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**NAMIBIA**

## CASE STUDY

# Fighting Livestock Theft — And Winning

### Grassroots efforts improve police and community response to crime



Photo: Sandi Tjaronda, NID

Members of Ditsa-I-Mu, based in an office in Khorixas, have successfully reduced livestock theft.

***In 2004, the number of reported stock-theft cases dropped 62 percent from the previous year.***

### Challenge

Poaching and livestock theft are common crimes in Namibia's rural areas, depriving farmers of their primary source of income. Due to a lack of staff and vehicles, the Namibian police are often unable to prevent stock-theft, which has undermined communities' confidence in the rule of law.

### Initiative

USAID supported the establishment of the Ditsa-I-Mu Stock-Theft Prevention Organization in 2003 to work with communities in the Kunene and Omusati regions. To help the police combat stock theft Ditsa-I-Mu supplements their equipment and advocates harsher sentences for convicted criminals. The organization also provides paralegal advice to farmers so that they won't take the law into their own hands when dealing with stock thieves. Through its fieldworkers, Ditsa-I-Mu established close contact with communities' farmers and traditional leaders, documented problems and compiled proposals to combat stock theft and illegal hunting in the region. The findings were submitted to the Kunene Regional Council and the Khorixas Police Station Commander, while local residents led a rally to entreat the police to pay more attention to stock theft and illegal hunting.

### Results

In 2004, the number of reported stock-theft cases dropped 62 percent from the previous year. Ditsa-I-Mu has increased public awareness of and response to crime, encouraging citizen arrests of poachers and holding regular meetings between community members and the police to follow-up on reports of stock theft. New systems, such as requiring permits for the movement of livestock, have been implemented to ensure that transactions between consumers and producers are legal.

#### Telling Our Story

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