

## Lower Olifants Community Health Risks and Opportunities

Learning how communities in the Lower Olifants catchment battle environmental pollution for a healthier tomorrow



Communities living near the Olifants River face environmental pollution risks and their health may be threatened.

### **FEEDBACK:**

We have spent some time with you talking about the problems you have with water and pollution in your community, and are now telling you some of the things we have found. Because science takes a long time to do we only have preliminary results but we will give you final results in April 2014. We are busy doing tests and analysis at the moment, but we wanted to give you some feedback so long, so that you know we are still working on the project!

### **Preliminary water findings in Botshabelo:**

Tests and analysis	Preliminary result	You need to worry	Do not worry, but keep-up your good practices
Testing for chemicals	Results so far show that there are no bad chemicals in the water that poses a health concern		
Testing for <i>E. coli</i>	The river water showed high counts of <i>E. coli</i> and untreated water may cause infections when consumed		

### **What should you do?**

People should not use the river water for domestic purposes unless they boil the water, add chlorine tablets, or use a filtration system before drinking it. We also tested water that was obtained from springs or small streams in the region. These sources seem to provide better quality water, with little risk of infection for those that drink it. It would be better to use these alternative sources for domestic purposes rather than the polluted river water.

### **Social research preliminary findings:**

We have been supported by Mr Malapane who is a local Headman or *induna* in Botshabelo. Mr Malapane highlighted that the village faced many water related challenges specifically with regards to their water sources and the condition of these sources. The main issues he mentioned were severe pollution of the river water, and unreliable water from taps. Because of the unreliability of these water sources people tend to either draw water from the river itself or buy water from water sellers.

We are happy to report that the Botshabelo Water Anti-pollution Committee has been established and that they are doing excellent work to prevent further pollution in the village!

## Project Timeline

Apr 2012-Jan 2013

- Project conceptualisation
- Case-study selection



Feb 2013

- Project introduction
- Data Collection



March 2013

- Data analysis on data from households surveys



**Currently (May 2013)**

- Community feedback
- Water samples



December 2013

- Water risk assessment
- Air quality check



April 2014

- Final report & feedback