

# **Gender and development in Namibia: a country study**

**Report prepared for Directorate General of Development, Commission of  
the European Communities**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The situation of women in Namibia cannot be understood without reference to the historical and political context and economic and social conditions of the country. Specifically, this entails an understanding of the on-going effects of pre-independence apartheid society as it constructed women's lives in terms of race and gender; of varying traditional practices among different cultures and geographical locations; and of the differences between urban and rural areas. Gender disaggregated statistical data for many aspects of social and economic life in Namibia do not exist. Therefore, this analysis draws upon anecdotal but well substantiated information from the different parts of Namibia, as well as the limited data available.

Namibia's relatively high (for Sub-Saharan Africa) annual GNP per capita at US \$1044 in 1988 (UNICEF/NISER, 1991), is a function of its small population and extremely skewed income distribution. Thus it calls for considerable disaggregation. The estimated GDP per capita (including subsistence income) of black people in the traditional economy (55 per cent of the population) was \$63 in 1988, and for the poorest 95 per cent of population, less than \$319 (UNICEF/NISER, 1991). The lowest reasonable absolute poverty line, in contrast, is \$150-180 per year (urban) and \$120-150 (rural). Consideration of the sources of this income and of the gender biases in employment, agriculture and household economy reveals further economic disadvantage for many black women. These will be explored in detail below.

## 2. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia recognises and is committed to the elimination of discrimination against women (Article 10). It authorizes, though does not require, affirmative action for women:

'it shall be permissible to have regard to the fact that women in Namibia have traditionally suffered special discrimination and that they need to be encouraged and enabled to play a full equal and effective role in the political, social and economic and cultural life of the nation'. (Article 23, cited in von Holtz, 1991:11.)

In 1990, a Women's Desk was established in the Office of the President and was subsequently upgraded to departmental status in 1991. The role of the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) is to lobby for gender-sensitivity in other ministries and to support and facilitate women's community development efforts. It is too early to assess the achievements of this structure.

Tapscott and Hubbard (1991:4) note an enormous gap between the constitutional and political commitment to gender equality and the concrete social reality. In political structures, there are very few women in influential senior positions - only six of the 72 voting members of the National Assembly are women. Table 1 gives a breakdown of women's representation in higher government. At central government level, with the exception of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Minister for Local Government, most women are concentrated in 'soft' ministries, such as Youth and Sport, rather than Finance, Agriculture etc. Although the total percentage of women in senior government positions - at 16 per cent - shows that women are underrepresented, it compares favourably both with many other countries in Sub-

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Saharan Africa and with some developed countries. For example, the percentage of women decision makers in central government (in 1987) for Botswana was 4.9 per cent, for the UK, 7.9 per cent, for Belgium, 3.6 per cent, and (more favourably) for Finland, 19.4 per cent (United Nations Statistical Office, 1991:39).

In the local authority elections scheduled for November/December 1992, it will be compulsory to include two or three women on each party list, depending on its length. Though this is to be welcomed, it does not of course guarantee the election of women representatives. Given the politicisation of women (and men) during the independence struggle and the high percentage (over half) of professional women, probably mainly nurses and teachers (see Table 2), it is likely that a sizeable pool of eligible women candidates exists. However, this factor may be outweighed by the demands on women's time, mitigating against their participation in the political process, especially in the rural areas. It is also important to note the under-registration of women for voting in regional elections in the rural North scheduled at the same time as the local elections. Moreover, many rural areas do not fall under local authorities and hence remain under the jurisdiction of traditional, predominantly male, authority structures.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. LEGAL CONTEXT

All laws discriminating between women and men remain in force until repealed or declared unconstitutional. The Ministry of Justice has identified 13 such laws, but as at October 1991, only one - that on income tax - had been addressed (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991:4). Tapscott and Hubbard (1991) consider the most serious legal site of gender inequality to be the customary and common (Roman-Dutch) law on marriage, since 'in the absence of an ante-nuptial contract stating otherwise ... the wife [is] subject to the marital power of the husband'. This means that the husband has control and sole decision-making power over joint property, and that the wife is unable to enter into contracts without his consent and effectively has minority status. Thus, for instance, she cannot pledge any of the couple's joint property for credit. This has potentially restrictive consequences for women's access to credit and for their participation in entrepreneurial activity.

However, most black rural women and some urban women probably do not marry under these provisions. Moreover, of those women who are married under Roman-Dutch law, a majority (50-75 per cent) have pre-marriage agreements to opt out of 'community property' arrangements. Whilst this has the advantage of allowing them to control property in their own right, it also has disadvantages in that it undermines their inheritance rights through the male. (R Green, personal communication.) Von Holtz (1991:16) suggests that women who are recognised as public traders in their own right can enter contracts (and be sued) separately from their husbands, even if married under Roman Dutch, community property provisions.

If a husband dies intestate, under customary law his property is divided between his wife, children and other male heirs (Hubbard, 1991). In practice, in Ovambo cultures (50 per cent of Namibia's population), this may mean the complete expropriation of the widow's property and also the children's, by male relatives and their families (Sister, 1991a). On death of the husband, his brother is supposed, under historic community law, to provide land, a home and food for the children of the deceased, but this is not always effective; nor is the earlier traditional obligation to take the brother's widow as another wife (R Green, personal communication). These are major factors borne in mind by young Ovambo women in deciding the relative merits of marriage, cohabitation or single motherhood, and perhaps

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<sup>2</sup> However, there are some 10-15 per cent of women sub-chiefs and headpersons. (R Green, personal communication.)

explains the apparent preference of many women not to marry, even when in relatively stable, long-term relationships.

Single motherhood is an extremely important phenomenon in Namibia, with over 50 per cent of women having borne their first child in their teens. Under Roman-Dutch law (which mainly covers the white and coloured populations) single mothers have custody of their children and fathers have a duty to support offspring conceived within or outside wedlock in proportion to the size of their income relative to the mother's (Hubbard, 1991). Under these provisions, non-paying fathers may be located by the police or social workers and forced to pay up, but this process requires confidence, persistence and access to the police - who may be located up to 200km away from women's homes. Community law provisions as to who has a right to custody are neither uniform nor uniformly honoured. Support payments to unmarried or divorced women for child maintenance are the exception not the norm. Historic community law norms for much of the black population do not recognise children outside wedlock and there are strong - if decaying - traditions against unmarried motherhood. (R Green, personal communication.)

Hubbard (1990) criticises the law on rape for placing the onus of proof on the woman in a male-dominated court system. Men may not be convicted of raping their wives. While no figures are available, the incidence of rape appears to be high. Together with domestic violence it constitutes a high-profile issue, at least in the Windhoek-based media. It is often linked to the abuse of alcohol.

Abortion is illegal except when the pregnancy results from rape or incest, or if continuing the pregnancy endangers the woman's life or health, or there is a major risk that the child is seriously physically or mentally impaired. In practice, proving rape - one of the possible grounds for abortion - is extremely difficult. While there are no statistics on the number of illegal abortions (UNICEF/NISER, 1991), in rural areas a variety of unsafe practices are used to induce abortions (Sister, 1992a). Although in urban areas, particularly Windhoek, there may be relatively little stigma attached to extra-marital pregnancy, in some rural areas (including most of the north), there is considerable stigma, especially in the absence of a stable relationship.

## **4. GENDER IN THE RURAL ECONOMY**

### **4.1 Subsistence economy in the North**

99 per cent of Namibia's crop-producing households live in the Northern regions of Liambezi, Okavango and North Central Namibia (the eight successor districts to the former Oshakati regional district)<sup>3</sup>. The major crops grown are millet and sorghum, followed by maize, beans and some other vegetables (UNICEF Namibia, 1991:111). All crops are grown seasonally due to restricted rainfall and water supplies. Cattle are also important in the agricultural economy of the North and are owned by approximately 50 per cent of Ovambo households according to UNICEF's (1990) survey. Cattle husbandry tends to be a male responsibility.

In the Northern regions, the percentages of women comprising the 15-44 age groups in 1991 were as follows: Liambezi, 58 per cent; Okavango, 58 per cent; and North Central Namibia, 59 per cent, the disproportion in male to female population being accounted for by male migration. In fact, the disproportion of females to males is surprisingly low, and may be

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<sup>3</sup> Namibia's administrative regions were changed in May 1992. Where possible the new names are used; where not regional names are followed by area are used.

partly accounted for by migration of unmarried women to towns in search of income earning opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

In these three regions, the gender division of labour combined with the relative shortage of adult male labour due to migration patterns, means that women bear responsibility for an estimated 80 per cent of food production, as well as for domestic and community activities.

In Kavango, for example, men and boys are largely responsible for ploughing, whilst planting (with traditional hoes) and weeding is done by women. Harvesting is a cooperative activity involving the extended family. Threshing and winnowing are also women's tasks (the latter is done by the most senior women). Husbands and wife(s) have separate grain storage places. (von Holtz, 1991.)

Given women's central role in food production in the North, increasing subsistence production, with its potentially ameliorative effects for household food security, requires attention to women's access to and control over resources in the agricultural economy. Increased subsistence production is constrained by several factors, which have particular implications for women. Opportunities for marketing surplus production (and cash crops) to raise incomes are also highly restricted. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

### **Access to Land**

The access to land of the black population as a whole is limited by their restriction to 'communal' areas. There are no plans for comprehensive land reform and, in any case, redistribution of settler ranching land would not solve the problem of access to good quality and croppable land for the black rural population (Green, 1991:42).

In small farming ('communal') rural areas, there are no private land titles as such, but there is - as is usual in sub-Saharan Africa - a range of secure, hereditary, use tenures allocated to the male head of household by village or sub-district authorities. This allocation system is based on the household, rather than the individual, and within the household, the male head is obligated to provide enough land for the woman to grow food. (R Green, personal communication.)

However, the 'head of household' based allocation can create problems if, for example, there is a man in the household but he is working in the South. Further, an unmarried woman traditionally always had a male obligated to provide for her, so that a female headed household could not - in theory - exist. This obligation to provide for single women - or at least adherence to it - has deteriorated more rapidly than acceptance of equal access to land for female headed households has been gained. (R Green, personal communication.)

Female heads of household are allocated land in some districts, but this is patchy and often occurs through an uncle or brother. Problems thus arise mainly in the absence of male relatives through whom rights to land could be secured. It is not clear how the long-term absence of a migrant male head of household would affect his wife's security of tenure over the household land. (R Green, personal communication.)

There are also indications that single women household heads are often allocated worse land by male village authorities, up to 20 minutes greater distance away from water sources in the dry season. In Ovambo and Herero areas, it is known that women have lost access to land following their husband's death, presumably because the male relative traditionally obligated to provide it did not do so (e.g. Sister, 1991:3-4).

A conference in Windhoek in July 1991, on the land question and land reform resolved that:

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<sup>4</sup> Nationally, females constitute 52-3 per cent of the 15-44 age group. (R Green, personal communication.)

' "women should have the right to own the land they cultivate and to inherit and bequeath land and fixed property" ... women should also "be granted equal representation on all land boards, district councils and other bodies concerned with the allocation or utilisation of land." ' (Sister, 1991:4.)

The data and the fact that this resolution was seen as necessary, imply that traditional and other authorities which allocate land systematically discriminate against women. Access to, use rights over and security of tenure of land for women - particularly in households with absent males - needs to be further investigated.

### **Lack of water**

Especially under the current drought conditions, lack of water is a critical constraint in Northern Namibia's food production and general household welfare. Water collection is a female responsibility and the time and energy resources involved in this are considerable. The average daily journey time of Ovambo women to collect water is 2 hours, which has deleterious consequences for agricultural production and for women's health, given the weight of water they carry on their heads. (UNICEF, Namibia, 1990).

### **Other ecological constraints**

As elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, women in Namibia are responsible for fuelwood collection. Declining availability of fuelwood therefore has serious implications for demands on women's time and energy resources. It is thought that fuelwood shortages are becoming increasingly severe in all parts of Namibia, even in the relatively well-wooded Okavango and Liambezi regions. In the Damara, Nama and Kaoko areas of the country, the situation may be even more acute.

Much of the conventional wisdom on the woodfuel crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa has been challenged in recent years, as well as certain policy recommendations - i.e. for large scale afforestation programmes - which tend to stem from this thinking (e.g. Mearns, 1991). It is now thought that woodfuel demand may be a fairly minor component in deafforestation; that woodfuel problems are very location specific; and that they therefore require precisely tuned and targeted interventions. Innovative local responses to resource management problems often exist to mitigate woodfuel and other land use stresses. The time spent by women on woodfuel collection may be very variable depending on other simultaneous labour demands, and in fact be fairly limited compared to other demands on their time (e.g. water collection; food processing). (Mearns, 1991.)

However, in Namibia it is clear that in or near densely settled areas fuel is increasingly scarce and that some rural women do spend two or more hours per day collecting it, whether the underlying cause is an interaction of more intensive land use and drought, or fuel consumption per se. R Green, personal communication.)

Woodfuel is only one of a whole range of products and services based on trees - including food, fodder and building materials - and men and women may have different and possibly conflicting interests in these. 'Most of the 1.7 million inhabitants of Namibia depend daily on forest products, for example, fuelwood, poles for building and fruit and nuts' (Erkkila, 1991:61). Demand for fuelwood and food from trees would appear to come from women, whereas demand for building poles may be male, although roof thatch demand probably comes from women. (R Green, personal communication.)

Security of tenure over land - or trees where these are considered separate from the land - is an important factor in determining attitudes towards tree planting. In addition, for women, property rights outside and within marriage, and security of marriage, may be factors shaping their attitudes towards long-term investments such as tree planting.

Data on gender patterns of access to, use and control of, and tenure over trees, and on the institutional structures involved in natural resources management, are not readily available for Namibia. These are important areas requiring further research, if interventions are to take account of gender considerations.

There are a few attempts to introduce solar powered cookers in Namibia, but these tend to be prohibitively priced. In North Central Namibia, Africa Groups of Sweden has a tree-planting programme; in the South the UNDP has some pilot schemes to assess the possibility of re-forestation programmes. The UNDP pilot schemes are running through schools and at least one women's group. The details of these projects, and their consideration of gender issues, are not known, however.

### **Technological constraints**

Over one third of Ovambo households plough by hand (UNICEF Namibia, 1990); only 12 per cent hire draught animals. This implies that about half of households plough with their own cattle. A small percentage - probably less than five per cent - may use tractors. Compared to elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of animal drawn ploughing is high.

However, ploughing is typically a male activity and where male labour is scarce and/or cattle are not available for ploughing - e.g. in female headed households - this may be a constraint on these households' agricultural production. Women rarely own cattle or have the knowledge to use draught animals. They also have little cash to hire cattle for ploughing and, if they do, probably do so late in the season (after the owner has ploughed his fields) with negative consequences for yields.

### **Lack of credit facilities**

Credit has not been available from formal sector institutions to 'communal' farmers. In rural areas, women entrepreneurs, such as wholesalers or artisans, do not generally have access to credit except of the putting out variety, from suppliers or *de facto* employers.

As discussed above, under some marriage arrangements, women require their husband's consent to enter into a contract and may not pledge their joint property as collateral. The female (urban) entrepreneurs who do have access to modern sector credit are probably those who marry under Roman-Dutch law with an 'outside community property' contract (see above). Other female entrepreneurs and labour only contractors (day credit traders) do not have access to modern sector credit, but not primarily because of the marriage law provisions.

The First National Development Corporation (FNDC) provides mini loans for informal sector activities, mostly in urban areas, of which over half went to women in the financial year 90-91. However, the total number of such loans decreased dramatically between 89-90 and 90-91. FNDC also established a scheme in 1989 to make loans available to single mothers, but the 60 per cent interest per annum charged (45 per cent real interest after adjusting for inflation) was prohibitive for much of the target group. The possibilities for Standard Bank to increase credit provision to rural women, have been examined, but it was concluded that '[t]he rural woman, is therefore, at this stage, an unbankable entity, within the existing commercial bank framework' (von Holtz, 1991:19).

NGO Credit Unions, providing saving, share ownership and loan facilities, are growing in importance, mostly in Katutura and peri-urban areas of the North. In Katutura, the biggest Credit Union is Saam Staans, which has 500 members of whom 95 per cent are women, including many single parents, and also runs a housing project (see section IX on housing).

Clearly, much work remains to be done in extending credit facilities in rural areas. Whilst land tenure problems are not currently the main obstacle to women gaining access to credit,

as credit facilities become more widely available, issues of women's access to and security of tenure over land may become more pressing in this respect.

### **The lack of extension services**

There is a lack of extension services to small scale farmers throughout the country. Existing services tend to concentrate on assistance to male-dominated activities, particularly stock-rearing. Those services focused on other activities are extremely limited and male producers are targeted (e.g. maize growers in the Okavango Valley). Outside Liambezi there is almost no extension advice on improved cultivation techniques based on local research, and HYVs or credit facilities for technical improvement are not generally available.

The Rossing Foundation has an agricultural training facility at Okashana which targets women farmers, and the ODA is co-funding an agricultural training college at Mashare in Okavango. Although this will not be specifically geared at women farmers, they will be encouraged to participate.

### **The lack of organised markets and infrastructure**

There is a lack of organised markets, especially for millet, which might be sold in the urban areas of the North and in Windhoek. The quarantine on movement of cattle to north of the Red Line, on veterinary grounds (i.e. previous failure to provide effective disease control beyond the white ranching area), prevents their sale in the South or their export, except as tinned meat. The poor road infrastructure in the rural North also impedes farmers' access to existing markets. There are government and donor-financed programmes to upgrade rural roads throughout North Central Namibia.

#### **4.2 Subsistence economy in Central and Southern Namibia**

Less than 10 per cent of Namibia's population live in these rural areas, and under five per cent are engaged in agricultural activity. Even more than the North, they face chronic water shortages. Crops are not widely grown; cattle, and further South, goat and sheep herding are the main activities. These tend to be male-dominated tasks, and involve especially boys' labour inputs. Women's tasks therefore tend to be domestically-oriented and include fetching water and fuel, both of which are increasingly unavailable resources (see above). These economies are heavily and increasingly dependent on pension and remittance income (see sections V:3 and VI). For whatever reasons, there appears to have been a secular deterioration of pasture and falls in the water table throughout most of these areas.

## **5. GENDER, EMPLOYMENT AND INCOMES**

### **5.1 Formal sector**

Table 2 gives the gender distribution of waged employees by occupation. Women predominate in service industries - especially domestic work - and are heavily under-represented in mining (although this is not separately shown), labouring and, manufacturing (except for low wage, hazardous fish processing work), as Table 2 illustrates. The data in this Table also show that there are more women than men in professional and technical, administrative and clerical and service occupations, although a lower proportion of administrators and managers are women.

Because of the bipolarity of the gender distribution of employees - with women concentrated in both middle range professional jobs (overwhelmingly nursing and primary school teaching)

and at the lower end of service occupations and fish processing industry - the average gender differential in wages is not that great. The average female wage is probably around 90 per cent of the average male wage, but this is somewhat deceptive given the bipolarity. (R Green, personal communication.)

According to the data in Table 2, less than five per cent of women are recorded wage employees in production and construction, transport and related activities, and in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. The percentage given here for female participation in agriculture is extremely low, compared to the known high level of female involvement in food production especially in the North, because both the micro and household enterprise (including small farming sector) are explicitly not covered.

Table 3 gives employment estimates by economic activity, although this is not broken down by gender, and is now rather out of date. This table shows that in 1977, small scale agriculture accounted for over 50 per cent of economic activity. It also shows that domestic service - a mainly female occupation - was the third largest category of economic activity (after small farming and commercial farming) both overall and for the black population.

Open unemployment has been estimated at between 25 per cent and 30 per cent of the labour force and 43 per cent of the labour force are employed in the formal sector (ILO, 1990). However, only 16 per cent of Katutura families derive income from the formal sector (NISER, 1991), and this figure would probably be still lower in the rural areas, as indicated by estimates in Table 3. A survey of Katutura (NISER, 1991) found higher levels of unemployment among women than men (44 per cent of women were unemployed compared to 33 per cent of men), despite the women's higher educational qualifications. Both male and female unemployment - if correctly recorded - are extraordinarily high by African standards. Comparable estimates for Maputo are under 10 per cent and for Dar es Salaam 10-15 per cent (also with higher female than male incidence of unemployment) (R Green, personal communication).

A rapid expansion in formal sector opportunities seems unlikely (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991:11). At the same time, the labour force is growing at three per cent per annum. Thus the formal sector opportunities are and seem likely to remain very restricted, even before disadvantages in access deriving from race and gender are taken into account. Due to discriminatory apartheid policies in education and training, the vast majority of black people are seriously underqualified for most of the available formal sector employment. In addition to this, women also suffer from gender-typing in the labour market. Nursing, teaching and secretarial work are seen as appropriate aspirations for better educated black women (including by the women themselves) and such occupations do carry job security and less risk of sexual harassment.

Since the prospects for formal sector employment growth are limited, affirmative action for women must be a priority so they are not further marginalised in this sector. The new Labour Code outlaws discrimination on grounds of gender and includes paid maternity leave and job protection for pregnant women. However, it does not include paternity leave nor any mention of breastfeeding or childcare provisions (Hubbard, 1991). Women tend to rely on informal networks for childcare. There are moves to set up more creches and pre-schools in urban areas. Very little formal childcare exists in rural areas, but again informal arrangements are common, especially involving aunts and grandmothers. However, many women see better childcare facilities as a pre-requisite to engaging in income-generating activity.

However, in rural - and even urban - areas, formal employment legislation may be largely irrelevant to enabling most women to earn more. Access to land and extension advice, plus basic services, are clearly the key areas for women in rural Namibia. In urban centres, the development of access to micro-enterprise, small trade and artisanal activities for women as employees or in self employment, is at least as important as formal wage employment.

## 5.2 Informal Sector

As elsewhere in Africa, informal sector activity in Namibia is dominated by retailing and distribution of consumer goods and cooked food, brewing, craft making and personal services, such as repairs or hairdressing, and casual (day or task) unskilled labouring. Data is limited but 30-40 per cent of households in peri-urban North Central Namibia are thought to be reliant on informal sector activity (NISER, 1991).

Through gender-typing in upbringing, women tend to possess fewer skills that can be turned to income-generation and they tend to be concentrated in food preparation (about 50 per cent women) and street vending, as well as handicraft and sewing production, the latter tendency supported by much donor assistance. However, various NGO and community groups are supporting and promoting women's involvement in non-traditional activities such as brick-making (e.g. Okuryanagava, Gibeon, Opuwo - see below) or cosmetic manufacture (Katutura).<sup>5</sup>

Obtaining credit to buy equipment and stock is problematic, although Credit Unions and micro loan facilities may be available for women in some urban areas (see section on credit in IV:1 above).

In Windhoek as well as in mining towns, many women gain their incomes through working as bar hostesses, or by becoming 'temporary wives'<sup>6</sup>. There are high risks for women in engaging in sexual exchange, given the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS in the country (see section VIII:2 below). Where women are dependent on short term sexual exchange for survival, they often lack power to enforce safe sex practices which could protect them.

Since employment opportunities are extremely limited in the small farming rural areas (in North Central Namibia formal employment involves only six per cent of the population and this is mostly in Oshakati and Ondangwa), informal sector activities and community income-generating projects are extremely important in order to raise women's incomes, with their well-known multiplier effects on child welfare.

In the rural North, brewing, basket making and vending of cooked food are important income-generating activities. In the Southern and Central small farming rural areas, women's work may be arduous but field reports suggest that women feel they do have time for and wish to be involved in income-generating projects, although the need for childcare may be a constraint (see above). This is particularly crucial in these areas, where income from crop production is non-existent and from stock-rearing, negligible.

## 5.3 Pensions

Another very important source of income for the rural and urban poor is the old age pension. This is the same for both women and men and is payable from the age of 60 (average female life expectancy is 58, male 55) (UNICEF/NISER, 1991). The levels of pensions which were determined on racial/ethnic criteria before independence are being unified. (Before independence the ratio of the level of pensions was 1:3:5 for blacks:coloureds:whites.) The percentage coverage varies by region, with the lowest levels in Liambezi where under half the eligible population receive pensions and Okavango where just over a third receive them (UNICEF/NISER, 1991:110). The majority of recipients (about two thirds) are women -

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<sup>5</sup> Craft training for Namibian exiles was primarily aimed at women, and had large leather and brickmaking components - see section on returnees below.

<sup>6</sup> 'Temporary wives' means women residing with men for anything between six and 30 months. (R Green, personal communication.)

because of their longer life expectancy (over 60 per cent of the population aged over 60 is female, according to the Census).

Especially in the South, pensions may constitute the sole source of cash income for a household and a grandmother (more usually than a grandfather) may support up to 10 dependents on her pension of around R200 per month. In numerous cases, mothers leave their children with grandmothers while seeking to build up an urban income base which will - they hope - allow them to bring them to town to attend school (R Green, personal communication). A small bag of maize meal costs approximately R4; a school uniform R30. Pomuti and Eiseb (1990) suggest widespread malnutrition in the South.

#### 5.4 Returnees

Approximately 45 000 political exiles have now returned to Namibia and 85 per cent have settled in the rural North. Data were not found as to what percentage of these are women. While many returnees received training in exile, much of this concentrated on literacy, crafts and soldiering, with limited relevance to the domestic labour market. Moreover, the quality of their skills is often disputed (more often for tertiary qualifications than for craft training, however), and 80 per cent of returnees remained unemployed a year after their repatriation (UNICEF, 1990). The returnees constitute both a disadvantaged group and a skill base that could be tapped to stimulate the Northern economy, although considerable injections of cash may be needed to create demand for craft products and construction work (many women returnees were trained in brickmaking and other craft activities). UNIFEM may fund agricultural and building development projects for returnee women in the far North.

## 6. GENDER AND POVERTY

The previous discussion suggests that gender may be a significant determinant of poverty: female unemployment is higher and participation formal sector employment, lower. Women also form disproportionate percentages of the population in the under-served 'communal' areas due to male labour migration to commercial farms or mines.

Table 4 gives a breakdown of average household income by region, although the data here is not well defined and may therefore be somewhat misleading, as explained in the note to the Table. Moreover, income data collected on a household basis tends to obscure gender inequalities, especially as rural African household budgets are traditionally not consolidated as to either income flows, or expenditure responsibilities. The patterns of female and male income streams (including goods purchased for household use) and of goods/services provision responsibilities needs systematic study.

### 6.1 Poverty and female headed households

Incomes in the peri-urban and rural North are considerably lower than in Katutura. 40-49 per cent of households in rural North Central Namibia and Katutura are female headed (UNICEF Namibia, 1990) and these tend to have higher levels of unemployment than male headed households (ILO, 1990). In both areas female headed households are also likely to have higher dependency ratios and less available adult male labour inputs than male headed households, which may aggravate their poverty. In North Central Namibia, female heads of households also have lower literacy levels than their male counterparts (UNICEF, 1990).

It appears that there are no systematic surveys on levels of female headship elsewhere in Namibia, though they can safely be acknowledged to be high, given the importance of male

migrant labour.<sup>7</sup> Also, there appears to have been no country-wide attempt to investigate the relationship between female headship and household income level.

In all rural areas in Namibia remittances play a large role in household survival. As UNICEF/NISER (1991:110) note, 'variations in the affluence of rural households lie more in the success with which family members secure employment in the urban areas and the extent to which they maintain links with home, than in differences in agricultural productivity between rural households'. Thus there may be considerable heterogeneity in income levels among female-headed households, as there is in the somewhat comparable context of rural Botswana.

## 6.2 Food security

Table 5, from the UNICEF study of Katutura and the rural and peri-urban North, shows that female-headed households had higher percentages of stunted children (UNICEF, Namibia, 1990:90). This may indicate worse feeding practices in female headed households. However, it is more likely, given that women generally have a greater propensity than men to spend income on food for children, to be evidence that female headed households in these areas are seriously disadvantaged in terms of income and/or in terms of their ability to produce for home consumption.

The non-viability of crop production in the South and Central areas, coupled with the reliance of large households on limited cash incomes (see section V:3) suggest that many households in these areas are vulnerable to food insecurity. As noted above, Pomuti and Eiseb (1990) suggest widespread malnutrition in the South.

Throughout Namibia there are very high levels of both male and female alcoholism and household food security is threatened by the competition for spending between food and alcohol (UNICEF/NISER, 1991:65). Again, survey data do not exist, but observation of a rural Namibian community suggests less drinking among women than men and that women, even if alcoholics, still spend more money on food than their male counterparts. This suggests that transfers or income generation schemes involving women will be more likely to increase overall household welfare.

## 6.3 Food aid

Government, World Food Programme and NGO feeding schemes are currently operating in most parts of the country. These target pregnant and lactating women, elderly and handicapped people, children under 5 and school children from 6-15 and provide 'maize blend', a mixture of maize, sugar and milk. One worrying factor in the targeting of food aid, however, is the low proportion of school age children attending school in some areas (see section VII:1 below). Since these are poorer than average areas, school enrollment is negatively correlated to household income and in poorer households girls are often kept home to do domestic work plus fuel and water collection. Thus, it is likely that a low proportion of the most at risk girl children benefit from school feeding. This is somewhat less true of mother and child clinics and church based programmes. (R Green, personal communication.)

Notwithstanding targeting problems, food aid clearly represents an important transfer. But there is concern that, if feeding schemes are implemented without any developmental component, in the longer-term, households' ability to provide their own food requirements will be further eroded and a greater dependency syndrome may result.

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<sup>7</sup> The usual estimate for Windhoek is 25-30 per cent. Also, a large proportion of households are unstable - i.e. they involve sequential, temporary or *de facto* marriages - so there are considerable problems of definition in looking at 'female headed households'.

## 7. GENDER AND EDUCATION

### 7.1 School enrollment

Education for all black Namibians has been highly inadequate with most teachers untrained and unschooled in English, Maths, Science, or indeed anything else (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991). Prior to independence, in some areas 50-70 per cent of children did not gain access to primary school (UNIN 1989 cited in Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991). Due to the irrelevance of the curriculum, poor school readiness (many children are sent to distant boarding schools at young ages), poverty and high demands on children's labour (especially on boys for herding and on girls for wood and water collection and sibling care in female headed households), 55 per cent of children dropped out of school by the fifth year, prior to independence (Callevaert and Kallos, 1989:26 in UNICEF/NISER, 1991). There may have been significant improvements in both attendance and drop out rates since independence, but data on this is, by definition, not yet available.

Overall, there appears to be higher enrollment of girls than boys up to grade 10, probably due to greater demands on boys' labour, but in female-headed households, girls drop out to perform domestic tasks and childcare (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991). The other major factor in female dropout, from about grade 5, is pregnancy. Whether or not a young mother may return to school depends largely on the school's policy - in practice that of the usually male principal.

However, considerable female disadvantage in school enrollment has been noted in certain areas, i.e. Okavango (64 per cent boys: 36 per cent girls) and Liambezi (54 per cent boys: 46 per cent girls) (UNICEF/NISER, 1991). These figures are not disaggregated by age or grade. These are regions with high levels of female household headship and agricultural participation (see IV:1 above). Ministry of Education and Culture figures for 1991 show that, in grades 11 and 12, girls are in the minority in all parts of the country (Sister, 1992a:6). In Southern Africa as a region, there is a strong tendency for female:male pupil ratios to improve as primary enrollment approaches universality, but there is also a general tendency for higher drop out rates among girls.

Ilukwena (1991) notes gender stereotyping in the curriculum and in various areas of school life.

### 7.2 Examination results

Analysis of matriculation results (grade 12 examination) shows that in Katutura, 52 per cent of passes were by girls and 48 per cent by boys, but in black rural schools, girls comprised only 34 per cent of those passing, while boys comprised 66 per cent. This disaggregation needs to be seen in the context of approximately 20 per cent overall examination pass rates by black children - although the rates are probably higher in urban areas and lower in rural areas (Sister, 1992a:6).

If the data on rural schools corresponds to the particular areas discussed above (or other areas with similar patterns of disadvantage), this may simply reflect the lower enrollment rates of girls in particular rural areas. The apparently high percentage of exam passes by girls in Katutura is harder to explain. It may be due to higher female enrollment, but this goes against the national - and regional - enrollment breakdown data at grade 11 and 12 levels (see previous section), suggesting higher female pass rates.

### 7.3 Technical and higher education

Only one per cent of the total population in formal education is receiving technical education. Of this tiny proportion, less than one tenth are black women (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991:9). Clearly vocational training capacity in Namibia needs to be greatly enhanced overall, but particularly for black women, and this combined with affirmative action in the labour market to secure women access to jobs.

A study of female enrollment at the former University of Namibia<sup>8</sup> (which had a white majority in full-time degree level courses) shows a concentration of women in traditionally 'female' subjects - e.g. Education, Health Science and Arts - and their under-representation in Science and Agriculture. At this level there are no significant differences in pass rates by gender (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991:21-2).

### 7.4 Literacy

General levels of literacy are low in Namibia at 30-35 per cent. Disaggregated data on literacy by gender, age and region is not available, although most estimates suggest 50 per cent male literacy compared to 25 per cent female. Older women (and men) are less likely to be literate than younger women (men), and rural women and girls (as well as men and boys) less literate than their urban counterparts (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991). The returned exile community is virtually 100 per cent literate and greater Windhoek literacy probably exceeds 75 per cent overall (though under two thirds for women). Adult literacy is a major area of church and other NGO activity. (R Green, personal communication.)

## 8. GENDER AND HEALTH

The focus of health care under the colonial administration was on expensive curative facilities in towns for the white population. The government has now adopted a Primary Health Care (PHC) strategy, but access to health care in the rural areas is still very limited, particularly in North Central and North Eastern Namibia. Throughout the small farming rural areas, clinics are understaffed and there is a shortage of medicines. This lack of access to care is compounded by poor access to clean water and sanitation. Evans (1990) suggests that 53 per cent of the population lack access to clean water and 77 per cent have inadequate sanitation facilities. The situation is thought to be particularly acute in North Central Namibia where only 20 per cent of the population have adequate access to safe water by WHO standards (Spruitj, 1990).

The most prevalent and important diseases vary by region and seasonally. Malaria is endemic and serious in the North (473 cases per 100 000 population (UNICEF/NISER, 1991:51). TB is the most serious disease in the South (49 per cent of Namibia's 5862 reported cases in 1988-90 were in the South). The significance of TB is further compounded by the growing incidence of HIV/AIDS. There is evidence that HIV positive persons are more susceptible to TB, and also develop particularly virulent forms with which they reinfect other people. Further, Zimbabwean experience suggests that AIDS cases occupy a very high proportion of hospital beds and even limited treatment can absorb a high proportion of the drug budget threatening universal availability of life saving basic drugs.

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<sup>8</sup> The new University of Namibia is not the same institution which was previously called the University of Namibia, and before that the Akademie.

## 8.1 Women's reproductive health

This is influenced by the number, spacing and age of commencement of pregnancies. Namibian women generally prefer large numbers of children and have their first child in their teenage years. In Mostert's (1989) survey, the mean age at first birth was 16.3 years. 50 per cent of women aged 15-19 years are married. Official surveys of modern contraceptive use show surprisingly high levels, in many areas (although not Okavango, Liambezi and Kaoko), but this may reflect the coercive nature of family planning policy under South African rule and be a distortion of actual levels of usage. (Mostert, 1989.) Depo Provera, which is thought to have considerable health risks for women, was - and still is - widely used amongst those Namibian women using modern contraception.<sup>9</sup>

## 8.2 HIV/AIDS

No women in UNICEF'S (1990) survey of Katutura and rural and peri-urban North Central Namibia reported the use of condoms. This clearly gives cause for concern, in view of the growing incidence of HIV/AIDS in Namibia, the generally low age at which teenagers become sexually active, the high level of STDs and the large numbers of sexual partners both women and men may have over a relatively short time period.

Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) figures for 1986 in UNICEF/NISER (1991) give a regional breakdown for HIV/AIDS incidence as follows: 39 per cent of reported cases were in Liambezi, 12 per cent in Okavango and 31 per cent in the central areas. 543 HIV/AIDS cases were reported in 1990 (MOHSS in UNICEF/NISER, 1991:53), though this probably includes only a small proportion of the total cases. Nationally the most affected group in Namibia is the 25-34 age group and adult men are more affected (or report more cases) than women. However, from the ages of 4-20 girls have higher rates of HIV/AIDS than boys (UNICEF/NISER, 1991). In Southern Africa as a region, 45 to 50 per cent of HIV affected persons are estimated to be female with heterosexual intercourse being the dominant means of transmission of the virus, and inadequate sterilisation in both traditional and modern medicine being the main secondary route (R Green, personal communication).

Despite government and NGO HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, many men are often extremely reluctant to use condoms - with deleterious consequences for women, especially given the possibly higher probability of HIV transmission from women to men than the reverse,<sup>10</sup> and their lack of power to enforce safe sex. This is particularly serious since, incidence of HIV/AIDS in Namibia is still considerably lower than in many African countries, and with early warning and intervention, the impact of HIV/AIDS may be stemmed. The availability of condoms varies by region - more information on their availability and barriers to usage by region would be useful.

The impact of HIV/AIDS in Namibia may also be or become gendered in the following ways:

- younger and more vulnerable women may be at higher risk of infection as men look for younger sexual partners in attempt to find a virgin who is not HIV positive;
- since women are the primary carers for sick relatives, the burden of caring for relatives with AIDS falls on women;

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<sup>9</sup> Depo Provera seems to have recently become more widely accepted however, although it is generally only recommended for women who cannot use other methods of contraception (see e.g. **Guardian**, 9 November 1992.)

<sup>10</sup> Most sources claim that women are more likely to be affected by men than the reverse, although there is still medical debate on this point.

- for women, there is also the risk of perinatal transmission of the HIV virus to babies, with associated psychological and social burdens;
- for urban women with children and wage earning husbands, the economic consequences during and after the husband's illness period are likely to be catastrophic.

## **9. GENDER AND HOUSING**

In Central and Southern areas of Namibia, particularly, housing is an important need expressed by many women. The majority of people in these areas live in tin houses, often made from pieces of scrap metal. These get extremely hot in summer and cold in winter and are generally very overcrowded (up to ten people in two rooms). Overcrowding is probably largely responsible for the high incidence of TB in Southern Namibia.

Dissatisfaction with poor quality housing has led to the establishment of brick-making co-operatives, often by women. There are women's brickmaking companies at Gibeon and Okuryangava, as well as in Katutura, linked to government or co-operative housing projects. (von Holtz, 1991.) These are examples of successful involvement of women in non-traditional activities. However, the cooperative at Gibeon, for example, has not been able to produce sufficient bricks to meet its contracts, because of lack of equipment, labour (much of which is occasional) and supplies (R Marcus, personal communication).

## **10. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

In contrast to the situation in many other developing countries, in Namibia there is relatively little broadly based community mobilisation around development and gender issues. This is partly attributable to South African repression of independent black organisations before independence, and partly to the subordination of development issues and gender struggles to the independence struggle, although the SWAPO Women's Council pioneered organisation around gender issues whilst in exile. In addition, traditional authority structures are hierarchical, and SWAPO and other political organisations have non-participatory decision-making methods.

The church is a major mobilising organisation nationwide especially in the rural North, and while the church establishment is a male dominated hierarchy, affiliated women's and social action groups have more participatory structures, and tend to be less sectarian than political organisations. (Tapscott and Hubbard, 1991; Green, personal communication). In general, however, throughout rural Namibia, a dependent 'welfare' mentality has developed among demoralised communities, which impedes local organisation around development or gender issues.

### **10.1 Non-government organisations**

In Windhoek, by contrast, there is a vibrant and growing - but fairly narrowly elite based - NGO community with high levels of commitment to participatory approaches and to gender-sensitivity. It appears that currently much of the NGO knowledge and expertise is confined to Windhoek. Although some organisations - e.g. the Namibia Development Trust (NDT) - have opened regional offices in Oshakati and Keetmanshoop, these remain exceptional, and decentralisation and local mobilisation in development efforts, particularly of women, are clearly priorities. This will, however, take some time.

There are also growing numbers of women's NGOs in Namibia. Many are sectarian - i.e. women's wings of political parties or churches. These allegiances reflect deep divisions between women which, like ethnic divisions, jeopardise mobilisation on gender issues. In November 1991, the Namibia National Women's Organisation (NANAWO) was set up by Netumbo Ndwandwe, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, in order to try to overcome these divisions. However, like Sister, the feminist collective, and Women's Solidarity, a rape counselling group, NANAWO remains for the most part a Windhoek-based initiative. Moreover, its leadership by a significant political figure may deter participation by women with political allegiance to parties other than SWAPO.

## 10.2 Government and donor support

The high-level political commitment to gender equality in the government and - especially - in the majority party has already been noted. However, it is very important that this commitment permeates down to the lower echelons of government so that policies to empower women are not frustrated at the local level. It is also important that credentials earned under UN sponsored programmes for exiles are recognised, because the majority of upper secondary and lower tertiary (e.g. United Nations Institute for Namibia) diploma holders are women and they constitute the majority of women qualified for middle and senior level professional and administrative posts.

SIDA are supporting a gender-awareness training programme for various different government ministries in conjunction with the Development Planning Unit of London University. This completed its fourth phase in September 1992. In Phase Three (March 1992) the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, *inter alia*, were targeted for gender planning and policy training workshops. A particular concern of the programme is to 'strengthen the integration of gender into the development planning process' (Development Planning Unit, 1992), through the training of personnel in the Planning Directorates of Ministries (which are linked to the National Planning Commission), and through direct consultations with the National Planning Commission. It is thought that 'a "critical mass" in gender planning expertise ... now exists in the Ministries of Agriculture and Education.' (Development Planning Unit, 1992.) Many other major bi- and multilateral and external NGO donors are also giving gender issues a high priority in the programmes and projects they assist.

Overall there are positive factors in the institutional context suggesting the possibility for more gender-sensitive development in the future, even though resistance to gender equality runs deep in most social institutions, and as the experience of other countries shows, should not be underestimated.

## 11. CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the major areas in which black women are disadvantaged in Namibia. Much of the data available is not systematically disaggregated by gender or by region. There is an urgent need for further investigation of patterns of gender disadvantage on a regional basis. It is also vital that development interventions should be sensitive to the often significant differences in patterns and forms of gender disadvantage in Namibia's different cultures.

While women's priorities differ considerably throughout Namibia, there are some major areas of common concern, especially employment, education, health and housing. Prioritising these sectors might be an effective strategy in supporting the overall empowerment of women in Namibian society.

It is difficult to draw specific policy conclusions from the above, given the lack of detailed data. However, a few general points are made below:

- Women need to be assured more secure access to and rights over land, particularly female heads of household, who may never have married, may be widowed or divorced or whose husbands are more or less permanently absent. Women need to be represented, and their views considered, in structures dealing with land allocation.
- There is also a need to strengthen credit provision for and encourage further diversification of women's urban and rural informal sector activities, and to increase rural women's access to relevant agricultural extension - currently a priority of the Rural Development, but not the Extension, Department in the Ministry of Agriculture. Women returnees may be a disadvantaged group whose specific problems need to be addressed, and skills tapped and enhanced.
- There is a need for affirmative action in the formal labour market, combined with improved education and training for women, which addresses persistent gender typing. Special attention is also required to tackle the low school enrollment and attainment of black women in certain rural areas. Daughters of female headed households may be particularly vulnerable to drop out.
- Female headed households are a sizeable and, on average, disadvantaged group in Namibia, in terms of income, access to productive resources, literacy and high dependency ratios. Their particular needs and constraints (lack of access to male labour; cattle; weak access to land) should be considered when implementing income generation, or other development projects, or delivering transfers. However, they are also a heterogeneous group, and there are considerable problems in defining and identifying female heads of household, which need to be addressed.
- In the longer term, further legal reforms, particularly in relation to marriage and associated property rights, are needed to improve women's economic and other rights, coupled with legal literacy and advocacy services. Prior study of actual community land and family law structures and practices is needed, however, if statutory efforts to enable women are not to be ineffective or counterproductive.
- The high level political commitment to gender equality in post-Independence Namibia needs to be promoted and implemented more vigorously at local levels. NGO and other donor activity also needs to tackle questions of gender at a more decentralised level, outside of the main urban areas.
- Finally, there is clearly a need for more detailed empirical research which will provide a gender analysis of the various questions highlighted above, particularly in relation to land and other natural resource tenure and usage patterns; gender differentiated incomes, expenditures and provision responsibilities; and family law structures and practices.

## TABLES

**Table 1: Women in positions of seniority in government (March 1991)**

POST	No. of Women	No. of Men	Total	Women as % of Total
Minister	2	18	20	10%
Deputy Minister	1	18	19	5%
Public Service Com.	2	5	7	28%
Permanent Sec. <sup>1</sup>	1	9	10	10%
Deputy Perm. Sec.	2	8	10	20%
Under Secretary	3	19	22	13%
Director	11	59	70	13%
Deputy Director	15	60	75	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>16%</b>

Source: Bentil, M., 1991, in Tapscott and Hubbard (1991)

<sup>1</sup> Since there are twenty Ministries and one Permanent Secretary attached to the President's office, the total number of permanent secretaries should be 21. It is not known why this source gives a lower figure.

**Table 2: Gender distribution of waged employees by occupation (formal sector, urban and rural)**

Occupational Category	Total	Male	Female
Professional, technical and related workers	- (22,955) <i>12.4%</i>	46.7% (10,729)	53.3% (12,226)
Administrators and managers	- (2,102) <i>1.1%</i>	89.2% (1,876)	10.8% (226)
Administrative, clerical and related workers	- (16,623) <i>9.0%</i>	38.6% (6,414)	61.4% (10,209)
Sales workers	- (10,049) <i>5.4%</i>	57.2% (5,743)	42.8% (4,306)
Service workers	- (37,186) <i>20.1%</i>	24.8% (9,237)	75.2% (27,949)
Farm and forestry workers, fishermen and hunters	- (38,388) <i>20.8%</i>	95.1% (36,503)	4.9% (1,885)
Production and construction workers	- (18,604) <i>10.1%</i>	95.5% (17,764)	4.5% (840)
Stationary engine, material handling and transport equipment operators	- (8,531) <i>4.6%</i>	91.4% (7,793)	8.6% (738)
General labourers	- (30,355) <i>16.4%</i>	93.1% (28,249)	6.9% (2,107)
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TOTAL	- (184,793) <i>100%</i>	67% (124,307)	33% (60,486)

Source: Dept. of Economic Affairs, **Manpower Survey 1988** in Tapscott & Hubbard (1991)

**Table 3: Employment estimates by economic activity, 1977**

Economic Activity	Blacks	Whites	Coloured	Total	% of total economic activity
Small agriculture	230,000	10,000	-	240,000	50.3
Large agriculture	43,500	6,500	6,500	56,500	11.8
Fishing and fish processing	5,000	2,000	500	7,500	1.6
Mining	18,000	1,000	3,500	22,500	4.7
Manufacturing and public utilities	7,250	2,500	2,750	12,500	2.6
Construction	10,000	2,500	1,750	15,000	3.2
Transport and communication	10,000	1,500	1,000	12,500	2.6
Commerce and finance	17,000	3,000	5,000	25,000	5.2
Government	11,500	3,500	15,000	30,000	6.3
Domestic service	29,000	6,000	-	35,000	7.3
Others*	17,000	3,500	500	21,000	4.4
Total	399,000	42,000	36,500	477,500	100

Note: \*Others include an estimated 17,500 urban unemployed self-employed

Source: R.H. Green, **Manpower Estimates and Development Implications for Namibia** (Lusaka, UNIN, 1978); W. van Ginneken, **Incomes and Wages in Namibia** (Geneva, ILO, 1985). Reproduced from UNIN, 1986, **Namibia: Perspectives for National Construction and Development**, UNIN, Lusaka, p 635.

**Table 4: Average household income by region, 1990<sup>1</sup>**

REGION	R per year <sup>2</sup>
Katutura	7,419
Peri-urban North	4,336
Rural North	1,547
Onyaanya	1,802
Engela	1,986
Tsandi	900
ALL REGIONS	3,881

Source: UNICEF Namibia, 1990:x

<sup>1</sup> It is not known whether this is total income, or cash income only; whether it includes only earned income or also includes remittances. Given that R900 (for Tsandi) = approximately \$315, or approximately \$45 per capita per year, whereas the poverty line is \$300 per year, the absolute poverty line \$150, and the survival line around \$90 per capita, the rural figures above seem rather unlikely if they reflect total income (including self provisioning). However, the impression of extreme poverty is consistent with other evidence.

<sup>2</sup> Rand is approximately US\$ 0.35.

**Table 5: Gender of household head and child stunting<sup>1</sup>**

LOCATION	Female head % children stunted	Male head % children stunted
Katutura	24	18
Peri-Urban North	35	30
Rural North	38	31
ALL LOCATIONS	34	27

Source: UNICEF Namibia 1990:90 in UNICEF/NISER, 1991:44

<sup>1</sup> Figures are approximate only; based on bar chart.

**Table 6: Characteristics of fertility and contraceptive usage, 1989**

REGION	Mean age at first birth methods	Mean no. of children wanted	% ever used family planning	% now using family	% now using "modern" planning
Windhoek	20.0	4.2	85.3	61.8	59.9
Other urban	19.1	4.3	78.7	41.1	37.7
RURAL	19.3	4.7	74.6	46.8	42.3
Nama	19.7	5.0	70.0	26.1	24.5
Rehoboth	20.6	4.8	82.8	53.7	51.5
Herero	17.7	4.9	86.0	37.2	32.7
Damara	19.0	4.8	89.6	50.0	45.7
Okavango	19.2	6.3	55.1	27.0	7.3
Caprivi	20.1	5.1	57.8	27.4	14.2
Kaoko	19.8	7.6	87.0	48.6	10.4
ALL REGIONS	19.5	5.0	73.1	42.7	33.8

Source: Mostert, 1989:26-28

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