

**THE STUDY TO INVESTIGATE WATER PROVISION BY  
OKAKARARA TOWN COUNCIL**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for

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Of

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By

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## **ABSTRACT**

The objective of the study is to investigate and assess the professional capabilities of Okakarara Town Council as it relates to service delivery using the provision of water as a case study. Okakarara Town Council is one of the local authorities that are characterised by a huge debt owed to the national water utility (Namwater) for the past five to ten years. The most central question that seeks to be answered through the study: was what are the problems associated with the provision of water by Okakarara Town Council and what can be done to address the situation.

Both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used in conducting the study. The study finds that there are problems inhibiting the efficient provision of water by Okakarara Town Council. Among factors that were revealed by the study, lack of employment opportunities, unaccounted for water due to dilapidated water infrastructure and a sound billing system were revealed as the most prominent. These factors impact on the issue of affordability and thus affect the ability of the residents to pay adversely. The study also found that there are some examples like billing systems from Otjiwarongo Municipality which Okakarara Town Council should emulate in order to improve their water supply.

The study furthermore has established that the Town Council is providing water to livestock farmers living in areas adjacent to Okakarara Town. These groups of rate payers are very crucial to the financial survival of the council. It is recommended that the water infrastructure be regularly inspected and kept intact. Participation of local residents in the running of the affairs of the Town Council in line with the Decentralisation Enabling Act needs to be strengthened.

In order to ensure efficient and effective water provision of local authorities like Okakarara Town Council, there are factors that need to be considered like sustainable economic base,

the condition of water infrastructure, workable billing system as in the case of Otjiwarongo Municipality.

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Lastly, I thank the Almighty for all the strength, courage and self-confidence through the entire research. Without Him, I believe, I would not have accomplished this mammoth task.

My love and sincere thanks goes to my fiancé for caring and support through my study.

## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to all my children and my sister Kauu Uerikua Katuuu.

**DECLARATION**

I, Mavejapi Othniel Katuuo, hereby declare that this study is a result of my own investigation and research, except where stated otherwise in the acknowledgement. This work has not been submitted in for a degree to any other institution of higher education.

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Mavejapi Othniel Katuuo

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Date

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.....</b>	<b>IX</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1:       INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1   Introduction .....	1
1.2   Orientation of the Study .....	1
1.3.   Statement of the Research Problem .....	2
1.4   Objectives of the Study .....	3
1.5   Research Questions .....	4
1.5.1   The Research Question .....	4
1.5.1.1   Sub-questions.....	4
1.6   Significance of the Study .....	5
1.7   Limitations of the Study .....	5
1.8   Outline of the Study .....	6

1.9	Definition of Terms .....	6
1.10	Conclusion.....	9
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>		<b>11</b>
2.1	Introduction .....	11
2.2	Conclusion.....	40
<b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>		<b>42</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	42
3.2	Research Design.....	42
3.3	Research Population.....	43
3.4	Sampling Procedures.....	43
3.5	Research Instruments .....	44
3.6	Data Collection Procedures .....	45
3.7	Data Analysis Procedures.....	46
3.8	Conclusion.....	47
<b>CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....</b>		<b>48</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	48
4.2	Discussion of the findings .....	50
4.2.1	Okakarara Town Council Management .....	50
4.2.2	Political Office bearers of the Okakarara Town Council.....	55



4.2.3	Teachers and Nurses employed in Government Institutions .....	56
4.2.4	Okakarara Town Residents .....	58
4.2.4.1	Okakarara Town (Okakarara Proper) and the Pamue Suburb.....	58
4.2.4.2	Informal Settlements within Okakarara Town, Okatumba and the Kambazembi Traditional Authority .....	60
4.2.5	The Business Community .....	64
4.2.6	The Farming Community.....	66
4.2.7	The Ministerial Management (the central level).....	67
4.2.8	Presentation of Otjiwarongo Municipality Scenario.....	70
4.2.8.1	Lessons Learned from Otjiwarongo Municipality .....	74
4.3	Conclusion.....	76
<b>CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>		<b>77</b>
5.1	Introduction .....	77
5.2	Summary of the findings .....	77
5.3	Conclusions .....	78
5.4	Recommendations .....	80
<b>REFERENCES: .....</b>		<b>83</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES</b>		
<b>APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM</b>		

## **LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 1: Different Categories of Respondents:.....49

Table 2: Categories of Residents, Services provided (billed) and Tariffs Used.....52

Table 3: Prices Charged for Water provided in Informal Settlements:.....61

Table 4: Types of Consumers and Basic Rates:.....70

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>AIDS:</b>	Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome
<b>ALAN:</b>	Association of Local Authorities in Namibia
<b>CEO:</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>HIV:</b>	Human immunodeficiency virus
<b>IPPR:</b>	Institute for Public Policy Research
<b>IT:</b>	Information Technology
<b>LA's:</b>	Local Authorities
<b>LGSP's:</b>	Local Government Services Partnerships
<b>MAWF:</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
<b>M &amp; E:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MOHSS:</b>	Ministry of Health and Social Services
<b>MoE:</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>MRLGHRD:</b>	Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development
<b>MoWT:</b>	Ministry of Works and Transport
<b>Namwater:</b>	Namibia Water Corporation
<b>NEPRU:</b>	Namibia Economic Policy Research Unit
<b>NGO's:</b>	Non-Governmental Organisations

<b>NHE:</b>	National Housing Enterprise
<b>NID:</b>	Namibia Institute of Democracy
<b>NTA:</b>	Namibia Training Authority
<b>PLWD:</b>	People Living With Disabilities
<b>PRO:</b>	Public Relations Officer
<b>PS:</b>	Permanent Secretary
<b>SA:</b>	South Africa
<b>SAP:</b>	Systems Application Programme
<b>SME's:</b>	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
<b>SOE:</b>	State –Owned Enterprise
<b>SPSS:</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>SWAPO:</b>	South-West Africa People Organisation
<b>TC:</b>	Town Council
<b>TIPEEG:</b>	Targeted Intervention for Empowerment and Economic Growth
<b>VTC:</b>	Vocational Training Centre
<b>WASSP:</b>	Water Supply and Sanitation Policy
<b>WTP:</b>	Willingness to Pay
<b>WHO:</b>	World Health Organisation

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the investigation of water provision by Okakarara Town Council. It also looks at the statement of the problem, the research questions, the aims and the objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study and definition of concepts. Broadly the chapter looks at the orientation of the study. The thesis also provides the outline of the chapters.

### **1.2 Orientation of the Study**

At independence in 1990, the government of the Republic of Namibia promulgated local authorities in terms of an Act of Parliament, the Local Authorities Act of 1992( Act No. 23 of 1992) that gave rise to establishment of local authorities. Okakarara Town Council is one of the local authorities created under this arrangement. Okakarara Town Council is situated approximately 102 kilometers east of Otjiwarongo, in Otjozondjupa Region. According to Karuaihe (personal communication, July15, 2008) the Okakarara town has a population of approximately 6000 to 8 000 people, this comprises of people living in both formal and informal settlements.

Namwater, as the bulk supplier of water to all local authorities in Namibia is still faced with the challenges in the supplying of water to various towns and villages. The commercialization of water services by Namwater has created problems for new local authorities, Okakarara Town Council in particular. Okakarara Town Council is obliged to acquire water from a bulk supplier. Namibia Water Corporation (Namwater) provides water to local authorities who in turn distribute the water to the residents. The issue of water provision has become a problem for the Okakarara Town Council since its proclamation to the status of a town. However, it is

important to note that the Okakarara Town Council source basic utilities (water and electricity from providers such as Namwater and Nampower). Some problems are caused by the fact that the Council is always not in the position to afford the payment as demanded by the bulk supplier.

The exercise of cost recovery employed in most sectors of service provision was a new thing that the new councils, like Okakarara have to deal with. To attest to this, there have been reports in the media for the past years in relation to factors that are hindering the performance of the Okakarara town council in terms of the provision of water. These are social, economic, administrative and political factors which the researcher will elaborate in this study.

### **1.3. Statement of the Research Problem**

The commercialization of water by Namwater created problems for the majority of the emerging local authorities including Okakarara Town Council. This is due to the fact that prior to independence in 1990, customers in Okakarara Town Council received their water free of charge. The problem of water provision in Okakarara and other emerging towns were reported extensively in the local media that Okakarara Town Council owes N\$ 2, 8 million. Okakarara Town Council is not always in the position to afford the payment as demanded by the bulk supplier.

The Okakarara Town is surrounded by rural areas that are falling within the boundary of the town. The communities living within this rural setting are owners of livestock (big and small) which are damaging the water infrastructure. The Council is providing water for both human and animal consumption to these communities. The pipeline supplying water to these communities is not fitted with water meters. Meaning that these communities are not paying for water the Town Council is providing to them. This state of affairs is one of the contributing factors to the high debt that the Council is having with Namwater. The

respondents cited the issue of infrastructure as a factor that impacts on the effective provision of water by Okakarara Town Council. The pipes are old and dilapidated because of the damage caused by livestock.

Töttemeyer (2006, p.3) argued that local governance and administration should be driven by knowledge-based technology or marked by professionalism. He further argues that we are living in a knowledge-demanding and expertise driven world, but there is a lack of professionalism in the governance and administration of our local authorities, Okakarara Town Council in particular. Based on Töttemeyer's findings, the Regional and Local Councils are characterized by lack of knowledge-based professionalism.

Water provision is one of the complex and volatile issues to handle and to administer because of the financial aspect of it and the mindset of the consumers. According to Tjerije (personal communication, October 25, 2005) prior to independence water provision was free of charge, and people were not exposed to the practice of paying for water in small towns like Okakarara Town Council. Töttemeyer (2007, p.6) proposed 'Renaissance in Local Authorities' when he argued that the financial crisis and administrative disarray afflicting most local authorities are a result of grossly outdated local authority structures and the process inherited from the colonial times.

The study looks at the issue of accessibility to clean water by the consumers, in relation to the availability of water from the bulk supplier (Namwater). Factors that affect the affordability of water by the Town Council are examined and suggestions made as to how best the problem of water provision should be addressed.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to investigate water provision by Okakarara Town Council and assess the professional capabilities of its management. Below are objectives of the study:

- To Investigate and assess the Okakarara Town Council's professional capability to provide water;
- To assess the effectiveness of the Council in issuing the water bills;
- To examine the extent to which residents respond to the Okakarara Town Council's demands regarding the settlement of their water bills; and
- To propose remedies for the constraints based on the lessons learned from other local authorities in Namibia.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

### **1.5.1 The Research Question**

The research question that seeks to be answered through this study is:

What are the problems associated with the provision of water by Okakarara town council and what can be done to address them?

#### **1.5.1.1 Sub-questions**

The study also tried to answer the following sub-questions:

- Is Okakarara Town Council's management capacity appropriate to spearhead the process of water provision to its stakeholders?
- Do the Okakarara residents pay their water bills on time as required by Okakarara Town Council (the service provider)?
- What mechanisms must be put in place to improve water provision to the inhabitants of Okakarara Town and all adjacent settlements receiving water from Okakarara Town Council?



## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

While the study delves deeper in the levels of comparisons as it pertains to Okakarara Town Council and Otjiwarongo, it is of paramount importance to state that the comparisons being alluded to are only meant to inform the study. However, the fact that Otjiwarongo's billing system is far more advanced than that of Okakarara. The researcher thoroughly investigated Otjiwarongo's technical capabilities and aligned such findings with what he construed to be an ill-equipped and less advanced Okakarara's billing system. As it can be deduced from the preceding assertions, a number of institutions and individuals stand to gain from this study.

Amongst the institutions and individuals which stand to benefit from this study are academic institutions, government at large as well as individual researchers. Public Service Managers, Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of State Owned Enterprises (SOE), will benefit from the study when dealing with issues of service delivery to their clientele, especially in the area of water provision. Researchers and students also stand to gain from this study when conducting research in relevant fields of study. Consumers will benefit from the study since it will instill discipline and motivation to pay for services rendered.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The first limitation experienced by the study was related to transport to reach the intended location. The intended location of the study was situated approximately three hundred and fifty kilometers from the residence of the researcher.

The second limitation experienced was the fact that the time period needed to complete the study affected the process of gathering adequate data. The time needed to complete the study is a bit short, and hence the use of adequate data was affected because things were done within a limited period of time.

The third limitation was the acquisition of stationary and equipment necessary to carry out the research, which proved to be very expensive. Another limitation was the people. People felt that the researcher was a spy and they had the fear of exposure. In this manner they might conceal some vital relevant information.

## **1.8 Outline of the Study**

Chapter 1 provides an introduction and orientation of the study or background. In chapter 2, the literature and the conceptual framework of the study are reviewed while chapter 3 deals with research design and methodology. Chapter 4 deals with presentation and discussion of the findings respectively, i.e. presentation and analysis of data. In chapter 5 the study is concluded by way of stating conclusions and recommendations.

## **1.9 Definition of Terms**

The following terms are used throughout the study:

- **Billing System:**

A system used by town councils and municipalities according to which residents are charged for services rendered

- **Data:**

Facts and statistics used for reference or analysis

- **Traditional Authority:**

Traditional Authority means the Traditional Authority of a traditional community comprising the traditional leaders of that community who have been designated and recognized as such in accordance with the provisions of the Traditional Authorities Act (Act 17 of 1995).

- **Rate Payers:**

Residents who are living in a town or municipal area and who are paying fees for services rendered, i.e. for the provision of water, electricity and other services.

- **Economies of Affection:**

Göran Hyden (2006) describes the economy of affection as a network of support, communications, and interaction among structurally defined groups connected by blood, kin, community or other affiliations for example, religion.

- **Tampering:**

In the context of municipal service delivery, especially water provision, it means unauthorized reconnection of water supply that has been disconnected for non-payment.

- **Town:**

It refers to all administrations within a given town, Okakarara Town Council in particular

- **Credit Control:**

Refers to where certain credit worthiness checks must be completed prior to a municipal service provided or deposits collected.

- **Local Authority/Government:**

A system of administration for smaller political units such as cities, villages and settlements. Local government is said to be “close to the people” since its powers are delegated by central ( or regional) government, and typically involve matters such as health, education, water, electricity, sewerage, sanitation and environment, which are of immediate concern to ordinary people. A dynamic system of local government is widely regarded as essential and genuine democracy.

- **Town Council:**

The elected policy and decision-making body of a town or city, headed by a mayor.

- **Ring-fence Programme:**

Is a programme whereby consumers/residents ring-fence their arrears without being charged interest, start over with new account and the Council open (re-connect) their water. The resident agrees with the Council to open a separate account whereby the arrears or the amount owed is treated separately and agrees on fees per month until the arrears are settled, while at the same time paying for the monthly consumption.

- **Decentralisation:**

Means giving the power and responsibilities of making decisions about urban areas (villages, towns and municipalities) and rural areas (settlements) to Regional Councils and Local Councils respectively. Regional Councils and Local Authorities are Government bodies directly elected by the people who live within their jurisdiction.

- **Delegation:**

When central government allocates some of its functions to the sub-national levels to carry out, but not to take full responsibility for, and without abrogating its own public accountability for those functions, and without prejudice to its right to retract those functions.

- **De-concentration:**

When central government decentralizes its own staff to sub-national level to carry out their regular functions closer to the people they serve or are supposed to interfere with for whatever purpose.

- **Devolution:**

Involves the central state, either by legislation or through constitutional requirements, giving full responsibility and public accountability for certain functions to the sub-national level.

- **Zoned Card:**

According to the debtors' Clerk at Otjiwarongo municipality, the municipality is buying water meter cards which it is selling to the residents for usage at the water meters to get water. These cards are not programmed to work at a specific water meter. They can be used at any water meter within the municipality. These are referred to as zoned cards.

**Re-zoned card:**

Before the water meter cards are sold to the residents they are being programmed to be used at a specific water meter at a specific residence. These are referred to as re-zoned cards.

## **1.10 Conclusion**

This chapter gives introductory background information. These are the introduction of the study, orientation of the study and the statement of the problem by emphasizing the fact that effective water provision by Okakarara Town Council can better be effectuated by a professionally competent human capital at the helm of its administration. Suggestions and

concerns by scholars and experts are cited in the statement of the problem to indicate that the provision of water to the residents by Okakarara Town Council warrants an academic enquiry. The objectives of this study are firstly to investigate and assess the professional capabilities of Okakarara Town Council as it relates to service delivery using the provision of water as a case study and, secondly to investigate the extent to which residents respond to the Council's demand regarding the settlement of their water bills. The remedies for constraints based on the lessons learned are proposed as part of the objectives.

The research question that the study is trying to answer is about the problems associated with the provision of water by Okakarara Town Council and what can be done to address them. The significance and the justification of the study are self-explanatory while the last part of the chapter is dealing with the organization of the study by explicating what each chapter entails. All the issues that can hamper the smooth conduct of the study are discussed under the limitations. The last part of this chapter clearly provided the definition of terms used in the study and detailed the content of each chapter thereof.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers literatures based on current writings on the subject matter. The chapter provides a review and conceptual framework of the study. The findings are compared with procedures and regulations governing service provision in an established municipality of Otjiwarongo, in order to inform the study and ultimately make proposals and suggestions in the area of water provision. In addition, it also analyses and uses the Local Authorities Act of 1992 (Act No. 23 of 1992) to guide this study.

The chapter looks into the relevant current literature by scholars in the area of decentralization, local governance and public administration. Literature that describes the modern ways of administering a service providing institution is used to shed more light on how things are being done for the purposes of efficiency and effectiveness as set out in the Decentralization Enabling Act (Act No. 33 of 2000). Töttemeyer (2007, p. 7) is of the opinion that Local Authorities in Namibia are operating on the British model and after eighteen (18) years of independence, the Local Authority Act of 1992 needs to be amended so that Namibia could move from the status quo and devise a system that complies with the country's specific needs and demands.

Anderson (2004, p. 25) argued that *“Local Authorities in Namibia are autonomous and in terms of the Act are required to officially gazette Human Resources regulations on the approval of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) as required by law to make sure that all relevant policies are in place. This is how the Ministry entered into agreement with the Finish Government through Cable Project (Capacity Building for Local and Regional Authority) to help with Human Resources policies and manuals for local authorities whereby councils are required to do some amendments*

*when the need arises*". Limbo (2004, p.13) argues that *"the newly created ones are largely associated with problems. The problems include but not limited to, physical mismanagement, limited resources and misallocation, unqualified staff and corruption"*. The afore-mentioned quote made reference to local authorities in Namibia, like the Okakarara Town Council.

Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) argues that *"most local authorities operate in communities with low income, insufficient housing, lack of employment opportunities, underdeveloped infrastructure and services, and generally a weak economic base"*. The residents or rate payers were not educated in terms of paying for water and electricity in municipal and town council areas. They were caught off-guard and payment for services in small towns was not familiar to them. The factors that affect good administration, service delivery and governance of the town council under investigation are looked into and remedies are suggested in line with the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23 of 1992). The Act set guidelines for the operations of local authorities in the quest to instil a sense of responsibility, transparency and accountability in local authority managers.

Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) suggests that *"Namibia needs a revised financial policy for local authorities reflected in a separated Act on local finance. Attention in this case should be on a well-articulated town development policy to deal with migration of people to local authority areas and how these areas can cope with such influx. Local authorities are faced with challenges like poverty, unemployment, squatting, criminality and HIV/AIDS pandemic in Namibia"*.

Experiences with decentralization reform process indicate that the most difficult part in the reform process is implementation. Once decentralization of some functions and assignment of resources (including human, financial and material resources) are agreed upon, then central government must be able to kick-start the process through the provision of adequate



institutional support to sub-national governments in areas such as human resources development including staff development/training (MRLGH, 1998).

The above-mentioned factors are real issues that affect the operations of local authorities in Namibia, especially the provision of essential services such as water. The Local Authority Act of 1992 (Act No. 23 of 1992), as it relates to water provision is analysed and some recommendations are made where necessary. Attempts are also made to analyse the Human Resource Development Policy of the government so that the researcher can deduce some provisions that will shed more light on the administrative capabilities of the officials employed by the Okakarara town council. Efficient governance and decentralization should be effectively synchronized as they are both pre-conditions for quality governance and administration (MRLGHRD, 1998).

Tjijenda (2007) argues that *“the Local Authorities/Regional Councils are having a lot of setbacks like poor resource allocation from central government, lack of office space, clear defined roles and unprofessional behaviours”*. These and other factors mentioned are crucial issues that are dealt with in the study in order to determine whether they are inherent to Okakarara town council or not. A report of 2004 by the Ministry of Regional, Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD), on the rehabilitation of Okakarara Town Council in terms of administration, finance and technical fields revealed that management of the Town Council lacks the ability to manage the workforce, finance and equipment. The report proposed training for the assistant accountant, debtors’ clerk, creditor’s clerk and a cashier.

In terms of the report of 2004 on the rehabilitation of Okakarara Town Council, Decentralization Policy the on-going socio-economic reforms are linked not only to the necessary transformation but also to the macro-economic and fiscal reforms which are

currently underway. Decentralization implies that the challenges and the disciplines required have to be exercised at the local and the national levels.

Recently, Okakarara Town Council was in the media as one of the Local Authorities owing the bulk water supplier (Namwater) enormous amount of money as an outstanding debt for the water supplied to them Numbala (2011, p. 5). The Public Relations Officer at Namwater argues that the following are the reasons why Local Authorities, including Okakarara Town Council fail to settle their dues with Namwater:

- Lack of management capacity in these local authorities, both technical and financial staff, adding that the problem needs urgent attention from the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development as most of these local authorities are not able to attract qualified and technical staff;
- An unwillingness to pay for services since some political office bearers encourage residents not to pay for their water accounts; and
- Severe dilapidation in the water infrastructure of both Namwater and the councils, with little refurbishments done, which results in some authorities losing substantial amounts of water in their systems, either through leaking infrastructure, un-billed customers or water stolen from the system.

Okakarara Town Council was among the local authorities that owe the bulk water supplier enormous amount of money. According to Numbala (2011, p. 5) the biggest concern for these entities was the sources of revenue which are available to them.

Most if not all, of the above-mentioned concerns, are the reasons why this study is conducted so that solutions can be found or suggested as pointed out in the section dealing with the objectives. To cement what Numbala highlighted above as problems inhibiting the local authorities in Namibia, Lwendo (2011, p. 8) argues that “*unfortunately the literature on*

*Africa relating to local government is replete with failure. The literature enumerates many interrelated problems common to local authorities in Africa. Local sources of revenue are poorly developed and administered, and local services needs are not well met. Scholars of African local government argue that there are insufficient staff and many employees lack adequate professional training”.*

The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) in 2006 had embarked on audit of local authorities in an attempt to try to improve on their performance. According to Ndoroma (personal communication, January 25, 2012) *“the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development made some recommendations that are trying to address the problems or challenges faced by the local governments in the country and these are contained in the document called the ‘Local Government Reform Position Paper’, which is still under discussion and needs to be finalised soon with the assistance from a Consultant from Guyana, in the Caribbean”.* According to Maletzky (2009, p. 3), Teek a Programme Officer with the Association of Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN), points out the under-mentioned challenges facing Local Authorities in Namibia, when she conducted a needs assessment study for the capacity building training for the State, Regional and Local Authorities in local democracy and governance:

- Central government should increase financial and human assistance (skills training) to Local Authorities as an imperative and appropriate approach as opposed to having one or two more services devolved to Local Authorities;
- None of the surveyed Local Authorities was financially ready to take over more services from central government because they lack revenue collection methods and financial support from Windhoek or financial institutions;

- Due to a lack of money, some local authorities cannot afford to pay the professionals, technicians and engineers needed to deliver quality services;
- The least preferred services for decentralization were secondary education and public transport, because of limited resources and no clear defined legal frameworks;
- Local Authorities struggle to provide infrastructural development as well as street and public lights due to the cost of financing that exceeds the income they generate;
- Common sources of revenue collection for the Local Authorities were:
  - Rates and property taxes;
  - Bank interests;
  - Users' fees;
  - Fines and business licensing;
  - Central government grant that is always meant for the Build-Together Programme and one or two capital projects; and
- The least used sources of revenue collection for the Local Authorities included private and business sector and international donors. This is an indication that the formation of partnerships in the Local Authorities was given a low priority.

The application of the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23 of 1992) is being hampered by the above-mentioned factors in Namibia. Situations are not conducive for the application of the Local Authorities Act. It is not an ideal situation in Namibia in terms of service provision by Local Authorities. As can be deduced from the different arguments advanced by the above referenced authors, there are factors or issues that need to be addressed before a local authority is expected to deliver quality service. These factors are ranging from human resources capital and technical skills to infrastructural development. Therefore, Maletsky (2009) suggests five key areas of training which ALAN needs to consider as advised by Teek:

- Improving revenue collection;
- Evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of service;
- Implementing strategic plans and local economic development plans;
- Developing more proactive participatory planning systems that can actively increase the influence of the public on decentralised services as opposed to the current passive participation;
- Helping the Local Authorities understand fundamental terminologies such as delegation, de-concentration, devolution, efficiency, effectiveness, participatory democracy, monitoring and evaluation.

In order for the provisions of Section VI of the Local Authorities Act (Act 23 of 1992) to be applied, the environment should be conducive. The Act compels the Local Authorities to provide water to their residents through technically sound infrastructure. On the other hand the Act is also explicit in terms of the responsibility of the residents as the receivers of the services (water) from the municipalities and town councils. It is the responsibility of the resident or house owner to pay for water supplied to him. Accessibility to water is a basic human right. This argument brings the researcher to the issue of the quantity of water needed by a household for daily use. According to Gleick and the World Health Organisation (WHO) , as cited by Tjijenda (2007, p. 11), estimated quantities for meeting basic water needs to be seen as an absolute daily minimum amount of water a person needs per day and should range from 50 litres to 100 litres. Furthermore, he categorizes the water consumption for a household. The 50 litres is categorized as 5 litres for drinking, 20 litres for sanitation and hygiene, 15 litres for bathing and 10 litres for preparing food.

In terms of Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Policy (WASSP) (2008, p. 10), the bulk water supply can terminate the supply of water to Local Authorities in an event of non-payment or through the unwillingness attitudes of residents. This scenario is not always due

to the fact that residents are unwilling to pay for the water supplied to them by Local Authorities. As noted earlier on in terms of challenges faced by the local authorities in Namibia, the ability to pay is linked to the issue of income and income is determined by the availability of salaried work or employment opportunities which can enable the residents to pay for water provided by the Okakarara Town Council.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (2008, pp. 10-11) further mentioned that *“temporary termination of water supply to an entire Local Authority or proclaimed settlement by a bulk supply service provider should not be used to enforce cost or debt recovery provided that the Local Authority terminate or restrict provision of services to individual non-paying consumers. Local Authorities are advised to use trickle flow valves, similar devices or other control measures for the specific control and should be included in the implementation strategy for the several levels of service providers”*. The Local Authority is obliged to use the revenues generated from water supply services for repayment of Namwater services.

Thornhill (2008, p. 59), argues that *“Local Government as government closest to the people demanded particular attention as the services they are expected to provide affect the daily lives of most inhabitants of the state”*.

In South Africa (SA) like in Namibia, local authorities are created with the main aim of bringing the government services closer to the people. It is a constitutional requirement that there should be local government that is democratically based. According to Thornhill

(2008, p. 63) *“most characteristics of the system of local government are that it is constitutionally entrenched, it now enjoys original powers derived from the Constitution and it has to be democratically based”*. He further argues that the system of municipal government and administration was restructured and replaced with a totally new system. For example:

- Municipalities have been demarcated in such a way that they cover the total geographical area of South Africa, not only the urban areas;
- Municipal councils are representative of the South African electorate registered to vote for the national and provincial legislatures (with limited exceptions);
- Communities have a constitutional right to demand to be consulted in decisions concerning the municipal area in which they reside to ensure that their needs are satisfied; and
- Municipalities provide an extensive range of services over and above basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation.

Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, p. 35) in the policy (or policy making) perspective, that the colonial administrations created most of the problems that became policy issues at independence. Topping the list was political participation: the law was that the majority of the citizens could not vote to elect representatives to the national assembly. Within that scheme of divide and rule, the existence of the 'Bantustans' served the exclusive interests of particular tribes and not of the Namibian nation. In essence, voting in a particular 'Bantustan' had no meaning to other 'Bantustans'. Hence, the only country that existed was what the whites defined as South West Africa. As for blacks, each tribal enclave constituted a country for the occupant tribe. That is what caused the liberation struggle, prompting the need to empower citizens at regional and local levels to make their own policies as opposed to the 'Bantustans' operations that were designed and supervised by white appointees.

The Local Authorities Act (Act 23 of 1992) Part V thereof is dealing with powers, duties functions, rights and obligations of a local authority. In terms Part V of this Act a Local Authority Council has the following general powers, duties and functions:

- To supply water for household, business or industrial purposes, to residents in each approved township situated within its area;
- To provide, maintain and carry on a system of sewerage and drainage for the benefit of residents in each approved township situated within its area;
- To provide, maintain and carry on refuse removal services to residents in each approved township situated within its area;
- To establish and maintain cemeteries, in a municipal council or a town council;
- To establish and maintain cemeteries in respect of each approved township situated within its area;
- To establish, carry on and maintain markets;
- To establish, carry on and maintain an ambulance service, which may only be exercised by a village council if assigned by the Minister by means of a notice published in the Government Gazette;
- To establish, carry on and maintain museums and libraries, which may only be exercised by a town council or a village council if assigned by the Minister by means of a notice published in the Government Gazette;
- To establish, carry on and maintain pounds; and
- To construct and maintain buildings or depots for the reception or storage of perishable goods, which may only be exercised by a town council or a village council if assigned by the Minister by means of a notice published in the Government Gazette.



According to Swartz (personal communication, June 13, 2012) there are 52 local authorities in Namibia that are performing most delegated, de-concentrated and devolved functions. In order for a local authority to perform the above-referenced functions, such a Local Authority should be efficient, effective and transparent. Involvement of local communities is cardinal in the operations of the Local Authorities.

Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, p. 54) reveal that *“concrete evidence indicating that the government of Namibia is not only committed to ensuring citizens’ participation in all phases of the national political processes, but also in the success of the decentralization policy which is observable everywhere”*. It is further argued by Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, pp. 54-55) that it should be recognized that the viability and possible sustainability of the policy is going to depend on the following variables: (i) acquisition and retention of appropriate skills within the workforce; (ii) provision of attractive packages to workers, in particular to the more experienced staff in order to prevent brain drain from the public to the private sector; (iii) effective implementation of the land re-distribution policy so as to quell the hunger for land by the landless majority and; (iv) ensuring that ‘Affirmative Action’ succeeds as a prerequisite for re-structuring the economy and the general social outlook in the country. These constitute political and administrative challenges that must be won if peace has to prevail, thereby, guaranteeing the success of decentralization policy.

Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, pp. 55-56) also identify the following as factors hindering meaningful public participation in Namibia:

- Uneven availability of information and means for participation and a growing culture of self-censorship by member of the public themselves for fear of being discovered to be politically incorrect. Critical comments by members of the public on government

policies and their implementation have been handled at times in a very intimidating manner that undermines some aspects of civil and political contextual freedoms.

- Lack of understanding of the structures of regional councils and local authorities on the part of members of the public; and
- Lack of a clear understanding of the rules and means for public participation at the regional and local levels. There is little standardized procedure for the public to approach committees to raise issues of concern. Committees seem to lack links with the communities they are supposed to serve.

Namibia has adopted decentralization as a state policy and instituted its implementation effective 1/04/1998 (MRLGH&RD, 1998). In terms the SWAPO Party Manifesto (2004, p. 12) the concept and introduction of the policy of decentralization in Namibia has its origins in the vision of SWAPO as a liberation movement during the heroic struggle before independence. This vision was reflected way back in its 1989 Election Manifesto. Namibia's vision under the SWAPO PARTY is to effect the implementation of decentralization within the overall national goal of striving to achieve national reconciliation and to foster peace, and a common loyalty to a unitary state. Decentralization can be defined differently by different authors or scholars. Kotze (1997, p. 26) defines it by referring to the constituent parts thereof.

These parts are:

- De-concentration consists of handing over some administrative authority and responsibility to lower levels within the hierarchy of central government;
- Delegation consists of the transference of authority required to perform certain tasks; and

- Privatization refers to the transference of responsibility for the performance of certain task to organization in the private sector, cases in point being professional bodies that regulate admission to an occupation and cooperatives who handle the marketing of specific products.

Decentralization Policy for the Republic of Namibia, as enshrined in the Development and Democracy booklet of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (1997, p. 11), suggests three types of decentralization possible within a unitary state namely: de-concentration, delegation and devolution.

Kotze (1997, p. 33) reveals that there are trends that need to be considered in the African administration at local government level. The constraints imposed on local government (with devolved powers) in African countries after independence, reflect the social and political realities that followed the withdrawal of colonial government:

- The existence of economics of affection and clan politics began to have an increasingly significant impact on both policy-making and day-to-day administration;
- The establishment of local government with strong, devolved powers, creates pressure on any central government and may either threaten or limit its control. There were however, other problems with decentralization, like the need has arisen to reverse the process of greater devolution that had been initiated at the time of decolonization, field administration that is the local arm of central government was strengthened, the greater the recentralization of responsibilities at central government level, the more the centre became out of touch with problems at field level;
- While recentralization in African Government was taking place, there was a concomitant weakening of local government. The extent of powers devolved to local government at the time of its introduction before decolonization eventually

contributed to the process of recentralization. It led to misgivings about the possible rise of regionalism, tribalism and ethnicity; and

- The shortage of manpower in African countries, funds and equipment necessary to maintain local government and field administration, also contributed to recentralization. In the interest of efficiency, therefore, overlapping and competitive bodies – the local government bodies were eliminated or scaled down.

The scenarios described above in terms of the field administration and local governments were not left on their own to rectify themselves. According to Kotze (1997, pp. 33-34) certain adjustments were made which took one or more of the following:

- Powers of decision-making were diminished including the power to levy taxes and collect other funds;
- advisory duties were often added to the functions of local government bodies;
- Agency on behalf of central government was increased;
- Local government staff was sometimes placed under the disciplinary supervision of the central government, usually through the creation of a consolidated local government service, or through the appointment or secondment of civil servants to local government bodies;
- Political control at Local level was extended to cover local government bodies, usually through the appointment of political commissioners at district and/or provincial level;
- Local government and field administration were closely coordinated, through the establishment of district development committees; and

- Local government bodies and field administration were consolidated into a single decision-making and executive structure.

Local authorities in Namibia are created through an Act of Parliament. It is called the Local Authorities Act (Act 23 of 1992), noted earlier on in this study. The establishment of Local Authorities is a constitutional provision and is set out in Chapter 12 of the Constitution of Namibia. In terms of the above-mentioned constitution Article 102 makes provision for the structures of Regional and Local Government. Furthermore, in terms of the constitution (the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, chapter 12) Local Authority in Namibia shall include all municipalities, communities, village councils and other organs of local government defined and constituted by Act of Parliament. Part 1 of the Act makes provision for Local Authority Councils in respect of municipalities, towns and villages (Local Authorities Act, 23 of 1992).

Riruako (2007, p. 129) argues that *“according to the Act, the councils are expected to provide services to all the people who reside in the boundaries within their areas of their jurisdiction. They provide vital services as water, sanitation, street and public places, roads and electricity, cemeteries, public transport and housing”*.

According to Riruako (2007, p. 130) the regional council is required to assist local government in executing its powers, duties and functions. In that regard regional government makes submissions to cabinet or any relevant ministry on local authority pertaining to matters within their respective regions. Apart from the submissions, the regional government may discuss matters of concern to local authorities with a given ministry. However, such interventions by regional government are limited to the degree of autonomy that each of the two institutions enjoys. In fact, local authorities are autonomous bodies with regard to the regional councils on the principle of no-sub-ordination.

It is the duties of the reporting ministry to see to it that local authorities are empowered in terms of service provision. According to Ndoroma (personal communication, February 02, 2012) *“the Local Authorities Act (23 of 1992) is silent on the criteria used to determine the eligibility of a place to be declared a village, town council or a municipality. Currently the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) is designing ways or criteria to be followed when a local government entity is to be declared a village, town council etc”*. He further notes *that in some cases the government (central government) declares the place a town or a village council when it deemed it necessary in terms of service provision based on the strategic location of such a place”*.

Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) opines that *“the Local Authority Act of 1992 needs a substantive review. The present local authority Act is based on the British model. Can Namibia move away from this model and devise a system that complies with the country’s specific needs and demands? The current legislation on local authority needs serious testing whether it complies with present–day demands and a changed environment”*. Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) further states that *“Local Authority Act of 1992 should also look at pertinent questions on whether local authorities have adequate economic base to cope with demands and development expectations”*.

According to Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) *“most local authorities are operating in communities with low income, insufficient housing and lack of employment opportunities, under developed infrastructure and services, and generally a weak economic base”*.

This study proposes certain interventions to be considered when dealing with issues relating to the management of the local authorities in Namibia. The challenges that are facing local authorities in Namibia are similar to what local authorities of other sister countries in the Southern African region, have to contend with. The concerns of Töttemeyer are the premise

of this study. Töttemeyer (2006, p. 11) argues that *“a new version and action leading to a new local authority system and structure in Namibia has become undoubtedly a necessity. Such system and structure must guarantee competency, efficiency, quality and professionalism in local governance and administration. Namibia is in dire need of innovation that addresses the fundamental shortcomings in the running of local authorities from the village to the municipality level”*.

To support Töttemeyer’s concerns, Lwendo (2011, p. 8) remarks that *“although each local government can be regarded as relatively successful in the context of its own country, all of them require reforms and assistance in a number of respects. Some of the more common and important needs include collection of better data for use in planning and budgeting; further streamlining of operating procedures; revenue base diversification; upgrading and expansion of certain services; improved professional training of employees; broader access to capital finance and reform of central fiscal relations”*.

Gildenhuis, Fox and Wissink (1991, p. 122) argue that *“local government and management are as old as the known history of the word”*. On the basis of literature that the researcher consulted local government could be the first form of government on earth. The word democracy was first used and formulated by Aristotle in the context of city (local) government. Aristotle’s version represents what is today called participatory democracy, where every citizen has a chance of direct participation in the decision-making process.

The ways how local governments were administered and run underwent a revolution through the years. This notion can correctly be illustrated by Gildenhuis, Fox and Wissink (1991, p. 122) when they argue that *“Aristotle’s ancient form of (local) government has been revived in modern times with the advocacy of participatory democracy and calls for maximum citizen*

*participation in local government affairs by way of devolution of power to autonomous self-governing local government units”.*

Transparency and participation are imperatives in terms of local government. This study also intends to look into community participation in the governance so that they can be aware of issues affecting their lives.

In practice, these tools are often used in different combinations depending on the specific context. In the case of Bulgaria, for instance, a variety of measures have been recommended that fall under different strategies, to enhance local governments’ effectiveness in building transparency and combating corruption at the local level. These include increased information flow between residents and the local authority, development of a code of ethics and establishment of an independent ethics commission, and training on the appropriate role of councilors.

According to Haycock and Labuschgne (2006, p. 258) *several local authorities (municipalities) struggle to ensure that long-term strategic plans are actually implemented and are severely criticized for a lack of performance. In some instances, cities in South Africa adopted isolated, centralized, rational and analytical approaches to the formulation of long-term strategic programmes while service delivery agents were required to implement strategies at an operational level. The approach originated from the view point that ‘contractor’ and ‘client’ responsibilities (i.e. policy/strategy and operational functions should be separated).*

Tonchi (2003) remarks in the lecture notes that *“Lupido Adamolekun proposes some alternative institutional approaches for delivery of services and distinguishes two broad types namely:*



1. *Those for which the exit option for citizens is feasible and which can therefore be provided by the private sector; and*
2. *Those for which exit options are not easy and for which voice mechanisms must be enhanced, making the involvement of the public sector necessary in some form (possibly within the frame work of collaboration between non-governmental organisations or the private sector and government). For the category of services whose outputs are difficult to specify and are not contestable, the core civil service is the only agency of service”.*

There are different types of Local Authorities as pointed out by Gildenhys, Fox and Wissink (1991, p. 126) when they argue that “*Local Authorities vary widely. Perhaps the best way to describe the variety is to classify the types of local authorities, firstly according to their geographical base, and secondly according to their functional base*”. For the purposes of this study, the functional base type of local authorities is of cardinal importance since it is within this group type where Namibian scenario is best represented.

Gildenhuis, et al (1991, p. 127) point out that “*functional base, local authorities may be classified in two main categories. There are the so-called multi-purpose or general purpose local authorities (usually referred to as general purpose) and the so-called single purpose or special purpose local authorities, usually referred to as special purpose local authorities*”.

General purpose local authorities deliver a wide range of diversified municipal services to their local communities within one demarcated area of jurisdiction. This requires a wide variety of professions combined with well-balanced laymen to serve as councillors. Gildenhuis et al (1991, p. 127) note that “*the present South African local units, both on the basic and intermediate levels, serve as excellent examples of general purpose local*

*authorities*". It is clear from the classifications that most local authorities in Namibia are falling within the multi-purpose or general purpose local authority category.

Lwendo (2010, p. 8) argues that *"scholars of Local Governments of developing countries, particularly in Africa have historically been much more centralized than their industrialized counterparts. Scholars further revealed that recordkeeping is primitive, and managerial procedures are under developed or non-existent"*.

The above-mentioned issues or considerations are connected to the issue of ethics and accountability. Simataa, as cited by Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, p. 62) is of the opinion that *"throughout the African continent, there is now a widespread awareness that enhanced public service delivery is the key to good governance advocated by most African leaders. Equally important is the fact that the quality of public services depends more on the level of ethical standards and accountability of public institutions that deliver those services"*.

In terms of factors that are contributing to unethical behaviour and accountability, Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, p. 62) further argue that in many public services in Africa professionalism, low levels of integrity and dishonesty, and conflict of interest have destroyed most public services because of resultant widespread use of shady human resource practices.

Simataa, as cited by Mukwena and Chirawu (2008, p. 65) further argue that *"vigorously the issue of conflict of interest arises because of the keen interest many Namibian public servants have taken in becoming entrepreneurs. The issue of conflict of interest has become a major problem at all levels of public service. In many Local Authorities across the country, there are continuous reports about financial mismanagement.*

Disconnection of water supply in local authorities is occurring on a frequent basis. Hoaēs (2012) states recently in the daily newspaper that *“individual households owe the Council N\$ 30 million, while businesses owe N\$ 20 million and ministries owe N\$ 5 million. This could also affect the humanitarian situation at the north-eastern town, because public institutions such as hospitals and schools would be without water if Namwater presses on with its cut-off plan”*.

The disconnection of water affects the provision of vital services like in the case of hospital, the sanitation issue. Hoaēs (2012, p. 3) further asserts that *“the disconnection for residential and businesses would take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of each month, while disconnections for government institutions such as ministries would take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month”*. The above-referenced scenarios are indicative of a local authority that is not properly managed or not administratively sound. To minimize the issue of disconnections of water for Local Authorities, there are measures that will be employed. Barth, (2012, p. 7 ) a retired Namibian Deputy Auditor-General argues that *“local authorities can create various special fund accounts in their books to cater for certain eventualities. What happen with most local authorities is that the cash available was used to finance operational expenditure. This means that most fund accounts are no longer cash-backed and cannot be used for the purpose for which they have been created”*.

Barth (2012, p. 7) is also of the opinion that *fund accounts which have been created by local authorities but, if they are not cash-backed, they cannot serve their purpose*. For the purposes of this study only the Betterment and Tariff Stabilization Funds are crucial. In terms of the Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (WASSP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) there are some requirements related to tariff structure. The Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (MAWF) suggests two priority rankings with regard to water supply

namely: Priority one, which is the provision of water for domestic use and priority two, this is the provision of water for economic activities.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Policy of 2008 (MAWF) suggests *“two broad sector objectives in terms of water supply and sanitation. These are to improve water supply in order to contribute to improved public health, reduce the burden of collecting water and related activities and to improve the provision of sanitation services in order to contribute towards improved health and quality of life, ensure a hygienic environment, stimulate economic development and related fields”*.

McGill (1996, pp. 53-54) argues that *“it is now becoming more accepted that urbanization is a force for the good in the countries’ economic development. At the same time the dangers of rapid growth to the urban inhabitants are repeated. There is an urgent need to improve the best of human, technical and other resources and to overcome or prevent the environmental and poverty problems associated with the concentration of economic and social development”*.

He further, when highlighting the new approaches in terms of management and asserts that *“towns and cities have been looked at from different points of view: on the one hand, they are seen as generators of economic growth and are considered the strongholds of modern development and progress; on the other hand, they are also seen as social and cultural entities with particular characteristics and atmosphere. However in recent years what is most talked about is (neither) of these features but (rather) the abject levels of poverty and human living conditions that a large number of city dwellers are subject to”*.

The arguments leveled are the premised of this study for the Okakarara Town Council being a Third World local authority entity that can be associated with most, if not all, of the features/issues/problems identified above in terms of management of the provision of

essential services such as water. The solution to these problems in the context of the Okakarara Town Council can be found by looking at them as inherent to Okakarara town. McGill (1996, p. 54) also suggests that *“there is a need to abandon Eurocentric value judgements in defining and solving (in this case) Africa’s urban problems. New solutions based on concepts relevant to local situations must be bred. One way of doing this is to learn what urbanites are doing and can do for them to solve various problems and to see whether there is room for improvement”*.

In respect of the above-referenced opinions, Knox and Masilela, as cited by McGill (1996, p. 54) state that *“research in Europe and North America has shown that urban planners in industrialized countries operate in a professional culture that is dominated by rationalistic, problem solving, technocratic and managerial orientations (whose) distributive values.... steer economic and social change along particular (Western) channels”*.

As opined by Phang (2006, p. 9) that *“today local government is managed in an ever changing environment; globalization especially has made it possible to know in an instant what is happening in another part of the world. Globalization has its critics and its admirers, but whatever view is taken, its impact on how local government is managed is clear with growing inter-connections and inter-dependencies. Shifting community needs that reflect global changes pose challenges for how local government is managed”*.

Phang’s argument above implies the fact that the issue of service delivery at local authority level should be a concerted effort of all stakeholders. Thus effective service delivery demands that local government, central government, the community and the private sector should all be involved when he argues that *“in a broad sense, local authorities, private sector, community organizations and other key players in service delivery share a common concern to serve a public interest. The line of argument here is that when local government delivers*

*effectively all players gain, but who should ensure that local government delivers and how? This discussion encompasses the issues of roles, responsibilities, interactive relationships and partnerships”.*

The issue of effective service delivery is problematic since in order for a local authority to deliver services effectively and efficiently, there are certain issues to be taken into consideration. In terms of administration, the local authority should be competent, well-trained and knowledgeable. Another issue to be considered is the participation of community in the affairs of decision-making to determine their destiny. The Okakarara Town Council, as a local authority in Namibia is not excluded from these challenges.

Phang (2006, p. 10) furthermore argues that *“local authorities in Malaysia face many challenges in trying to deliver effectively and with quality: the main challenge is their weakness in capacity”.*

From the assertions referenced above, it is clear that capacity in the Developing World is one of the challenges facing local authorities as it relates to service delivery. In order for the local authorities to deliver services effectively, the performance of the town council personnel/staff should be enhanced. In other words, training needs to be effectuated. Okakarara Town Council, as one of the local authorities in Third World or Africa cannot escape these considerations. Töttemeyer’s concerns in terms of capacity building and Renaissance in Local Authorities in Namibia are issues that seriously need to be considered by all role players. The purpose of this study is to investigate these concerns and try to propose some panaceas/remedies for the situations in terms of Okakarara Town Council.

Sansom (2006, p. 58) is of the opinion that *“throughout the world, local governments are facing increasing difficulties in finding the resources to meet community needs for essential services. One solution to this problem is to enter into partnerships with other government*

*agencies, private sector and/or community organizations*". Sansom further proposes the practice of Local Government Services Partnerships (LGSPs) and defines it as *"arrangements entered into by local governments with other public agencies, private companies or the non-profit sector in order to deliver adequate or better services to the community"*.

It is evident from the above-referenced quote that service delivery is a mammoth task that demands a concerted effort from different stakeholders. Sansom (2006, p. 62) defines governance as *"the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented or not implemented. In the broader community sense, it is concerned with collective action and the network of relationships between all the different organizations (government agencies, private sector and civil society) that must work together to meet society's needs"*. According to Samson (2006, p. 57) the 2003 Commonwealth Local Governance Conference held in Tshwane, South Africa under the Theme Local Government Service Partnerships, *had brought together senior figures from local and central governments with representatives of the private sector and civil society to explore different partnership mechanisms by which local government service delivery can be enhanced*". As stated by Sansom (2006, p. 58) the Tswane Conference explored partnership mechanisms used by local government across a range of services, including water, social services, health, housing and local economic development.

Partnerships in some countries yield positive results in terms of service delivery. Tonchi (personal communication, March 19, 2003) remarks that *"in post-apartheid South Africa the distinguishing characteristic of local government is their reliance on partnerships with the private sector and civil society to mobilize resources and to deliver services. This has had positive impact at a time when the fiscal relationships between the central government and subnational government have not been fully sorted out. However local governments finance*

*both in respect of self-generated revenues and decentralized expenditures is one of the main problem areas in intergovernmental relations in the country”.*

With regard to Human Resources Development, according to Mukwena and Drake, as cited by Kasanda (2008, pp. 105-106) argue that *“the decentralization of government activities in terms of personnel and development activities to local and regional governments in Namibia came into existence in 1993. He notes that many of the local and regional authorities started with a skeleton staff. He further notes that the Regional and Local Governments, therefore, assumed the responsibility of carrying out tasks within the ambits of the Regional Council Act 1992 (Act No. 22 of 1992) and Local Authorities Act 1992(Act 23 of 1992) that would enhance the living standards of their communities”.*

In this regard, in order to run the development activities previously run by the central government, the Regional and Local governments needed to recruit appropriately qualified personnel.

Andrews (1988, p. 151) is of the opinion *that because workers are continually exposed to change as a result of technological progress training is a continuous process which ultimately culminates in development”.* She further argues that *“because productivity in the public sector is of great importance, it is important that officials should already know how their work must be performed at the time of joining the institution, so that they may be fully productive at the outset”.*

Töttemeyer (2006, p. 12) argues that *“there is an urgent need to empower and capacitate local authorities. Among others emphasis must be put on adequate skills development. The authority structure must be modernized, streamlined and professionalized so that it can comply with added responsibilities. In many local authorities the communities have lost trust*



*in the capability and quality of local authorities and their staff to comply with the demands of competent governance and administration”.*

Proponents of local government reform in Namibia are proposing for local authority legislation reform. The call is based on the fact that financial resources transfer to local government should be made a legally binding issue. Smit (2012, p. 6) reports that *“the City of Windhoek Mayor Ellaine Trepper has again reiterated her call for reform of local authority legislation to ensure that financial transfers from Government to local authorities became a legal requirement. Such reform would guarantee financial support from Government to local authorities and would in turn ensure the sustainability of projects such as the provision of water, electricity, sanitation and serving of land in low-income areas”.*

The provision of services by local authorities is heavily depended on the availability of resources. According to Smith (2012, p. 6) the mayor of the City of Windhoek, Trepper, is of the opinion, when she addressed the informal settlement residents at the annual meeting, that *”the municipality will continue to focus on the available resources on the delivery of basic services in the low income areas of Windhoek in terms of the provision of sanitation and electricity. Trepper further notes that to realize these hopes we should reform the current local authority legislative framework to ensure that the allocation of resources by central government to local authorities is a national legal requirement”.*

With regard to the ways/manner in which most Local Authorities in Namibia are managed, Töttemeyer (2006, p. 12) is of the opinion *“that many of the existing municipalities, towns and villages in Namibia run short of the criteria and expectations required for quality governance and administration. He further opines that among local councilors and equally among officials a conceptual lack of knowledge on the preconditions for the efficient running of a local authority, in addition do not have adequate knowledge of applicable legislation”.*

Hoffschulte, as cited by de Villiers (2008, pp. 99-100) is of the opinion *that local authorities were not only recognized as the strongest partners close to the citizens; but they were also treated as levels of government. This was a breakthrough compared to their previous disregard and treatment as non-governmental organization (NGOs). Most importantly, all member states participating in the Istanbul Habitat II conference adopted the Habitat Agenda and the Istanbul Declaration, in which they undertook to promote decentralization by democratic local governments and to work towards the strengthening of their financial and institutional capacities*". The aspect of service delivery by Local Authorities can be equated with the notion of a developmental state. Johnson, as cited by Maserumule and Mathole (2006, p. 220) defines a developmental state as *"that type of state rationally planned in a manner that makes it possible and necessary for government to influence the direction and pace of economic and social development rather than leaving it to the dictates of the markets"*.

As stated by Muserumule and Mathole (2006, p. 221) *"in a developmental state, the government establishes social and economic goals. Factors of production are privately owned but government intervenes to provide state guidance to ensure that their utilization is always aimed at realizing national interests. This is achieved through the creation of an inexpensive, efficient and effective public service staffed by the nation's brightest and best servants functioning without constraints and capable of being innovative in addressing the social and economic needs of the citizens"*.

The issue of water provision by Okakarara Town Council is being guided by a policy called the Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy and Procedures of Okakarara Town Council. Tjipueja (personal communication, February 07, 2012) argues *that when dealing with the exercise of water provision, the issue of cost recovery is coming to the fore since the facilities needs to be maintained and kept intact from time to time. Towns, municipalities and other*

*service providers have to recover cost. Abu-Zeid, as cited by Tjjenda (2007, p. 18) is of the opinion that “sustainability of water supply and delivery system to ensure continued provision of services is accomplished by generating enough funds to cover the administration, operation and maintenance and replacement of water system facilities”. Liu et al and Abu-Zeid, as cited by Tjjenda (2007, p.18) emphasize that “revenue is a key to service delivery and sustainability. Thus, utility or service provider cannot be efficient in cost recovery if some or all of these costs are not recovered”.*

The Water and Sanitation Sector Policy (1993, p. 6) recommends that *government support services should be seen as a medium for self-sufficiency and not be extended to a pricing policy to be worked out and agreed upon. Tjjenda (2007, p. 18) states that “no pricing policy exists as a guideline for tariff design. However, with the establishment of Namwater, a water utility, the focus of pricing policy changed toward full cost recovery, from which all other water service providers should emulate”.*

Scholars contend that Namwater is not always fulfilling its objective of providing water on an affordable basis to the end-users due to the fact that it is frequently raising the tariffs.

Marah et al, as cited by Tjjenda (2007, p. 20) contend that *“tariffs influence cost recovery through affordability and willingness to pay (WTP) effects. As the tariffs per household increases, affordability declines and all else being equal, the likelihood of paying can also be expected to decline. The WTP is less directly determined by the degree of conformity between the prevailing tariff structure and consumers’ normative beliefs about appropriate tariffs”.*

According to the Commonwealth Secretariat Report on Making Local Governance Work Series 1, on Local Democracy and Good Governance in the Caribbean (2005, p. 23), there are reasons why central government devolves service delivery to local level: As they are closer to the people, local government services should be cheaper, quicker and more relevant, it can be

very difficult and expensive to deal with local problems nationally, everyone lives in a local community, no one lives nationally, so services are best provided locally.

Diergaardt (personal communication, May 05, 2012) reveals that *“the billing system that Namwater is using to bill local authorities is called SAP System. The area managers are receiving instructions from the head office, debtors’ division to disconnect the water supply in the case of defaulters and also the connection of new clients. He further argues that there is a repayment agreement of arrears. In this case the consumer (local authority) can arrange for ring-fencing as in the case of the end-user (resident) who is supplied with water by the Town Council. The only difference here is that in the case of Namwater the debtor should pay half of the amount owed and the other half will fall under the repayment agreement. Under this agreement the remainder of the arrears should be paid within six months. If the agreement is dishonored, the result is a complete disconnection of water supply to the client”*.

## **2.2 Conclusion**

It can be concluded therefore that literature from scholars in the field of public administration were reviewed and analyzed to inform the study. As it can be deduced from the opinions in the literature review of this chapter, issues of economic base, professional capability of the staff and clear financial management system are crucial for effective water provision by Okakarara town council.

The chapter dealt with the perception of the rate payers with regard to the issue of paying for water after the Okakarara town was declared as a town as opposed to the period prior to independence whereby the water was provided free. Two legislations, namely: The Decentralization Enabling Act (Act No. 33 of 2000) and the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23 of 1992) form part of this chapter.

The capacity of the Okakarara Town Council to cope with the provision of water, as a local authority entity is leaving much to be desired. This can be substantiated by the notions advanced by Töttemeyer (2007, p. 6) when he argued that a clear-cut town development policy to deal with migration of people to local authority areas and how these areas can cope with such influx should be put in place. Participation of members of the public in the affairs of the local authority was highlighted by some scholars as can be deduced from the consulted sources.

This chapter presented relevant information that is needed to inform the study as can be revealed from the different sources read by the researcher. Service delivery by local authorities is a mammoth task that cannot be tackled by one institution only but with concerted efforts from all stakeholders. It involves a synergy of factors ranging from social, economic and administrative. This chapter gives an account of all those factors as can be derived from the qualitative data presented by different authors. In order for the local authority to effectuate any service delivery effectively, factors like sustainable economic base, community participation, employment creation efforts and infrastructure development are of cardinal importance. Lwendo (2012, p. 8) argues that *“transparent governments that respect civic participation and the rule of law are necessary to ensure that scarce resources are spent well and investments are made in the poorest people”*

The Decentralisation process should be understood thoroughly by all public servants tasked with responsibilities of managing service delivery at both the central and regional levels.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provides this study with literature and conceptual framework needed to solve the research problem. This chapter looks at research design, research population, sampling procedures, data collection procedures, research instruments, data analysis procedures and at the end provides the conclusion.

### **3.2 Research Design**

In order to give a good and thorough understanding of the question of water provision by Okakarara Town Council, this study investigates literature on the topic and makes use of lessons from the Otjiwarongo Municipality to compare the procedures and strategies employed by Okakarara Town Council with those used by that municipality. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research techniques.

The researcher made reference to the fact that one of the approaches used for the study is descriptive. This is due to the fact that the researcher described the actual situation on the ground at the Okakarara Town Council while it is hoped that such information would give impetus to the whole study. To fulfill this goal, the researcher used existing data which include, but not necessarily confines to the following: desk top copies, workshop reports and monitoring and evaluation reports. Hence, as reflected in the preceding sentence, both primary and secondary information were used.

The study has also taken a comparative approach to describe the Okakarara Town Council situation with other town councils. Hence, Otjiwarongo Municipality has been identified to inform the current study. Finally, one of the important pillars of this study is the use of questionnaires and open-ended interviews. The assessment of the effective water provision

practice is based on a comparative analysis with other established municipalities like Otjiwarongo as previously stated.

### **3.3 Research Population**

Black (1999, p.111) argued that by defining the population the researcher is saying this is the group from which the researcher would select a representative sample for this study. Hence, this study came up with a number and mixture of a population it considered to be inclusive and representative of the inhabitants of the Okakarara Town Council. The research population for this study consisted of about 100 informants, comprised of local residents. In addition, the researcher also interviewed all the management of Okakarara Town.

As it can be deduced from the aforementioned statements, the sampling population for this study consisted of direct beneficiaries of the water supplied by the Okakarara Town Council, role players in terms of the management and supply of water, namely the management of Okakarara Town Council. This group also included the CEO, General Managers, Managers and middle management personnel, Councilors, the Mayor, the ratepayers (residents) and the users from the Government-owned institutions like the hospital, schools and business entities (shops, restaurants factories and SME's activities).

The rate payers comprised people from settlements adjacent to Okakarara Town Council which include the Kambazembi Traditional Authority settlement, "*Okakango*", "*Okatumba*," "*Pamwe*" suburb and the main central area of the town.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures**

The research targeted the population of Okakarara Town Council consisting of different types of consumers in terms of levels of income. A sample was drawn from the rate payers living in informal resettlements, those living within Okakarara Town or township in formal houses, the former "whites-only" suburb called "Pamwe" and other adjacent areas that are being supplied

with water by the Okakarara Town Council. As previously stated, a sampling population of 100 people was used to inform the study on the actual situation on the ground. As alluded to earlier in this study, at the beginning of this paragraph, all efforts were made to make the sampling group a representative one in lieu of the different types of consumers benefiting from the provision of water by Okakarara Town Council.

The Chief Executive Officer of Okakarara Town Council and his managers, the Councilors, community members, teachers and nurses formed part of the sampling group. The sampling strategy followed is a critical case sampling.

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2005, p. 290) notes that “a critical case sampling strategy is applied when we look for data that is particularly information-rich and enlightening”. The stated argument is true in respect of this study, because a wealth of information does exist in Okakarara to enrich the findings of the study. The sample covered residents of all ages who are clients of Okakarara Town Council and who depend on the supply of utilities by the Okakarara Town Council. These are men and women who included people of all races residing in Okakarara Town.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents selected for the study. To ensure congruent responses from all respondents, the researcher constructed structured questionnaires, with definite, concrete and pre-determined questions, presenting the same wording in terms of questions and area specified, such that comments from respondents’ own words could be minimal ( i.e. to avoid the open-ended questionnaires). The fundamental reason for choosing questionnaires was due to its potential to elicit first-hand information from the respondents. The strategy was of data collection. Interviews have been conducted



with individual officials on different occasions to compliment information provided in the questionnaires.

The main source of these data included: Local Authority or municipal records, information journals on the topic under investigation from leading research institutions in the country (e.g. IPPR and NEPRU), seminars and other research reports from relevant agencies, review of relevant literature from dissertations, theses and journals. The researcher conducted interviews, observations and focus group discussions in order to gather relevant information through direct involvement of respondents by effecting interaction.

Through observation and interviews, primary and secondary data were sourced through direct observation by the researcher and by interacting with the target population. These assisted the researcher in ascertaining vital relevant information relating to water consumption patterns of the residents. Internet was used to augment information gathered through interviews and other techniques.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

Primary and secondary data were central in this study. To supplement primary data, secondary data was considered. The researcher made use of questionnaires that are both open-ended and closed formats in order to capture descriptive primary data. Primary data were sourced from key informants. These included officials from the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (the PS, the Director of Regional and Local Government, Director of Human Resource Development) the municipality of Otjiwarongo and Okakarara Town Council, prominent community members as well as the residents of Okakarara Town. Officials from Okakarara State Hospital (the matron, PRO) where incidents of water closure were reported are also targeted as sources of valuable

information for this study. Secondary data were sourced from relevant literature, relevant journals; annual and workshop reports and dissertations.

The study engaged the CEO, managers and middle management staff, the PRO within the Okakarara Town Council and from national water utility (Namwater), the PRO was engaged in the quest to try to gain an in-depth understanding of rules and regulations underpinning the provision and acquisition of bulk water. In the case of a situation where the respondents are being affected by a language barrier, an interpreter was used to eliminate any misunderstanding that could have occurred as a result of a language problem.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedures**

Qualitative data was classified into themes and the key issues were analyzed to find out whether the problem of water supply at Okakarara Town Council is due to a lack of administrative competency from the administrative officials (CEO and his or her managers) of the Town Council, lack of understanding from the residents that they need to pay for services being provided ( see Tjerije's statement under 'Problem Statement'), lack of income due to un-availability of job-creation opportunities, like the operation of factories and super markets or all of the aforementioned factors.

Qualitative data was grouped around these themes. Secondary data complimented or replaced primary data where it was deemed unreliable and incomplete. Under descriptive statistical analysis, data from the questionnaires were coded and analyzed. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the data collected and also compare them to see whether they converge in certain ways/areas or diverge.

A summary of statistics including tables were used to present the findings. Computer software, as indicated earlier were used, where necessary, to analyze data –e.g. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). With regard to quantitative data the study used statistical

software. Reports from the water utility that give guidelines in terms of water supply strategies that are used by town councils were scrutinized in order to establish whether the Okakarara Town Council is adhering to the guidelines.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The chapter dealt with the methodology followed to conduct the research for the study. In terms of research design, it is concluded that both the quantitative and qualitative methods/techniques are applicable. Literature on the topic and procedures used by other municipalities like Otjiwarongo are cited only to inform the study as previously stated. The research population is based on 100 informants comprised of the residents of the Okakarara Town Council and adjacent areas.

The sampling procedures are strictly followed as discussed at the beginning of the chapter. Research instruments used include questionnaires (closed and open-ended), focus group discussion, interviews and observation. Data collection and analysis procedures are discussed in detail in this chapter. Other methods of data collection like observation and focus group discussions are highlighted. Key informants like the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development's management cadres e.g. the Permanent Secretary (PS), Directors of Housing and Technical Services, Decentralization, Regional and Local Government and Traditional Authorities, formed an integral part of the sample. The usage of secondary and primary data can be said as cardinal in this study. Journals from existing municipalities were used as sources of data. The use of tables to group the respondents and institutions covered under the study were effectuated.

## **CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the study gathered through interviews, observations and documentary analysis. The purpose of the study is to investigate and assess the Okakarara Town Council's professional capability to provide water, to investigate the Council's effectiveness in issuing the water bills and to investigate the extent to which residents respond to the Okakarara Town Council's demands regarding the settlement of their water bills.

According to the Okakarara Town Planning Scheme Report, November (2008, p.2) Okakarara is located in the Otjozondjupa Region, central east of the country. It is situated on a tarred road, which is approximately 72 km from the intersection of the district road C22 with north bound national road, the B1. It is located a few kilometres southeast of Waterberg National Park.

The findings relate to the following main research question:

- What are the problems associated with the Provision of water by Okakarara Town Council and what can be done to address them?

The research instruments mainly used were structured questionnaires. Interviews were also conducted or used in cases where the respondents cannot read and write. Most respondents are educated people who were officers employed in the Okakarara Town Council, some were teachers from the three schools and an administrative officer from the state hospital at the Okakarara Town Council. Some residents and the management cadres of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD), also used questionnaires.

**Table 1: Different Categories of Respondents:**

<b>Institution:</b>	<b>Research Participants:</b>
Okakarara Town Council Management:	The Chief Executive Officer
	Manager of Finance, Administration and HR
	Senior Accountant
	Manager: Tourism & Local Economic Development, Technical Services & PRO
Political Councilors (leader):	Chairperson of the Management Committee
Okakarara Town Residents:	3 respondents- randomly selected
Pamwe residential area:	2 respondents-randomly selected
Informal Settlement (“Ousaira”):	Two groups from two households (2-3 members in a group)
Okatumba and Okakango settlements:	Two groups: 1. =using the Council tap, through fee collection 2. = tap for individual household;
Kambazembi Traditional Authority:	Administration Clerk
Business Community:	1x respondent
Schools and Hospital:	3 x respondents
Farming Community:	1 x farmer
Central Government:	5 respondents (The PS and Directors of relevant Directorates)
Otjiwarongo Municipality:	Debtors Accountant

The interview with the Otjiwarongo Municipality officer was to try to strike a comparison in terms of the billing system being employed by that municipality and the Okakarara Town Council. The respondents highlighted some issues that can be suggested in terms of Okakarara town council. The suggestions will form part of the measures to the town council, where applicable.

According to Tjaveondja (personal communication, February 8, 2012), a meter reader employed by the Okakarara Town Council, revealed to the researcher that a company is to be contracted to renovate or rehabilitate the whole underground pipe system (sewerage system) of the town. This is due to the fact that the system was installed way back during the 1970's and 1980's and is getting old and rusty.

## **4.2 Discussion of the findings**

In this section the interview results are presented as per categories indicated in the table above (Table 1: research participants). The questions were different as per each group of respondents. This implies that questionnaires to respondents contained different questions- e.g. Chief Executive Officer (CEO), manager of finance and HR, Political Councillors, etc. as part of the Okakarara Town Council management, residents of Okakarara Town. Pamue and informal settlements as residents, business outlets, and government institutions like the Okakarara State Hospital, Okakarara Senior Secondary School and Okakarara Primary School as well as the Okakarara Vocational Training Centre.

### **4.2.1 Okakarara Town Council Management**

To the question regarding the relevant qualifications, the respondents gave different answers like B. Juris-Law, in the case of the CEO. In terms of training the respondents indicated that the Council is providing in-service training yearly or annually and the reasons for such arrangement is due to financial constraints and to economize on the scarce resources that the

Council has at its disposal. The Okakarara Town Council is having a Strategic Plan in place that serves as guidance for the realization of its objectives in terms of service delivery. The study has revealed that the council has a mechanism of ensuring that residents pay their water bills on time, by collecting their water bills by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month from the Council.

To the question as to what mechanisms should be put in place to improve the water provision, the CEO responded by stating that the system need to be computerized and proper billing system is essential and currently the Okakarara Town Council is using a system called Finstel.

With regard to the factors affecting the availability of water to Okakarara Town Council, pipe bursts and old underground pipes (sewerage system) were mentioned as common factors. This is due to the fact that these pipes are old and worn out. Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth (TIPEEG) funds will, however be used to replace the old pipes and the whole sewerage system which is more than 50 years old. This renovation will be done in order to ensure constant water supply.

The CEO was of the opinion that new town councils like Okakarara should learn from the established towns/municipalities when it comes to water provision. He told the researcher that they have teamed (twinned) with many Local Authorities (LA's) and it is important to learn from others especially on cross-subsidisation, i.e. affluent townships to cover for poor ones but we are still in the learning process. Most respondents at the management level of the Town Council revealed that the issuance of water bills on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month is matter of policy. One respondent from the management cadre was of the opinion that one of the reasons for the issuance of bills on that date is to give residents ample time to plan and prepare to settle their bills at the end of the month.

To the question of whether the manner in which residents pay their bills impact on the availability of water from the main supplier, respondents were of the view that if the residents are not paying for the water the Town Council is supplying to them, the water will be suspended and the supply be disrupted since the Town Council will not be in the position to pay its dues to the main supplier (Namwater). With regard to the billing system, the CEO and the Manager of Finance and Human Resources mentioned the Finstel system whereby the Council is using the services of a meter reader who captures data from individual households manually and download it into an electronic system in order to produce the bills. There are categories according to which residents are billed, namely:

- Settlements;
- Residential;
- Formal- and informal business; and
- Non-profit making entities

The categories and the services the residents are billed for are presented in the following table hereunder (Table 2):

**Table 2: Categories of Residents, Services billed and the Tariffs (rates) used:**

<b>Category:</b>	<b>Services for billing:</b>	<b>Tariffs(rates):</b>
1. Residential	Water basic	N\$ 53.50
	Refuse removal	N\$ 48.00
2. Business:		
a). Formal	Water basic	N\$ 200.00
	Refuse removal	N\$ 48.10
b). Informal	Water basic	N\$ 60.00



	Refuse removal	N\$ 48.10
3. Non-profit making entities	Water basic	N\$ 83.70
	Refuse removal	N\$ 45.80
4. Other Institutions (i.e. GRN Ministries, etc.)	Water basic	N\$ 300.00

As can be deduced from Table 2 above, the study found that there are different categories of consumers. The first column shows the categories of consumers. Consumers are receiving different services from the Town Council like water for which they are being billed (the second column). The last column indicates the different tariffs that residents are paying. On top of the actual water usage, the residents are paying a basic fixed amount or tariff.

According to one respondent the Okakarara Town Council is small and characterized by unemployment due to a lack of job opportunities. However, for residents who cannot afford to pay their water bills, the Council has introduced a Ring-fence Programme whereby residents can ring-fence their arrears without being charged interest and start over with new account and the council re-connect the water. The residents emphasized the fact that councillors should encourage/educate their electorates on the importance of having water and the issue of settling their water bills. The respondents argue that the economic base of the Town Council is not sustainable since most residents are unskilled and unemployed.

In terms of the mechanisms needed to improve the water supply by the Town Council, most respondents are of the opinion that the council should replace the pipe system of the town since they were constructed during the 1970's and 1980's and start getting old. Dams that are

keeping water should be cleaned in order to avoid rust. Tariffs indicated in the table above (Table 2) are being followed at all times when residents/consumers are charged.

The study found that with the declaration of Okakarara as a town, the Council inherited a scenario whereby residents are having houses which most of them took over from the previous owners with huge amounts in arrears. Some debts could run up to N\$ 50 000.00 and Council could not handle this situation since there was no policy in place to address it. Pensioners' water was not suspended since the Ministry subsidized a portion of their consumption.

According to one respondent there are few employment opportunities in Okakarara town and residents are more attracted to the Build-Together Programme from where they are benefitting in terms of low cost housing. There is market for the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) houses due to low levels of income. Institutional workers like cleaners and labourers are there and these job categories cannot afford houses at prices demanded by NHE due to low levels of income. But nevertheless, the Okakarara Town Council is compelled to provide water to these people. The study found that areas like Okatumba and Okakango cannot effectively be supplied with water because of the fact that the infrastructure (pipes) is old or broken and are leaking.

An interview with the Manager of Tourism and Local Economic Development, PRO and Technical Services, who advises the Council on Economic Development, revealed to the researcher that his advice covers areas such as road infrastructure development, construction of industries, big SME's Park Development which contains 24 units, from which 8 are already identified. This park will be characterized by a host of businesses which will serve as self-employment entities. The council also plans to bring on board accommodation facilities and catering businesses within the town of Okakarara.

The manager further stated to the researcher that the Council is envisaging contracting-out small services like refuse removal and cleaning of streets to private companies especially SME's as means of business development in the town. Residents will be employed by these companies for them to earn an income so that they can pay for water provided by the Okakarara Town Council.

The envisaged Local Economic Development Interventions are as follows:

- SME's Park with a grant from the Ministry of Regional and Local Government; Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD);
- Business Development Initiative by the Ministry of Trade and Industry;
- Road Infrastructure with Financial Assistance from the Road Fund Administration (RFA); and
- TIPEEG Funds: The first phase involves the construction of the Town Capital Projects which will employ approximately 100 people.

The abovementioned issues will boost the economy of the Okakarara town by creating more job opportunities for the residents whereby they will earn income and be able to pay for their water consumption from the Okakarara Town Council.

#### **4.2.2 Political Office bearers of the Okakarara Town Council**

In respect of the question of whether political office bearers are part of the decision-making process at the town council the respondents in these categories were of the opinion that councillors are part of the decision-making since they are responsible for policy setting and the strategic plan that the town council is following. Councillors are also responsible for the

balance score card to check on the performance of the Chief Executive Officer, who in turn plans strategies that are followed by different departments in terms of performance in line with the demands from the CEO.

Maintenance of this infrastructure is crucial otherwise the issue of unaccounted for water is the order of the day.

To the question of whether the Town Council is having different categories of ratepayers as it relates to their income, respondents indicated that all residents are charged the same rate irrespective of the levels of income. Different rates only apply in terms of the location of the suburban areas, see Table 2.

#### **4.2.3 Teachers and Nurses employed in Government Institutions**

This study also covered government institutions located within the boundary of the Okakarara Town Council. These institutions are:

- Okakarara Primary School;
- Okakarara Senior Secondary School;
- Okakarara Vocational Training Centre; and
- Okakarara State Hospital.

All the above-mentioned institutions are government-owned entities which are having different reporting ministries. The schools are reporting to the Ministry of Education, the State Hospital to the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS) and Okakarara Vocational Training Centre to the Namibia Training Authority (NTA).

To the question on how frequent is the institution experiencing water suspension from the Town Council, revealed that most respondents responded that it happens annually and sometimes after a year. In terms of the settlement of water bills of different government

institutions, the respondents stated that the Regional Offices in Otjiwarongo and sometimes the Ministry are responsible for the settlement of the bills.

In the case of the State Hospital, the study has revealed that the bill can go up to N\$ 40 000.00. This situation is being aggravated by the fact that debts sometimes are accumulated due to bureaucratic administrative processes that are causing delays in the payment or settlement of water bills. Before any payment is effected at the hospital and the Regional Office levels, they are scrutinized by the Economising Committee.

For effective and efficient administrative practices, in the case of the hospital, a resolution was taken to handle all the utilities as ad hoc activities. This has eliminated the delays and ultimately the backlog in the payment of the water bills. As far as the conditions of infrastructure is concerned, major maintenance is carried out by the Ministry of Works and Transport (MoWT) and the Town Council, except for minor repairs like leaking of taps etc. The MoWT sometimes delays in the purchase of the needed materials.

In the case of schools, School Development Fund can be used for repairing leaking taps in the hostel and other minor repairs. Most respondents argued the issue of non-payment as the cause of disconnection of the supply of water to schools and the State Hospital. The Okakarara Senior Secondary School with 600 and plus learners, of which a 60% of that number is living in the hostel, is unhygienic and inconvenient when the supply of water is disrupted. According to the Principal the bill is not always known to the staff, except the Regional Education Office in Otjiwarongo. He suggested that it is more appropriate for the school staff to be in the know with regard to the water bill so that they can educate the learners on the water saving measures.

The principal of Okakarara Primary School stated that they experienced disruption in the water supply from the town council some 2-3 years ago and such a scenario can be attributed

to administrative practices or issues. The principal who was a councillor at the Okakarara Town Councillor revealed to this researcher that at a time the operations of the Town Council were linked to Windhoek and this administrative disarray happened then the Town Council was not de-linked from Windhoek. One school principal expressed concerns about the way the Town Council is administered.

The principal further argued that the council only depends of water from NamWater which is expensive. There are other alternative sources of water from where the council can get water cheaper and supply at a lower cost to the residents. In her own word she narrated that “*we should start harvesting water from the Waterberg Plateau and drill boreholes, if it is not contrary to the legislation governing the water supply by the local authorities*”. Since the Ministry of Education is responsible for the settlement of the water bills, the schools experience delays in the settlement of bills that sometimes lead to the suspension of water supply. The Okakarara Primary School is taking its own readings and compares or reconciles it with the one taken by the Town Council. The Okakarara VTC experiences a few cases of water suspension and most disruptions are caused by pipe bursts and related incidents.

#### **4.2.4 Okakarara Town Residents**

This section represents the residents living in Okakarara Town Council, informal settlement in the town called ‘*Ousaira*’- in Otjiherero vernacular meaning houses build with canvas material; residents of Okatumba and the Kambazembi Traditional Authority and Pamue suburb.

##### **4.2.4.1 Okakarara Town (Okakarara Proper) and the Pamue Suburb**

To the question whether the residents paid for water before Okakarara was declared a town, respondents gave different views or mixed responses. Some argued that they paid to the second tier government of the Herero Administration, some revealed that they cannot remember since by that time they were children, some stated that they paid a minimal fee to

the Commissioner (Afrikaans = 'Kommissaris'), although not formalized like the current set-up.

One respondent stated that in certain cases some residents inherited debts that are dating back to the 1980's when their parents leaved (were living) or in some cases the previous owners had decided to migrate to the rural areas where they start with subsistence farming as a means of survival. In such cases the water bills were haphazardly attended to by the previous owners. The Town Council transferred these old amounts on the names of the current owners. This state of affairs made it difficult for the residents to settle these amounts and as such led to accumulation of debt and ultimately disconnection or suspension of water supply.

The findings revealed that most residents see the necessity to pay for the services rendered by the town council. Based on the follow-up questions the study showed that it is imperative to pay for water, since the Okakarara Town Council is buying the water from the bulk supplier NamWater. One respondent argued that *"it is important to pay for water supplied by the Okakarara Town Council so that the council can develop the town, improve the water system especially during the raining season as well as to pay for the employees' salaries"*.

In terms of the question as to when they settle their water bills, the research participants responded that they receive their bills on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. The study found that most residents find it difficult to settle their accounts or water bills. The research participants advanced the following reasons to the researcher:

- Many house owners in the town are unemployed;
- Some house owners are senior citizens who survive only on government grants like pension money;

- Some residents are students who are studying from parents' homes, who are not earning an income and only depend on remittances from rural areas when parents auction livestock;
- Some residents depend on money from small businesses like selling fried meat, sweets and some fruits. Income generated is in most cases not sufficient to pay for the services rendered by the Council like water supply; and
- Pensioners and People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) are paying the same rate as any other residents
- In terms of the development of the town for a period of five years from now, research participants were of the opinion that the Council is trying its level best. The Trade Fair as an annual event; the Industrial Park is being constructed; medical outlets; agricultural shows. These are planned activities of the development for the years to come. To the question of how the situation was during the colonial times and after independence, respondents said that they were not expected to pay for water. Water was provided by the government for free. It is only now after independence that residents are seriously expected to pay for water and sometimes there are great amounts of money involved. According to one respondent disconnection of water is a frequent occurrence for most houses inclusive hers. Billing includes every service like the refuse bin, even when it is not emptied or collected. Most houses are renovated due to the fact that they belong to the Town Council. The study found that the family members per household are ranging from 4-8.

#### **4.2.4.2 Informal Settlements within Okakarara Town, Okatumba and the Kambazembi Traditional Authority**



The system or mode of providing water to the informal settlement within Okakarara Town and Okatumba settlement is through a communal pipe system on which taps and water meters are fixed. A certain shack is identified whereby the owner is tasked with the collection of funds.

Through focus group discussion, the study has established that the community from informal settlements pays the town council amounts ranging from N\$300 – N\$500 per month. In the informal settlement of Okatumba and the one within the Okakarara town called “*Ousaira*” in the local Otjiherero vernacular, there is one method used by the Town Council to supply water to these settlements. The water is supplied through a big pipeline on which taps are connected which the communities can use to get water. These taps are located at selected households whereby the house owners are charged with the responsibility of collecting money from the residents on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Council sets the prices to be charged by the respective house owners as per the quantity of water consumed or provided as set out in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Prices Charged for Quantity of Water provided in Informal Settlements:**

<b>Quantity in (litres):</b>	<b>Price charged (N\$, cents):</b>
20-25 litres	N\$ 0,50c
5-10 litres	N\$ 0,25c
210 litres (drum)	N\$4,00

The above referenced arrangements are applicable to all residents including the shack owners. The collected amount is not always equal to the amount that appears on the bill at the end of the month. The amount on the bill is in most cases higher than the one the house

owner collected from the quantity of water sold. The difference is always borne by the household owner or the collector. The information in Table 3 emanated from interaction during focus group discussions with shackdweller.

There is another type of water provision whereby the tap is connected to the individual household and only that house is registered with the Town Council to pay for the water consumption thereof. In such a scenario the household is collecting money from the other community members since the water is for the use of that individual household. The tap is not publicly owned. According to the owner of the household where the water is individually consumed, there are minimal incidents of breakdowns in the water infrastructure. The study also found that in the case of the individual tap, maintenance and control is done by the user him/herself.

The study revealed that a shack with up to 4 family members can use the 20-25 litres for a day and half for household activities, such as:

- Cooking,
- Bathing
- Washing.

When asked as how many times someone is collecting water, the respondent answered that he is fetching the water twice a week, and apply certain saving measures to save the water. When doing the laundry one has to collect 2 to 3 containers depending on the quantity of clothes to be washed. A shack (household) with 7 members can use up to 8 containers of (20-25litres) water when doing the washing (laundry) and 2-3 containers when not doing washing.

The quantity of water a shack with seven family members collects is lasting from one to two days.

The study found that residents in the informal settlements are not experiencing water suspension due to non-payments and even the pipes that are being used by the Town Council to supply water are maintained very well. Disconnection is happening sometimes when minor rehabilitation works are being performed. Shackdwellers interviewed told the researcher that since most of them are unemployed, they encountered problems in settling their bills. In such circumstances they arrange with the caretaker of the tap to collect water and pay later or some of them pay in advance when funds are available and collect later of quantity for the amount paid. For instance one put N\$10.00 down and the caretaker deduct the amount for the quantity of water that one collects till the N\$10.00 is cancelled.

In the case of an individual household allocated a tap, there is no collection of fees on behalf of the Town Council. The owner of the house/shack is responsible for the payment of his / her water consumption. The individual house owner revealed to the researcher that the water suspension is due to the rate payers, but not necessarily the management of the Town Council. One shackdweller narrated the following as solutions for effective management of water supply:

- Systems infrastructure: The pipes should be inspected and treated frequently;
- The Okakarara Town Council should ensure that residents are paying for their water consumption, since the treatment of water is costly;
- Pensioners (old-aged) should pay a minimal amount of money, with one part to be subsidized either by the Town Council or government; and
- Residents in the Informal Settlements should also be assisted by the Town Council by allowing them to pay a reduced amount.

A clerk for the Kambazembi Traditional Authority interviewed by the researcher stated that their offices are situated in the Okakarara Town and the water consumption is charged at the

normal rate like any residents of the town. To the question of how the authority is settling their bills, he answered by stating that they are paying the consumption with funds paid by the community for services rendered. The subjects are requested to pay allowances for the issuance of licences, permits and married certificates, for instance. The water is supplied to the two main buildings, namely offices and the hall that serve as a traditional court.

The Kambazembi Traditional Authority is paying an amount of up to N\$500.00 for the consumption of water. The authority did not experience water disruption since its coming into being or its establishment. The study established further that during winter time the water meter become dysfunctional in some instances, but the water supply to the authority is not being disrupted. The Kambazembi Traditional Authority is treated as a business category. To the question whether the authority participates in the decision-making process of the Town Council, the respondent answered that the authority does not have a representative in the Town Council although the majority of the residents are its subordinates. Decisions are being imposed on the Authority, as a representative of the people. The homestead or palace of the chief of the Kambazembi Traditional Authority also receives water from the Okakarara Town Council and it is being billed just like in the case of informal settlements. The respondent was of the opinion that the Authority should have a representative on the Town Council, as a traditional authority entity, who can take care of the interests of the subordinates or followers.

#### **4.2.5 The Business Community**

This section covers all business entities resorting within the borders of Okakarara Town Council. This means licensed business outlets within the town of Okakarara ranging from restaurant, mini or supermarkets to liquor outlets (bottle stores). The owner of “*Ouuu no make*” Restaurant revealed to this researcher that their water is supplied by Okakarara Town Council. To the question as to when they are settling, their account, respondents responded

that they are doing it on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, and if the consumption exceeds N\$500.00 the council used to suspend the supply. Once the water supply is suspended, one is expected to pay a reconnection fee of N\$160.00. The respondent revealed that since he started with his business in 1994 the suspension only occurs once and covers the whole town. Disruptions in the supply of water are caused by conditions of the infrastructure.

These are the two scenarios that are causing disruptions according to the interviewee:

- When there are pipe bursts that allow a lot of water to get lost through leaking; and;
- When the quantity of water in the reservoir diminishes, the Okakarara Town Council embarks on the rationing process of the water supply, meaning that there are certain hours that the Council allows the supply and then suspends it temporarily for certain hours – i.e. close from 21h00 until 06h00 the following morning.

After the suspension of the water, supply is adversely affected due to a lack of pressure in the pipes that can allow a smooth flow of the water. In this case some residents or businesses are receiving much or sufficient water while some is receiving less or none. This situation lasts for some hours before it normalizes, and as such, impacts negatively on the whole sanitation issues and other hygiene related aspects of the business.

Pipe bursts and water meter dysfunctional contribute to fluctuations in the amount to be paid for consumption. The amount paid when the infrastructure is normal is different from when people experience problems with it (infrastructure like pipes, water meters etc.).

To the question why one should pay water consumption, the respondents (most of them) responded by stating that:

- The Town Council is getting water from Namwater at a cost. Therefore consumers or residents need to pay for water consumption so that the Council can be in the position to pay for the supply from Namwater;
- Sewerage (underground pipes) needs to be maintained by the Town Council. The council is charging N\$ 200.00 as basic amount on water consumption. A situation that is a bit difficult for the consumers and on top of the basic an amount of N\$ 72.21 is added for the sewerage. Interest is added for each overdue amount.

The researcher posed the above-referenced question in order to try to test the level of understanding of respondents/residents with regard to their responsibilities in terms of paying for water as a service provided by the Town Council.

The study revealed that most people are unemployed or engaged in informal sector (business). A little number is formally employed for instance in the Town Council, government and the Private Sector, shops, supermarkets and liquor outlets. With regard to the management of water by Okakarara Town Council, most respondents responded that the town council started now improving and the situation is not like some two or three years ago. Through notice boards information, one is reading promising interventions like the Okakarara Town Council is embarking on replacement of old pipes and any dilapidated infrastructure in order to ensure constant water supply to the residents.

#### **4.2.6 The Farming Community**

The farming community in the nearby settlements are supplied with water by the Okakarara Town Council. These include settlements like Ohakane, Okatumba and others where farming families are settled. According to the interviewed farmer, interviewed by this researcher, there are twelve (12) households that are receiving water from the Okakarara Town Council. The water is supplied through a pipeline that is taking water to a designated dam/reservoir,

from where taps are connected, with their own water meters, to supply the individual households. The water supplied is for both human and animal consumptions.

This study established that the bill involved in this case can go up to N\$ 1 200.00 per month in times of drought and sometimes even higher than that. The study further established that initially, before Okakarara was declared as a town, a promise was made that most settlements will be provided with pipes just like in the case of Pamue suburb. Some farmers at Ohakane are using their own pipes plus some given to them by the Town Council. The fact that some of these farmers are using their own pipes does not exclude them from being billed for the water supplied. To the question as to how many livestock each household owns, the respondent responded/stated that per average, a household owns approximately 200 livestock. This comprises both the big and small livestock. As a solution to the problem of water suspension, debtors need to make arrangements with the Town Council so that they can settle their bills when they are in the position to do so.

#### **4.2.7 The Ministerial Management (the central level)**

This section deals with the views of the Ministerial Management Cadres. It involves the Permanent Secretary, different Directors of relevant Directorates. These are Directorates such as Decentralisation Coordination, Housing, Habitat and Technical Services, Regional and Local Government and Traditional Authority Coordination and Finance, Human Resources, Administration and Information Technology (IT).

To the question of the qualification requirements for the position of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the town council, most respondents were of the opinion that it is a B degree without specifying the field of study- e.g. a B degree in Public Administration and so on. The recruitment process is a bottom-up exercise as revealed by the study. The study also established that the Ministry is not interfering with the recruitment of senior management

staff at local authority level. The Ministry is only providing guidance and direction. In this case the Minister of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) is only being informed with regard to the appointment of the CEO.

Most respondents were of the opinion that many local authorities are better than others since they recruit competent staff and follow Local Authority Rules and Guidance. The study revealed that there is mutual agreement between the Ministry, National Housing Enterprise (NHE), banks and local authorities as it relates to the development of towns. The NHE and the banks are providing housing for the residents while the Ministry has initiated the Build-together Programme in all local authorities in the country.

To the question of what are the challenges faced by the Okakarara Town Council in terms of water supply, one respondent mentioned good governance by senior management, lack of financial resources and lack of commitment. As solutions to the above-referenced challenges, the study established that transformation of all senior staff within local authorities, particularly the Okakarara Town Council, conducting of monitoring and evaluation exercise of activities and application of strict administrative measures are needed. A minimum qualification requirement of a B. Degree in Public Administration, with relevant experience in Management was cited by one respondent. In terms of the formula used in local authorities with regard to recruitment, the study revealed that the appointment of staff members in the structure of local authority council is done by local authority council in terms of Section 27 of the Local Authority Act (22 of 1992), as amended.

In terms of the above-referenced Act, the Minister should be consulted for the appointment of the CEO as per Section 27 (2) (a) of the Act. According to one respondent, there is no formula for bailing out local authorities that got bankrupt. The Minister can use his



prerogative by assessing from situation to situation. Some local authorities are better than others, because the economic activities and the revenue base as well as the capacity of the management and control mechanisms to foster accountability are sound.

The provision of water to local authorities in Namibia before 1990 was done through the department of Water Affairs as per the Water Act, but the Local Authorities Act of 1992 provides for the local authorities to supply water to their residents. The current situation in terms of bulk water supply to town councils like Okakarara is that they are supplying water through Namwater.

The study revealed that there have been challenges in the supply of water in terms of old infrastructure, maintenance and revenue collection. Other challenges facing local authority entities like Okakarara Town Council are:

- The conflicting Acts–The Water Act and the Local Authorities Act. Both Acts are having the mandate to provide water to residents;
- Affordability by communities, for instance the poor and pensioners; and
- Infrastructure development due to limited resources.

The study established that, as solutions to challenges mentioned above, the two Acts need to be harmonised in order to streamline the water provision, central government should subsidise the poor and pensioners to ensure water that is affordable to them and central government should make budget provision for infrastructure development.

With regard to the level of decentralization as it relates to the functions of local authorities, the study established that:

- the Decentralisation process is moving slowly due to lack of commitment from the political leaders;

- Unfunded mandates also hampered decentralisation because regions do not have sufficient funding to cater for all decentralised government agencies; and
- Lack of criteria to allocate funds to Regional Government in order to address the underfunding.

To the question whether Namibia is decentralising activities or functions to local Authorities or regional councils, the study found that decentralisation in Namibia is parallel to both Local Authorities and Regional Councils, the provisions in the Act already indicate functions that are to be decentralised and local authority activities are fully decentralised. The study further established that there are 52 local authorities in the Republic of Namibia.

#### **4.2.8 Presentation of Otjiwarongo Municipality Scenario**

As stated under the statement of the problem, the Otjiwarongo Municipality was used only to inform the study. To the question of the type of billing system the municipality is using, the Debtors' Clerk interviewed by this researcher responded by stating that it is called the Finstel System. According to the respondent the period of billing is from the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the subsequent month. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month the readings are taken and processed every day manually. The Deviation Report (of which year? =Mr Hoko, Please! ) is produced that will reveal the dues for the customers and verification is done afterward.

The manually processed system is having the danger of favouritism when it comes to the calculation of the debt residents are owing to the Town Council. To illustrate this argument Luswenyo (2003, p. 65) is of the opinion, in terms of service delivery in the case of Katima Mulilo Town Council, that *“local residents believe that the Town and its staff have not professionally and equitably discharged their function. In other words, the officials*

*processing the bills would calculate cheaper bills for their families and friends because all is done manually”.*

The study furthermore, found that there are certain types of consumers, namely: Residents of ‘Orwetoveni’, residents of Otjiwarongo (residing in the town area), businesses (small and big), industries- i.e. schools, parastatals (State-Owned Enterprises) and Government Ministries. The study also revealed that Otjiwarongo Municipality is having one rate for all the consumer types which is the basic rate of N\$ 23.00 fixed, as set out in Table 4, hereunder.

**Table 4: Types of Consumers and the Basic Rates:**

<b>Consumers/Ratepayers:</b>	<b>Basic Rates(N\$):</b>
1. Residents of Orwetoveni	23.00
2. Residents of Otjiwarongo(residing in Otjiwarongo town)	23.00
3. Businesses (Light and Big)	23.00
4. Industries(e.g. schools)	23.00
5. Parastatals	23.00
6. Government Ministries	23.00

The study established that sewerage charges depend on the type of the system and refuse removal is charged at N\$ 13.00 per bin per removal. Removals are done once or twice a month. In terms of the advantages and disadvantages of the billing system used, the study revealed that the system is transparent, fairer and allows the conducting of checks and balances exercise with regard to its operations.

The respondent further revealed to this researcher that the municipality tried a Pre-paid system and contracted a private company called Tag Meter Namibia. This system failed since the card could not be re-zoned and as such could also not serve a purpose. A new system, Kent Meter, which proven to be effective, was introduced. This new system is being piloted by using the municipality employees and through monitoring and evaluation the new piloting is bearing fruits in terms of effectiveness. Through this system, the card can be zoned, meaning that it is or can be programmed to work at the owner's residence/house only. The study established that the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) allocated N\$ 10 million to the pilot.

The respondent argues that the municipality has one rate for different consumers. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month the Municipality is disconnecting water supply in the event of non-payment of bills. The study, through an interview with the Debtors Clerk, showed that:

- The municipality is embracing (having) an open-door policy. Customers can make arrangements on how they can handle their dues when their bills are in arrears and affordability is a problem. In other words, if they cannot pay their dues by the due date (the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month). The municipality cannot allow an arrangement on arrangement; consecutive arrangements;
- There is a Credit Control Policy in place that directs the handling of finances and regulates payment in terms of services rendered to consumers. In terms of the abovementioned Policy (2012) especially Section 5, Subsection 5.4 is dealing with debts and arrangements and stipulates that *debts and arrangements to repay shall be treated holistically, but different repayment periods or methods may be determined for different types of service, debts or arrears within the general rule that the repayment period should be in line with the instalments that the debtor can afford.*

- There is always a Debtors' Clerk on stand-by at the finance section who provides advice to customers;
- A reconnection fee of N\$ 100.00 should be paid before the water supply is reconnected to the system, after disconnection. In terms of Subsection 5.6 of the Policy (2012) new applications for services will be subject to prescribed credit information and outstanding amounts may be transferred to the new account. All information furnished on the application form may be verified by Council with any or all data information institutions, credit information bureau and/or any financial institutions as may be deemed necessary by Council in determining the applicant's credit worthiness.

The infrastructure condition is satisfactory since the Council experienced minor break-downs in respect of water pipes. But all in all, there are no major rehabilitation works done to the water infrastructure for the past six (6) or seven (7) years. The water meters may be defected through rusting which can affect their functionality. According to the respondents dysfunctional water meters are always replaced with new ones to ensure constant water supply. The study found that Namwater bill is always higher than the money collected from the customers.

Informal settlement residents are provided with programmed cards, which they are using to access water for consumption. The resident consumes the quantity of water he/she paid for. The municipality experiences some break-downs in the water pipes since residents in the informal settlements are cutting the pipes to avoid being billed for the water consumed. This practice is called "tampering". In terms of the above referenced policy "Tampering" means unauthorized reconnection of a supply that has been disconnected for non-payment, the interference with the supply mains or bypassing of the metering equipment to obtain unmetered service.

#### **4.2.8.1 Lessons Learned from Otjiwarongo Municipality**

This section deals with some good examples that can be suggested to inform the study. This should not be construed as a comparative analysis of events. The reader is referred to chapter one under the introduction of this study.

Otjiwarongo Municipality as an established local authority, served as a good source of information when it comes to the issue of service delivery. In terms of the purpose of this study, the municipality was an indispensable source of information. The researcher vividly present the lessons learned from Otjiwarongo Municipality as provided here below in a bullet format. The study has indicated that these lessons can be learned from the Otjiwarongo Municipality and used as remedies/panaceas, as stipulated under the objectives of this study. The above-mentioned considerations are prompting the question: “what can be learned from Otjiwarongo Municipality?”

- For effective water supply to the informal settlement and the farming community, the Okakarara Town Council should use the Pre-paid system whereby the consumer is supplied with a card which will be loaded with the quantity of water as per the amount paid to the Council. This card can be swiped at the water meter, not necessarily re-zoned to a specific residence or homestead. Alternatively the resident can punch the card number at the water meter and tap water until the quantity paid for is exhausted or used-up;
- The above-mentioned point will work effectively or is a possibility if the Town Council can constantly monitor and supervise its water infrastructure so that some unscrupulous (dishonest) consumers cannot commit tampering;

- Constant monitoring and supervision of the water infrastructure should be conducted to avoid tampering and ultimately minimizes the possibility of unaccounted for water, which is a financial burden to the Okakarara Town Council;
- In terms of the Billing system, the town council should try to pilot the Kent Meter System. Although in the piloting stage, it appears to be effective since the card can be re-zoned to work only at the house/residence of the owner. That is the advantage of the Kent Meter System compared to the pre-paid system from Tag Meter Namibia. Okakarara Town Council is urged to be in constant contact with the Otjiwarongo Municipality and tap on the outcome of this pilot project;
- The Finstel System in both cases seem to be unreliable and can be easily manipulated since the officers tasked with the processing of the data can calculate their friends and relatives favourably because the process is manually handled. The data is not always accurate since it is manually done. This is one of the reasons why, in the case of both Councils, the bill from Namwater is always higher than the actual money collected from the consumers;
- The Okakarara Town Council can follow the system of refuse removal used by Otjiwarongo Municipality, i.e. fixed amount per bin per removal. This service should be sourced out to an SME business from the youth in the Town as means of employment creation and consequently so that it helps boost the economic base of the Town;
- The Kent Meter System that can be re-zoned to work at a specific residence is effective and is therefore recommended in the case of Okakarara Town Council. This will minimize the chances of unaccounted for water since the residents will be in the position to account for the quantity of water consumed; and

- The Okakarara Town Council can emulate the Otjiwarongo municipality in terms of frequently inspecting and replacing the dilapidated water infrastructure, as a means of effective water supply.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the findings of the study based on the views of different respondents. The findings are actual issues expressed by the respondents and one of the prominent issues that are affecting effective provision of water by Okakarara Town Council is the state of water infrastructure such as underground pipes. The findings indicated that in terms of local economic development, there are less economic activities going on in the Okakarara Town.

Through the ring-fencing practice, residents are assured of constant water supply, when the money is not available. The effective water provision by the Okakarara Town Council can be determined by factors such as the rehabilitation of the infrastructure, recruitment of artisans like plumbers and carpenters, town planners and engineers. The knowledge of these technocrats is crucial for quality service with regard to the provision of water by the Okakarara Town Council.

The promotion of local economic activities like SME's will help residents to improve their income, which will put them in a position to pay for water provided by the Okakarara Town Council. Housing through the Build-Together Programme of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development need to be promoted/encouraged as opposed to the informal settlements.

The informal settlements are temporary structures and in terms of town planning sewerage cannot be brought on such structure. Informal settlements can be removed once the full-fledged town development for Okakarara town is undertaken.



## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the aspects of water provision by Okakarara Town Council. In the summary, the researcher attempted to base the arguments on the aspects of water provision by the Town Council according to what the respondents narrated through interaction and by answering questions from the questionnaires. The conclusions and recommendations are based on the aspects of water provision as informed by the Otjiwarongo Municipality. All aspects discussed and presented in chapter 4 are summarized.

### **5.2 Summary of the findings**

The study was based on the question of whether the Okakarara Town Council is capable of supplying water effectively to the residents. The methods/instruments used to gather data are questionnaires, focus group discussion and interviews. From the responses of the respondents it can be derived that there are different stakeholders in the process of water provision in terms of Okakarara Town Council. These include Namwater, as the bulk water supplier, the Town Council (Okakarara Town Council) and the ratepayers or the residents.

The study found that the underground water pipes are old and quantities of water are lost not accounted for need to be rehabilitated. The other feature that came clear from the findings of this study is the absence of or weak economic base. There are no employment opportunities and the residents find it hard to settle their water bills. The methods employed by Otjiwarongo Municipality in terms of water provision like the Kent Meter System, suggested for the Okakarara Town Council to follow due to the advantages attached to it.

With regard to the provision of water to the informal settlements, the study found that the Okakarara Town Council is using the system of placing a tap at a house or a shack where others can get water by paying a fee to the house owner.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

It can be concluded that the Okakarara Town Council's capabilities to provide water to its residents were influenced by factors such as unemployment and lack of sustainable economic base (lack of a vibrant local industry to support the growing Okakarara population). Coupled with the afore-mentioned challenges requisite qualification requirements needed to run the administration of a local authority entity, was not adequate.

The study indicated that in most cases the water bill from the main water supplier (Namwater) is higher than the actual bill charged to the residents by the Town Council. Hence, the difference is always borne by the Town Council. It can be further concluded that the water infrastructure is dilapidated. This is due to the fact that since the erection of the water infrastructure in Okakarara, it had never been upgraded. The result has been corrosion and worn out water pipes which resulted in water leakage. This necessitates rehabilitation and renovation of the existing pipes. The fact that the Town Council had to pay for the unaccounted for water loss, results in an added financial burden on the Council.

Another aspect that is having a bearing on the ability of the Town Council to provide water effectively to its inhabitants is a lack of business activities with the potential of providing employment to the people of the town. This was alluded to earlier here above and it is because of that drawback that the majority of people in Okakarara are not in a position to afford houses, not to mention their inability to pay for essential services like water provided by the Town Council.

Despite the trend of non-payment that led to debt accumulation and water supply disconnections, the study has revealed that the policy of ring-fencing (see definition of terms under chapter 1) of accounts is the most humane one since it allows accessibility to water, even though the resident is indebted. The majority of respondents, as it was revealed through structured interviews by the researcher do understand that in order for services to be rendered effectively and efficiently by the Town Council, residents need to pay their water bills. The study revealed that the residents are aware of the fact that the money they are paying is being used by the Council to pay for the maintenance of the water infrastructure and other services. The evidence of the residents understanding as just alluded to here above is provided for in the text under the presentation of the findings.

The findings further showed that in terms of locations adjacent to Okakarara Town, livestock farming, especially in the case of “*Ohakane*,” serve as a source of income used by the farmers to meet their financial obligations (i.e. settling their water bills). This economic activity depends on the availability of water and grass. If the Council limits their access to this vital natural resource the number of animal will diminish (decrease) and ultimately their income to be generated through the sale of livestock will also go down. Such a situation undoubtedly has a bearing on the affordability of water provided for both human and animal consumption.

The study indicated that there is a plethora of positive examples from Otjiwarongo Municipality that the Okakarara Town Council should emulate for effective supply of water to its residents. The Kent Meter system used by Otjiwarongo Municipality is one such example. This system is having the benefit that the meter cards can be re-zoned or programmed to function at a demarcated meters at specific residents. It can also be concluded that the practice whereby the residents are charged per bin per removal, as it being done in Otjiwarongo.

## 5.4 Recommendations

The question that the study is trying to answer throughout is premised on the problems that influence the effective provision of water by Okakarara Town Council. These factors are highlighted in the research conducted and as revealed through the study explicitly, through answers by respondents. The provision of water by the Okakarara Town Council is characterized by a lot of problems that are influencing the effectiveness and efficiency thereof.

One of the good observations revealed by this study is the fact that access to water as a basic need is not denied to people due to non-payment of water bills. The introduction of ring-fence programme regarding water bills is a good idea for which the Town Council needs to be applauded and commended and as such proof the first sub-question. The water infrastructure that is not being renovated contribute enormously to the unaccounted for water.

There are factors that are contributing to the trend of non-payment of water bills. These factors are of legislative or of policy nature. The absence of employment and business opportunities within the town of Okakarara is contributing to, is that of a lack of sustainable economic base. Such factors will answer the research sub-question two. The following recommendations as informed by the findings from Otjiwarongo Municipality and as revealed by the findings of the study conducted at Okakarara Town Council and the residents:

5.2.1 In order to avoid the incidents of unaccounted for water, it is recommended that the Okakarara Town Council implements the pre-paid system in the informal settlements. This system has the advantage that the owner only uses the quantity of water he/she paid for and the card is not used at residents other than communal water outlets;

- 5.2.2 The practice of allocating a tap or a water meter at a specific shack or a household in the informal settlements will be a desirable thing since individual members are always in the better position to control and manage the consumption of water, will detect any leakage promptly and report it to the Council so that repair work can also be done timely. Another point to be considered is to cluster a number of shacks five or eight per tap or a meter, each one with a programmed pre-paid water card. This practice has the advantage that residents use the quantity of water paid for;
- 5.2.3 The Okakarara Town Council should acquire and retain a workforce with relevant skills that are accompanied by the provision of attractive packages especially for the more experienced staff in order to avert brain drain to the private sector. The scenario will answer the research sub-question one;
- 5.2.4 The payment of bills by residents on time should be seen in holistic terms since it involves issues of affordability which are being influenced by unemployment due to a lack of employment opportunities, inflation and poverty with regard to household income. These are impacting negatively on the ability to pay for water on the side of the consumers. These considerations answer the research sub-question two;
- 5.2.5 Effective provision of water by the Okakarara Town Council is a process that should involve a synergy of issues like maintenance of water infrastructure, treating of water if possible, administrative issues (i.e. issuance of water bills, setting right policies, paying artisans responsible for the up-keep of sewerage and taps) abilities to afford water provided to residents and availability of employment opportunities;
- 5.2.6 In terms of mechanisms to be employed to improve the water provision to the inhabitants of the Okakarara Town, it can be recommended that there are good examples that can be learned from an established municipality like Otjiwarongo with

regard to the types of billing systems, maintenance of water infrastructure through frequent inspections thereof;

- 5.2.7 There should be different basic rates for different consumers or residents which are linked to their levels of income. Although the policy of ring-fencing of accounts is in place, the Okakarara Town Council needs to have different tariffs that are being determined by the levels of income and social vulnerability. Pensioners, People Living with Disability, unemployed residents should be charged lower rates than others;
- 5.2.8 The government through the MRLGHRD should put mechanisms in place to assist local authorities that can afford the payment of water supplied by the water utility (Namwater) due to the debt accumulation of residents. This can be done through bailing out of affected local authorities like Okakarara Town Council;
- 5.2.9 It is recommended that factors such as the size of population, employment opportunities in the locality from where the residents will draw income to pay for services to be provided by the envisaged local authority and relevant human resources capital to run the administrative affairs of such local authority should determine the declaration of a locality as a settlement, a village council, a town council, a municipality and/or a city;
- 5.2.10 Application of relevant administrative measures, monitoring and evaluation of activities by local authorities and the availability of financial resources are crucial with regard to the improvement of water provision.

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# **APPENDIX A**

## **UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

### **FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE**

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF OKAKARARA TOWN, MANAGEMENT OF OKAKARARA TOWN COUNCIL AND THE MANAGEMENT CADRES OF THE MINISTRY OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **THE STUDY TO INVESTIGATE WATER PROVISION BY OKAKARARA TOWN COUNCIL**

**INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY: MAVEJAPI OTHNIEL KATUO**

**Interviewee Details:**

**Age:**

**Education:**

**Marital Status:**

**SECTION A**

**Questionnaire to the Chief Executive Officer of Okakarara Town Council.**

**QUESTIONS:**

1 Do you have the following qualification? Please tick the appropriate.

a) MPA:

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b) Honours Public Admin.:

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c) B Tech. or Diploma Public Admin.:

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d) Other:

Please specify:

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2 How frequent do you receive in-service training?

Monthly:	
Bi-yearly:	
Yearly:	
None:	

Comments:

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3 Is there a Strategic Plan for the Okakarara Town Council?

Yes:	
No:	

4 If the answer in 3 is yes, to what extent do you follow the guidelines set out in the Strategic Plan?

Fair:	
Good:	
Very good:	
Not:	

5 How do you ensure that residents pay their water bills on time?

Make use of mail boxes: By 10 <sup>th</sup> of each month:	
Dispatch by the end of the month:	
Deliver to the doorsteps ten days before end of the month:	
Residents collect from OTC themselves by the 15 <sup>th</sup> of each month:	

6 What mechanisms should be put in place to improve the water provision of the Okakarara Town Council?

Reduce the rate:	
Market Okakarara town as an investment destination vigorously:	
Central Government to subsidize the old aged & PLWD's bills:	
Computerize the billing system:	

Comments:

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7 Which factors affect the availability of water to the Okakarara Town Council?

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8 How frequently is the Council doing renovation on pipes and whole sewerage system in the town in order to ensure constant water supply?

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9 Do you agree that new town councils like Okakarara should draw lessons from the established towns/municipalities when it comes to water provision?

Agree:	
Disagree:	

If you agree, what lessons can be learned?

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**SECTION B**

**Questionnaire to the manager of finance and administration of Okakarara town council**

**QUESTIONS:**

Please tick the appropriate box and provide comments or reasons in the dotted spaces, where applicable.

1 When do you issue monthly water bills to residents?

The 10 <sup>th</sup> of the current month:	
The 20 <sup>th</sup> of each month:	
End of each month:	
Late	

Comments:

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2 Does the manner in which residents pay their water bills impact on the availability of water from the main supplier?

Comments:

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3 What type of billing system does the Town Council have? Give reasons.

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4 Are the settlements adjacent to Okakarara Town being billed the same way as the residents in the town?

Yes:	
No:	

If no, give reasons

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5 What mechanisms should be put in place to improve the provision of water by the Okakarara Town Council?

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6 How sustainable is the economic base of the Okakarara Town?

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## SECTION C

### Questionnaire to the Councilors (political) of the Town Council

#### QUESTIONS:

1 Are Political Councilors part of the decision making process at the Town Council?

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2 What factors are affecting the effective provision of water by the Okakarara Town Council to the residents?

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3 Is the management of the Council having different categories of ratepayers in terms of the levels of income?

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**SECTION D.**

**Questionnaire for the members of the community/residents:**

**QUESTIONS:**

1 Did the community pay for water before Okakarara was declared as a town?

Yes:	
No:	

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2 Why is it important for the community/residents to pay for water supplied by the Okakarara Town Council?

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3 When do you receive your monthly water bills?

The 10 <sup>th</sup> of the current month:	
The 20 <sup>th</sup> of each month:	
End of each month:	
Late	

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4 Do you find it difficult to settle your water bills?

Yes:	
No:	

If yes, give reasons:

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5 Are you employed?

Yes:	
No:	

If no, how are you settling your water bills from the Town Council?

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6 How are pensioners and People Living with Disabilities treated by the Town Council in terms the provision of water and electricity?

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7 How do you see development in your town five years from now?

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8 How do you compare the colonial time and now in terms of development of your town?

Are you better now or were you better during the colonial time?

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9 Are you benefiting from the Build-Together Programme?

Yes:	
No:	

Any comments:

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**SECTION E**

**Questionnaire to the teachers and nurses:**

**QUESTIONS:**

1 How frequent are you experiencing water suspensions from the Town Council?

*Tick appropriate box:*

Monthly	
After three months	
Every six months	
Annually	
After a year	

2 Who is responsible for settling the water bill for your institution?

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- 3 After suspension, and the owed amount is settled, how long it taking for the Town Council to make water available to your institution?

*Tick the appropriate box:*

One hour	
One day	
Two days	
More than two days	

- 4 Is disruption of water supply to your school/hospital due to non-payment of water bills or break-down in the pipe/sewerage system?

*Tick the appropriate box:*

Non-payment of water bills	
Break-down in the system	

**SECTION F (Central level)**

**Questionnaire to the Permanent Secretary, Directors of Regional, Local Government and Traditional Authorities Coordination, Administration and Human Resources Development, Decentralization Coordination and Housing and Technical Services**

**QUESTIONS:**

1        What are the qualification requirements for the position of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the town councils?

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2        Which formula is used in Local Authorities in terms of recruitment? Is it Top-down or Bottom-up?

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3        Why is the Ministry interfering with the recruitment, especially when it comes to the Senior Management? Is it causing tensions among the people?

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4 How does the Ministry bail out Local Authorities (LA's) that got bankrupt? Which formula is being used?

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5. Why are some Local Authorities better than others?

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6 What roles do the National Housing Enterprise and commercial banks play in the development of towns/cities?

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7 Who initiated the Build-together Programme? Is it the Ministry or towns/cities?

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8 If the answer in No. 7 is the Ministry, does it cover all Local Authorities in Namibia?

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9 How was water provided to Local Authorities in Namibia before 1990?

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10 What is the situation currently in terms of bulk water supply to Town Councils, like Okakarara?

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11 In your opinion, what are the challenges of providing water facing the Okakarara Town Council, as a Local Authority entity in Namibia?

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12 What solutions do you have for challenges mentioned in number 11 above?

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13 At what level of decentralization are we now in terms of functions of Local Authorities?

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14 In the case of Namibia are we decentralizing activities to the Regional Councils or to Local Authorities?

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15 How many Local Authorities are there in Namibia?

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**APPENDIX B**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES

**INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM**

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY: Mavejapi O. Katuuu

I .....agree to participate in the interview of this study on the basis that I volunteered for the study and that I have the right freely to withdraw from the interview of this study at any time, and have the right not to answer questions about which I feel uncomfortable without penalty, risk and loss.

The researcher has explained to me in comprehensive terms the nature and purpose of the study and how the data findings will be used.

I will remain anonymous in the study and the raw data from interviews will remain confidential. The researcher promised to use “pseudonyms” in the thesis. The information obtained will not be used to disadvantage me. There are no other persons than the researcher and myself who will have access to the raw data.

.....  
Signature of participant

.....  
Place where interview was conducted

.....  
Date Consent Form completed

**(For Researcher’s use only)**

.....  
Signature

Date .....