

## Project Summary

Title	Characterization of Indigenous Legumes and their Utilization as Pure Stands or for Over-sowing of Natural Pastures
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Purpose	This project aims at strengthening the utilization of the indigenous legumes in Namibian rangelands to enhance livestock productivity.
Project Summary	Natural pastures are the predominant form of grazing for ruminants, but their crude protein can drop below 4% during the dry season, reducing digestibility and animal performance. The predominant source of crude protein in Namibian natural pasture is shrubs and trees. Improved legumes like centro, green and silver leaf desmodium, siratro, and stylo have been oversown in pastures however no such effort has been undertaken in the Namibian rangelands yet legumes are known to fix nitrogen in the soil leading to increased herbage yield, digestibility and improved quality of standing hay during the dry season. Therefore, this project seeks to strengthen the utilization of indigenous legumes in the Namibian rangelands so as to increase livestock productivity. The project will specifically; characterize indigenous forage legumes, conduct agronomic trials to select suitable accessions and determine optimal growth conditions, compare indigenous and improved legumes on the basis of yield, adaptability, persistence, disease resistance; and undertake <i>in vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> digestibility trials as well as assess animal performance at different inclusion rates with other feeds. The project will train two MSc. students and engage farmers at various levels leading multi-level outputs including enhanced farmer skills and entrepreneurship in seed production.
Country and Specific Location(s)	The semi-arid (central and eastern) and sub-humid (northern) agro-ecological zones of Namibia

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