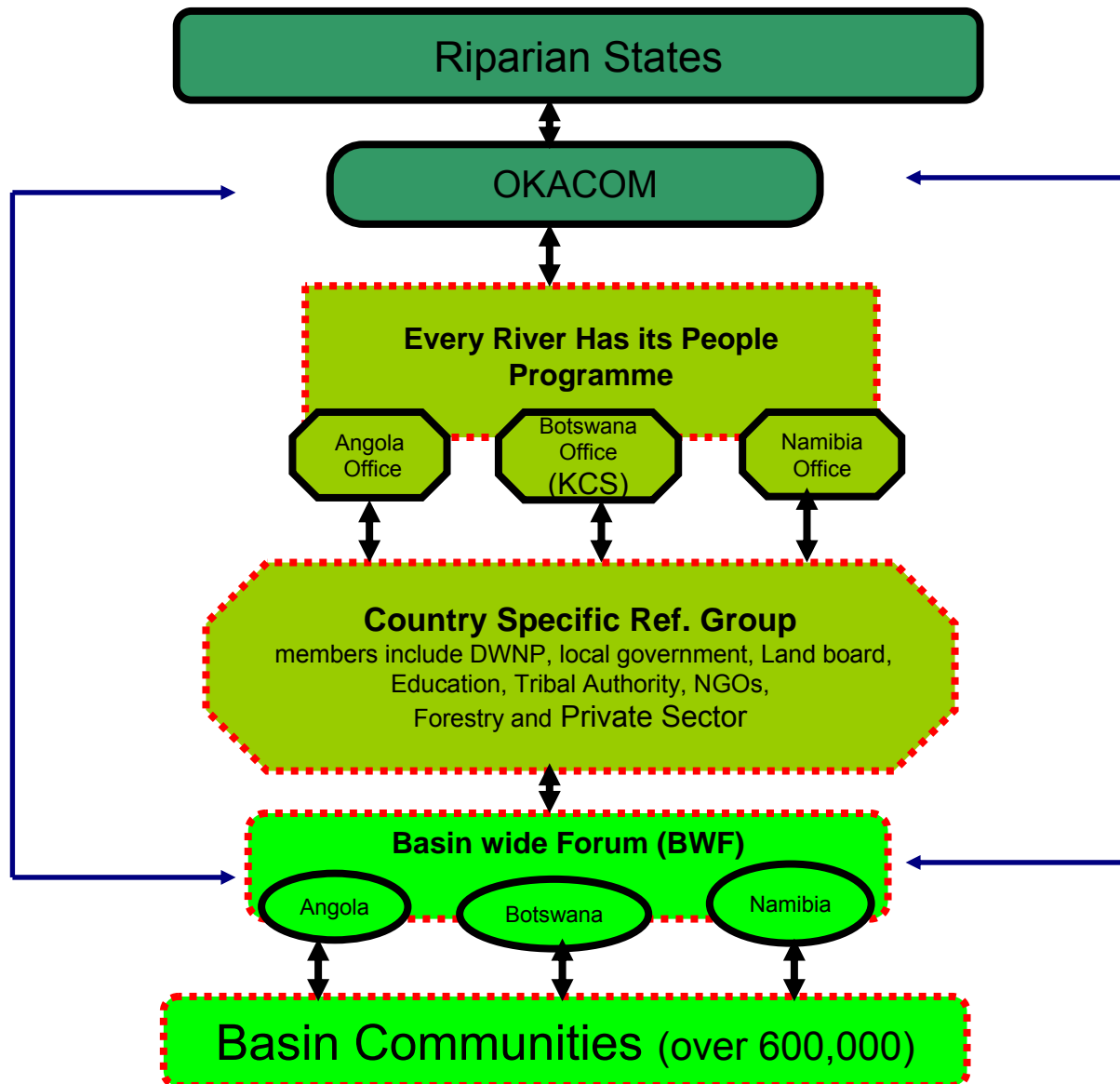
Basin Forum structure



Effective linkages/networks between different stakeholders



Structure in the Okavango



Mechanisms / Tools that promoted/facilitated community participation

- The basin's institutional structures were established where necessary and developed where they already existed.
- (BWF), which was established as a means to ensure representation of communities across the basin in decision-making
- BWF and Okacom Commissioners agreed and signed a framework for constructive two-way interaction
- through these linkages that policy makers (such as Okacom) take into consideration communities aspirations and in a similar way communities get to know the Commission's plans
- Other established structures include basin reference groups, which are at a national level and being technical groups
- Basin-wide Project Advisory Committee BPAC
- Institutional structures that already existed include traditional authority structures, village development and farmers committees, fisheries and forestry associations, cultural groups, etc

Step by step participatory tools

- Introduce the concept of Community Catchment Forums during surveys/ information exchange interactions
- **In consultations with communities, design representative structure**
- Facilitate appointment/election of representatives to the Community Catchment Forum in each riparian country and to the Basin-Wide Forum
- **Formalize Community Catchment Forum in each riparian country**
- Facilitate the development of goals and priority actions for each Forum
- **Introduce the Basin-Wide Forum to the Commission**
- Develop collaborative guidelines
- **Hold first Basin-Wide Forum meeting**
- Capacity building and awareness creation

Opportunities and long term benefits of the institutions

Resource managers:

- Trusts /conservancies
 - With the trusts and conservancies communities take the responsibility of management NR within their conservancy area.
- Agro-forestry
- Aquaculture
- Participate in weeds control
- Education within basin schools

Community voluntary service



PHYSICAL PICKING



Community enterprise

- Community tour operation
 - Community camp sites
 - Cultural tourism
- Craft development
 - Develop and market together their products
 - Recently held exhibitions
 - Marketing of the basin and basin products

Okavango experiences – **Take home**

for effective stakeholder participation in transboundary river basin management (and working towards co-management), we need some common anchor points within a very dynamic and adaptive approach:

- Shared Vision across basin (horizontal) and between stakeholders and Commission (OKACOM): e.g. “**Basin stakeholders actively and effectively participate with the OKACOM in the co-management and development of the basin, for enhanced livelihoods and sustainable development**”
- Basic level of Information amongst commissioners & stakeholders
- Open, transparent, timely and two way Communication across basin - horizontal and vertical

- **Appropriate Institutional Mechanisms at local, regional, national and basin-wide levels, including for project delivery – and use existing mechanism where these exist**
- **Strategic capacity building for partnerships and co-management at all levels, including commissioners**
- **Develop shared agenda based on agreed priority issues, addressing (a) root problems, (b) devolution of rights over natural resources for their improved management, and (c) integrated livelihoods-based enterprises. Don't be fixated just on water issues. Wise use of the basin and all its resources is what is needed.**

Within the structure of these anchor points (plus principles of good transparent governance), allow for a very flexible, dynamic and adaptive approach and rolling plan of action.

Implications of the Challenges

- We have to meet the felt/real needs of the communities and not what we perceive to be their needs
- **Indigenous Knowledge is important to recognize in understanding situations within community set-up especially when subsequent measures are to operate with the set-up**
- Overlooking community priorities can lead to apathy on the whole project process.
- **There is still a lot that need to be interrogated to answer the challenges in the basin**
- Sustainability of the programme beyond funding
- **Not all communities playing a role**
- Communities too demanding/ liberal
- **Process too expensive/ cross border nature**

Objectives
Partners
The Project
Pinboard
News

EVERY RIVER



Results
Products
Working Documents
Comments
Links

HAS its PEOPLE

For more information please visit our web site
- in both English & Portuguese -

<http://www.everyriver.net>