

Tsodilo Hills

*Tsodilo Hills Experience Development Action Plan
prepared by Ethna Murphy of International
Development Ireland Limited ("IDI")*





Introduction

Under the framework of the Private Sector Development Partnership (PSDP), the Botswana Tourism Organisation (“BTO”) together HATAB and with the Department of National Museum & Monuments are seeking to invest in product and market development with regard to Cultural and Heritage (C&H) sites in Botswana. The Tsodilo Hills – as one of two UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Botswana – is considered to have the best prospect for the development of an experience based on the rich culture and heritage of Botswana.

In August 2015, Ms. Ethna Murphy of International Development Ireland, (“IDI Expert”) was engaged by CDE for 33 consulting days to work with key public and private stakeholders to develop a brand experience framework and marketing strategy for the Tsodilo Hills, an UNESCO World Heritage site. The main tasks and deliverables of the assignment were agreed following the completion of the first mission in September. **This document – the Tsodilo Hills Experience Development Action Plan – is the Project Document 2 of the assignment.**

Tasks and deliverables for the development of a brand experience framework and marketing strategy for the Tsodilo Hills:

- The development plan for the creation of an **iconic experience** for Tsodilo

Project Document 1: Tsodilo Hills proposition and brand experience document

- **The development of the Tsodilo visitor experience** with all stakeholders that appeals to key target market segments and that has the potential to become a must do for international visitors;

Project Document 2: Tsodilo Hills Experience Development Action Plan

- To work with local partners to recommend the development of a Tsodilo Hills **proposition that is authentic, inspirational and engenders pride in local communities**

Tsodilo Hills Partner and Stakeholder workshops , delivered in October 2015

- The provision of a **marketing and communications framework** that will guide the translation of this proposition into a set of practical marketing communications
- **Support BTO to target international markets** using existing and relevant tourism contacts to add a Tsodilo Hills experience to their visitor offer, as well as make recommendations for possible new segments and markets to target internationally.
- Provide **marketing & branding advice and recommendations** to stakeholders, public and private on how to market the Tsodilo hills to the international market

Project Document 3: Marketing & Communications Plan



Development of the Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan

The Experience Development Action plan for the Tsodilo Hills is designed to inform and guide the priorities and investment for the key Partners over the next 1 – 3 years.

The plan is informed by and draws on:

- Document 1: The Tsodilo Hills Proposition and Brand Experience prepared by IDI
- The research and information gathered by Dr Kundri Boehmer-Bauer, Anthropologist and Tourism Development Expert, who analysed and assessed the cultural and heritage significance of the hills and surrounding area and provided a range of recommendations with regard to their development as an international tourism destination
- The recommendations of the key project partners, (BTO, HATAB, DoNMM, Tsodilo Community Trust) and the many national and local stakeholders engaged with in a series of meetings and workshops that focused on the development of the Tsodilo Hills visitor experience
- The strategic approach outlined by Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO) and Department of National Museums and Monuments (DoNMM), who have identified the opportunity to grow the tourism industry in Botswana by harnessing the rich natural heritage and culture of the nation in a manner that can deliver new experiences for a variety of consumer segments from new markets
- The IDI Expert's knowledge of international best practice and experience in branding, marketing and destination development





Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan

The Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan highlights the **vital ingredients that are needed to deliver the promise to visitors on the ground**. Some of these elements have been referenced in earlier plans (i.e. a number of Integrated Management Plans' which underpinned the Core Area Management Plan of 2009) and therefore are already underway but may require reviewing and / or improving based on offering **an agreed Tsodilo Hills Proposition (Document 1)**, and others are of such significant importance that they need to be addressed within the next 6 – 12 months to ensure Tsodilo can deliver on its potential.

IDI has identified the **“Quick Wins”** that are essential to get the Tsodilo project off the ground and where possible have identified lead partners and suggested funding sources. Other recommendations and actions will require more detailed implementation plans for specific project streams, and funding will need to be identified and negotiated with delivery partners.

Successful implementation will depend on the following:

- **Involving and working with the community in implementing the plan** - they underpin what makes Tsodilo such a unique and special destination and are vital in delivering the Tsodilo proposition and promise.
- **Managing stakeholder expectations in order to keep all parties engaged** - As noted by IDI in its inception report in September 2015, there is an extraordinary level of commitment from all stakeholders at national and local levels, from public and private, and from community groups. Expectations of this diverse grouping needs to be managed as there are varied agendas, objectives differ, siloes exist, and there appears to be gaps in the perception regarding the Tsodilo Hills experience.
- **An independent, well respected leader to drive implementation** - In Dr Kundri's final report, September 2015, the need for a mediator or intermediary who was completely independent of other stakeholders was identified. The IDI Expert agrees with this recommendation and has suggested an organisation framework to ensure that the plan can be implemented over the next year and beyond.



Who will implement the Plan?

The plan will be implemented by a **working partnership between key stakeholders**. The working partners will include BTO, DoNMM, HATAB, and the Tsodilo Management Authority. **An independent Chair** who is a passionate and respected advocate will support the partners to implement over the next 24 months - with particular emphasis on delivering quick wins to build confidence and belief that Tsodilo can work.

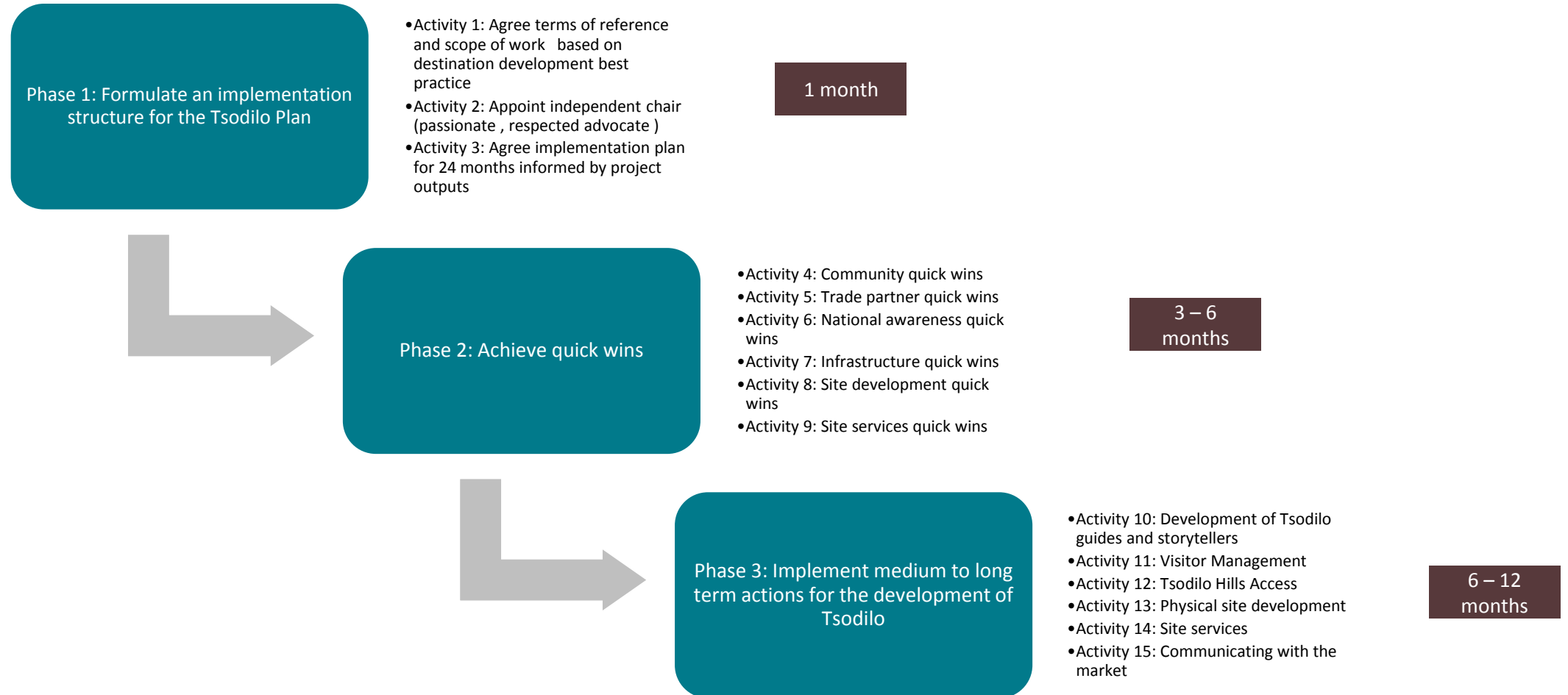
Other supporting partners who need to be included are:

- Debswana Diamond Company who have expressed commitment to continue to support local community capacity building and investment in infrastructure. Specifically they may consider funding investment in trails and accessibility
- Botswana historical society committed to building youth and student engagement, with a view to developing them as 'Tsodilo Volunteers'
- Botho University have committed to implementing a training needs analysis and developing training resources to support community and guide training
- Brand Botswana – may explore how best to support a national awareness campaign on the importance of this site for Botswana
- International Partners (Including French and German Embassies)
- International Development Ireland ("IDI") – IDI would be willing to support the implementation of the plan by way of project management and co-ordination of the stakeholders and plan actions if required.





Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Phasing & Activity schedule





Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Detailed Activity List

Phase	Activity	Description	Responsible	Budget
Phase 1	Activity 1	Agree terms of reference and scope of work based on destination development best practice	Supported by CDE	
	Activity 2	Appoint independent chair (passionate, respected advocate)	Supported by CDE	
	Activity 3	Agree implementation plan for 24 months informed by project outputs	BTO/ DNMM/ HATAB/ Supported by CDE	
Phase 2	Activity 4	Community quick wins	TCT Partners commission support for community delivery “Train the Trainer”	
	Activity 4.1	Design one day workshop for Tsodilo Hills community to include briefing re proposition and implications/ opportunities, include use of Visitor Service Journey as model and highlight actions committed to by partners i.e. investment in power and communications, service delivery by community and role as “Tsodilo Ambassadors” Include basic training re servicing ablution blocks, camp ground cleaning , encouraging “Leave no Trace” procedures		
	Activity 4.2	Deliver a Two Day workshop for all Tsodilo Guides to provide detail overview of Tsodilo Proposition with a focus on the themes and stories highlighted for visitor engagement. Provide a uniform or badge for Tsodilo Community Ambassadors – who have attended workshops and committed to service delivery inc Guides and other staff		
	Activity 4.3	Tsodilo Community – host Tsodilo Hills Discovery Day with Local trade and communities to show case area and culture informed by Proposition		
	Activity 5	Trade quick wins	BTO / HATAB / TCT	
	Activity 5.1	Build database of all trade partners to include Tour operators, lodges in destination		
	Activity 5.2	Deliver on day workshop re Proposition, the Tsodilo Action plan and provide information on support for marketing development (Ref Communications plan) Establish and agree Trade Partner Charter for Tsodilo- these have exclusive access for their customers, support implementation with community and partners		
	Activity 6	National Awareness quick wins	Brand Botswana / BTO / DoNMM/Trust	
	Activity 6.1	Design and deliver a National awareness programme and promotion to build pride and understanding of Tsodilo Hills as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Programme message should be informed by proposition and link to other cultural wonders, UNESCO Okavango Delta and heritage		
	Activity 6.2	Invite Citizens to Discover Tsodilo Hills - Design Family weekend package and prepare to deliver over next bank holiday period		



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Detailed Activity List

Phase	Activity	Description	Responsible	Budget
Phase 2	Activity 7	Infrastructure quick wins		
	Activity 7.1	Solar Power instillation at Museum site		
	Activity 7.2	Internet and mobile connectivity for area to include Museum services, Campsites, and visitor servicing	BTO	
	Activity 7.3	Upgrade and improvement of signage (directional, information and welcome) at airport, main road, and at entrance gate - visuals to be informed by proposition and Marketing communications plans		
	Activity 7.4	Design a suite of maps and information boards to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tsodilo Site Map highlighting location of campgrounds, museum, villages, craft and retail facilities - trail map & descriptions - Tsodilo Commandments – see 9.1 - Pricing and fees for guides and camping - Picture Board of Guides and profile – to highlight role as Tsodilo Guides, Ambassadors and Storytellers 		
	Activity 7.5	Basic upgrade existing trail access and markers – on Rhino Trail, Lion Trail, and consider recommendations for Cliff Trail and access to Male Hill in advance of and to prepare for Activity 8 Review recommendation by Dr Kundri and (Boubekeur 2014) re Construction of wooden plank bridges on trail see 9 Dr Kundri Boehmer –Bauer inception report June 2015	Community – with support from DoMM	
	Activity 8	Site development quick wins		
	Activity 8.1	Design and fund a Tsodilo Hills Trails and stories Summit. Invite international activity, design and storytelling experts to submit attendance proposals; select best fit; fund and host site visit, workshop & presentation; facilitate team to work with partners to gather top line recommendations; identify best fit to inform a development specification to deliver 2 year plan All pre programme information and draft maps for all possible trails and hikes to be prepared in advance	DofNMM/TCT Funding and support for approx. 15 international delegates . Host and workshop with local partners – 30 Funding request to PPSB	
	Activity 9	Site services and information quick wins		
	Activity 9.1	Agree and publish Tsodilo Commandments – Visitor engagement , environment protection , tour guiding rules etc. see proposed developed by Dr Kundri	TCT/DoNMM	
	Activity 9.2	Design a information board highlighting role and importance of Tsodilo Community Trust		



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Detailed Activity List

Phase	Activity	Description	Responsible	Budget
Phase 3	Activity 10	Development of Tsodilo Guides and Storytellers		
	Activity 10.1	Review and develop new framework for Tsodilo Guides accreditation, training and mentoring , informed by BTO Guide Accreditation Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing training supports – formal off-site and informal onsite The ambition to deliver a unique Tsodilo Hills experience informed by proposition Considering a tiered structure that offers progression and uses community knowledge and expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Guide - Lodge employee, English language + skills, high level interpretation of art, nature, culture Level 2 local community story tellers - lead and guide people through the hills, protect art Level 3 - build volunteer base with local interests, academics , students , Botswana society 		
	Activity 10.2	Map Activity 10.1 with National Guide training framework		
	Activity 10.3	Establish partnership to support training, mentoring and development, (private sector, community, Botswana Society, Botho University)		
	Activity 10.4	Review stories, supports and tools to support onsite mentoring		
	Activity 10.5	Define group sizes and procedures		
	Activity 10.6	Visitor management policy to be addressed, including risk management		
	Activity 11	Visitor Services and offers		
	Activity 11.1	Camping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – consider segmentation and location for budget and high end offer x 2 sites f - Offer local produce, fire wood , village tours to campers 	BTO/HATAB	
	Activity 11.2	Museum site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop retail and service opportunities at site local food pack, lunch (booked in advance), shop selling soft drinks - Develop a programme of culture events, music and dance at camp site, show at museum garden for groups , craft demonstrations Bushmen experiences - for lodge and campers - Walks, Hunting Techniques, Games, Dance - Consider enhancement plan for museum interpretation informed by delegate recommendations at summit ref 8.1 		
	Activity 11.3	Build community and village engagement by agreeing programme of events		



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Detailed Activity List

Phase	Activity	Description	Responsible	Budget
Phase 3	Activity 12	Access to Hills		
	Activity 12.1	Consider policy and investment to provide scheduled flights to Shakawe Airstrip		
	Activity 12.2	Identify and agree how to provide connections to site and lodges suggestions include Donkey and Cart pick up. Quade Bikes		
	Activity 12.3	Ensure all communications provided accurate information regarding air and road transport		
	Activity 12.4	Identify and provide information and supports for self – drive customers to include online mapping and direction		
	Activity 13	Physical site development		
	Activity 13.1	Develop a world class Tracks and Trails Unesco World Heritage Experience Design a maintenance plan for access roads, trails, infrastructure that trains and supports local community	DoNMM TCT	
	Activity 13.2	Informed by Summit Recommendations implement plan for infrastructure investment, interpretive design, mapping and information		
	Activity 13.3	Campsite upgrade informed by Best in Class, nationally and internationally. Fund community and stakeholder benchmarking visits to improve visitor services and build capability		
	Activity 14	Site Services		
	Activity 14.1	Invest in core site to develop centre for interpretation entertainment and events retail and visitor servicing Develop retail and craft merchandising and sales programme that includes training of suppliers, building commitment to sales events , establish targets and measurement – include community brand and label	DoNMM TCD	
	Activity 15	Village and wider Destination actions - Build and develop village tours and support for Tsodilo proposition - Align early development proposal for Gcwihaba Caves, Drotshy's Caves, Aha Hills - Consider quality of other activity experiences , Okavango fishing , boating and other walking tails for future packages 1		
	Activity 16	Development of Tsodilo Lodges - Tender and specification issued by BTO to inform a detailed communication process for local community and trade partners - Training and capability supports to be informed by lodge timeline	BTO TCD HATAB	



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Work plan

	Q1 2016			Q2 2016			Q3 2016			Q4 2016			2017				Responsible	Budget
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Phase 1: Formulate an implementation structure for the Tsodilo Plan																	CDE/BTO/DoNMM/TCT	adm / operational
Agree terms of reference and scope of work based on destination development best practice																		
Appoint independent chair (passionate, respected advocate)																		
Agree implementation plan for 24 months informed by project outputs																		
Phase 2: Achieve quick wins																		
Community quick wins																		
Design one day workshop for Tsodilo Hills community to include briefing re proposition and implications/ opportunities, include use of Visitor Service Journey as model and highlight actions committed to by partners i.e. investment in power and communications, service delivery by community and role as "Tsodilo Ambassadors"																	TCT	PSDP/ Training Budgets
Include basic training re servicing ablution blocks, camp ground cleaning, encouraging "Leave no Trace" procedures																		
Design and deliver a Two Day workshop for all Tsodilo Guides to provide detail overview of Tsodilo Proposition with a focus on the themes and stories highlighted for visitor engagement																	TCT /DoNMM/BTO	PSDP
Tsodilo Community – host Tsodilo Hills Discovery Day with Local trade and communities to show case area and culture informed by Proposition																	TCT	TCT
Trade quick wins																		
Build database of all trade partners to include Tour operators, lodges in destination - communicate projects update with all																	BTO	operational
Deliver on day workshop re Proposition, the Tsodilo Action plan and provide information on support for marketing development (Ref Communications plan)																	BTO	operational
Establish and agree Trade Partner Charter for Tsodilo- these have exclusive access for their customers, support implementation with community and partners																	HATAB/BTO/TCT	operational
National Awareness quick wins																		
Design and deliver a National awareness programme and promotion to build pride and understanding of Tsodilo Hills as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Programme message should be informed by proposition and link to other cultural wonders, UNESCO Okavango Delta and heritage																	Brand Botswana	PSDP
Invite Citizens to Discover Tsodilo Hills - Design Family weekend package and prepare to deliver over next bank holiday period																	TCT/DoNMM	PSDP
Place trail map & descriptions at gate																		
Infrastructure quick wins																		
Solar Power instillation at Museum site																	DoNMM/TCT	funder ?
Internet and mobile connectivity for area to include Museum services, Campsites, and visitor servicing																	BTO	BTO
Upgrade and improvement of signage (directional, information and welcome) at airport, main road, and at entrance gate - visuals to be informed by proposition and Marketing communications plans																	BTO/TCT	BTO
Design a suite of maps and information boards to include: - Tsodilo Site Map highlighting location of campgrounds, museum, villages, craft and retail facilities - Trail Map & description - Tsodilo Commandments - see activity 9.1 - Pricing and fees for guides for camping - Picture Board of Guides and profile - to highlight role as Tsodilo Guides, Ambassadors and Storytellers																	BTO/TCT/DoNMM	BTO
Basic upgrade existing trail access and markers – on Rhino Trail, Lion Trail, and consider recommendations for Cliff Trail and access to Male Hill in advance of and to prepare for Activity 8. Review recommendation by Dr Kundri and (Boubekeur 2014) re Construction of wooden plank bridges on trail see 9 Dr Kundri Boehmer –Bauer inception report June 2015																	DoNMM/TCT	funder ?
Site development quick wins																		
Design and fund a Tsodilo Hills Trails and stories Summit. Invite international activity, design and storytelling experts to submit attendance proposals; select best fit, fund and host site visit, workshop & presentation; facilitate team to work with partners to gather top line recommendations; identify best fit to inform a development specification to deliver 2 year plan																	DoNMM/BTO/TCT	PSDP
All pre programme information and draft maps for all possible trails and hikes to be prepared in advance																		
Agree and publish Tsodilo Commandments – Visitor engagement, environment protection, tour guiding rules etc. See proposal developed by Dr. Kundri																	TCT	operational
Design an information board highlighting role and importance of Tsodilo Community Trust																	TCT	operational



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan – Work plan

	Q1 2016			Q2 2016			Q3 2016			Q4 2016			2017				Responsible	Budget
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Phase 3: Implement medium to long term actions for the development of Tsodilo																		
Development of Tsodilo Guides and Storytellers																		
Review and develop new framework for Tsodilo Guides accreditation, training and mentoring, informed by BTO Guide Accreditation Framework																	BTO/HATAB/DoNMM	PSDP
- Existing training supports – formal off-site and informal onsite																		
- The ambition to deliver a unique Tsodilo Hills experience informed by proposition																		
- Considering a tiered structure that offers progression and uses community knowledge and expertise																		
Level 1 Guide - Lodge employee, English language + skills, high level interpretation of art, nature, culture																		
Level 2 local community story tellers - lead and guide people through the hills, protect art																		
Level 3 - build volunteer base with local interests, academics, students, Botswana society																		
Map Activity 10.1 with National Guide training framework																	BTO/HATAB/DoNMM	
Establish partnership to support training, mentoring and development (private sector, community, Botswana Society, Botho University)																	BTO	
Review stories, supports and tools to support onsite mentoring																		
Define group sizes and procedures																		
Visitor management policy to be addressed, including risk management																		
Visitor Services and offers																		
Camping																	TCT	oprational
- consider segmentation and location for budget and high end offer x 2 sites																		
- Offer local produce, fire wood, village tours to campers																		
Museum site																	TCT/DoNMM/	PSDP for plan
- Develop retail and service opportunities at site local food pack, lunch (booked in advance), shop selling soft drinks																		
- Develop a programme of culture events, music and dance at camp site, show at museum garden for groups, craft demonstrations Bushmen experiences - for lodge and campers - Walks, Hunting Techniques, Games, Dance																		
- Consider enhancement plan for museum interpretation informed by delegate recommendations at summit ref 8.1																		
Build community and village engagement by agreeing programme of events																	TCT/BTO	
Access to Hills																		operational
Consider policy and investment to provide scheduled flights to Shakawe Airstrip																	BTO	strategic
Identify and agree how to provide connections to site and lodges suggestions include Donkey and Cart pick up. Quade Bikes																	BTO/HATAB	strategic
Ensure all communications provided accurate information regarding air and road transport																	BTO	operational
Identify and provide information and supports for self – drive customers to include online mapping and direction																	BTO	operational
Physical site development																		
Develop a world class Tracks and Trails Unesco World Heritage Experience																	DoNMM/TCT/BTO	PSDP
Design a maintenance plan for access roads, trails, infrastructure that trains and supports local community																	DoNMM/TCT/	operational
Informed by Summit Recommendations implement plan for infrastructure investment, interpretive design, mapping and information																	DoNMM/TCT/	fundes ?
Campsite upgrade informed by Best in Class, nationally and internationally. Fund community and stakeholder benchmarking visits to improve visitor services and build capability																	TCT/HATAB	
Site Services																		
Invest in core site to develop centre for interpretation entertainment and events retail and visitor servicing																	DoNMM/TCT/BTO	PSDP/ Operational
Develop retail and craft merchandising and sales programme that includes training of suppliers, building commitment to sales events, establish targets and measurement – include community brand and label																		
Village and wider Destination actions																		
- Build and develop village tours and support for Tsodilo proposition																	BTO/HATAB/TCT	PSBP/ Operational
- Align early development proposal for Gcwihaba Caves, Drotshy's Caves, Aha Hills																		
- Consider quality of other activity experiences, Okavango fishing, boating and other walking trails for future packages 1																		
Development of Tsodilo Lodges																	BTO/HATAB/TCT	BTO
- Tender and specification issued by BTO to inform a detailed communication process for local community and trade partners																		
- Training and capability supports to be informed by lodge timeline																		



Tsodilo Hills Experience Action Plan

The Tsodilo Hills Experience Development action plan should be reviewed every two months by the delivery partners.

Each review needs to be informed by the Proposition guidelines, together with the Marketing and Communications plan.

Existing and newly developed marketing collateral (i.e. Tsodilo Hills logo) should inform the design of all site directional, motivational, information and visitor servicing signage and trail maps.

The needs and expectations of priority consumer segments will require regular monitoring and evaluation.

