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“Solidarity in a competing world —
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Effects of Wildlife Crop Raiding on Livelihoods of Khumaga, Boteti-Sub District, Botswana

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Abstract

Human wildlife interaction in Boteti District, Botswana is critical. Wild animals destroy agricultural products and threaten human lives. This paper, therefore, assessed the effects of wildlife crop raiding on livelihoods of Khumaga, Boteti-Sub District, Botswana. A total of 119 arable farmers were interviewed using open and close-ended structured questionnaires. Key informant interviews were also conducted with purposively selected officials at the Department of Wildlife and National Park, the Department of Crop Production and with village leaders. Findings indicate that arable farmers at Khumaga face challenges of crop depredation by wildlife. Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), hippo (*Hippopotamus amphibious*), porcupine (*Hystrix africae australis*), monkey (*Cercopithecus aethiops*), duiker (*Sylvicapra grimmia*), jackal (*Canus mesomelas*), and kudu (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) were all considered by respondents to be problem wildlife. Wild animals destroy agricultural production at Khumaga leading to food insecurity; sometimes farmers can lose the entire field as in elephant crop raiding. In relation to crop production and loss due to wildlife crop raiding, costs incurred by arable farmers at Khumaga were also assessed. Findings indicated that crop raiding has resulted in some of the arable farmers abandoning crop farming at Khumaga village. In conclusion, decision-makers should ensure that farmers at Khumaga are protected against wildlife to improve arable farmer's livelihoods and conservation efforts at Khumaga village in Botswana.

Keywords: Conservation, crop raiding, human wildlife interaction, livelihoods, wildlife