



Farmers harvest water

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by Absalom Shigwedha

FARMERS from Okandjira village at Ovitoto in the Otjozondjupa region have embarked on rainwater harvesting to grow vegetables.

The initiative was spearheaded by the director of the Women Solidarity Namibia, Rosa Namises, and funded by Pallium, a German NGO.

According to Alex Jokisch of the University of Darmstadt in Germany – which is involved in the project – farmers were trained by two Kenyan water experts, Isaac Kariuki and Joseph Macura from OneWorld Consultants.

“They constructed water storage tanks, a greenhouse for growing tomatoes, green peppers and shades to protect the vegetables from direct sunlight,” he said.

He said eleven community members received training and are now running the facilities. The vegetables are for sale and for their own consumption.

Kariuki and Macura were recruited by Pallium, however, a team from Pallium was also involved in the construction.

Jokisch said rainwater harvesting for gardening have also benefited rural communities at Epyeshona, Iipopo and the University of Namibia's Ongwediva campus.

The rain water or water from flooded rivers is stored in tanks or ponds and can then be used during dry seasons.

In the north, CuveWaters trained villagers on harvesting rainwater and flood water and started small-scale gardens. The CuveWaters project worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry.

The ministry's directorate of water supply and sanitation co-ordination also runs a project to construct and rehabilitate earth dams in the regions. The project started in 2008 and is aimed at harvesting rainwater for livestock and for vegetable gardens.

The department also rehabilitated traditional wells and pans, according to Jeffrey Kandjii, the chief control engineering technician in the directorate.

