

## Unsung Heroes of the Field: Safeguarding Rhinos in Kunene

In the vast expanse of Kunene, where black rhinos roam freely in communal conservancies, a remarkable team of unsung heroes are tirelessly working to protect these majestic creatures. The success stories we witness today are the direct result of the unwavering commitment and collaboration between the conservancies, local communities, Namibian Police (Nampol), Save the Rhino Trust (SRT), and the dedicated Rhino Support Team from the Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC).

Tate Fares Kangombe, a team leader, and Kaurorua Tjavara are the unsung heroes. These two extraordinary individuals form an integral part of the rhino team, traversing an average distance of 2,261 kilometers per month. Kaurorua, proudly donning his traditional Himba attire during patrols, stands tall with a deep sense of pride in his contribution to rhino conservation. Their passion for their work stems from their love for rhinos and a burning desire to ensure future generations can witness these magnificent creatures. Their ultimate wish is to witness an increase in rhino populations and put an end to the menace of rhino poaching.

Regular awareness meetings are held with local communities to actively engage them in rhino conservation efforts. These meetings serve as platforms for sharing information on rhino sightings, tracks, carcasses, and suspicious vehicle or human activities. Tracking rhinos is no easy task, as these creatures cover vast distances in search of food and water. Challenges arise in some areas where rhinos become skittish at the sight of vehicles or people, prompting the team to conduct additional awareness talks in those specific regions.

The dedication and hard work of these unsung heroes are crucial in safeguarding the future of rhinos in Kunene. They are the silent protectors, ensuring the survival of these iconic animals for generations to come. Let us recognize and salute Tate Fares, Tate Kaurorua Tjavara, and the entire rhino team for their tireless efforts in preserving the rhino population and actively involving local communities in this vital conservation mission.