



*Republic of Namibia*

## **Namibia Country Report (Draft)**



**For the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and  
Sustainable Urban Development**

**(Habitat III)**

**July 2015**

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## List of Acronyms

BTP	-	Build Together Programme
CLIP	-	Community Land Information Programme
CBO(s)	-	Community Based Organization(s)
DRR/ M	-	Disaster Risk Reduction/ Management
FLTS	-	Flexible Land Tenure System
HIV/AIDS	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LED	-	Local Economic Development
MHDP	-	Mass Housing Development Programme
MWT	-	Ministry of Works and Transport
NDP	-	National Development Plan
NHAG	-	Namibia Housing Action Group
NHE	-	National Housing Enterprise
NGO(s)	-	Non-Governmental Organization(s)
NYC/ S	-	National Youth Council/ Service
LA(s)	-	Local Authority(s)
MDG(s)	-	Millennium Development Goal(s)
MURD	-	Ministry of Urban and Rural Development
MYNSSC	-	Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture
NSA	-	Namibia Statistics Agency
RA	-	Roads Authority
RC(s)	-	Regional Council(s)
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SDFN	-	Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia
SWAPO	-	South West Africa People's Organization
UN-Habitat	-	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

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## Foreword

Recognize is taken that Namibia is a signatory to the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the subsequent commitment to the Global Plan of Action. I as the Minister of Urban and Rural Development am therefore greatly honoured to sanction this Country Report of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, for the Third United Nations (UN) Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). This is particularly at a very opportune time in our national discourse when housing, land delivery and sustainable urbanization are the key issues and challenges. It is our firm hope that the conference will succeed in its purpose of reinvigorating the global and national level commitment to sustainable urban development focusing on the implementation of the 'New Urban Agenda'.

Managing urban growth has become one of the important challenges facing Namibia in the next 15 years towards Vision 2030. It is our considered view that how we manage urban growth will have a direct impact on how our towns and cities will perform in the future in driving national development, inclusive growth and responding to the most pressing urban challenges including land delivery, housing the poor and improved service delivery. The first step would be to articulate a comprehensive shared vision towards and integrate National Urban Development Strategy and Framework, 'To enhance liveable, safe, resource efficient cities and towns that are socially integrated, economically inclusive and globally competitive where all residents have opportunities and access to participate actively and meaningfully in the urban life'.

Furthermore, we believe that the framework for the New Urban Agenda needs for focus on the following key issues:

- It will need to be people centred and fully acknowledge the role of culture as one of the pillars of sustainable development.
- It will need to address integrated and holistic urban planning, land management and responsive basic service delivery that is a key cornerstone for the development of our communities, towns and cities.
- In addition, the New Urban Agenda will need to help us move away from the dichotomy of rural versus urban.

The Government of Namibia is totally committed to constantly improve the wellbeing of its society, citizens and the environment it operates in. We therefore look forward to further partnerships to the new Habitat III Agenda.

Sophia Shaningwa (MP)  
**MINISTER**

## Introduction

The Government of Namibia became a signatory to the Istanbul Declaration on human settlements in 1996, and thereby committed itself to the implementation of the Habitat II Agenda and the Global Plan of Action. In March 1996, the Namibian Government adopted the Namibia Plan of Action. The Plan was undertaken to address the large number of Namibians living in poverty, under the conditions of inadequate shelter and homelessness. This Action Plan served as a guide to all stakeholders and agencies in the fields of housing delivery and human settlements development.

The National Habitat Committee was established in 1995 with representatives from Government Ministries, Non-Governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Local Authorities, Trade Unions and Churches. Some new stakeholders have been included for a more balanced representation. Particular concerns were raised on the Namibia National Plan of Action document of 1996, inter alia realizing the shortcomings and the need for conformity with the Habitat II Agenda and the Global Plan of Action. The National Plan of Action of 1996 was thus reviewed in March 1999 to be in tandem with the goals and principles of the Global Plan of Action as well as the National Housing Policy, particularly with the two themes of equal global importance – adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an increasingly urbanized world.

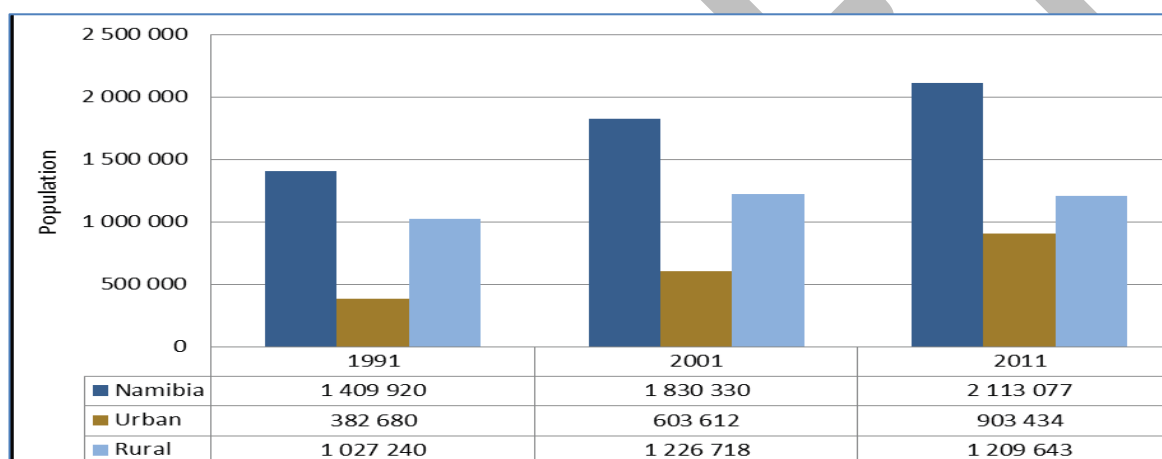
This report is intended to review and analyse the progress of implementation of Habitat II for the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). The report has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders. Inputs were drawn from information sources from Government Ministries and Agencies. It is believed that this report illustrate the good practices of Namibia for the last two decades, the challenges experienced and lessons learned, as well as the key issues that the framework for the New Urban Agenda needs to focus on.

Nghidinua Daniel  
**PERMANENT SECRETARY**

## Chapter I: Urban Demographic Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda

### 1. Managing rapid urbanization

Namibia became independent in 1990. The first official census conducted in an independent Namibia during 1991 indicated that Namibia had a population of 1,409,915 people of whom 28% lived in the urban areas and 72% in the rural areas. Since this period, urban areas registered unprecedented growth, which in part reflected the freedom of movement enshrined in the Constitution after years of mobility restriction on people. The major factor promoting the rapid rate of urbanization in the country is rural-to-urban migration, mainly of young men and women in search of better social and economic opportunities.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, urban areas boast a greater formal workforce, which is a major driving force behind rural-urban migration and deepens rural-urban disparities. Namibian population increased to 1.8 million in 2001 to 2.1 million people in 2011, and the urban population grew by 49.7% whilst rural population dropped by 1.4% over the same period, a trend that illustrates high rates of rural-urban migration in the country (NSA, 2011:25-26). Figure 1 depicts population size by urban and rural areas for all Census years.



**Figure 1:** Population size by urban and rural areas – Namibia Statistics Agency.

Windhoek, the capital of and largest city in Namibia, with a population of 233,529, became the focal point of rural-urban migration after independence; and these newly settled urban residents lived in very unhygienic conditions, without accessible water and sewerage facilities.<sup>2</sup> It also became apparent that a substantial increase in serviced land delivery was needed, particularly in Windhoek's low-income housing areas. Furthermore, urban growth has been greatest in the informal and low income housing areas.<sup>3</sup> It is estimated in Vision 2030 that at the current rate of urban population growth the population of Namibia would be 60% urbanized by 2020, and 75% urbanized by 2030.

As can be seen in Table 1 below, there has been a noticeable population increase in the most urbanized regions such as in Erongo with the highest increase of 40% followed by Khomas with 36.71%, between 2001 and 2011 (NSA, 2011).

<sup>1</sup> Namibian Vision 2030: Policy Framework for Long-term National Development: Main Document, Office of the President, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in 'A place we want to call our home': A study on land tenure policy and securing housing rights in Namibia, by Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2005.

<sup>3</sup> An Atlas of Namibia's population: Monitoring & understanding its characteristics, by Central Bureau of Statistics, 2010.



Area	2001	2011	2001-2011 Increase
<b>Namibia</b>	<b>1 830 330</b>	<b>2 113 077</b>	<b>15.45</b>
Caprivi	79 826	90 596	13.49
Erongo	107 663	150 809	40.08
Hardap	68 249	79 507	16.50
Karas	69 329	77 421	11.67
Kavango	202 294	223 352	10.19
Khomas	250 262	342 141	36.71
Kunene	68 735	86 856	26.36
Ohangwena	228 384	245 446	7.47
Omaheke	68 039	71 233	4.69
Omusati	228 842	243 166	6.26
Oshana	161 616	176 674	9.11
Oshikoto	161 007	181 973	13.02
Otjozondjupa	135 384	143 903	6.29

**Table 1:** Population size by regions

Table 2 below shows urbanization at regional level.

Area	1991 (Percentage)	2001 (Percentage)	2011 (Total Population)	2011 (Urban)	2011 (Percentage)
<b>Namibia</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2 113 077</b>	<b>903 343</b>	<b>42.8</b>
Caprivi	15	28	90 596	28 362	31.3
Erongo	63	80	150 809	131 770	87.4
Hardap	44	46	79 507	47 814	60.1
Karas	45	54	77 421	41 823	54.0
Kavango	17	18	223 352	64 049	28.7
Khomas	88	93	342 141	325 858	95.2
Kunene	25	25	86 856	22 898	26.4
Ohangwena	0	1	245 446	24 903	10.1
Omaheke	16	20	71 233	21 203	29.8
Omusati	0	1	243 166	13 848	5.7
Oshana	26	31	176 674	79 801	45.2
Oshikoto	13	9	181 973	23 634	13.0
Otjozondjupa	46	41	143 903	77 471	53.8

**Table 2:** Urbanization at regional level

With increase urbanization many Local Authorities (LAs) are under severe strain in keeping up provision of serviced land. Urbanization also put a strain on the provision of housing, sanitation and other services, due to insufficient resources to plan for, and accommodate this growth. There is therefore an urgent need to develop a national approach to the challenges of urban growth.

## 2. Managing rural-urban linkages

It is noted that links exist between rural and urban areas. Concerted efforts have been made in the past to bridge the inequality gap between rural and urban areas in Namibia, but the phenomenon persists.

The Namibian government thus introduced initiatives to improve living conditions of rural people who are faced with immense social, economic and environmental factors.

### *National Rural Development Policy and Strategy*

The policy was approved by Cabinet in 2012 and is aimed at accelerating broad-based rural industrialisation and economic growth. The policy aims to improve the standard of living in rural areas

by providing basic social and economic services and by creating a political, legal, economic and social environment, which will empower people to take charge of their own development. The strategy is the operative document for the implementation of the National Rural Development Policy.

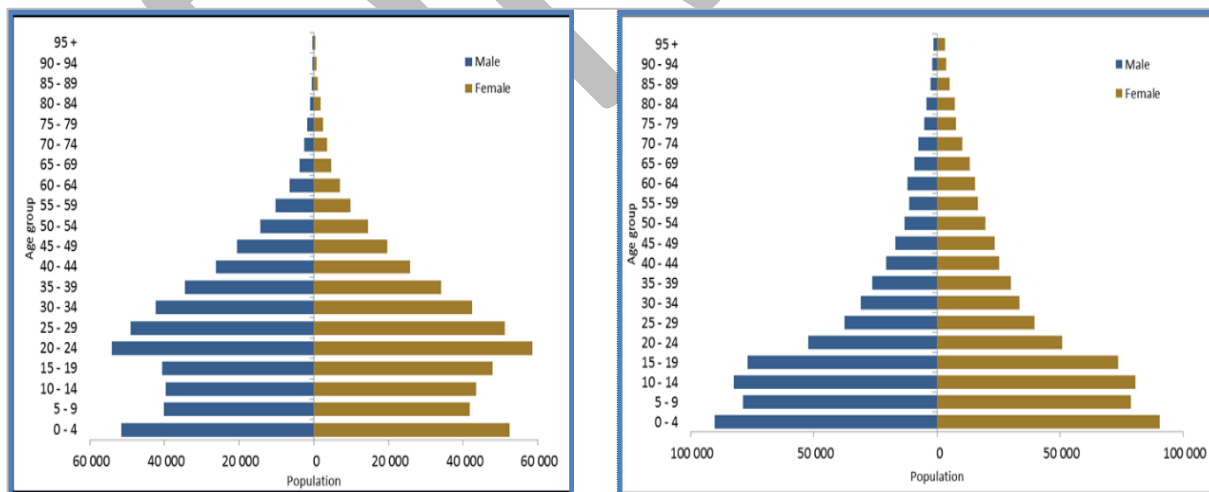
The solution to poverty in rural areas cannot be found in the rural economy alone. Rural growth needs access to urban markets and vibrant non-farm sectors. Equally the growth of urban areas can be compromised by inadequate rural development. Strategies (e.g. for addressing poverty) must recognize the interdependence of rural and urban spaces, while a comprehensive, integrated approach to urban development needs to respond to the reality of migration to peri-urban areas.

### 3. Addressing urban youth needs

Namibia’s population is young with 57.9% of Namibians being 24 years old or younger.<sup>4</sup> Equally, the Namibia Labour Force Survey of 2014 indicates that the youth population in Namibia, 15 to 34 years, is 826,874. Of this figure 436,978 (53%) resides in urban areas. Consequently, it is this group of the population that faces many social and economic challenges such as high rate of school failure, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, and abuse of drugs and alcohol. Recently, the youth voiced out their concerns over unavailability of land specifically in the urban areas and thus demanded local authorities to make land available to them. In support of this statement, in the study done by the National Youth Council (Jauch, H., 2015:66), it is indicated that Namibia’s youth is confronted by a host of socio-economic challenges, including mass unemployment and precarious forms of employment and incomes; and unlike the National Employment Policy of 2013, the current housing policies do not focus on the youth at all.

Therefore, although government has introduced various initiatives to address the needs of the youth, more aggressive programmes are required to address the challenges faced by the youth.

As shown on Figure 2 it is clear from the two population pyramids that the urban population is predominated by people aged 39 years and below with a peak at 25-29 whilst the rural population is predominated by people aged 19 and with a peak at 0-4 years. The two pyramids gives a clear indicator that Namibia should be prepared “the youth” are coming to urban areas.



**Figure 2:** Population pyramids, 2011 – Namibia Statistics Agency.

<sup>4</sup> Youth and Urban Land/ Housing in Namibia: Final report prepared by Herbert Jauch for the National Youth Council: 20 May 2015.

The following are some of the initiatives introduced to address the plight of the youth, in order to make them productive citizens that will contribute to the social and economic development of the country.

### ***National Youth Council (NYC)***

The NYC was implemented to advise the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture (MYNSSC) on developmental and youth issues. The council was established in 1994 and it operates in six key areas: employment, promotion and environmental awareness, youth health and welfare; networking; youth exchange and international relations as well as information technology and media.

### ***National Youth Service (NYS)***

The National Youth Service is a youth development service institution, established by the National Youth Service Act, Act No. 6 of 2005. The main focus of this initiative is to recruit young school leavers from all over the country, by offering skills training to those who do not qualify for further studies at institutions of higher learning.

### ***Namibia youth credit scheme (NYCS)***

This is an integrated business development model that targets committed out of school youth and prepares them to start and grow their own enterprises with the objectives of generating incomes, creating employment opportunities and contributing to the alleviation of poverty.<sup>5</sup> As of 2014, more than 6,900 youth have benefited from the scheme, of which 73% are women.

### ***African Youth Charter***

Namibia ratified the African Youth Charter on 12 March 2008. The Charter provides important guidelines and responsibilities of Member States for the empowerment of youth in key strategic areas, namely education and skills development, poverty eradication and socio-economic integration of youth, sustainable livelihood and youth employment.

### ***Community Based Organizations (CBOs)***

Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) has initiated youth programs and started to train youth in doing Socio-Economic Surveys as part of the data collection of the Community Land Information Program (CLIP). This prepared the unemployed youth for employment. Young people are also involved in the Federation as members, and contribute towards loan management and report preparation in the networks and regions. They also started to organize themselves to respond to their needs and stay away from harmful habits such as drugs and alcohol abuse.

## **4. Responding to the needs of the aged**

The extent, to which we protect and promote the dignity and rights of older people today, reflects on how our own rights will be protected and promoted in our old age.<sup>6</sup> The elderly citizens are acknowledged and well esteemed for their past contributions to the development of our country, and in their old age they are well cared for and remain happy senior citizens in a safe and loving environment.<sup>7</sup> Vision 2030 indicates that senior citizens constitute a small percentage of the total population (7%), and this is not expected to increase appreciably during the Vision period, as a result of the effect of HIV/AIDS on the population. This figure remains the same in the last census of 2011.

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<sup>5</sup> Namibia Youth Credit Scheme 2007-2012: Working with Youth and through youth to improve livelihoods: A programme of the Ministry of Youth, national Service, Sport and Culture, October 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Report on respecting our elders: The first national conference of older people: 28 – 29 September 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Namibian Vision 2030

The Namibian Constitution's article 95 (promotion of welfare of people) sub-article (f) obliges the state to ensure that senior citizens are entitled to and receive regular pension adequate for the maintenance of decent standard of living and enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities. To give effect to this and other mandates to provide basic income to vulnerable groups, the pension Act, 10 of 1992 came into force.<sup>8</sup> Old people in Namibia (60 years and older) are paid a monthly social grant, under the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. This social grant has been increased over the years, and now stands at N\$1,000. The amount guarantees that the recipients have access to basic needs. With this monthly grant, the elderly have the opportunity to pay for water, get basic healthcare and pay for basic food needs.

Recipients of a basic or disability pension are also registered for mandatory life insurance paying a funeral benefit.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, government prioritises health care for the elderly through programmes such as the cataract operations that happen yearly.

In addition, the SDFN took an inclusive process whereby the pensioners can participate in securing their own shelter for 22 square meters, paying only N\$50 per month. No interest is charged and the contribution is going towards the capital. 97 pensioners benefited from the social funds for a total amount of N\$1.7 million.

## 5. Integrating gender in urban development

The Namibian Constitution provides a strong background for gender equality as it forbids discrimination on the basis of sex. To this end, the government has established the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare to coordinate, implement, and monitor activities and programmes to ensure equitable socioeconomic development of women, men and children. The first Gender Policy of Namibia was formulated in 1997 and was reviewed in 2010. The overarching goal of the National Gender Policy is to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of both female and male persons in Namibia; in this respect, the policy framework provides mechanisms and guidelines for all sectors and other stakeholders for planning, implementing and monitoring gender equality strategies and programmes in order to ensure that these would facilitate gender equality and women's empowerment.<sup>10</sup>

The National Gender Plan of Action (NGPA) was also formulated by government. In a bid to put in motion the objectives of the NGPA, the Namibian Women Parliamentary Caucus (NWPC) was established by Women Parliamentarians in 1996 with the objective of promoting gender sensitive legislation and a greater role for women in the Namibian Parliament. This has provided an opportunity for elected women from all parties and all levels of government to share their experiences and overcome the diverse problems that they experience individually, collectively and at electoral level. Equally, due to the 50/50 policy spearheaded by the SWAPO party, women now represent 48% of the National Assembly.

Furthermore, a number of NGOs are also active in promoting women's participation in power sharing and decision-making, especially within the political arena. One such initiative is the global campaign which began in 1999 as a global effort aimed at achieving gender equality in political representation and was spearheaded by Sister Namibia. The Namibian Women's Network also provides advocacy, lobbying, and voter education while the Women's Solidarity provides counselling, advice and other forms of assistance to any woman who might have been raped and or sexually, physically and emotionally abused.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Namibia Social Protection Floor Assessment Report, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014

<sup>9</sup> Namibia Social Protection Floor Assessment Report, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, 2014

<sup>10</sup> National Gender Policy 2010 – 2020: Ministry of Gender, Equality and Child Welfare: March 2010

<sup>11</sup> African Development Bank Namibia, Country Strategy Paper, 2009-2013, Regional Department, South Region: March 2009

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Job Creation (MLIRJC) is tasked to ensure women's equal participation in the work force through its monitoring and enforcement of the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act.

Being a signatory to the Millennium Declaration of 2000, Namibia is participating in the process of achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly MDG 3, which promotes equal rights and intends to strengthen the rights of women.

## **6. Challenges experienced and lessons learnt in these areas**

With an increased rate of urbanisation, urban localities in Namibia are faced with a number of challenges such as growth of informal settlements, poor housing conditions, insecurity of tenure, unemployment, poor access to basic services and infrastructure, which give pressure to Local Authorities (LAs) to keep up with the demand for basic services and amenities.

Despite various strategies that are put in place, Namibian youth are still facing many challenges such as alcoholism, drug abuse, various health and social problems associated with HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancies, crime and violence, physical and emotional abuse, high rates of school drop-outs, high unemployment levels, lack of or insufficient expertise and capital required to undertake entrepreneurial initiatives, lack of or inequitable access to information and recreational activities. All of this coupled with the detrimental impact of HIV/AIDS contribute towards an unhealthy environment for the youth of today and poor prospects for the future.

As urbanization causes more people to migrate to towns and cities, the elderly are left behind with little support and are left to fend for themselves. Other challenges faced by many elderly are the inadequacy of basic services, such as water and sanitation. Additionally, the elderly are forced to take care of their grandchildren due to various socio-economic situations.

Regardless of the progress made, there are still many challenges faced by women, such as increased prevalence of HIV/AIDS, rape and gender based violence. There is therefore a critical need to tackle all these ill issues of society.

## **7. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda**

People have good reasons for moving to urban areas and that urbanization is both understandable and manageable. This implies a mind shift on the part of policy makers to embrace the potential of urbanization through evidence base understanding and thoughtful policy and strategic responses.

There is a need to acknowledge the economic, social and environmental interdependence between rural and urban areas. It is becoming more and clearer that rural and urban spaces share structural, social, economic and cultural linkages. Rural development and urban development policy frameworks that connect with each other will enhance inclusive development. The focus must be on strengthening linkages between urban and rural development, as a mechanism to achieve sustainable and inclusive development by:

- Linking functional geographical areas through various levers and other strategic initiatives.
- Creating synergies between enterprises in urban and rural areas.
- Developing value-chains between various economic sectors.

The solution to poverty in rural areas cannot be found in the rural economy alone. Rural growth needs access to urban markets and vibrant non-farm sectors. Equally, the growth of urban areas can be compromised by inadequate rural development. Strategies (e.g. for addressing poverty) must recognize the interdependence of rural and urban spaces, while a comprehensive, integrated approach to urban development needs to respond to the reality of migration to peri-urban areas.

There is a need to recognize that the urban population is growing younger while the rural population is growing older. This is because most people when they retire go back to the rural areas where life is simpler and manageable. In contrast young people in search of job and educational opportunities flock to towns and cities. As a consequence the housing and other services need to align to the needs of this segment of young people

Social welfare programmes should be extended to all people in society especially the weak and the older in order to make sure that every part of society gains access to these benefits.

There is also a need for building capacity of researchers, trainers and planners in participatory and gender responsive methods.

## **Chapter II: Land and urban Planning: Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda**

### **8. Ensuring sustainable urban planning and design**

Land use planning and land delivery is of central importance for Government as land delivery is a crucial element in the provision of shelter and housing delivery. Land is also a key source of revenue for local authorities and also a driver of local and regional economic development. Currently land delivery is governed by Land Ordinance No. 11 of 1963 and the Town Planning Ordinance no. 18 of 1954. Therefore land delivery can take anything from 28 – 42 months. However having recognized the bottlenecks created by the legal process in land delivery, there is a new Urban and Regional Planning Bill that is expected to be promulgated during the 2015/2016 financial year. The objective of the Bill is to:

- Establish an urban and regional planning board;
- Regulate spatial development frameworks and structure planning;
- Decentralize urban planning and land use management;
- Provide for zoning schemes, subdivisions and consolidation of land, establishment of urban areas and extension of urban areas situated in local authorities in such a way as will most effectively promote health, safety, order, amenity, convenience and environmental and economic sustainability in the process of development.

Townships and Division of Land Ordinance No. 11 of 1963 establishes the Townships Board and the Town Planning Ordinance No. 18 of 1954 establishes the Namibia Planning advisory Board (NAMPAB) and provides a legal basis for a Local Authority to draft a Town Planning scheme within the local authority boundaries. The purpose of the Townships Board is ‘to exercise and perform the functions, powers and duties entrusted to and conferred upon it in terms of the provision of Townships and Division of Land Ordinance 11 of 1963’. The functions of the Townships will be to consider the following matters when enquiring and reporting on an application seeking to establish a township:

- Whether the land is suitable in respect of area, position, water supply, aspect, contour, extension, soil and other physical features and accessibility;



- The existence of servitudes or encumbrances that may affect the establishment of the proposed township;
- The proposals and stipulations contained in the application and the conditions on which in the opinion of the Board the application should be granted;
- The extent of the townlands and the number, size and position of any erven and sites to be reserved for the State or for any public or local authority purposes or in the general interest of the inhabitants;
- The proposed design and name of the township;
- The allocation of districts or zones limiting the use to which the erven may be put and the order in which they may be sold;
- The maximum number of houses that may be built upon each erf and the maximum area of each erf, which may be built upon;
- The endowment, if any, which should be made for a local authority or future local authority;
- Any other matters to which, in the opinion of the Board, the attention of the Minister should be drawn.

In addition to reporting on any application referred to the Township Board, the Board shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Townships and Division of Land Ordinance or by the Minister and the Minister may refer report on such other matters to the Board.

The purpose of NAMPAB is to consider all matters relating to town planning schemes as assigned to it by the terms of the Ordinance (Ordinance No. 18 of 1954) and advise the Minister on matters related to the town planning scheme. The general functions of NAMPAB are:

- To advise the Minister in matters relating to the preparation and carrying into effect of town planning schemes;
- To formulate in general terms a town planning policy for Namibia with special reference to various types of development in their relation to roads, railways, residential, commercial and industrial areas, educational and other public institutions, townlands, places of recreation, open spaces, water supply, sanitation, soil suitability and the like, including also the administrative and financial implications which certain types of development would have in respect of local government control;
- To undertake any survey within Namibia and to assign plans in connection therewith;
- To encourage the study of town and regional planning;
- To ensure as far as practicable that local authorities in the exercise of their powers in respect of town planning make use of such powers to the best advantage;
- To advise and assist Local Authorities generally in connection with the preparation of town planning schemes;
- To furnish any Local Authority with technical advice in regard to a town planning scheme; to prepare plans for any suggested scheme; to prepare estimates of the approximate cost of carrying out such scheme; and to tender such other advice as may be deemed necessary to enable such Local Authority to initiate such scheme and carry it out to completion upon its approval by the Minister;
- To advise the Minister on the desirability for and necessity of establishing townships;
- To advise the Minister on the subdivision of land situated outside an approved township or outside the townlands of such a township where either the subdivision or the remainder thus created is smaller than twenty-five hectares;
- To advise the Minister on the desirability for and necessity of de-proclaiming townships;
- Generally to exercise such powers and perform such functions as are conferred or imposed upon it by or in terms of this Ordinance: Provided that such powers shall only be exercised and such functions shall only be performed if the Minister so directs. Each Board comprises of 12 members appointed by the Minister of Urban and Rural Development. NAMPAB draws its

members from Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, National Planning Commission, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Land Reform, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry Justice, Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and Association of Local Authorities in Namibia.

The Townships Board draws its members from infrastructure related agencies such as Namwater, Telecom Namibia, TransNamib, Ministry of Works and Transport, Roads Authority, Surveyor General, Registrar of Deeds, Association of Local Authorities in Namibia, Director of Regional, Local Authorities and Traditional Authorities.

The two bodies convene meetings every month of the year to perform their duties.

## 9. Improving urban land management, including addressing urban sprawl

With an increased rate of urbanisation, urban localities in Namibia are faced with a number of challenges such as growth of informal settlements, poor housing conditions, insecurity of tenure, unemployment, poor access to basic services and infrastructure, which give pressure to LAs to keep up with the demand for basic services and amenities.

The increasing demand for land in Namibia's urban centres after independence led to the realisation by the Namibian Government that addressing tenure security in rural areas alone was not sufficient; hence it was widely recognised that Namibia needed to implement a comprehensive national land reform that takes into account different land needs and equitable access to land in both rural and urban areas.<sup>12</sup>

### *National Land Policy 1998*

This policy provides for a unitary land system for the country that accords all citizens equal rights, opportunities and security across a range of land tenure and management systems. The policy contains a special gender provision, in line with Article 95 of the Constitution, giving women the same status as men with regard to all forms of land rights, either as individuals or as members of family land ownership trusts. The policy provides that all widows and widowers are entitled to retain the land rights they enjoyed during their spouse's lifetime. It provides for multiple forms of land rights ranging from customary grants to leaseholds and freehold titles, licences, certificates or permits and state ownership. In addition it sets the direction for addressing the situation of the urban poor: informal settlements will receive attention through appropriate planning, land delivery and tenure, registration and financing, with environmental sustainability borne in mind. The policy requires the establishment and proclamation of urban areas as townships and municipalities where appropriate, to promote decentralisation and the close involvement of communities in their own administration.

The policy also states that particular attention must be given to establishing a transparent, flexible and consultative local authority planning system and development regulations. The policy recommends the enactment of legislation enabling the compulsory acquisition of land by central or local governments for public purposes in accordance with Article 16 of the Constitution. The compulsory acquisition of commercial agricultural land for public purposes is provided for in the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act, but there is no similar provision in legislation pertaining to urban land reform.

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<sup>12</sup> The Flexible Land Tenure System in Namibia: Integrating Urban Rights into the National Land Reform Programme, by Elke Matthaai and Prisca Mandimika: Paper prepared for presentation at the "2010 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty", March 24 – 27, 2014



### ***Flexible Land Tenure Act of 2012***

The Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS) was developed as an innovative concept to provide affordable tenure security for informal urban settlers; the basic idea of the FLTS is to establish a parallel, interchangeable system complementary to the current formal system of freehold tenure; and the aim of the FLTS is to address the issue of equitable and needs oriented access to land, thereby complementing the efforts already undertaken under the national land reform programme.<sup>13</sup>

### ***The Property Valuers Profession Act of 2012***

The Namibian Council for Property Valuation Profession was established as per this Act. The Act provides for regulation of the valuation profession through registration of values and thus ensures persons providing valuation services have the required qualifications and expertise. The Council will also ensure high ethical standards are adhered to by all registered practicing valuers.

## **10. Enhancing urban and peri-urban food production**

The important role of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture is now being recognized in the international arena, especially its contribution to the lives of people in and around the towns and cities unemployed or underemployed.<sup>14</sup> The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Directorate of Extension and Engineering Services launched a project entitled “Integrated Initiative in Support of Urban and Peri-Urban Horticulture Development” in Namibia.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, as urban dwellers were flocking to Windhoek in high numbers during recent droughts, the City Council of Windhoek acknowledged that local governments should assume responsibility for assisting urban migrants for food and nutrition security issues.<sup>16</sup> A Windhoek Declaration on Food and Nutrition Security was signed by all present Mayors and overseen by the Deputy Prime Minister; and the signatories committed themselves to the implementation of the recommendations while the Deputy Prime Minister stated that the workshop deployed the highest political will Namibia has ever seen for this matter and strongly encouraged local authorities and stakeholders to enable implementation by showing technical will.<sup>17</sup>

## **11. Addressing urban mobility challenges**

Namibia has a relatively good core network of national physical infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, however there are emerging weaknesses which, if not addressed could become serious obstacles to higher economic growth. The Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT) is mandated to develop sectoral policy and regulations and to ensure infrastructure development and maintenance of transport State assets. Until 1995, the road transport sector was still regulated in terms of the Road Transportation Act, No. 74 of 1977, under which the market was dominated by a few large operators, making it difficult for previously disadvantaged Namibians to gain access to the market. Government, in a bid to redress this shortcoming, published the White Paper on Transport Policy in 1995.

Road Traffic and Transport Act, 1999 (Act 22 of 1999) was enacted to provide for the establishment of the Transportation Commission of Namibia; for the control of traffic on public roads, the licensing of

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.mawf.gov.na/Programmes/horticulture.html>

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

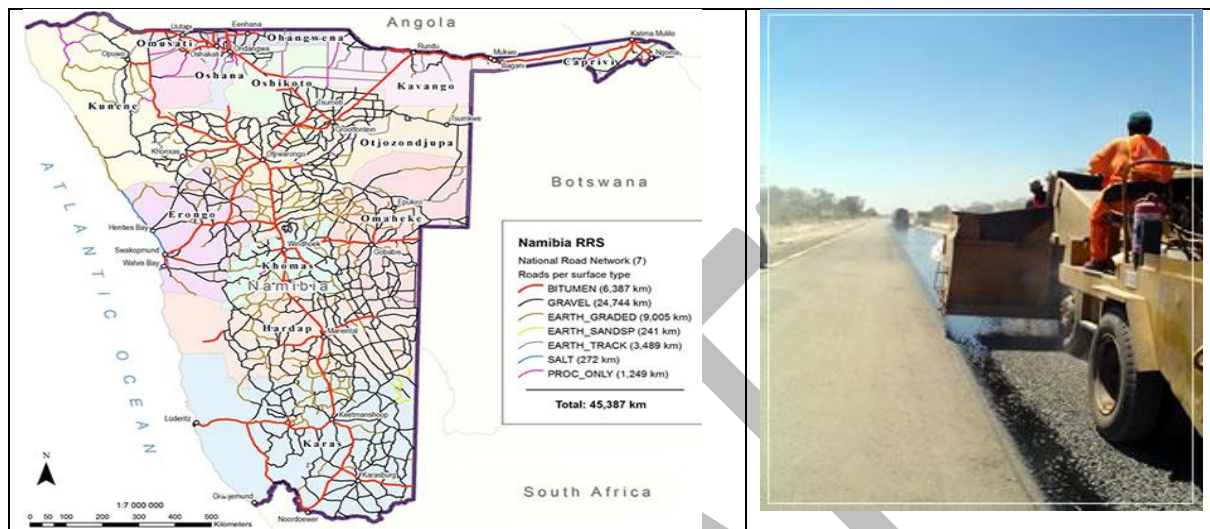
<sup>16</sup> Working paper on food and nutrition security workshop final report – 21 to 23 July 2014: World Future Council

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

drivers, the registration and licensing of vehicles, the control and regulation of road transport across Namibia's borders; and for matters incidental thereto.<sup>18</sup>

The Roads Authority (RA), whose core business is to construct and maintain Namibia's road sector, plays a pivotal role towards road safety in Namibia. The growth of the road infrastructure and the expansion of the road network have contributed immensely to the economic development of Namibia and the SADC sub-region as a whole.

Figure 3 below is the Road Network map, outlining the total length of the network as well as the road surface types found in Namibia.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 3:** Road Network map and road surface types

Established by an Act of Parliament (Act 14 of 1999, amended 2002), Roads Contractor Company (RCC) objective is to undertake work relating to the construction or maintenance of roads or any other construction works in accordance with sound and generally accepted business principles. Construction work includes, but is not limited to, buildings, bridges, waterworks, dams, reservoirs, tunnels, canals, aqueducts, irrigation works, aerodromes and railway infrastructure.

On July 18 2012, the City of Windhoek (CoW), jointly with the MWT and other stakeholders, embarked on the process of developing a Sustainable Urban Transport Master Plan (SUTMP) for the City of Windhoek.<sup>20</sup> The master plan is intended to provide for an efficient, affordable, equitable, safe and convenient public and non-motorised transport (NMT) for residents of the city and its surroundings.<sup>21</sup>

## 12. Improving technical capacity to plan and manage cities

Before independence, Namibia was ruled by a strong central government. However this situation has now changed since local authorities have assumed a vital role as providers of services to citizens. Public water services are among the key responsibilities of local authorities. In the quest to ensure effective

<sup>18</sup> Road Traffic and Transport Act, 1999 (Act 22 of 1999)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.ra.org.na/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=12&Itemid=13](http://www.ra.org.na/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12&Itemid=13)

<sup>20</sup> Sustainable Urban Transport Plan for Windhoek including Rehoboth, Okahandja ad Hosea Kutako International Airport, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> ibid

governance system and service delivery, the Namibian government invested a lot of time and resources in facilitating the establishment of LAs and setting up proper governance system.

The government has embarked on a programme to reform the local government sector aimed at improving the operation of local government in Namibia. This reform focuses on efficient and effective service delivery in recognition that they are part of the system that is at the delivery point to our people. The reform encourages LAs to reduce red tapes, the free flow of information between them and their communities and provide high quality infrastructure within the resources at their disposal.

The other area of focus of the reform is the establishment of financial prudence requirements for LAs. In building a more competitive and productive economy, it is critical for local governments to take a prudent financial approach to public resources. The reform also aims to strengthen local authority governance capacity by reviewing political, institutional and staffing requirements, inter government relations and the development planning procedures among others.

The government have immensely assisted LAs in servicing of land and for provision of other basic services to the communities. However most of the planning functions still remain with central government.

CBOs such as SDFN/ NHAG (Namibia Housing Action Group) have built relationships with the Polytechnic of Namibia to learn to work with communities in a bottom up approach in planning. In partnership with the Association of African Planning Schools Shack/ Slum Dwellers International, communities design their own layouts in which the students learn how to work with communities. Land Management students frequently intern with NHAG to familiarize themselves on collecting and managing data and addressing community needs in planning. The federation created platforms where communities and LAs learn from each other at a national and international level.

### **13. Challenges experienced and lessons learnt in these areas**

The challenge that Namibia faces is that it shares a common history of apartheid colonialism and consequent land use patterns in towns and cities. As a result similar issues of urban sprawl, low densities, functional segregation between home and work as well as racial and class segregation are found. Despite improvements in terms of service delivery and other developmental inputs to previously marginalized areas, urban areas in Namibia remain marked by profound social divisions, which stem from apartheid planning.

The speculative property and land markets in Namibia continue to undermine access to urban opportunity and reinforce the highly inefficient urban sprawl characteristic of most urban areas in Namibia. This is in part because of the importance of the formal property market and the practice of land auctions by local authorities. While this is good for the income through land sales and property rates income for municipalities, it has not served to address issues of affordable housing and access to decent shelter for all.

Although significant efforts for land reform in the rural areas, there has been no substantial land reform or security of tenure for the majority of Namibians in urban areas. The process of availing land and securing tenure is still an enormous challenge facing the urban inhabitants and especially the urban poor. Informal settlements increased and many LAs especially the capital city, are facing constraints in availing sufficient opportunities for communities to develop their own land and secure tenure.

Current investment levels are insufficient to support higher economic growth, and maintenance programmes, including the transport sector. An additional challenge will be to maintain or upgrade

existing infrastructure, use it optimally, and extend it effectively and efficiently, in line with the demands of the economy.<sup>22</sup>

The local government sector is faced with challenges such as poor or ineffective capacities at various levels, which have resulted in most of the LAs not meeting the expectations of the people that they are supposed to serve. In particular most LAs lack the necessary financial and technical capacity to plan and deliver basic infrastructure and services. These capacity constraints, coupled with poor cadastral land records system, cumbersome land approval and registration procedures and speculative conducts of the private sector, negatively affect the supply of and access to serviced land and housing in Namibia in general and for the poor in particular.

#### **14. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda**

The need for land and shelter far exceed the capacity to manage the town planning and land development, causing serious bottlenecks and shortages in all segments, except the highest income bracket. There is therefore a need to decentralize land use planning processes to Regional Councils (RCs) and LAs, as well as invest in training and accreditation of specialized skills in land use, town planning, engineering, surveying and cadastral technicians to fast track land delivery processes.

Urban Sprawl prevention needs to receive attention, alternative urban spatial models needs to be explored. Informal settlements and existing households are already creating higher densities, as a strategy to cater for high housing demand. Hence there is a need for suitable interventions to prevent urban sprawl.

There is a need for flexibility in enforcing municipal by-laws in order to support urban livelihoods as a principle of inclusive urban management. This implies that progressive approaches to the informal economy should be adopted. Government needs to develop understandings and policies for the informal economy that will enable LAs to manage it more coherently and also help enhance the sector's economic potentials.

There is a need to recognize and strengthen the role of LAs, to enable them to tackle unemployment and strengthen the local economy by taking on a more decisive leadership role and directing strategic policies and investments. Additionally, government interventions are needed to entail financial and technical support to LAs to enable them to provide water, electricity, urban land and other municipal services.

Importantly, extensive investment in transport infrastructure is needed to unlock the full potential of economic corridors and to ensure efficient flow of factors of production.

### **Chapter III: Environment and Urbanization: Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda**

#### **15. Addressing climate change**

Namibia has made significant strides with regards to the development of various environmental policies and programs. Innovative clauses in the national constitution proclaim Namibia's commitment to sustainable development at the highest level and establish the framework for environmental protection. A cornerstone in Namibia's environmental policy formulation was the Green Plan presented by the founding

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<sup>22</sup> National Development Plan (NDP) 4

President to the Rio Earth Summit in June 1992. The Green Plan was the foundation of Namibia's 12 Point Plan for Sustainable Development, which in turn, fed into the First National Development Plan (NDP) (period 1995/1996 – 2000/2001). A wide range of actions have been taken into account, carefully designed and integrated. These include amongst others:<sup>23</sup>

- Environmental Management Act of December 2007, which establishes a set of fundamental environmental plans such as sustainable use of natural resources, etc.
- Draft Pollution and Waste Management, which adopts an integrated pollution control approach and establishes a multi-sectoral Pollution Control Board.
- A Concept note was developed for an urban Agenda 21 programme, which a phrase thereof was included in the National Vision 2030 – a detailed strategy of implementation needs to be drafted.
- State of the Environment Reports.

To strengthen its climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, Namibia adopted the National Climate Change Policy in 2011. The Policy provides a framework for resource mobilisation for the country to embark upon adaptation and mitigation measures. It calls for transfer of technology, capacity building and the provision of financial resources, while promoting and enhancing synergies amongst stakeholders across sectors. The National Climate Change Policy makes provision for international cooperation, collaboration and networking. The Namibian Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for Namibia is also in place.<sup>24</sup>

## 16. Disaster risk reduction

The Disaster Risk Management Act, of 2012 provide for the establishment of institutions for disaster risk management in Namibia. One of its four main objectives is to provide for an integrated and coordinated Disaster Risk Management (DRM) approach that includes a focus on preventing or reducing risks (as well as emergency preparedness, response and recovery). Its provisions aim to incorporate Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as a priority within the DRM system at the national and local levels, as well as to integrate DRR with development and include it in school education through the national and local institutional mandates and structures. The Directorate of Disaster Risk Management is required to facilitate and coordinate specific DRR strategies, while national focal persons in each government institution are charged with facilitating training of their national and regional staff in DRR. Regional, local and settlement DRM committees established by the Act are then mandated with similar responsibilities.

Also, Namibia first established its National Disaster Risk Management System by executive regulation in 1994, triggered by the 1992/1993 drought emergency. Namibia then carried out a further review in line with its commitments to DRR under the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, beginning with the National DRM Policy of 2009, which gave the Office of the Prime Minister overall responsibility for the operation of the national DRM system and for maintaining the Directorate of DRM. On this basis, it then developed its DRM law to update the system. Namibia's 2012 law thus built on a process that had begun almost two decades earlier.

In Namibia, prior policy commitments were given a legal footing in the 2012 DRM law, which establishes the National Disaster Fund. The Fund is administered by the National Disaster Risk Management Committee, and draws its income from various sources. It serves as a contingency fund for the development and promotion of DRM in Namibia, which is a broad mandate not specific to DRR.

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<sup>23</sup> UN-Habitat Namibia Country Programme Document 2008-209

<sup>24</sup> SARUA Climate Change Counts mapping study: Namibia Country Report, May 2014



Namibia, like many other countries in the world is not immune to the negative impacts of recurrent natural disasters such as floods and droughts on the livelihoods of its vulnerable communities. Such disasters have, over the years, increased the communities' risk to food insecurity, eroded their livelihood coping capacities and significantly reduced their resilience.

Namibia successfully responded to the National drought situation in 2013/2014, has developed food security monitoring system, disaster risk management plans and disaster standard operational procedures. The country is in the process of developing Disaster Risk Management mainstreaming strategies.

In addition, with the introduction of the Fire Brigade Services Act, 2006 (Act No. 5 of 2006), the Government, through the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, is obligated to subsidize the fire brigade services of the local authorities. The Ministry has procured modern firefighting equipment for all fifty two (52) local authorities in Namibia. The impact of this intervention is among others:

- An improvement in the capacity of Local Authorities to deal with and prevent fires and other emergencies, thereby protecting the lives of people and reducing damage to properties; and
- Increased investor confidence to invest in our local authorities.

## 17. Reducing traffic congestion

On the national road network outside the boundaries of LAs, congestion is experienced mostly between towns leading to and from Windhoek as well as other towns which are connected to the transport corridors. It is also most experienced during festive seasons and during weekends. To address this, the RA of Namibia has a medium to Long Term Road Master Plan (MLTRMP), which guides the RA on the construction and maintenance of the national roads network. It also gives priority of roads that need to be newly constructed, rehabilitated and maintained in order to promote availability of the road network to all communities and businesses countrywide.

Statistics show that the transport system of Windhoek is characterised by very low density which makes transportation expensive. 40% of all trips are made by taxis. Four percent make use of the municipal bus services, 26% use private vehicles, 29% walk and one percent use bicycles.<sup>25</sup> The Namibia Bus and Taxi Association of Namibia (NABTA) is the legally mandated transport association regulating the local public transport sector.

The City of Windhoek operates the public passenger bus service but it has been established that it faces a number of challenges that are addressed in the Master Plan. Chief among them is that services are not readily accessible to the commuting public throughout the day. There are no shared or exclusive right of way for bus operations and few non-motorised transport infrastructures.

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<sup>25</sup> The Namibian - business - general | 2013-07-31 , Windhoek seeking solution to traffic gridlock, Chamwe Kaira



**Figure 4:** Traffic Jam – High traffic volumes are the order of the day on Windhoek streets during the morning and afternoon rush hours

## 18. Air pollution

Air pollution remains a threat to the global climate and human health, and it is an important environmental problem in Africa, including Namibia. It consists of numerous harmful substances, some of which are well known for their negative effects on the environment and on human health. Although Africa has played a minor role in the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere over the years (SADC contributes about 2% of global greenhouse gas emissions), the course of Africa's future energy consumption and land use practices will surely have a greater impact in the atmosphere in this century.

Generally, most power used in Namibia originates in South Africa. In fact Namibia imports 72% of its domestic electricity consumption. At the moment there is no Act in Namibia that deals solely with air pollution. There is the Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Ordinance No. 11 of 1976, which has been repealed. The only existing law regarding air pollution in Namibia has been included in the newly drafted Pollution Control and Waste Management Bill, which is awaiting approval from Cabinet. There is relatively little industry in Namibia, so generally air pollution is minimal. One form of air pollution is not caused by human activity at all – this is the mica dust that pervades the air in the Windhoek area around August - October when there are high winds. A significant cause of air pollution is smoke from cooking fires. This is mainly a concern in rural areas and informal settlements where cooking on wood fires is most common. Smoke from cooking fires causes both respiratory problems and eye problems. Women generally bear the brunt of these ill effects since they do most of the cooking. Another source of general pollution is due to exhaust emissions from vehicles. These gases do contribute to global warming and are carcinogens, but on a global scale pollution of this type is very minimal in Namibia<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> All of the above cited from: State of Environment Report on Waste Management and Pollution Control, Appendix D – pollution, August 2001

## **19. Challenges experienced and lessons learned in these areas**

Climate change negatively affects economic and social development, especially with regard to food, health and livelihood security; coastal and marine populations; and water recharge and availability. Natural disasters are a feature of the Namibian landscape and this threat is likely to continue, not least because climate change is making weather patterns less predictable and more extreme. Every year, Namibian communities face devastating losses caused by floods, drought, forest and veldt fires, and disease outbreaks. These hazards and their associated consequences have significant impacts on communities, the economy, infrastructure and the environment, as well as Namibia's development priorities. Population growth, urbanization and industrialization also increase pollution and the release of toxins into the urban environment.

Traffic congestion in Namibia, specifically in Windhoek is a nightmare that every motorist experiences daily. It seems like there are more vehicles in the city and going to work in the morning or leaving work in the afternoon one is very likely to get stuck in traffic and it doesn't matter whether one use a private car or public transport. The traffic congestions are also compounded whenever there is an accident as many suburbs only have one or two exit routes to industrial areas and the central business district.

Windhoek is growing at a rate of approximately 4.3% per year and within 20 years it is estimated that Windhoek will have to cater to the transport needs of approximately 1 million residents. At the moment, there are approximately 330,000 people living in Windhoek and more than half of them work in the city centre while some learners travel to school in the city from Katutura and other suburbs every day. Apart from public transportation, which consists of taxis and municipal buses, the number of private vehicles in the city seems to be increasing daily as more and more people buy cars and traffic congestion gets worse as most of these vehicles use the three main routes into town.

## **20. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda**

Namibia has a good legislative framework regarding environmental management and requirements for environmental impact assessment for key developments in LAs. This legislative frameworks need to be integrated in the planning and development of LAs and the provision of shelter. There is a need to outline a clear strategy for building Namibia's resilience to climate change and promote the mainstreaming of climate change considerations and responses into all relevant sector planning frameworks. This includes applying and enforcing green building regulations and land use planning as well as to protect the ecosystem and natural buffers to reduce the risk of floods and storm water surges.

In addition, increased urbanization will concentrate people in smaller areas as well as different land use and buildings can increase risks of disasters affecting a larger group of people. This implies that towns and cities need to invest strategically in disaster risk management. Disaster reduction is a cross-sectoral issue, and therefore requires consciousness by all stakeholders in their daily activities. Given the increasing regularity and severity of natural disasters, Namibian Government has recognised that a national, coordinated and cooperative effort is required to enhance Namibia's capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters.

As regards to traffic congestion, various roads were identified to be upgraded to either dual carriage ways or 2 + 1 roads in order to cater for the growing traffic along such road network, as well as to improve the conditions of roads to contribute to the realization of Namibia's Logistic Hub as aimed by the NDP4 and Vision 2030. Those road projects will reduce the traffic congestion as well as promote economic growth at the same time. Likewise, emphasis should be put on increasing public transport services, to include various options of public transportation in such a way that even people who own cars can have the option to leave their cars at home and rather take public transport.



## **Chapter IV: Urban Governance and Legislation: Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda**

### **21. Improving urban legislation**

The delimitation and governance of regions by Regional and Local Councils are effected in accordance with Articles 102-111 of the Constitution. The Regional Councils Act 22 of 1992 and the Local Authorities Act 23 of 1992 further regulate the establishment, powers, duties and functions of the councils. The management and development role and functions of RCs are stipulated in section 28 of the Regional Councils Act. These include: regional development planning in cooperation with the National Planning Commission (NPC); the establishment, management and control of settlement areas; and assisting Local Authority Councils in the exercise of their functions. All LAs (municipal, town and village) are given certain automatic powers, but villages may exercise these powers only if the Minister of Urban and Rural Development considers them ready to do so. Central government can step in to help towns and villages that are having trouble providing adequate services to residents. The lack of development in most towns undermines the town councils' authority and ability to raise revenue from tax, and thus could jeopardise their political legitimacy.

The government of Namibia has embarked on a reform of the local government since 2007. The local authority reform is intended to: create a formal system of governance where central, regional and local governments function as a cohesive whole to address common goals and national priorities; promote inclusion and participation of all citizens in the development of their communities; strengthen the capacity of local authorities to provide adequate, reliable and sustainable basic services to all; increase accountability and transparency at the local level; strengthen the capacity of local authorities to forge strategic, partnership and cooperation with other spheres of governments, the private sector and the NGO community; provide opportunities for meaningful citizens' participation in the development of their communities; strengthen the institutional framework of local authorities to facilitate local economic development including attracting investments.<sup>27</sup>

### **22. Decentralization and strengthening of local authorities**

Chapter 12, Article 102 of the Namibian Constitution provides the basis for Decentralization by providing for the establishment of Regional and Local Governments. The Regional Council and Local Authorities Act instituted the introduction and implementation of Decentralization in the country.

The Decentralization Policy in Namibia was officially launched on 30 March 1998. In the document it is proposed that decentralization go through various stages with the ultimate aim being devolution. To facilitate implementation of the Decentralization Policy, the government in 2000 passed the Decentralization Enabling Act (No. 33 of 2000); the Local Authorities' Amendment Act, 2000; the Regional Councils' Amendment Act, 2000; and the Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provision Act, 2000.

Decentralization seeks to transfer political, administrative, legislative, financial and planning authority from the centre to regional and local authority councils. Political decentralization in Namibia seems to be on the right track, since all the regional and local authority councils have a governmental character. The

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<sup>27</sup> Local government position paper, April 2013

municipalities have autonomy over their planning and financial matters. For the purpose of effective implementation of decentralization the government has established different coordinating and development committees, which are made up of relevant stakeholders, including representatives from CBOs and NGOs. Therefore the grass roots groups of the people's organizations have the opportunity to negotiate and implement their programmes for sustainable development.

### **23. Improving participation and human rights in urban development**

Chapter 3 of the Namibian Constitution contains the Bill of Rights, in which the fundamental human rights and fundamental human freedoms are enshrined. The Bill of Rights provides for the enforcement of fundamental human rights and freedoms, such as the right to both immovable and movable property, the right to education, freedom to move freely throughout Namibia and to reside and settle in any part of Namibia, and that the practice of racial discrimination and the practice and ideology of apartheid from which the majority of the people of Namibia have suffered for so long shall be prohibited.

There are institutionalised structures in place in Namibia that facilitate and maximise citizens' participation in the affairs of their communities. This is a fundamental principle of local democracy that promotes inclusion and enriches the discourse on issues affecting communities so that ensuing decisions and development programmes reflect citizens' preferences and priorities.

Likewise, Namibia since independence has ratified and acceded to various important international and regional human rights conventions and treaties, among them the Vienna Convention on Human Rights, Austria 1993. In 2013 Namibia was elected as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, an honour which places a responsibility on Namibia to lead by exemplary example when it comes to respect for and promotion of human rights.<sup>28</sup> In line with the Vienna Convention, government tasked its Ombudsman to work out Namibia's first Human Rights Action Plan in 2009. As a result of such efforts, Namibia held its first National Human Rights Conference that same year. The National Human Rights Action Plan of Namibia was subsequently launched during 2014, which mainly focuses on rights in areas such as health, education, housing, land, water and sanitation, access to justice and the right not to be discriminated against. The plan will be implemented over a five year period, 2015 - 2019.

There are several measures in the Plan which coincided with already ongoing government development programmes, one of which is to empower the people through public education and awareness campaigns, with specific emphasis on access to quality public service. The emphasis placed on regulatory and legislative reform under each section also resonates with government's ongoing efforts to repeal outdated and discriminatory legal and policy instruments, which should be replaced with new and appropriate legislative and policy instruments.

One of the key principles in the National Human Rights Action Plan to guide Namibia's human rights intervention over the five year period indicated above, is participation aimed at ensuring people exercise their right to participate in decision-making regarding protection of their rights, while government will also endeavour to engage and support the participation of civil society on human rights matters.

### **24. Enhancing urban safety and security**

The Namibian Police Force is established as per the Namibia Constitution Article 118, in order to secure the internal security of Namibia and to maintain law and order. Therefore the Police Act 19 of 1990 was enacted. This Act provides for the establishment, organisation, administration, and powers and duties of

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<sup>28</sup> Namibia National Human Rights Action Plan, 2015 - 2016

the Namibian Police Force. It prescribes procedures to protect the internal security of Namibia and to maintain law and order. It also regulates the appointment, promotion, discipline and discharge of members of the Namibian Police Force. It replaces the Police Act 7 of 1958.

In recent years Namibia witnessed rapid urbanization, which has led to wild-fire-effect multiplication of squatter settlements, and that has resulted in breeding grounds and hideout for criminals. This has thus contributed significantly to the causes of crime. In dealing with these violent crimes the Namibian Police has established several specialized units such as Commercial Crime Unit, Motor Vehicle theft Unit, Drug Law Enforcement Unit, in order to ensure the prevention and combating of various crimes.<sup>29</sup>

Various strategies have also been put in place to enhance safety and security especially in the urban areas. Windhoek has a City Police in place. The City Police has adopted Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving as its core policing concept as outlined in its mission: "In partnership with the community, render a reliable and efficient policing service through professional conduct, the application of modern technology and sound management operational practices".<sup>30</sup>

The increasing demand for land in Namibia's urban centres after independence led to the realisation by the Namibian Government that addressing tenure security in rural areas alone was not sufficient. It was widely recognised that Namibia needed to implement a comprehensive national land reform that takes into account different land needs and equitable access to land in both rural and urban areas. Land reform was conceived as a means by which the Government would provide redress for past injustice and promote development. These goals would be implemented through the restoration of land rights to those dispossessed by segregation laws through a comprehensive land tenure reform programme. Therefore, the Ministry of Land Reform has been mandated to plan, implement and oversee the land reform process in Namibia. The Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS) was developed as an innovative concept to provide affordable tenure security for informal urban settlers.

## 25. Improving social inclusion and equity

The core focus of the national government through the Presidency is the focus on inclusion. It centres on the mantra of "no Namibian must be left out." LAs as the level of government closest to the people are best placed to ensure that genuine social and economic inclusion happens on the ground. It is evident that inclusive economic development is essential to creating jobs, generating higher incomes and creating viable communities and nations.

Plans and Strategies to cater for all Namibians, especially for the poor have been put in place through various stakeholders' strategies, such as Government's Build Together Programme; Ministry of Land Reform through surveying of blocks of land; the City of Windhoek Upgrading and Development Strategy and the SDFN participatory land and shelter process. These initiatives supported the poor to access resources, land and shelter in urban areas.

Education has been identified by NDP4 as a distinct enabler that can improve the quality of life and address the labour market skills mismatch problem. Consequently, the Government has prepared the National Human Development Plan 2010-2025 with Bank support and created the Human Resources Development Council and Productivity Centre to help address the skills shortages across all sectors of the economy. Namibia has made some progress towards the achievement of its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Gender parity in primary school has been met while gender parity for secondary and tertiary education is likely to be achieved in 2015.

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<sup>29</sup> Vision 2030

<sup>30</sup> [http://www.windhoekcc.org.na/depa\\_city\\_police\\_division1.php](http://www.windhoekcc.org.na/depa_city_police_division1.php)

Gender equality and the empowerment of women have been the cornerstones of Namibia's development agenda since its independent in 1990. Milestones include a gender-neutral Constitution that prohibits sex discrimination, several gender-sensitive legislation and policies, and the ratification of key international conventions and regional protocols aimed at eliminating discrimination against women and promoting gender equality. To further enhance gender equality, the Government launched the revised National Gender Policy 2010-2020 in March 2012 and updated the National Gender Plan of Action, both of which are now aligned with the SADC Gender Protocol.

The Social Security Commission provide a foundation of social protection on the principles of solidarity for workers in Namibia and their dependants. Since the beginning of the Social Security Commission (SSC) in 1995, it has made substantial difference in the lives of ordinary workers and their dependants in respect of earnings replacement due to eventualities arising from maternity leave, sick leave and death and work related disabilities, injuries and loss of employment. The activities of the Commission are guided by the Social Security Act, 1994 (Act 34 of 1994).

## **26. Challenges experienced and lessons learnt in these areas**

Local government is faced with varied challenges such as inadequate financial resources, declining local economies, capacity constraints, rural-to-urban migration, and dilapidated physical infrastructure. Consequently, despite the establishment of regional and local governments, central government institutions continue the planning and implementation of basic services at regional and local level, in some cases resulting in parallel efforts. Moreover, a predominant top-down approach in development planning has always deprived regional and local governments from prioritizing local needs. The implementation of the decentralization reform is moving at a slow pace and therefore has weakened the ability of sub-national governments to timely and effectively respond to local needs as decision-making powers remain centralized.

Cases of murder, rape and armed robbery continued to pose a serious threat to individuals in Namibia. The prime root causes of crime include socio-economic factors, such as poverty, alcoholism and drug abuse. Crime also appears to be inextricably linked to undignified or inhuman conditions of living. People without dignified living standards tend to be more vulnerable to crime. Poor people also engage in theft simply in order to make a living.

In addition, Namibia informal settlements formalization of tenure has been slow, and many people experience insecure tenure as a result, although to some extent the anti-eviction directive from Cabinet protects them. Tenure complexity is also related to a certain extent to whether or not land is urban or rural. Urban and rural areas are inextricably linked, with informal settlement in urban areas often serving as reception areas for new migrants from rural areas.

## **27. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda**

Local government has an important role to play in the provision of access to conveniently located land, services, housing and the benefits of urban life. Even with limited resources and capacity constraints, local government can significantly improve the lives of all residents through participatory and integrated approach. Improving urban legislation is therefore indispensable for ensuring delivery of adequate basic services to the communities. Improving the content of legislation and its responsiveness to local realities, should take into account the voices of affected groups and communities, making legislation simple, clear, and accessible, and ensuring that it can deliver results. A key issue that needs to be addressed in terms of managing the complexities of urban habitat and shelter governance is the need to manage the

intergovernmental dynamics and relationships within the city, relations with the RCs and with neighbouring LAs. LAs face the challenge of managing multiple fiscal, political and accountability tensions in order to fulfil their development and growth mandates.

Crime and violence is not only a criminal justice and security issue but has deep social and economic roots and consequences. Namibian towns and cities offer many opportunities, such as access to better services, employment, social development and vibrant public places, but that also increase opportunities for crime and violence. Drivers of violence and crime include a combination of factors, such as poverty, inequality, economic exclusion, unemployment, weak governance, rapid urbanization, poor urban design and the larger phenomenon of socio-spatial segregation and exclusion due to apartheid era planning. Women, children and young people are the most vulnerable to the threat of and exposure to violence.

Creating safer and more equitable cities and town requires new strategies to promote inclusion of marginalized or vulnerable groups. When planning, the following interventions are needed:

- Look at how public transport facilities, as well as streets and roads, can be designed and managed to promote safety;
- Harness the energies of various stakeholders to create safe spaces;
- Foster partnerships, between government and community organizations, non-governmental organization and the private sector;
- Implement focused prevention techniques, through intra-governmental co-ordination and inter-governmental collaboration.

## **Chapter V: Urban Economy: Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda**

### **28. Improving municipal/ local finance**

Without contradiction, revenues are the life-line of local government and, as such every effort must be made to maximise their collection.<sup>31</sup> The Local Authorities Act 1992 stipulates the following as revenue sources for local government in Namibia: Electricity Supply; Water supply; Property tax; Sewerage charges; Development charges; Licence/permits; Rental of council facilities; Interest on investments; Sale of immovable property; Central government transfers; Penalty on rateable property; Commercial activities; and Donations from bilateral and international organisations. Trading services, in which LAs provide services such as electricity and water to citizens on behalf of the bulk suppliers, have been a major source of revenue.

Furthermore, the Government has been and still is assisting LAs to provide services to their communities and for them to remain functional. In Namibia collection rates vary; for Part I Municipalities intake fluctuates between 60-75%, for Part II Municipalities and towns the collection rate is about 50% and 30% for villages.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, for most LAs these revenue sources are inadequate and some LAs utilize funding intended for development purposes for operational matters. While this is an unacceptable public management practice and should be discouraged, it reflects the desperate measures that some LAs have resorted to, so as to maintain functionality. This situation has also affected their ability to meet financial obligations to the suppliers, namely, NamWater and NamPower, often resulting in suspension or termination of services.

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<sup>31</sup> Local Government Reform Position Paper, April 2013: Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development

<sup>32</sup> Local Government Reform Position Paper, April 2013: Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development



## 29. Strengthening and improving access to housing finance

Namibia inherited a much skewed pattern of settlement development at the time of independence, as a result of the homeland policies followed by the colonial government.<sup>33</sup> Urban human settlements were segregated with migrant labour residing in all-male overcrowded hostels, whilst the majority of the population resided in the rural areas and lacked physical infrastructure and decent housing.<sup>34</sup> To improve access to housing, the government undertook multiple courses of action, which consist of various legal instruments, housing finances schemes and housing construction programmes. These efforts mainly focus on enhancing access to housing among middle, low and ultra-low income groups while housing to middle and high income groups is mainly financed through commercial banks. Bank Windhoek, Nedbank, First National and Standard Bank are the four commercial banks in Namibia. Property and/or land prices are determined by market forces according to the 'willing buyer/willing seller principle'.<sup>35</sup> In addition to policies and programmes, the Government also avails funding from the central budget to speed up land and housing delivery in the country. The following are the various social housing programmes implemented since independence:

- The Build Together Programme (BTP) is the key programme through which Government has attempted to deliver housing to low and ultra-low income groups in Namibia. This programme is implemented at the regional and local authority levels, which disburses loans for building new houses and/or upgrading existing homes. The loan values range from N\$3,000 to N\$40,000 with a repayment period capped at 20 years and is geared towards individuals earning less than N\$3,000 per month. The interest rate attached to these loans ranges between 4% and 7%. Nonetheless, due to an increase in the costs of building materials, the loan amounts have become insufficient for housing construction and therefore need to be revised upwards to reflect prevailing market conditions.<sup>36</sup>
- National Housing Enterprise (NHE) is dedicated towards providing housing finance and constructing houses for individuals in the low and middle income brackets. The NHE loan sizes vary, and are disbursed as various financing products. The loan repayment period ranges between 20 to 30 years.
- The SDFN is a non-governmental savings organisation comprising of various housing groups, which assists its members to obtain land and infrastructure for housing purposes. The SDFN provides members with loans ranging from a minimum of N\$8,000 to N\$26,000, with the main determining factor of the loan value being the ability to repay the loan. The loans are repayable within a period of 11 years at an interest rate of 0.5 percent per month. However, in order to qualify for a loan, a member is expected to provide an advance payment equivalent to five percent of the loan amount. The SDFN solicits funding from its savings schemes, the Central Government, local private companies and international donors.

A company, First Capital Housing Fund was also established in 2011 with an initial investment from the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF) to pioneer a new way of providing home loans to people with low income, government employees and GIPF members to enable them acquire and develop affordable housing. The Fund is aimed at financing construction of new houses, renovations and purchase of houses for all qualifying borrowers.

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<sup>33</sup> Namibia National Plan of Action, March 1996

<sup>34</sup> Overview of the housing finance sector in Namibia commissioned by the Finmark Trust with support from Habitat for Humanity: Namene Kalili, Jonathan Andongo and Taylor Larson: Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit, November 2008

<sup>35</sup> Bank of Namibia 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium 2011: Housing in Namibia: Has the situation changed 21 years after independence

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

### 30. Supporting local economic development

The introduction of Local Economic Development (LED) in Namibia is relatively new with earlier efforts by local authorities in terms of involvement in economic development and growth activities being limited to the provision of service land for business and industrial premises development purposes.<sup>37</sup> The Local Economic Development Agency (LEDA) came into being with the launch of the Namibian LED White Paper in July 2011. The agency supports the decentralised Namibian government authorities in creating enabling business environments.

From the year 2011, the Government with the support of Germany's GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, - German Society for International Cooperation, Ltd.), assisted and supported a total of 38 RCs and LAs to develop their LED policies and strategies. Most of these are already being implemented and bearing fruits for the respective RCs and LAs, in terms of investment interests, employment and income generation. Other activities undertaken and results achieved are:

- Capacity building in the form of five (5) annual LED conferences and training workshops;
- Establishment and institutionalization of three (3) regional LED forums in the Southern, Central and Northern parts of Namibia that serve to leverage the potential of peer-knowledge-exchange and initiate cross-town and regional LED initiatives, as well as to identify and discuss concrete solutions and interventions to address common LED challenges in the respective localities;
- Studies carried out on among other the impact of Public Private Dialogues (PPDs) among business owners in Namibia and benchmarking of LED initiatives; and
- Development of PPD implementation guidelines to guide LED practitioners in Namibia on how to conduct PPD engagements successfully

### 31. Creating decent jobs and livelihoods

Namibia has taken the lead in promoting decent work since independence. The following legislative frameworks, policies and programmes have been developed:

#### ***Labour Act no 11 of 2007 with the purpose of;***

- Establishing a comprehensive labour law for all employers and employees.
- To regulate basic terms and conditions employment
- To ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees
- To regulate collective labour relations

#### ***Collective minimum wage agreements***

These agreements are in place in sectors such as agriculture, security, construction and domestic work. The purpose of the collective agreement for a minimum wage are to improve the living standard of employees; to reduce poverty; to maintain social peace; to ensure income levels are above the breadline; and to curb and prevent exploitation employees in the sectors mentioned.

#### ***Namibia Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2010 – 2014)***

Decent Work Country Programmes have been established as the main vehicle for delivery of International Labour Organisation (ILO) support to countries. DWCPs have two basic objectives. They promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies. At the same time they organise ILO

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<sup>37</sup> LEDNA LED Stocktaking Survey: Report on the state of LED for Namibia: June 2008

knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the Decent Work Agenda within the fields of comparative advantage of the Organization. Tripartism and social dialogue are central to the planning and implementation of a coherent and integrated ILO programme of assistance to constituents in member States.

Namibia Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) owes a lot to the numerous contributions received principally from the government, the Social Partners and other national stakeholders. The consultation process with the constituents for a DWCP for Namibia was initiated during 2007 through a series of consultations with the government and social partners in Namibia. In November 2008 the ILO held its first consultation with national constituents in Windhoek to verify the ILO country situational analysis report on decent work. Based on the report and the major decent work deficits were identified The Constituents prioritized employment promotion, HIV/AIDS, social security and strengthening social dialogue, as the main areas in need of support. These have provided a basis for developing the Namibia DWCP. Some of the prominent achievements obtained under the Decent Work Country Programme include:

- Namibia's Second National Employment Policy 2013/2014-2016/2017 was launched in October 2013;
- Child labour issues are mainstreamed into policies and labour legislation, and child labour projects are carried out to address child labour problems;
- HIV/AIDS in the workplace policies and tools developed and implemented.

### **32. Integration of the urban economy into national development policies**

Economic growth in Namibia started to improve considerably after independence, but the level of growth has not been sufficient to address the many social iniquities facing the country. In addition, although gross domestic investment improved remarkably, the level has remained insufficient to spur higher rates of economic growth needed to reduce poverty and the high unemployment rate. Major investment projects, with the potential to create jobs, are often held up by simple bottlenecks in water, electricity or transport infrastructure, or inadequate local skills. At the same time many LAs barely communicate with the business community or other economic stakeholders (because they are preoccupied with their own internal activities), and also lack technical capacity for facilitating economic development.

Sometimes the spatial pattern of investment is somewhat haphazard, with investment driven where developers can access cheap land or infrastructure, rather than planned from a socio-economic and environmental perspective. This is because LAs are not equipped or determined enough to decide on the most appropriate locations for business and industrial development in their city or town. Part of the challenge is the disjoint, and sometimes contradiction, between national (macro) economic policy and local economic development planning.

The other challenge is that instead of seeing the informal sector as a source of livelihoods and a training ground for nurturing future enterprises, it tends to be dismissed as undesirable, marginal and survivalist, and therefore of little economic consequence. Cities are more inclined to restrict the activities of informal traders, rather than to help them to grow and diversify. There is insufficient experimentation with community-based enterprises and the social economy as a way to develop local skills and provide useful services e.g. in townships and informal settlements – recycling waste, renovating homes, installing cheap energy systems, and caring for children and elderly people.



### 33. Challenges experienced and lessons learnt in these areas

For various reasons including lack of capacity, strategy, enforcement, among others, some LAs are unable to maximise revenue collection and therefore suffer income shortfalls. Consequently, they are unable to honour some of their financial obligations and to fulfil their service delivery mandates as expected. Some LAs carry a huge debt burden, part of which they have inherited from the pre-independence era and another portion from the inability of the unemployed and/or indigent people to pay for services provided to them. This is further exacerbated by the narrow revenue base of these local authorities.

Furthermore, the Namibian housing sector is characterized primarily by limited financial support for the low income groups as well as limited capacity to the demand for land and housing development. By 2007, the country faced a backlog of 80,000 households in dire need of housing and there are reasons to believe that this figure has increased since then, as manifested in the growing number of informal settlements on the outskirts of most towns in the country.<sup>38</sup> The main factor contributing to the housing shortage is the shortfall in housing supply which failed to keep up with growing demand over the years.<sup>39</sup> The housing shortfall is further amplified by the prevailing high unemployment rate, rising house prices and growing urbanisation in the country, amongst others.<sup>40</sup>

Income inequality has also remained one of the most pervasive challenges facing Namibia, this is further compounded by high unemployment and the growing wage gap between skilled and unskilled labour. This inequality continues to entrench economic marginalisation and produces spatial poverty traps. A large number of households do not have access to services and are concentrated in informal settlements in cities and in peri-urban areas.

### 34. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda

Making interventions to enhance the revenue capability of local authorities is necessary. These should include the development of a feasible intergovernmental fiscal transfer modality and building the capacity of local authorities to increase tax compliance and revenue collection. Additionally, clear policy guidelines for investment, credit control and borrowing should be developed. Guidance should also be provided on ways and means of harnessing the social capital that exists in communities for the benefit of local government development. This untapped resource has the potential to make a significant contribution to local government development.

Several auctions by local authorities have proved that land is auctioned off at artificial prices, which reduce the ability of middle and low income households to access the formal housing market. To that effect, auctioning of land for excessive gains should be prohibited as it leads to inflated prices. Alternatively, such auctions should be exclusively limited to high income residential areas. Central Government should also avail more funds to housing initiatives to address the plight of low income households. Several legal instruments need to be introduced to curb rising house prices in the country. This will reduce speculative activity and standardise valuations in the housing market.

There is also a need to recognize the fact that different towns, villages and cities face different challenges. Whereas the challenge for bigger cities may be to recognize and strengthen their role in economic planning, smaller towns and villages face their own peculiar challenges. Some towns face the challenge of being depended on one or key economic sectors (and so vulnerable to economic or policy shocks),

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<sup>38</sup> Bank of Namibia 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium 2011: Housing in Namibia: Has the situation changed 21 years after independence?

<sup>39</sup> *ibid*

<sup>40</sup> Bank of Namibia 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium 2011: Housing in Namibia: Has the situation changed 21 years after independence?

poor relations in governance and management, and weak relations between government and non-government organizations and between government and business. Sometimes there are often weak strategic and spatial planning capabilities, inadequate municipal infrastructure and maintenance, which prevents them from expanding their economic base. LAs with large rural populations can also experience tensions between elected local councils and traditional leaders.

There is a need to strengthen local authority institutional capacity in economic development because compared to other municipal functions, economic development required different skills and competences, in particular organizational capacity to engage with external role players and champion local interests. Other capabilities needed include strategic leadership, economic literacy, networking, partnership-building and negotiation with wider interests, to ensure that job-creating investment is championed, while ensuring that proper balance is given to economic objectives alongside environmental and social considerations. Municipalities should consider appointing economists, project facilitators and people with appropriate business experience.

At the same time, the production structure and capabilities of smaller towns and villages need to be strengthened, to allow them to play an increased role in local economic development. The potential ability of small towns to act as catalysts for rural economic development is intimately linked to the quality of available infrastructure and the local enterprise sector.

There need to be recognition that there is no silver bullet solution to the unemployment crisis, and that both the government and the private sector have important roles to play, often best achieved by working together or through intermediaries. LAs should be enabled to tackle unemployment and strengthen the local economy by taking on a more decisive leadership role and directing strategic policies and investment.

## **Chapter VI: Housing and Basic Services: Issues and Challenges for a New Urban Agenda**

### **35. Slum upgrading and prevention**

The accelerated influx of migrants into the main urban areas after independence caused progressive settlement growth on open LAs owned land as well as considerable housing and servicing problems for many LAs. This situation also provoked a dramatic increase of informal settlement in Windhoek, mostly in Katutura; many living in overcrowded conditions in Katutura moved onto vacant land nearby and many migrants from impoverished rural areas joined them.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> A place we want to call our home: A study on land tenure policy and securing housing rights in Namibia, by Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), 2005



**Figure 4:** Informal Settlement area in Windhoek

Government assisted through the Informal Settlement Upgrading Sub-programme, under the Build Together Programme (BTP), whereby small LAs and RCs were assisted with funding in the provision of basic services such as, water, roads, sewerage and electrical reticulation in informal settlement areas.

#### ***Community Land Information Programme (CLIP)***

Since there was insufficient information about communities living in informal settlements in most of the LAs, RCs, as well as the Central government, SDFN/NHAG supported by the MURD and Shack/ Slum Dwellers International (SDI) initiated the CLIP, to collect information about the existing informal settlements in Namibia.

According to the CLIP, there are 134,884 households (population of 541,119) that live in informal settlements. This translates into 25% of the Namibian population, which indicates a significant challenge facing urban development (CLIP, 2009). It is further ascertained that another major concern is the sanitation situation, while most of the settlements have access to clean water through communal taps, 33% of the estimated households use the 'bush' or 'open air' as toilets, while half of the informal settlement indicated that they have no toilets.

This information assists communities to determine their priority needs and start to take actions with their local authorities to address these needs. The planning studios in Gobabis Freedom Square resulted in a new layout planned by the community and will form the basis for the upgrading of the informal settlement. Greenwell Matongo C in Windhoek also planned for and upgraded their informal settlement.

#### ***Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP)***

Namibia joined the PSUP in 2012. The programme is partly funded by the European Union and UN-Habitat. The overall objective of the PSUP is to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the urban poor and to contribute to Millennium Goal (MDG) 7 (Ensure environmental sustainability), including: target C, to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; and, target D, to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

Phase I produced urban profiles giving a detailed understanding of the issues in selected areas. Profiles were completed, in Walvis Bay Municipality, Opuwo Town Council and Aroab Village Council. Phase II of the PSUP comprises the Action Planning and Programme formulation, for preparation of Phase III that will involve the implementation of some tangible projects identified.

## 36. Improving access to adequate housing

The Namibian government identified housing as one of the priority areas of development. Government commitment to address the housing needs of all Namibians led to the formulation and adoption of the first National Housing Policy, approved by Cabinet in 1991. The policy clearly states that the role of government is to facilitate and promote partnership between all relevant public and private parties concerned with the delivery of land, shelter and human settlement development. The policy was reviewed and updated in 2009. Facilitating affordable, durable, adequate, and qualitative housing outputs in order to shelter as many Namibians as possible is a fundamental emphasis of the policy, hence it advocates the imperative of aggressive mobilization of domestic savings, government subventions, exploring alternative building materials and technologies, and supporting people housing processes (people's own contributions) to enable Namibia to provide more and affordable housing to her people.<sup>42</sup>

The National Housing Policy is implemented with the assistance of public and private sectors, and civil society. The National Housing Policy also provided a guideline where various instruments and strategies need to be formulated.

The National Housing Development Act was promulgated in 2000. The act makes provision for amongst others the establishment of the National Housing Advisory Committee, and the establishment of Housing Revolving Funds by LAs and RCs.

The following are various initiatives in the provision of housing in Namibia:

### ***Build Together Programme (BTP)***

The BTP was initiated and administered since 1992/1993 financial year countrywide by the Namibian government. This is a self-help programme whereby individuals as beneficiaries are required to construct their houses with assistance of their families or hire builders; as well as housing provision to social welfare cases; and provision of basic services to the communities. The programme benefits households with an income of N\$3,000 or less per month. The BTP was delegated to the RCs/ LAs from 1998/1999 financial year. Since 1996, this programme benefited 18,210 households. The BTP was awarded the Habitat Scroll of Honour in 1993 and World Habitat Award in 1994. The aim of these awards correspondingly, is to honour individuals and institutions instrumental in improving the living conditions in urban centres; as well as recognizing institutions that provide practical, innovative and sustainable solutions to current housing needs, which are capable of being transferred or adapted for use elsewhere.

### ***Mass Housing Development Programme (MHDP)***

The MHDP was initiated during 2013 to address the housing backlog in Namibia. The target of the programme is that over a period of 17 years, a total of 185,000 houses will be constructed up to 2030. Therefore, an average of 10,278 houses is expected to be constructed per annum. Phase I of the MHDP that commenced during the 2014/2015 financial year is implemented by the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) for a two-year period.

### ***Habitat Research and Development Centre***

This is a centre established under the auspices of the MURD to experiment with alternative and locally available building materials. The aim is to reduce the cost of building materials in the construction of houses especially to the low and ultra-low income households of Namibia.

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<sup>42</sup>Republic of Namibia, Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development: Namibia National Housing Policy: Cabinet Approved 1991, Reviewed 2009.



### ***Community Based Organizations (CBOs)***

Housing activities of CBOs increased after independence. The SDFN/NHAG and other CBOs has been actively working with low-income communities to establish saving schemes in order to assist with the servicing of land and construction of houses. SDFN has constructed more than 4,000 houses through a community managed process. SDFN contributed savings and their own labour in the moulding of bricks and some aspects of the construction of their houses, enabling the very poor to participate in and benefit from the process. 19,000 more SDFN members are participating in the savings, following the example of the saving groups. This programme has proven itself over the years as a credible community led programme for delivering housing to the poor. For instance the Twahangana Fund established by the Federation after the Habitat II Conference in 1996 expanded to respond to the needs of the communities and assisted more than 7,900 households with N\$84.6 million as at June 2015. The Fund itself has also availed N\$4.7 million for 2264 households to improve their incomes. Government as from the year 2000 has contributed N\$23,129,000 to the Twahangana Fund.

### ***National Housing Enterprise (NHE)***

NHE is a state-owned company of the Government under the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development. Its accountability to the MURD was formalised by the NHE Act of 1993 (Act No 5 of 1993) as amended. NHE core business is providing housing needs to low and middle income inhabitants of Namibia and financing of housing for such inhabitants. This involves: land acquisition from LAs; housing construction; and provision of housing loans. NHE builds on average 660 houses per year.

## **37. Ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water**

According to the 2011 Census, almost all urban households have access to safe water (98%) in the form of piped water inside or outside their dwellings, or from public pipes or boreholes. 59% of rural households share the same privilege, but 16% of rural households rely on unsafe water from rivers or streams and another 13% on unsafe water in unprotected wells. The first Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (WASP) was adopted in 1993. As recommended in the WASP, the Namibian Water Corporation Limited (NamWater) a State owned Enterprise was established as the major bulk water supplier. The Directorate of Rural Water supply (DRWS) was also established in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (MAWRD) to improve access to safe water of communities in rural, communal areas. The 1993 WASP was reviewed and replaced by the WASP of 2008. Its principles are in line with Integrated Water Resources management (IWRM) including a strong focus on Water Demand Management (WDM).<sup>43</sup>

The Water and Sanitation Sector is entrusted with a task of setting up the necessary countrywide facilities to ensure an increased supply of clean water (through the construction of dams, desalination plants, and boreholes) to all citizens of Namibia and for industrial development purposes.<sup>44</sup> The focus of the Sector is to reach 100% population coverage of potable or safe drinking water by 2017. The major projects undertaken are as follows:

- Commenced with the construction of the Neckartal Dam;
- Completed the project designs for the new Divundu pipeline scheme and treatment plant;
- Project design for the work on the Kalkveld supply scheme started, which stands at 80%;
- The Community Based Management Drilling and Cleaning of Boreholes Project resulted in the drilling of 237 boreholes, exceeding the targeted 195 in the quest to mitigate the effects of the recent drought;

<sup>43</sup> Namibia Water Supply and Sanitation Policy: October 2008

<sup>44</sup> Namibia 4<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Report on NDP4: October 2013 to March 2014: NPC May 2014

- With respect to water supply subsidies in urban areas, the Sector achieved 76% payment to subsidise water supply to low-income communities as planned.<sup>45</sup>

The Water Resources Management Act, 2013 was also enacted to provide for the management, protection, development, use and conservation of water resources; to provide for the regulation and monitoring of water services and to provide for incidental matters.

### 38. Ensuring sustainable access to basic sanitation and drainage

Poor sanitation and inadequate access to safe water are public health concerns because they create conditions conducive to the spread of disease.<sup>46</sup> It is a fact that sanitation plays a pivotal role in economic development of a country because improved sanitation facilities contribute significantly to the health of the population, which in turn drives the nation's economy.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, the need for potable water supplies and basic sanitation services in Namibia was identified at independence as one of the major basic essential needs of which the Nation, amongst others people living in informal settlements, had been deprived.

It is indicated in the 2011 Census that 49% households in Namibia have no private toilet facility while close to 40% have one or another type of flush toilet. Various flush toilets are common in urban areas and use by about 69% of households, while three out of four households in rural areas do not have any toilet facilities. About 10% of households use pit latrines with a slightly higher share in rural than urban households. The bucket system is more common in the Hardap region (6%) than anywhere else.

Area	Households	Private flush connected to main sewer	Shared flush connected to main sewer	Private flush connected to septic/cesspool	Shared flush connected to septic/cesspool	Pit latrine with ventilation pipe	Covered pit latrine without ventilation pipe	Uncovered pit latrine without ventilation pipe	Bucket toilet	No toilet facility	Other
Namibia	464 839	24.8	11.7	1.6	1.4	4.3	3.2	1.8	1.8	48.6	0.7
Urban	228 955	44.4	21.2	1.4	1.7	3.6	2.2	1.4	1.3	22.4	0.4
Rural	235 884	5.8	2.5	1.9	1.1	4.9	4.2	2.2	2.3	74.0	1.0
Caprivi	21 283	10.4	2.1	0.3	0.4	4.4	1.5	0.8	0.7	73.5	6.0
Erongo	44 116	45.8	33.4	1.8	1.6	3.2	1.9	0.8	0.6	10.6	0.3
Hardap	19 307	40.2	6.3	6.0	2.0	1.2	1.9	0.8	6.2	34.9	0.4
Karas	20 988	41.1	18.0	2.7	2.4	3.7	2.9	1.5	3.5	23.3	0.7
Kavango	36 741	7.5	2.7	1.0	0.5	5.0	3.0	3.1	1.9	74.7	0.5
Khomas	89 438	48.6	24.2	1.1	2.3	1.3	1.3	0.5	0.6	19.9	0.4
Kunene	18 495	16.2	7.0	2.3	1.8	4.3	1.8	1.0	1.7	63.2	0.7
Ohangwena	43 723	3.0	2.6	1.0	0.7	5.5	3.2	1.7	2.1	80.0	0.3
Omaheke	16 174	23.3	6.5	2.8	1.6	1.5	1.0	0.6	1.1	60.2	1.4
Omusati	46 698	3.7	1.5	0.7	0.4	6.5	4.7	2.5	1.7	77.9	0.4
Oshana	37 284	16.0	5.2	2.1	1.6	11.6	8.8	4.4	3.5	46.4	0.4
Oshikoto	37 400	9.4	4.8	1.6	1.4	3.4	5.3	3.0	1.8	68.9	0.4
Otjozondjupa	33 192	33.0	11.2	2.0	1.3	4.2	3.7	2.8	2.1	38.9	0.8

**Table 3:** Percent distribution of household by type of main toilet facility<sup>48</sup>

### 39. Improving access to clean domestic energy

The Government, through the Ministry of Mines and Energy is promoting renewable energies, especially solar energy, through Solar Shops and the Solar Revolving Fund. The solar revolving fund subsidises

<sup>45</sup> ibid

<sup>46</sup> Namibia 2011 Population & Housing Census Main Report

<sup>47</sup> Namibia Sanitation Strategy 2010/11 – 2014/15: September 2009

<sup>48</sup> Namibia 2011 Population & Housing Census Main Report

solar home systems in remote areas. At the same time, the concept of the solar shops will help to ensure that solar equipment and technology can be easily distributed and available throughout the country.

To reach this objective, the Ministry and the Renewable Energy and Efficiency Institute are working with existing distributors and hardware shops. The latter are offered the opportunity to become official distributors of solar equipment and are eligible to receive subsidised loans for the stocking and warehousing of technology. There are 108 shops planned, the first of which opened in 2011<sup>49</sup>.

#### **40. Improving access to sustainable means of transport**

The RA use Regional Road Master Plans which were established to cater for regional needs. Through these plans, the Authority is able to implement road projects which increase access of communities to roads; improve tracks to gravel roads to allow easy access to communities especially to schools, clinics, churches, market places and promote trade. Through these regional plans, communities through the Constituency Councillors, Regional Councils and Road Board meeting, road projects are recommended to the RA which has greater economic and social benefits in such communities.

At the current stage, there are various road projects which are upgraded to gravel road standards especially in the northern regions and the purpose is to increase sustainable access to road by communities and be able to live within 2km away from the road. This will improve sufficiently, the level at which communities in remote areas can easily travel from one place to another.

#### **41. Challenges experiences and lessons learnt in these areas**

Despite the many components provided in the National Housing Policy and the awareness of the issues within government, few elements of the policy have been taken forward and little has been achieved in the last twenty years to clear the backlog in housing.<sup>50</sup> The housing sector is also constrained through lack of available serviced land, which is both slowing down the process of housing delivery and pushing up prices of serviced land. In addition, although housing is considered as one of the priority areas of development, there is a challenge of limited funding allocated to housing provision in the country as compared to other areas. Access to affordable land and credit facilities for the low-income groups is also one of the major constraints to the housing process. The cost of conventionally serviced land is unaffordable to most low-income groups under the present planning and land infrastructure regimes.

Provision of water and sanitation facilities to residents, especially in the informal settlements where people relieve themselves in the open, is still a challenge for Namibia. When nature calls, people in the said areas are forced to use any open space available thereby exposing themselves to passers-by or sometimes hold their bladders and bowels until nightfall, and then venture into the nearby fields under cover of darkness. This situation is particularly challenging for women and girls who lack privacy and facilities for hygiene management. Diarrhoea and other infections like worms due to lack of safe drinking water and proper sanitation accounts for about half of ill-health and under-nutrition in children.

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<sup>49</sup> Green Economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, lessons learned from Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Namibia and Nigeria, GIZ (2013)

<sup>50</sup> Housing Policy and Delivery in Namibia, by Els Sweeney-Bindels: Institute for Public Policy Research.

#### 42. Future challenges and issues in these areas that could be addressed by a New Urban Agenda

Experience both in Namibia and elsewhere in Africa shows that while there are different options for low income housing, on-site upgrading has proven in various contexts to be the best option as it is the least expensive, most humane way of enhancing a city's much needed housing stock of affordable housing. The experiences of both the Built Together Program and the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia has confirmed that the full involvement of women is the best guarantee that any housing project will succeed as women are most concerned about housing conditions for their families. Housing delivery should not just concern itself with increasing the number, but must aim at creating a sustainable human habitat and environment. The issue of secure tenure for low income groups, especially informal settlers has to be addressed, as the process of housing for these groups depends much on security of tenure.

While giving priority to the rural communal areas, it is equally essential to maintain and improve the present water supply and sanitation coverage levels in urban areas to address the current and future accelerated urban population growth particularly in informal settlements. The exceptionally rapid influx of people to the urban areas will require accelerated expenditure on water supplies and sanitation infrastructure development to provide essential services and to prevent spread of diseases in high density urban areas. With the growing lower income urban target group in mind, efforts should also be aimed at making low cost improved sanitation solutions for urban sanitation more attractive, along with the augmentation of existing infrastructure capacities for those who can afford it.

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## Chapter VII: Urban Indicators

Data required for this section is for 1996, 2006 and 2013, when possible disaggregated by gender. However, data for most of those years is not available.

### *i. Percentage of people living in slums*

1993/1994: 10% - the frequency of improvised housing, frequently in squatter camps is about the same in rural and urban areas. It is somewhat more common for male headed households to live in single quarters or improvised housing. (Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey – NHIES)

2003/2004: 27% - improvised housing is typically associated with informal settlements; 27% urban dwelling are improvised compared to 10% in rural areas (NHIES)

2009/2010: 30% live in improvised houses (female 27.9% and male 31.5%)

### *ii. Percentage of urban population with access to adequate housing*

1993/1994: 80% of the households (urban) live in modern housing. The distribution of the households on different types of houses is basically the same for female-headed and male-headed households (NHIES)

2003/2004: 65% of households in urban areas live in modern dwellings, especially in Khomas, 69% and Erongo, 66%

### *iii. Percentage of people residing in urban areas with access to safe drinking water*

2011: 98% have access to safe water in the form of piped water inside or outside their dwellings, or from public pipes or boreholes

2013: 97.8% of urban population using an improved water source, compared to 71.9% for rural. The total for Namibia is 84.0% (Namibia Demographic and Health Survey – NDHS)

### *iv. Percentage of people residing in urban areas with access to adequate sanitation*

2013: 57.8% of the population living in urban areas have access to water borne sewerage and 13.3% living in rural areas connected to sewers

2013: Percentage of people with access to improved sanitation – 53.2% for urban; 16.7% for rural; total 33.8% (NDHS, 2013)

- v. ***Percentage of people residing in urban areas with access to regular waste collection***  
2011: 70% (Census, 2011)
- vi. ***Percentage of people residing in urban areas with access to clean domestic energy***  
2001: 0.4% solar energy – source of energy used for cooking, lighting and heating  
2011: 13.3% gas; 6.6% paraffin/ kerosene; 0.2% animal dung (main source of energy for cooking)  
0.4% gas; 4.4% paraffin/ kerosene; 0.4% solar (main source of energy for lighting)  
2.9% gas; 0.2% animal dung; 0.4% solar energy (main source of energy for heating)
- vii. ***Percentage of people residing in urban areas with access to public transport***  
2013<sup>51</sup>: 40% of all trips are made by taxis; 4% make use of the municipal bus services; 26% use private vehicles; 29% walk; and 1% use bicycles
- viii. ***Level of effective decentralization for sustainable urban development measured by: (i) Percentage of policies and legislation on urban issues in whose formulation local and regional governments participated from 1996 to the present; (ii) percentage share of both income and expenditure allocated to local and regional governments from the national budget; (iii) percentage share of local authorities' expenditure financed from local revenue***
- ix. ***Percentage of city, regional and national authorities that implemented urban policies supportive of local economic development and creation of decent jobs and livelihoods***
- x. ***Percentage of city and regional authorities that have adopted or implemented urban safety and security policies or strategies***
- xi. ***Percentage of city and regional authorities that have implemented plans and designs for sustainable and resilient cities that are inclusive and respond to urban population growth adequately***
- xii. ***Share of national gross domestic product (GDP) that is produced in urban areas***

<sup>51</sup> The Namibian – business – general; 2013-07-31, Windhoek seeking solution to traffic gridlock, Chamwe Kaira

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