

What is the MDP Field Practicum?

Master's of Development Practice (MDP) students spend 10-12 weeks working with communities and host organizations to address challenges in conservation and development.

Why is it Important?

Gives students the opportunity to:

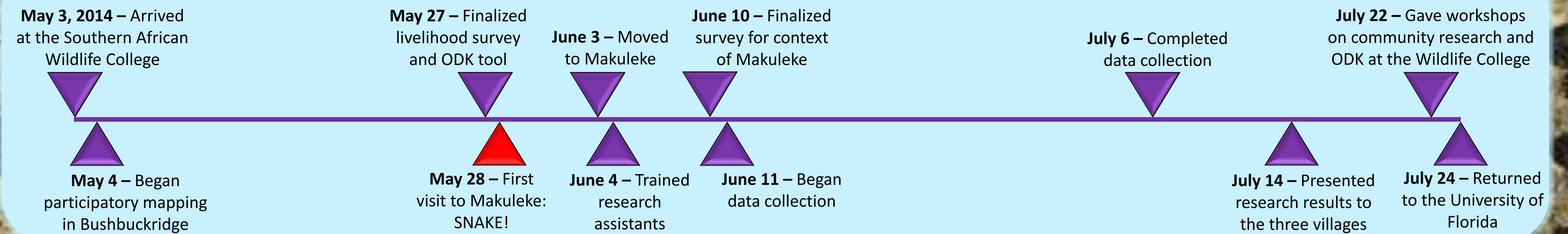
- Demonstrate skills learned in the program
- Build relationships with diverse host organizations all over the world
- Contribute to empowering communities and individuals

My Placement



Host (★): Southern African Wildlife College
Field site (★): Makuleke
Project: Assisting communities to improve equitable distribution of economic benefits from Kruger National Park

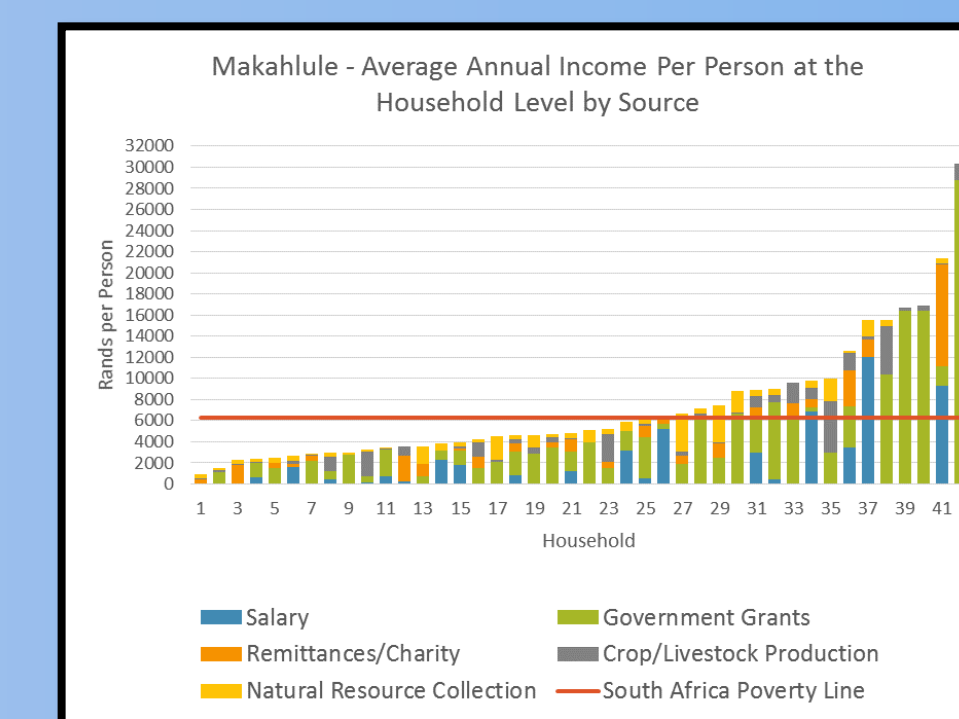
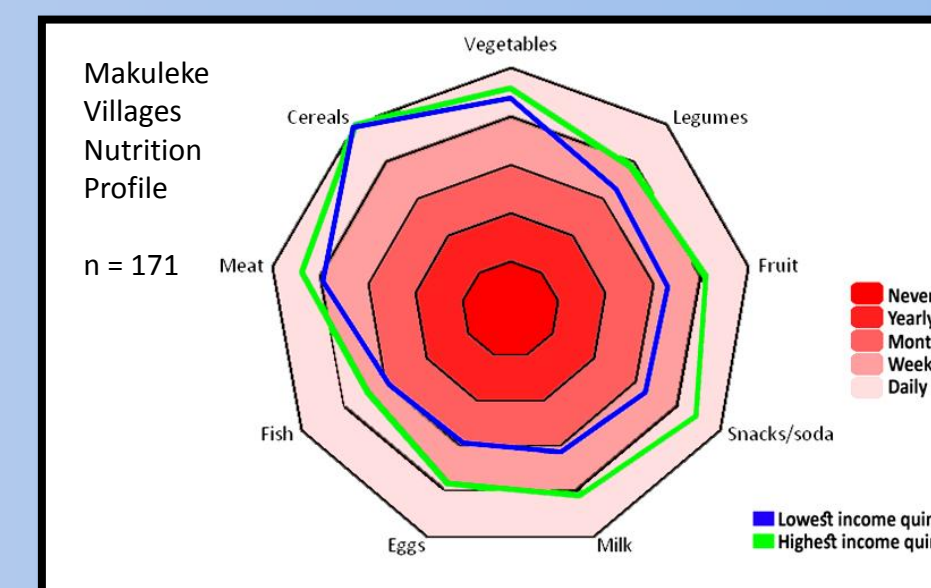
Timeline



Key Activities

1. Livelihood Survey

- ❑ Purpose: to establish a baseline for household income, nutrition, natural resource use and economic benefits from Kruger National Park
- ❑ We trained 5 local research assistants, conducted 171 surveys, and returned results to each village
- ❑ Main findings:



- We realized we had to manage our participants' expectations because many people assumed we were there to develop a community project.
- Training our local research assistants to present the results directly in their local language was more effective than having them translate for us.

2. Open Data Kit (ODK)

- ❑ Q. What is ODK?
A. Android app for electronic data collection
- ❑ We programmed the livelihood survey for use with Samsung tablet computers, collected all data electronically and trained 10 researchers in ODK
- ❑ Available for free at: <https://opendatakit.org>

- By using ODK we saved time and improved accuracy by combining the data collection and entry into one step.
- Participants were not troubled by us recording their responses electronically.



3. Program Development

- ❑ I designed tools for students and host organizations to evaluate each other and a system to improve student – host communication.

- We had a miscommunication with our host organization about the purpose of the field practicum. Agreeing on a Terms of Reference may help clarify both student and host expectations.

"Omens in Makuleke"



1. My colleague discovered an African Rock Python stuck in our toilet.



2. We met a lot of people from Makuleke who came to see the snake.



3. A few guys clubbed the snake over the head and tried to extract it from a pipe outside.



4. The snake was still stuck so they dug down and cracked open the pipe to remove the dead snake.



5. The snake wasn't dead at all, and pandemonium reigned as the enormous python woke up.



6. That night we met the Chief and learned that it is considered a good omen when travelers cross paths with a snake. He then gave us permission to begin work in the community.