



**Kutlwano Makwatse- PhD student under Kalahari Research and Conservation. Conservation through and by Empowering Communities in the Kgalagadi.**



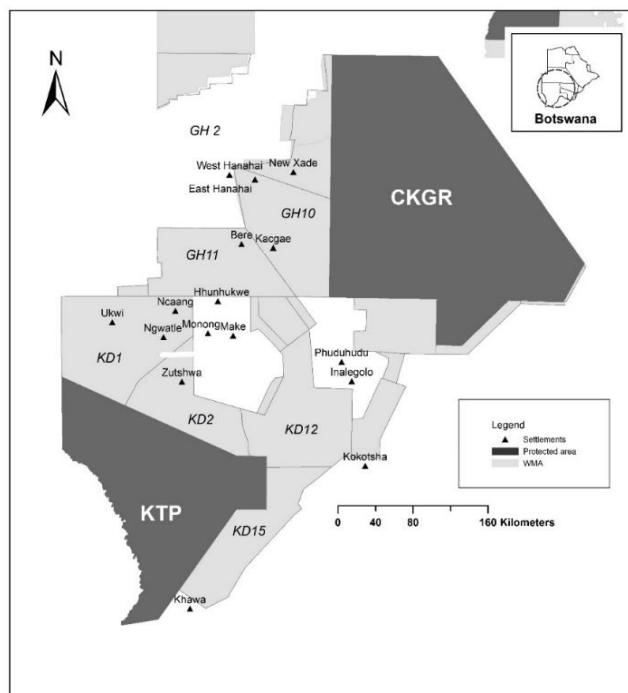
I am Kutlwano Makwatse, a 27-year-old Motswana woman born in Kasane and raised in Francistown, the second capital city of Botswana in the North Eastern side. My home village is Mahalapye, a village in the central part of Botswana. My interest in wildlife management, or conservation was indistinct as I started my academic journey. As I progressed, I started having interest in issues surrounding the environment and their implications (whether negative or positive) and how they affect those living in or around it; that is the interaction between human and the environment.

My second degree amplified my curiosity in wildlife conservation through courses that I undertook such a “Wildlife Management and Tourism”. I started to realize how much I had overlooked such an important component of the economy. Being born and raised in Botswana, I know how much my country cherishes the tourism sector, which largely is wildlife based. I found it fitting to explore this phenomena further, hence why part of my PhD will explore ways in which lions could be conserved using a Conservation Performance Payment

approach. My broad PhD Title is ***“Designing, Implementing and Evaluating a Community Conservation Performance Payment (CCPP) project in the Kgalagadi region of Botswana.”***

The CCPP project will be used to address the threat of livestock encroachment into the wilderness areas of KD1 and KD2. We will do this by rewarding the community with financial payments if their livestock is herded responsibly and kept away from areas allocated by the community for wildlife. We will also pay the community for photographs of carnivores they capture on camera traps in the area. These funds will go towards compensating farmers for livestock that has been killed by predators.

I have realized that involving communities (men, women, children, the disabled) in any conservation effort is key. Areas that are wildlife prone and are also habitats for people may cause conflict between humans and wildlife. It is therefore important to ensure that communities in those areas realise the importance of wildlife conservation as an economic tool while simultaneously embracing their cultural practices such as livestock rearing. This study aims to revive the idea of human and wildlife co-existence and ensuring that community’s benefit from their conservation efforts.



**Figure One:** Our project area KD1, KD2 (19100 km<sup>2</sup>) in relation to the KTP and the CKGR. KD1 has three small communities contained within it, Ukwi, Ncaang and Ngwatle. KD2 has only one small village there called Zutshwa.



**Figure 2:** Kutlwano giving the Ngwatle residents a talk on gender dynamics in conservation.

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