A guide to hosting a Permaculture Blitz

Namibian Organic Association

Namibia Nature Foundation — Committed to conservation

A permaculture blitz, or 'permablitz', is a one or two-day event in which a group of volunteers come together and design or re-design a garden/farm according to permaculture principles. Participants learn these principles by putting them into practice. This community-driven learning approach helps to build sustainable, resilient landscapes.

STEP 1 Preparation

1 Select Site

- Identify an interested individual/organisation willing to host a permaculture blitz at their property and committed to maintaining the measures implemented.
- Visit the site to understand factors such as sunlight exposure, soil quality, land tenure, social structures, water availability and accessibility that will affect the design and implementation of the permaculture blitz.

2 Assemble a team

- Invite volunteers interested in permaculture and sustainable gardening practices.
- Identify individuals with expertise in permaculture design, gardening, landscaping, carpentry, plumbing and other relevant skills to provide guidance and leadership and confirm their availability for the date of the event.

3 Visit the site

- If possible, the expert who will facilitate the event should visit the site to develop a draft permaculture design plan that incorporates principles such as diversity, integration, efficiency and sustainability.
- Determine the specific elements to be implemented during the event, such as planting fruit trees, implementing rain harvesting features or producing biochar. Identify material required to work efficiently, to be procured/organised in advance.

4 Organise logistics

- Determine the date, time and duration of the permaculture blitz, taking into account the availability of volunteers and weather conditions
- Organise what needs to be transported (tools, materials, etc.) in advance.
- Identify a site with ablutions suitable for camping. Preferably, volunteers should stay together, so that discussions about activities can continue throughout the event.
- Quantify and buy food and water required for the entire period of the event.

Permablitz Principles

Observe and interact
Catch and store energy
Obtain a yield
Apply self-regulation and accept feedback
Use renewable resources
Produce no waste
Design from patterns to details
Integrate rather than segregate
Use small and slow solutions
Use and value diversity
Use edges and value the marginal
Creatively use and respond to change

STEP 2 Facilitating the permablitz

1 Start the Permablitz

- Brief volunteers on the objectives and tasks for the day.
- Encourage collaboration, creativity and teamwork to maximize productivity and achieve the desired outcomes.

2 Conduct a permaculture assessment

- Take the group around the existing site so that they understand the current setup.
- Identify permaculture measures that would enhance productivity and resilience.
- If a 3D model of a homestead is available, set up the model and visualise the planned measures. Keep the model as a reference point to support planning and, if necessary, adjustment of the plan.
- Agree as a collective what measures are being implemented and who will be responsible and active in which tasks.

3 Coordinate volunteer activities

- Take the group around the existing site so that they understand the current setup.
- Identify permaculture measures that would enhance productivity and resilience.
- If a 3-D model of a homestead is available, set up the model and visualise the planned measures. Keep the model as a reference point to support planning and, if necessary, adjustment of the plan.
- Agree as a collective what measures are being implemented and who will be responsible and active in which tasks.

4 Celebrate and reflect

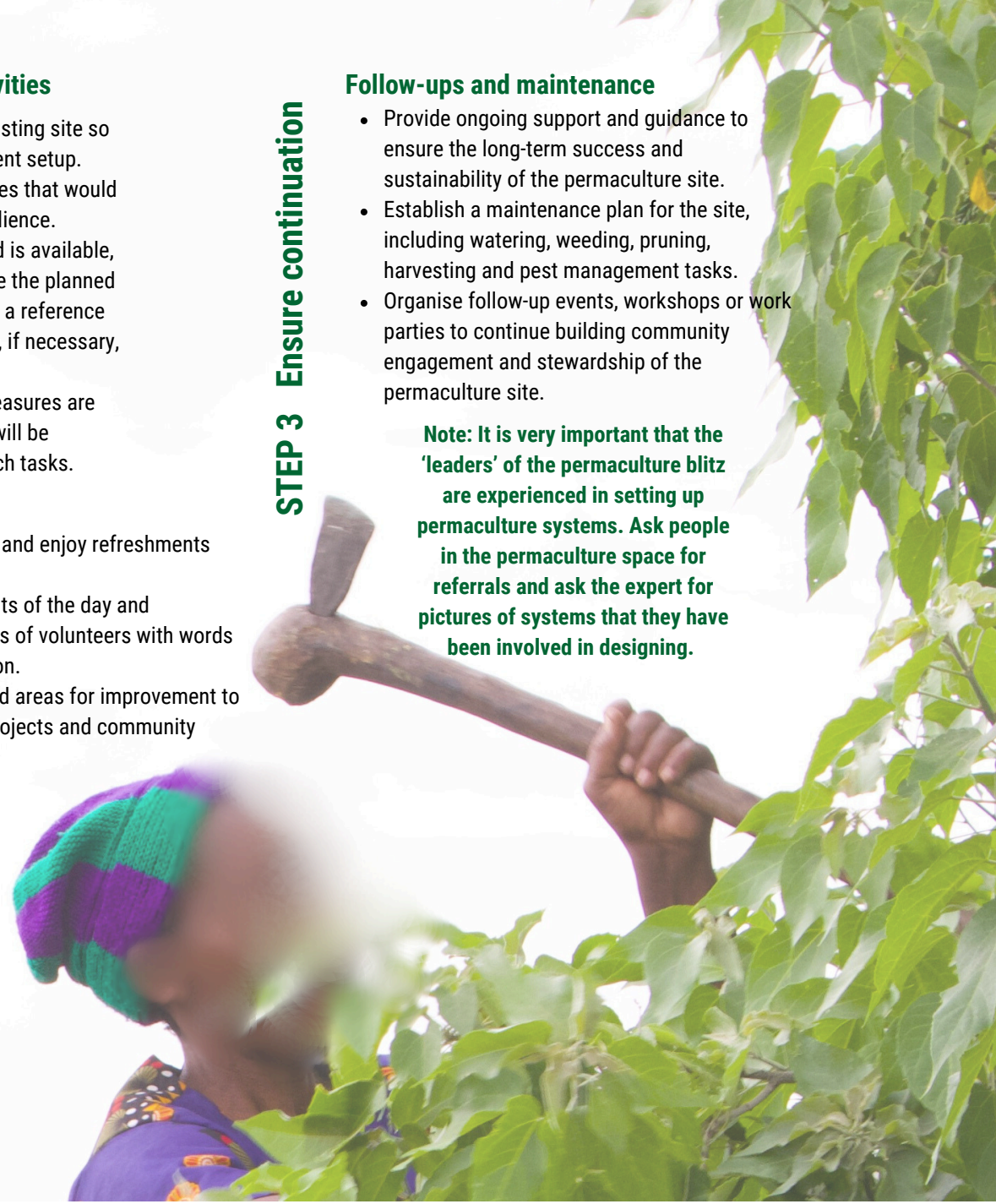
- Take breaks to rest, socialise and enjoy refreshments together during the event.
- Celebrate the accomplishments of the day and acknowledge the contributions of volunteers with words of appreciation and recognition.
- Reflect on lessons learned and areas for improvement to inform future permaculture projects and community initiatives.

STEP 3 Ensure continuation

Follow-ups and maintenance

- Provide ongoing support and guidance to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the permaculture site.
- Establish a maintenance plan for the site, including watering, weeding, pruning, harvesting and pest management tasks.
- Organise follow-up events, workshops or work parties to continue building community engagement and stewardship of the permaculture site.

Note: It is very important that the 'leaders' of the permaculture blitz are experienced in setting up permaculture systems. Ask people in the permaculture space for referrals and ask the expert for pictures of systems that they have been involved in designing.



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