



MILLENNIUM  
CHALLENGE CORPORATION  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Success Story

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## A Dream Come True for Namibian Students

“A dream come true!”

These were the emotional words of Tunomukwathi Angula when she received her tour-guide certificate in March. The 26-year-old woman is one of 47 Namibians who successfully completed a training course funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) that allows graduates to lead tourist groups through the country’s deserts and national parks.

For the past 14 months, Angula and her classmates learned a variety of skills related to working in the tourism industry, including language and communications skills and knowledge of local plant and animal life. Within two weeks of her graduation, Angula received a job offer with a Namibian tour operator.

The grant that allowed Angula and the other students from remote provinces of northern Namibia to attend the course is part of MCC’s five-year, \$304.5 million compact with Namibia. The grant was provided through the compact’s Education Project and is also linked to the Tourism Project, which aims to improve the management and infrastructure of Etosha National Park, enhance the marketing of Namibian tourism and develop the capacity of communal conservancies to attract investments in ecotourism and increase their revenue.

MCC is investing in the Namibian tourism sector because of its potential to drive economic growth and reduce poverty. The Tourism Project is expected to benefit more than 168,000 people and raise household income almost \$44 million over the next 20 years.

Tourism is Namibia’s second-most lucrative industry after mining—yet its potential is underutilized. The compact is supporting the upgrade of tourism facilities to cater to the needs of visitors from overseas and the expansion of training courses to develop professional skills in the field of hospitality and tour guiding.



Tunomukwathi Angula says that the training she received is “a dream come true.”

The Tourism Project recognizes that sustainable management of natural resources—along with policies that promote partnerships between communities and the private sector—can generate substantial employment and benefits for rural communities. The tourism and education projects aim to create an educated labor force that can help implement and disseminate information about conservation best practices.



Namibian tour guide trainees stop and listen during familiarization field trip.

The training course provided an opportunity for Angula and the other students to study crucial topics like English, flora, fauna, and geology. The class included 13

women, as well as members from the Ovahimba, a vulnerable indigenous minority group.

During their skills and competency training, the students needed to prove themselves in their future professional environment by working for three months in Namibia's vast rural areas, surrounded by beautiful landscapes and abundant plants and animals.

Some participants came with previous experience in the tourism industry but lacked the financial resources to obtain a nationally recognized guiding certificate. Almost half of the students found employment with Namibian tour operators either during the course of the training program or within weeks of its completion.

MCC's compact with Namibia is only in its third year, but already it is helping create sustainable opportunities for local community members hailing from some of the most isolated areas of the country.