

**FROM BANTUSTANISATION TO DECENTRALISATION: A COMPARATIVE  
STUDY OF SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN NAMIBIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study is to systematically evaluate both the pre and post independence local governance framework and structures. The study will thus, highlight the political, developmental and philosophical differences between the post-independent policy of decentralisation in Namibia and the pre-independence policy of Bantustans. This will be realised by evaluating public perceptions on decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans; as well as by investigating the general impact of associating or equating the policy of decentralisation to that of Bantustans, on the implementation and realisation of the former.

It is a well-known fact that the motivations for pursuing decentralisation differ from one country to another. Likewise, people and countries define decentralisation differently and connote different things to them. To that end, decentralisation in Namibia entails the process of delegation and devolution of functions, powers, responsibilities and resources from central government to regional councils and local authorities within the framework of a unitary state. Its implementation is guided by the principle that functions follow funds and personnel. The motivation for decentralisation in Namibia is two fold, namely, (a) the government's willingness to democratise and remedy the un-democratic and discriminatory historical form of governance before independence and (b) decentralisation is primarily seen as an instrument or tool to promote and guarantee democracy and sustainable development. Therefore, the objectives of decentralisation in Namibia center on democracy, development, empowerment, good governance and

administration, enhancement of accountability and promotion of local economic development.

To ensure effective implementation of the decentralisation policy government has enacted enabling legislations such as the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990, Regional Councils Act, 1992, Local Authorities Act, 1992, Decentralization Policy of 1997, Decentralisation Enabling Act 2000, Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provisions Act 2000, and Traditional Authorities Act, 2000.

In contrast the pre-independence Bantustanisation in the form of decentralisation was motivated by completely different philosophies and political underpinnings. This was in the sense that it was based on ethnically or tribally divided communal areas or geo-political units defined on the basis of assumed cultural, political, socio-economic and ethnic differences. The Bantustan Policy evolved first in South Africa through the Apartheid Policy of 1948 and Group Areas Act, of 1950 and 1986. Later the same policy was transplanted to South West Africa/Namibia through the Odendaal Plan, and was consolidated by Proclamation Administrator General 8/1980. The Bantustan Policy was primarily intended for pseudo self-determination based on ethnic and racial grounds, the marginalisation of the indigenous populations and political segregation aimed at divide and rule. Most importantly, it advocated “Separate Development” or geographical isolation of the non-white groups into separate homelands based on colour and race criteria.

This study revealed that the fears expressed by Honorable Nahas Angula that the present decentralisation plans may revive Bantustans, were not necessarily his alone, but were shared by many within the SWAPO leadership. These views were intensively debated during the drafting of the National Constitution in the Constituent Assembly. The idea has been lingering in many people's minds ever since.

Similarly, this study noted that decentralisation and Bantustans have three common denominators in terms of their advocacy for self-governance: encouragement of participatory decision-making at regional and local levels, and transference of power and resources from central government to sub-national governments. Bantustans were a form of decentralisation with a different focus. For example Bantustans were assigned responsibilities, budgets and power by central government to administer on behalf of their communities as they deemed appropriate. They had their own legislative assemblies and executive committees for policy formulation.

On the contrary, this study also revealed that there are major differences in the political and philosophical orientation of the two policies in terms of their respective ideologies, philosophies and objectives, governance, government's legitimacy, legal frameworks, structures, focus and approaches, federal/unitary of the state, representation, benefits, freedom and rights, functioning/operations, accountability, accessibility and government's financial support. Moreover it was observed that Bantustans put emphasis

on decentralisation of tribal identity and symbols rather than on service delivery, democracy and development.

The association or equation of decentralisation to Bantustans could hold serious and negative consequences for the decentralisation implementation process, namely, it could delay the process. People will be hesitant to accept the process and acknowledge that there is freedom in the country, abuse of decentralised resources, disassociation and resistance of people to embrace the process, loss of accountability, and that could not lead to needed commitment and involvement of people and consequently failure of decentralization. Government will be reluctant to devolve power; and it would be costly to convince people to support the process of decentralisation. Decentralisation is meant to empower the rural and grassroots people so that they can own, participate in and sustain the decentralisation process. If this does not happen, the decentralisation process will be a failure.

Finally, the decentralisation implementation process was observed to be vulnerable to hijacking to promote ethnicity through the recruitment of fellow tribesmen at sub-national government level by both the technocrats and politicians of the dominant tribe. Therefore, it is recommended that guidelines on ethnic balance, or a policy on Affirmative Action based on ethnic balance, could be instituted in the public service; and frameworks for implementation and proper management of the decentralisation implementation process be developed by the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing, Public Service Commission and/or Office of the Prime

Minister to avoid perpetuation or a repeat of ethnic discrimination and division through the post independence decentralisation policy.

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is firstly dedicated to my two boys Sinvula, Morris Jr, wife, mum and dad and secondly in memory of my two sisters Mwaka and Maria.

**DECLARATION**

I declare that “*From Bantustanisation to Decentralisation: A Comparative Study of Sub-National Governance in Namibia*” is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

MORRIS SIBOLILE SINVULA

December 2005

Signature: -----

**ABBREVIATIONS**

AG	:	Administrator General
AIDS	:	Acquired Immuned Deficiency Syndrome
CRO	:	Chief Regional Officers
DEMCOP	:	Democratic Co-operative Development Party
DIP	:	Decentralisation Implementation Plan
DPIC	:	Decentralisation Policy Implementation Committee
DTA	:	Democratic Turnhalle Alliance
HIV	:	Human Immune Virus
IHUDS	:	Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
LAs	:	Local Authorities
LADC	:	Local Authority Development Committee
MAG	:	Monitor Action Group
MAWRD	:	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development
MLRR	:	Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation
MRLGH	:	Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing
NamPower	:	Namibia Power Corporation
NamWater	:	Namibia Water Corporation
NDP II	:	Second National Development Plan
NUDO	:	National Unity Democratic Organization
PNDC	:	Provisional National Defense Council
RCs	:	Regional Councils
RDCC	:	Regional Development Coordinating Committee
SDC	:	Settlement Development Committee
SLSA	:	Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa
SWA	:	South West Africa
SWANU	:	South West Africa Nation Union
SWAPO	:	South West Africa People's Organization
UNAM	:	University of Namibia
VDC	:	Village Development Committee

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Decentralisation entails the process of transferring authority, responsibilities and resources for public functions from central government to sub-national government level, the latter level comprised of Regional Councils, Local Authorities and Traditional Authorities. It further implies giving sub-national governments authority for planning, budgeting, management, implementation and monitoring, and discretionary powers over the raising and allocation of resources. Decentralisation is a popular idea among most governments and people despite its bottlenecks like lack of financial resources and capacity, because it connotes giving the people more direct access to their government and the government to people (Mawhood, 1993).

The World Bank website indicates that much of the decentralisation, which has taken place in the past decade, is motivated by political concerns. For example in Latin America, decentralisation was an essential part of the democratisation process, as elected governments operating under new constitutions replaced discredited autocratic central regimes, while in Africa, the spread of multi-party political systems created the demand for more local voice in decision-making.

Notwithstanding these conclusions, this paper notes that in each specific case there are very specific motivating factors prompting central governments to decentralize some of

their functions to sub-national government levels. For instance, in Southern African countries like Namibia and South Africa, the introduction of decentralisation should be viewed against the historical background of the form of governance that prevailed before the two countries went through their respective processes of democratic transitions. These countries' historical background was characterized by discriminatory policies and governance based on colour, race and ethnic criteria. In these contexts decentralisation is perceived as a political and administrative process for involving people in determining their own destiny through self-governance and self-administration (Töttemeyer, 2002).

The enactment and application of the discriminatory apartheid policies culminated in the establishment of ethnic reserves, which were later transformed into the so-called "Bantustans" for Blacks in both South Africa and Namibia. Töttemeyer (2001) and Cohen (1994) describe Bantustans or homelands as "ethnically or tribally defined communal areas or geo-political units defined on the basis of assumed cultural, political, socio-economic and ethnic differences". The evolution of Bantustans in Namibia commenced around the 1900s during the German colonial rule. This policy objective was further perpetuated in the 1920s when the South African Government took over the administration of the then South West Africa. Some of the instruments used by the South African government were the Apartheid Policy, 1948, Group Areas Act, 1950 and 1986, the infamous Odendaal Commission of Enquiry of 1962, Self-Government for Native Nations in South West Africa Act, No. 54 of 1968 and Administrator General 8 of 1980. These policies promoted racial segregation and supremacy of whites.

At Namibia's independence in 1990, the grim legacy of poverty, lack of land, unemployment, illiteracy and underdevelopment left by the colonial and apartheid regimes could not be continued any longer and in a way prompted the Namibian Government to adopt the policy of decentralisation to ensure a fair and equitable process of economic, cultural, and social development. This process of decentralisation was designed with the view of providing people at grassroots level with the opportunity to participate in their own decision-making processes and extending democracy to them as a right based on national ideals and values. (MRLGH, 1997).

In view of this background information on the inception of Bantustanisation and decentralisation in Namibia, the study will present a comparative analysis between the two policies to expose the differences that exist between them, with the intent to assist in addressing misconceptions surrounding the decentralisation process in a post-independent Namibia.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Despite the enactment of the Policy of Decentralisation, its ideals being enshrined in the Namibian Constitution and its principles and objectives clearly defined, there are still misconceptions and false expectations, as a result of which there are skepticism, criticism and equation of the post independence process of the Decentralization Policy to the pre-independence policy of Bantustanisation by some Namibians. Some critics of decentralisation allege that it is a mere change of name from Bantustans, which will

eventually group people according to their ethnic, racial and colour basis. Similarly, some have remarked that the demarcation of regions after independence retained certain socio-and ethno- demographical features, which constituted part of the former homelands e.g. Ohangwena Region is predominantly Kwanyamas, Omusati–Mbalantus, Omaheke–Hereros, Tswanas and Mbanderus, and Caprivi–Subias, Mayeyi and Mafwes

One example of criticism about decentralisation came from Nahas Angula–Member of Parliament and Minister of Higher Education, accusing some decentralisation plans of attempting to “revive Bantustans”. He further remarked that the proposed amendment to the Regional Councils Act, No.22 of 1992, aimed at elevating the position of the top administrator in the thirteen regions of Namibia, seemed like “Regionalization” which he equated to the Bantustanisation process of the apartheid era of dividing the Blacks and ruling them while keeping ethnic groups in homelands (The Namibian, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2002).

“Regionalism” is a concept coined to mean the geographical demarcation of the country into portions called “ regions” not based on race or colour. In fact ‘regionalism comes from the word ‘region’. It can further be interpreted as the creation of regions as sub-national or second tier governments. Regionalism in this context is not continuous because it is understood to be a time bound activity, but decentralisation is a continuous process. In Namibia, regionalism is combined with decentralisation and democratisation to ensure effective sharing of power between national and sub-national level

(Töttemeyer, 2003). On the other hand, regionalism differs from bantustanisation, because the demarcation of regions was based on geographical and economic factors, instead of race or colour criteria. As earlier mentioned regionalism in the Namibian context is combined with decentralisation and democratisation process which was not the case in bantustanisation.

Similarly, Hopwood (2004) wrote that “There is little political will to speed up decentralisation, because it reminds some SWAPO politicians of the apartheid policy of creating “Bantustans” and is perceived by some as veering too close to federalism, which SWAPO has steadfastly opposed”.

Although different from the above, a year later, another former Member of Parliament and Paramount Chief Kuaima Riruako of the Herero tribe and the President of NUDO called for a federal system in Namibia. His call for a federal system came after a conference of Herero chiefs and their subjects where government was accused of nepotism and tribalism. The chief argued that the current unitary Namibian state has failed because it only benefits the “majority tribe” which controls all state resources. According to him, federalism offered the alternative as it accords the minority groups equal opportunities to participate in the affairs of the country (The Namibian, 26 April 2004). Furthermore, Hunter (2004) wrote that MAG demanded a federal system based on ethnic origin, and SWANU argued that decentralisation could easily be misunderstood as a different form of apartheid, when they were asked about their views

on decentralisation in Namibia before the 2004 elections. It should be noted that federalism is the extreme form or degree of decentralisation, whereby regions or provinces are constitutionally empowered to formulate their own laws and raise their own revenues different from the central government and literally operate independently from national government.

Related to the call for federalism in Namibia is the attempt to secede Caprivi Region from the rest of Namibia, which took place in August 1999. These sentiments manifest firstly, the quest for autonomy of regions and authority to control and manage their own resources, secondly, discontentment with regard to the planned extent of the implementation of decentralisation, and thirdly reflect how far people want the decentralisation policy to devolve power and resources to the regions, and fourthly, demonstrates how the legacy of Bantustanisation plays a role in influencing public expectations and perception that decentralisation should operate like Bantustans which were federal in nature.

The fact that the people who participated in the formulation and enactment of this very policy were skeptical, and/or equated it to the notorious colonial and apartheid era Bantustan structures, requires a real analysis of the understanding of the current perceptions about the post-independence decentralisation process. Hence, this initiative to conduct this study under the title: *“From Bantustanisation to Decentralisation: A Comparative Study of Sub-National Governance in Namibia”* with the view of

presenting a clear distinction between the respective political and developmental philosophies that underpin both the pre and post independence sub-national governance structures and policy frameworks in Namibia.

Sub-national governance generally refers to structures below central government that is regional and local governments and traditional authorities. The study will not only focus on the role and framework of regional governance structures, but also on traditional leadership and governance structures too. Hence, the reference to sub-national governance.

### **1.3 Research Question**

In order to assist in the evaluation of the public perception on the two concepts, this study was guided by the following research question:

Does the decentralisation process in post independent Namibia differ substantively from the Bantustanisation process that was undertaken in South West Africa/Namibia between 1900s-1989?

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

The study will systematically evaluate and analyze both the pre and post independence local governance frameworks and structures, in order to thoroughly point out the

political and developmental philosophical differences between the post independent policy of decentralization in Namibia and the pre-independence policy of Bantustans or homelands, which existed in Namibia prior to independence (1900s-1989). Moreover, the study will investigate and evaluate public perceptions on decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans, as well as investigate and understand the general impact of associating or equating decentralisation in Namibia to Bantustans, on the implementation and realization of the former.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is highly significant toward the understanding of the current perceptions among the policy makers and leaders as well as the general public, with the intent that it can greatly contribute toward the ongoing attempts to address the skepticism and misconceptions embroiling the decentralisation policy through education. If these misperceptions go unchallenged, their cumulative impact could in the long run jeopardize the implementation, ownership and acceptability of the decentralisation process among Namibians. Therefore, the citizens need to be informed about the vast differences between the orientation of the policies of decentralisation and Bantustanisation respectively, as well as the rationale and benefits of decentralisation in order to sustain general public support, participation and involvement in the processes envisioned in this policy.

Furthermore, the study is important on account that no prior research study of this nature has been undertaken. Therefore, the study is unique and ground breaking in the sense that it undertakes a comparative analysis of the political context, as well as objectives in terms of policy orientation and operational structures of decentralisation as opposed to those that existed within the context of Bantustans. It is hoped that this study will not only provoke interest and expose gaps, but will also provide a framework for addressing the existing confusion, misunderstandings and skepticism among the general public and lawmakers. It is further hoped that it will assist with the transformation of the mindsets of those who became accustomed to the functioning of the pre-independence structures and therefore, hold the same expectations in the post independence era.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

The research topic “*From Bantustanisation to Decentralisation: A Comparative Study of Sub-National Governance in Namibia*” is a qualitative study because it assesses public perceptions regarding the commonalities between the pre-independence policy of Bantustanisation and the postcolonial decentralization policy initiative. Therefore, information for this study was acquired through secondary and primary sources, and the following three qualitative methods are deemed to be appropriate for this study: questionnaires, structured interviews and documentation review. The justification is that these methods allow interaction that enables the researcher to collect, observe reactions, analyse and interpret data from respondents’ perspectives.

Secondary information was obtained from various publications such as relevant published materials on sub-national government in Namibia, legislations, journals and previous related studies. Whereas, Primary Sources of information were divided into two groups, namely Key Informants using structured interviews and questionnaires and targeting academic departments and institutions such as UNAM, line ministries (MRLGH, MAWRD and MLRR), regional councils and traditional authorities. A Survey of the General Public was also conducted using instruments like the structured interview and questionnaires in order to obtain the general public's understanding of and their expectations from the two policies.

Since the population targeted for inclusion in this study was divided into key informants and members of the public, to test their respective perceptions on decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans, the questionnaire for the survey of public perception was slightly different from the key informants' and was divided into three sections, namely, Section A: Decentralisation, B: Bantustans and C: Decentralisation and Bantustans.

The selection of the following regions to be covered in the data collection process was based on the following considerations with Khomas representing the urban-central regions, Hardap the rural southern regions, and Caprivi the rural northern regions. This study targeted at least one management cadre of regional councils, one regional councilor/ politician, one traditional leader and four members of the public per region. However, only fourteen respondents completed and returned the questionnaire on time.

Pertaining to key informants, five informants were targeted, all of whom were interviewed.

It should be noted that not all public respondents and key informants were found conversant with the terms decentralisation and Bantustans. Therefore, a combination of random, convenience and judgmental sampling, where the researcher could choose the sample based on its availability and expert judgment, was used during the data collection process.

Thus far questionnaires amounting to twenty-one were randomly distributed to residents of Caprivi, Hardap and Khomas Regions, of which only fourteen (67%) were returned on time. The total number of questionnaires plus key informants amounts to twenty-six. Most of the questionnaires from Hardap Region were not returned on time and thus were excluded from this study. Following this was the comparison and aggregation of responses from key informants and general public as chapter five.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The below mentioned problems were encountered during the development of this study and may have influenced the content and nature of conclusions drawn.

### **1.7.1 Unavailability of Regional Councillors**

This study coincided with elections during October/November 2004. Firstly, it was the Local Authorities and secondly, the Presidential and National Assembly and Regional Councils Elections 2004. During this time some of the study's target population, in particular "councilors" as politicians, were heavily engaged in campaigning. Owing to that, councillors were most of the time unavailable despite having agreed to the appointments with this researcher. Similarly, elections did not only affect the politicians but also the electorate or the general public because most were not available for interviews or questionnaires at all.

### **1.7.2 Delay in the Returning of Questionnaires from Hardap Region**

Delays in the returning of completed questionnaires to the researcher were experienced in particular from Hardap Region during the production of this study. Three out of seven questionnaires from Hardap Region were received on time; the rest were not returned at all. The views of the three study participants are not representative of the Hardap RC, and the overall study findings and conclusions may have been predominantly influenced by the views from other regions, thus missing out on those from Hardap Region, which represented the southern regions.

### **1.7.3 Time and Resources**

The time for this study was too short for a large sample size. Besides that the lack of resources impeded the researcher from traveling to all targeted regions to collect information. Due to the limited resources available, the number of the study participants is not representative. Thus, the results of this study cannot be generalised as the researcher would have wished.

### **1.6 Structure of the Study**

This study is structured as follows: the first chapter provides the introductory and background information about the study, detailing the statement of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, research question and research methodology. Following this, what is presented in chapter two is a brief review of literature and the theoretical framework and definitions of the key concepts, namely, Bantustans and decentralisation in Namibia as applied in the study. Chapters three and four present discussions on the evolution of Bantustans and decentralisation in post-colonial Namibia based on their political objectives, policy orientation and philosophies. The final two chapters, namely five and six of the study respectively present an analysis and discussion of the data collected as well as drawing conclusions and recommendations there from.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter will review literature on the key concepts of the study, namely, Bantustan and Decentralization in Namibia. Both concepts have been defined either in the previous or chapter (s) ahead. In addition, literature regarding different country's motivations and definitions for decentralisation is reviewed in order to illustrate variations in the rationale underpinning the decentralisation reform pursued by various governments, especially those in developing countries.

### **2.1. Definitions of Key Concepts**

There is consensus and common understanding among the various authors in their descriptions of decentralisation as a multifaceted concept with many definitions and meanings, which may vary across people and countries. For instance Mawhood, (1993) states that most people and governments prefer this concept simply because it suggests presenting opportunities for people to access their governments and governments to accommodate the views of their people through stimulation of citizen participation in national development processes. Hence, the slogan or motto in Namibia "Bringing government closer to the people and vice versa".

Literature on decentralisation indicates that there are three types of decentralisation through which it can be realised, namely Political, Administrative, and Fiscal decentralisation. Political decentralisation entails the transfer or devolution of powers from central government to the sub national governments, whereas Administrative decentralisation occurs when central government offices and infrastructure are established at sub-national levels and the control over staffing is passed to regional or local governments. Fiscal decentralisation occurs when financial resource powers are transferred to sub-national governments and when these entities are granted power to levy local taxes, prepare and approve their own budgets and central government provides them with unconditional grants (MRLGH-DIP, 2004). In brief, fiscal decentralisation is based on the principle of discretionary power over financial resources by sub-national governments.

Besides the abovementioned, decentralisation can further be realised through the following three major forms, that is de-concentration, delegation and devolution. De-concentration is the redistribution of decision-making authority and financial and management responsibilities among different levels of central government. Delegation is the transfer of decision-making and administration of public functions or responsibilities from central government to sub-national government level, but ultimately central government remains accountable for the delegated functions and resources. Devolution is the transfer of authority for decision-making, finance and management of the devolved function (s) to the sub-national governments i.e. regional and local

governments. Among these three forms of decentralisation, devolution is the most preferred form to attain real decentralisation, because under it, local governments are autonomous and independent, have tax authority, and clear legally recognized boundaries to exercise authority (Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies - IHUDS, 2002). With this objective, Namibia chose the path of delegation as a preparatory phase for devolution as its ultimate goal of decentralisation in the country (MRLGH-DIP, 2004, International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2000).

Mawhood (1993) defines decentralisation as “the creation of bodies separated by law from central government, in which local representatives have formal power over a range of public matters and whose political base is their specific localities, with limited area of authority. He stresses that these bodies’ rights to make decisions should be entrenched by law and must have resources which are spent and invested at their own discretion”, thus ensuring their fiscal autonomy. This definition informs us as a country that there are certain requirements to be met to ensure a real and successful decentralisation process, namely, creation of independent bodies separated by law from central government as real and multi-functional governments at local level within the framework of national legislations and unitary state. In the case of Namibia, empowerment of citizenry through ongoing capacity building to take over the administration and performance of decentralised public functions, and such bodies should be guaranteed by law to exercise financial autonomy over decentralised financial resources.

Literally, this entails that central government will have little or no direct control over the administration of activities decentralised or devolved to sub-national governments in terms of appointment of staff, budgeting and controlling of resources and influencing decision-making processes. The further implication of this definition is that once central government decides to devolve powers, functions and resources to sub-national governments, its roles are bound to change to that of policy formulation, standard setting, advisory services, capacity building and supervision.

The Rational Choice interpretation argues that decentralisation reforms are undertaken to secure electoral advantage or electoral calculation, and to gain support of key constituencies. In the same vein, decentralisation can be used as a strategy to create alternative centers for power, dividing up potential regime opponents and reducing their power. In Namibia, the re-demarcation of some constituencies in the Omaheke Region for example, can be interpreted as government's attempt to reduce DTA's support in those constituencies. This scenario may have directly or indirectly helped SWAPO to take control of the Regional Councils in the 2004 elections.

The above-captioned conceptual definitions will be operationalised in the following section that will deal with the political factors underpinning the implementation of the decentralization policy in the Namibian context discussed under, as well as in the subsequent comparative overview of the objectives and motivations underlying decentralization initiatives in other countries.

## **2.2. Decentralisation in the Post-colonial Namibian Context**

Technically speaking, Bantustanisation was a form of decentralization with a different focus from that of the post-independent era. To this end, decentralisation in a post-independent Namibia has a new focus. Hence, very little has been written on the concept in the Namibian context.

Decentralisation in the Namibian context entails the process of delegating or devolution of responsibilities, functions and resources to regional and local governments within the framework of a unitary state and under this guiding principle: functions-follow funds and personnel (Decentralization Enabling Act, No.33 of 2000 and Hunter, 2004). However, the latest revelations (The Namibian, 19 August, 2003 and Hunter, 2004) referred in chapter one, reveal that some political parties like NUDO and MAG, though they regard decentralisation to be important in Namibia, are discontent about decentralising within the framework of a unitary state. Instead they prefer a federal system. MAG for instance prefers a federal system based on race, while NUDO claims that the current decentralisation within the unitary state framework favours the majority tribal group and does not offer opportunities to minority groups for access to national resources. Although this may be true, Töttemeyer (2002) argues against a federal dispensation in Namibia, justifying that due to the inequalities, disparities and disunity of the population as a result of the colonial and apartheid legacies, a federal system was not feasible. Instead, he felt that “a strong integrative and regulative political system to

unite and reconcile the Namibian nation was embodied in a unitary state". Finally, critics of decentralisation argue that the unitary state framework does not presently give sub-national governments financial autonomy to decide where funds should be allocated, because the decentralised funds are already earmarked for a particular decentralised function (s) and no unconditional grants have been decentralised or disbursed so far. Kaakunga (2003) attributes the situation of lack of financial autonomy and funds to the fact that currently sub-national governments function as extensions of central government thus, no funds are transferred from the center to sub-national governments except for operating expenditures and subsidies for particular services such as traffic control, fire-brigade and loans for capital projects.

Meanwhile the MRLGH, (1998) advocates decentralisation in the post-independent Namibia to be a tool designed to promote democracy and sustainable development and transference of powers to sub-national governments, thus "bringing government closer to the people, grassroots empowerment, promotion of participatory democracy and quality governance, enhanced accountability and promotion of local economic development" (Tötemeyer, 2002) supplements. The question in this regard is how far has the decentralisation process gone to realise these objectives? In terms of promoting democracy, testimony to this is the holding of regular, national, regional and local government elections for the electorate to elect their leadership. In terms of transferring power to RCs and LAs for instance, nothing has changed. The central government remains highly centralised and no function/resource (s) has been decentralised yet to

sub-national governments, due to lack of political will, directive, commitment and readiness for and internalisation of decentralisation (Tötemeyer, 2003). Furthermore, the promotion of the decentralisation process by the MRLGH has simultaneously created high expectations and caused frustrations among the population due to its haphazard and/or slow movements.

The MRLGH (1997) informs us that decentralisation will be implemented in phases. The functions to be decentralised have been identified and grouped into categories, namely, short, medium and long term. Similarly, the Decentralisation Enabling Act, 2000, states that decentralisation will be gradually implemented through the phases of delegation and devolution. Firstly, this researcher recognizes central government for a good decentralisation legal framework and plan, because it meets the requirements for a real decentralisation process as earlier proposed by Mawhood (1993). Although it meets the requirements, Oluwo (1990) cautions that decentralisation in Africa has failed not because of lack of legal frameworks, but because of political commitment by central government to fund and support the decentralisation process. Similarly, critics of decentralisation in Namibia would like to know the criteria used to identify functions to be decentralized given that the Ministry of Home Affairs is not inclined to decentralize the Civic Department and by contrast the Ministry of Health and Social Services is decentralising pension services rather than Primary Health Care. With regard to delegation as a preparatory phase for devolution, critics further question why delegation

and not de-concentration if there are line ministries like Education and Health already having de-concentrated structures in the regions.

In conclusion, in an unpublished article, Töttemeyer (2003) attempted to compare the historical destabilisation and stabilisation factors, past and present in Namibia. In a way, this article attempted to trace historical and present events of the politics of Namibia from the colonial period to the present. This article is partially relevant in the sense that it gives a very brief overview of a comparative analysis of historical events and post-independence government events. This article does not wholly meet the intentions of this study, because its focus is not specifically on Bantustans versus decentralisation, but it is more general and broad covering most political events in Namibia of which Bantustans and decentralisation enjoy a minute coverage.

The general comment about Töttemeyer's articles on decentralisation is that he was writing from a political perspective and as a person spearheading and masterminding the whole decentralisation process. He was an MP and Deputy Minister for Regional and Local Government and Housing from the ruling SWAPO party. In a way, his writing might have been influenced, biased or one sided due to the positions and status he held in government. Similarly, his positions in government might have prevented or inhibited him from critically reviewing the decentralisation process for example in terms of either its plan, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as his publications are silent in terms of criticism on the decentralisation process.

## **2.3 Comparative Overviews of the Objectives and Motivations**

### **Underlying Decentralisation Initiatives in other Countries**

This section compares various countries' objectives and motivations underlying decentralisation. To start with, in Zambia, former President Kenneth Kaunda defined his government's Decentralization in Centralization under a policy of humanism as "a measure whereby through the party and government machinery, we will decentralise most of the party and government activities while retaining effective control of the party and government machinery at the center in the interest of unity" Olowu (1990). Firstly, notwithstanding the relationship between the state and the parties in one-party dominated multi-party democracies such as Namibia, Botswana and South Africa, when one talks about decentralisation from a government perspective, reference is made to public functions, which are in the interest of the general public and not political party activities. Whether party activities are decentralised or not, that may be in the interest of the party and its membership and therefore, may not necessarily be in the general public interest. Secondly, the intention of government was not to devolve but to de-concentrate power and resources on account that sub-national government structures were still controlled and answerable to the center. Devolution and de-concentration are both forms of decentralisation through which decentralization can be achieved. The two are different in the sense that in de-concentration, central government offices are moved to the regions but remain under the control of central government. Whereas under devolution, sub-national governments are autonomous and independent, have tax

authority and legally recognized areas of jurisdiction and are answerable to the electorate. It seems like the whole process was designed for political reasons, which were to strengthen Kaunda's party to gain political support in the districts. Namibia stands to benefit from Zambia's experience, in the sense that de-concentration is not a good option or form of decentralisation because it involves very limited transfer of authority to sub-national government, and does not involve local political choices or processes (IHUDS, 2002). Therefore, central government cannot talk about decentralisation if powers and resources are being withheld.

In Sudan, decentralisation meant the concentration of power at provincial level to achieve maximum participation of citizens in the administration of their local affairs and thus reduce centralisation. At the center of Sudan's decentralisation plan was the empowerment of the provincial commissioners (political appointees) who presided over the provincial executive council, public service, the police, and security matters to veto decisions of the provincial councils if deemed not to be in the public interest as defined by the ruling political elite (Olowu, 1990). In this case, power and resources were concentrated at provincial level, which was distant from the grassroots people, thus denying them opportunities for participation and decision-making on issues that directly affected their lives. The Namibian government should also be cautious about concentrating powers at the regional level, but should ensure the accountability of the regional structures of government to their respective electorates by encouraging the participation of the latter in all deliberations initiated by the former. There is one

obvious and pertinent difference between Namibia and Sudan's decentralisation process, that is in Sudan, government appoints regional and local leaders who would preside over public service functions, whereas in Namibia, political office bearers such as governors and mayors of RCs and LAs are elected rather than appointed, and cannot individually veto council decisions, as is the case in Sudan (Oluwo, 1990).

In Tanzania, under the former and late President Julius Nyerere, decentralisation was promoted as an ideology for self-reliance tied to rural development and the Basic Needs development strategy (Olowu, 1990). The ideology is commendable. However, central government's abolishment of local government structures and taking over the administration was a move to consolidate central government and serving its interests rather than that of the communities. The first lesson here is that the process was a failure in terms of agricultural productivity, infrastructure allocation and administrative management (Olowu, 1990). Secondly, central government cannot talk about promoting decentralization while simultaneously abolishing local government structures at sub-national level and taking over the administration thereof. This is purely centralisation as opposed to decentralisation. From the above definitions and meanings of decentralisation, it is explicitly clear and evident that indeed decentralization connotes different things from one country to another.

Chapter one made reference to the fact that there are specific motivating factors for decentralisation of power, responsibilities and resources to sub-national government

levels for different countries. To this end, literature on decentralisation in Spain notes that it was meant for restoration of democracy and national identity after its dictatorial regimes (Tapscott, 2003). An important part of Spain's decentralisation process was the introduction of an Asymmetrical Devolution Model in its new constitution, which could perhaps partly address recent calls for federalism and violent secessionist attempts in Namibia. The model made provision for another fourth tier of government called "autonomous regions" in an attempt to accommodate the strong, and sporadically violent demands for self-rule in parts of the country. The principle underlying the Asymmetrical Devolution Model is 'the rejection of the hierarchical subordination of different tiers of government in favour of a system of defined competencies or of distributed powers' (Tapscott, 2003).

The call for a federal system and the secessionist desires in Namibia are based on the arguments that power and resources are not evenly distributed and that there is dominance of one tribal group. Therefore, this model could present opportunities for regions to be declared 'autonomous' in terms of assignment of considerable *intra vires* powers (legislative) to manage their own affairs of the region (IHUDS, 2002). Similarly, the model makes provision for central government political appointees to oversee and review all actions of the autonomous regions. Above all, the constitution assigns central government powers over the matters of national interests, for instance international relations, defense, administration of justice, and foreign trade. Adopting this model, Namibia, as a unitary state today, would require amendment to the constitution. Given

its historical background of segregation based on racial grounds and fear of federalism by a SWAPO led government, one could envisage resistance by way of intense public debate on this issue.

Uganda, adopted the policy of decentralisation in 1986 after the civil war, authoritarian rule and economic decay (Lambright, 2002). The rationale was decentralisation for democracy as it is evident in its constitution. Article 176 (2b) states that “Decentralisation shall be a principle applying to all levels of local government and in particular from higher to lower local government units to ensure people’s participation and democratic control in decision making”. Similarly, Article 176 (2C) states that the “system shall be such as to ensure full realization of democratic governance at all local government levels” (Lambright, 2002). Notwithstanding the above, it was imperative for the Ugandan government to decentralise because of the way the National Resistance Movement accented to power, that is, through toppling another government or regime. As a result, the Ugandan government was compelled to decentralise for “fear of the difficulty and possibility of conflict, if government had tried to centralise power at the end of the war”, Lambright (2002) concluded.

Likewise, post-independent Zimbabwe also embarked upon a decentralisation reform which Eriksen, Naustdalslid, and Schou (1999) called “establishing local government in a racially divided society”. Zimbabwe’s objective for decentralisation was to stimulate democratisation and promote rural development. In South Africa the decentralisation

process was driven by two main forces, namely the belief that many functions can be undertaken more effectively at local levels of government, and that national government wanted to relieve itself of existing or potential fiscal pressure and administrative responsibilities. The emphasis of the South African decentralisation is placed on participation of the electorate in the decision-making processes and accountability of the democratically elected authorities to the electorate (SLSA, 2003).

Besides that, Lambright (2002) and Eriksen et al. (1999) stated that in countries where much of the political conflict was rooted in struggles between different groups based on ethnicity, religion, and region over control of the state and the accompanying resources, decentralisation was introduced to defuse conflicts and increase their stake in government. This was noted by Ayee in (Lambright, 2002) that decentralisation in the context of Ghana was simply a tool used by the PNDC to resolve “the legitimacy crisis especially by military regimes”. Distributing power to sub-national governments was perceived to be necessary in the creation of willingness among the various groups to participate rather than fight.

According to Steffensen, Tidemand, Naitore, Ssewankambo, and Mwaipopo (2004), decentralisation can be implemented for various reasons, namely to answer the problems experienced with centralised/de-concentrated systems of service provision, to gain political support, to achieve improved efficiency in resource allocation, to bring

decisions closer to citizens, to improve governance and accountability, to improve equity and rural development, and to improve development and strengthen poverty reduction.

The above case studies of the rationale for decentralisation by other countries are meant to show that different countries decentralise for different reasons. It has been observed that all motivations for decentralisation cited above tie in well with the (IHUDES, 2002) assumptions that decentralisation promotes democracy and good governance, on account that they are centred on participation, development, governance, democracy and empowerment. These motivations and assumptions correlate to Namibia's reasons for decentralisation, that is 'democracy and development'. However, in what context is decentralization the appropriate instrument or tool to promote democracy and development? In this regard, Lambright (2002) noted that countries that have decentralised programs reflect that decentralisation cultivates grassroots democracy and development by shifting political power and financial authority to local level and increases opportunities for citizen participation thus, furthering democracy and improve governance.

In like manner, these case studies inform us that decentralisation may be implemented for one primary reason, which could be evident to the general public. However, decentralisation can be at the same time a strategy or tool that can be used by government to gain political support/votes or suppress or divide the regime's opponent, thereby reducing its power.

## 2.4 Bantustanisation

The term ‘Bantustanisation’ is derived from the word ‘Bantustan’; which, according to Töttemeyer (2001) and Cohen (1994) as earlier stated in chapter one, entails a process of geographically dividing communal lands into portions based on tribal, ethnic, cultural, political, and social-economic differences.

This website (<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/history/A0856652.html>) informs us that bantustanisation originated from South Africa with the primary purpose of promoting racial separation and supremacy of Whites. Putz, Egidy, Caplan, (1989), writing on the ethnic second tier governments in Bantustans, states that the objective of bantustanisation was self-determination and independence of the indigenous population. Similarly, as it will be reflected in chapter three Berry (1998) and Cohen (1994) agree with Putz, et al. (1989) that the South African government viewed the creation of self-governing Bantustans as an answer to de-colonisation of the indigenous population. It should be noted that this was a false independence or self-determination promised to the indigenous people because Bantustans had limited political autonomy and nominal ordinance making powers (Cohen, 1994). How could it be termed independence if black oppression was exacerbated, curfew regulations remained operational in homelands, and political and freedom rights were denied?

Butler, Rotberg, and Adams (1977) and Egero (1991) remarked on the enactment of the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903 and Land Act of 1913, that they were aimed at creating a cheap, controllable African workforce for the farms and mines, and to crush the independent peasantry farmers who posed a formidable competition to white farmers. In addition Cohen (1994) stated that Bantustanisation commenced through the expropriation of the indigenous land to make way for the white settlers and missionary activities; while Putz et al. (1989) adds that Bantustanisation was implemented in phases and there were stages through which Bantustans were supposed to go before attaining their so-called independence, namely, they had to have own flags, anthems, court of arms and constitutions. Egero (1991) argues that the Bantustan system was implemented through the revitalisation and incorporation of traditional authorities' structures into the white rule for their own political and economic gains. Mamdani (1996) agrees with Egero (1991) that in the process of pursuing the policy of Bantustanisation, in certain cases and communities as it will be alluded in chapter three, chieftainship was manufactured or made up and imposed on communities thus, confirming that no democracy was practised. However, some key informants of this study argued that Bantustans embodied the principles of democracy, participation and development, because there were elections and the road networks the country inherited from the then South African regime. Meanwhile, these arguments were challenged or refuted by other key informants and Töttemeyer (2001&2002) who stated that elections were non-representative, boycotted because some political parties were not allowed to participate and, to the extreme elections were held on non-party basis (Putz et al. 1989).

They also argued that development of road networks were for military purposes and not for communities.

Cohen (1994), writing on the effects of the Bantustanisation policy on education in Namibia, criticised the Bantustanisation system as having been biased and discriminatory against the Namibian black population. She argues that the system separated the education system in the country in accordance with the existing ethnic groups, namely the Education Department for Caprivians and Kavangos was separated from the White Education Department. The rationale of the education system was to confine the indigenous people to roles of subordinate workers and to increase government's control over education. Education stressed the values of tribal life and rural skills, religion, hygiene and separate communities rather than academic subjects. Further criticism was that Bantustanisation-restricted movements of the Blacks in their homelands through the Curfew Regulations Proclamation No.33 of 1922. In addition, Bantustanisation is critiqued for having led to the formation of classes i.e. Whites as the ruling class and Blacks as a working class without any political and economic power.

Tötemeyer (2002), writing from local government perspective in Namibia, criticised the system for having denied the black population local government administration, especially in the northern Bantustans of the country where local government was not instituted at all. However, he argues further that even in the Police Zone where local government was instituted earlier, the Black population was totally excluded.

## **2.5. The Theoretical Conceptualisation of Decentralisation**

The IHUDS, (2002) notes that there are a number of assumptions underlying decentralisation. One is that political decentralisation facilitates devolution, which empowers local communities and involves them in the local decision-making process. Therefore, decentralisation is seen as an “instrument to promote development, democracy and good governance”. It has been claimed that decentralisation brings about rapid socio-economic development, keeping in mind the wide variation in the nature and magnitude of local problems. Local level governance helps to identify local problems and issues realistically and resolves them accordingly. It has further been recognised that democracy is thriving in nations that support a participatory decision-making process.

Secondly, decentralisation is conceived within the context of “governance”. Therefore, decentralisation is an instrument for promoting (through participation of locals and holding local leadership accountable) good governance at the local level. Good governance, according to the IHUDS (2002), denotes a relationship between the government and the civil society, and the participation of stakeholders in governance. It is based on equal treatment of citizenry; efficient and effective use of resources; improvement of economy; promotion of entrepreneurship; transparency, and accountability in response to the electorate’s demand for services. The contemporary practice of governance differs from the traditional approach in that it is concerned with devising ways in which a society organises itself to create and implement policies.

**CHAPTER THREE: SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN PRE-  
INDEPENDENCE NAMIBIA: WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE  
BANTUSTANISATION POLICY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

In this chapter the literature regarding Native Reserves and Bantustans is reviewed since Bantustans were built on reserves. Bantustans/homelands and reserves as key concepts are defined. The rationale for the creation of Bantustans is also reviewed thereby laying the foundation for the comparative analysis that will come later in the study.

### **3.1 Definition of Key Concepts**

#### **3.1.1 Bantustans or Homelands**

The two terms are normally used interchangeably because they are synonymous. In chapter one, Töttemeyer (2001) and Cohen (1994) both defined Bantustans as “ethnically or tribally defined communal areas” or as “geo-political units defined on the basis of assumed cultural, political, socio-economic and ethnic differences”. Egero (1991) states that Bantustans refers to areas designated by the South African Government as “homelands” for that country’s African ethnic groups. In the pre 1994 South African government circles, they were known as “National States” or “Black States”. As it has been said, Bantustanisation is a concept derived from the term “Bantustan”. It was a

policy and simultaneously a process of geographically separating or isolating non-whites from whites and from each other based on race and colour.

### **3.1.2 Reserves**

According to Mbuende (1986) “Reserves are those areas in which Africans could run their own affairs in accordance with their own laws”. However, the laws being referred to here were not necessarily or literally Africans’ per se, but instead the apartheid and colonial discriminatory proclamations and ordinances that were imposed by the then South African government. This is so, because they were not empowered to make any laws.

## **3.2. Sub-National Governance in Namibia: Historical Perspectives**

The history of sub-national governance in Namibia can be traced according to the following successive phases of Pre-colonialism, German Colonial Period and South African Regime just as the process of governing in the country itself.

### **3.2.1 The Pre-Colonial Period**

Before colonialism came, traditional leaders exercised and performed the powers and duties of political and administrative decision-makers. All the political, administrative,

economic, social, military and religious authorities were vested in the traditional leadership without separation (Tötemeyer, 2001). Although traditional leaders performed almost similar duties across the board, it is not correct to generalise that there was no separation of power and responsibilities in all communities. This is so because some communities had and still have governance structures, which differed from one ethnic group to another in the context that some were centralised and others decentralised. In Caprivi for example, traditional structures were more decentralised because there were and still are village, district and main khuta structures as different levels of administration. Similarly, other communities like the San, Damaras, Hereros and Kwangaris also had devolved rather than centralised systems of governance. Equally important is that other ethnic groups had chiefs (Caprivi), kings without kingdoms (Oshiwambo) and paramount chiefs (Hereros and Damaras).

### **3.2.2 The German Colonial Period**

The German colonial rule began with the zoning of then South West Africa into three main administrative units, namely, the northern sector beyond the Red Line and beyond the confines of the Police Zone, the Police Zone, and the Eastern Caprivi Zipfel. The German Government exercised administration in those zones directly or indirectly. In the then Eastern Caprivi Zipfel for example, indirect administration and control was used through the traditional tribal structures because of its remoteness and inaccessibility from Windhoek (Tötemeyer, 2001 & Du Pousani, 1986).

### **3.2.2.1 The Evolution of Reserves**

The Namibian historiography, provided specifically by Amukugo, (1993) Cohen (1994), Mbuende (1986), SWAPO (1981), and Katjavivi (1989) informs us that the establishment of Native Reserves which later turned into Bantustans for the indigenous black population in then South West Africa (Namibia) commenced in the early 1900s during the German colonial rule. Bantustanisation was a policy and strategy undertaken by both the German and South African governments to advance their political and social interests. The strategy began with the expropriation and confiscation of the more fertile land from the indigenous black populations to make way for the increasing number of white settlers and missionary activities, leaving the indigenous groups with little and poor quality land, which was found to be useless for the white settlers. Cohen, (1994) informs us that it was during this time of expropriation of the indigenous land that the idea of establishing 'reserves' emerged. This notion/policy was prompted or necessitated by the fact that the German government needed more land for white settlers, while missionaries needed the reserves to guarantee future missionary work and to enable them to easily maintain their Christian congregations. There is a difference between the orientations and approaches of native reserves under the German and South African governments. Firstly, under the German government, the motive was to acquire land through expropriation for settlers and missionary activities, while under the South African regime it was used to promote white superiority, marginalisation, exploitation

and segregation of Blacks based on race and colour. The approach was through ‘separate residential development’ for Blacks isolated away from Whites.

It is important to note that native reserves under the German rule existed only within the Police Zone and not in the northern regions/beyond the red line. The implication was that this process under the South African regime required the identification of areas for relocation of Blacks in the Police Zone, whereas in the northern parts the rights of the people were affirmed on the land that was traditionally theirs.

Similarly, the exercise of acquiring land was in certain cases and communities, especially in the southern part of Namibia, achieved through the use of traditional structures. For instance ‘Protection Treaties’ were entered into between traditional leaders and Germans in return for large tracks of land (Cohen, 1994). To this end, it is argued that the use of traditional or tribal structures was another strategy that the German government used in the administration of homelands to advance their interests. This statement corresponds to Egero’s (1991) views that the Bantustan strategy contained two essential ingredients, namely the creation of Bantustan administrations through the revitalisation of tribal authorities, and their incorporation into the de facto white rule of the reserves thereby opening the doors for African class formation in the Bantustans. The Bantustan strategy was a serious attempt to apply indirect rule, leaving the domination and control of the African people to their own “tribal or traditional”

rulers. This objective was important with the forced relocation of thousands of Africans into Bantustans.

According to Mamdani (1996), chieftaincy or chieftainship was in certain cases manufactured and chiefs were imposed on people. A case in point in Southern Africa is the Native Affairs Act, of 1927 in Zimbabwe, which gave the governor-in-council the right to appoint whomever he considered suitable for the chieftainship position (Mamdani, 1996). A similar case was reported by Du Pisan (1986) that the South African President was empowered to establish tribal authorities and determine their duties, power and functions. To date, the Traditional Authorities Act, 2000, determines and outlines traditional leaders' powers and functions and empowers communities to choose their own traditional leaders. The President comes in to endorse what the communities have decided upon. This shows that chieftainship was truly a tool used for political and economic gains by the colonisers.

#### **3.2.2.2 Local Government Administration**

The introduction of local government administration for Whites was instituted in then South West Africa (SWA) in 1904 and formalized after the visit of the Colonial Secretary. The delay was attributed to ongoing wars between the Germans and Hereros and Namas. Du Pisan (1986) adds to this list poor economic climate, the colony's high dependence on foreign capital and investment, and the immensity of the country. During

the entire German rule in Namibia, local government administration for Whites was predominant in the central and southern part of then South West Africa (Police Zone), while beyond the red line (northwards) no local government was instituted at all.

Töttemeyer (2001) and Du Pisani (1986) wrote that two levels of local government were instituted during the German period, namely, the *Local Councils* responsible for the construction and maintenance of public streets and parks, provision and control of water supply within the local authority boundaries, and the *District Councils* with representatives from the Local Council in the respective districts, and others residing outside the local authority boundaries. District Councils were responsible for dealing in matters outside the responsibility and geographical jurisdiction of the Local Council. The black population's participation in local governance was totally excluded.

### **3.2.3 South African Regime**

Berry,(1998) states that “In terms of the League of Nations’ mandate for South West Africa, the responsibility for the well-being and development of the indigenous (Black) population was vested in the government of the Union of South Africa, and was exercised on its behalf by the Administrator of South West Africa”. After officially taking over the administration of South West Africa in 1920, the South African Government had little choice but to rely, to a large extent, on then existing reserves and re-established tribal authorities to rule large areas of the territory. This was because it

had neither the manpower, nor the infrastructure to do otherwise in a country with a surface area of 824 269 square kilometers and a sparsely distributed population. These views concur with Töttemeyer's (2001) statement that the structures under the German colonial period remained unchanged when the South African government took over the administration of SWA/Namibia.

However, Cohen (1994) and Mbuende (1986) alluded to the fact that the League of Nation's mandate was abused and breached by the South African government. This particularly referred to the expropriation of the indigenous fertile land for white settlers and the introduction of apartheid policies in Namibia.

Robert Von Lucius (in Berry, 1998) pointed out that the idea of ethnicity as a vital foundation of public policy has been in practice for a long time in South West Africa. Therefore, the formal establishment of ethnically based "homelands" in South West Africa was thus a logical extension of a system of government which had been in operation in the territory. After the 1948 National Party election victory and the formal implementation of apartheid in South Africa, the South African government viewed the creation of "self-governing" states based on the boundaries of the major ethnic groups, both within the borders of South Africa and South West Africa as an amicable answer to de-colonisation of the indigenous populations.

### 3.2.3.1 Evolution of Bantustans

Bantustanisation was a form of decentralisation. However, it does not fit at all into the current decentralisation, because it was racially oriented, and the focus and approach don't match with the democratic process embodied in the present decentralisation. The Bantustanisation policy under South African rule was utilised to pursue and re-enforce the apartheid policy aspirations.

The Bantustan proposal first evolved in South Africa through the creation of Transkei as a single Bantustan (<http://anthonydamato.law.northwestern.edu>). This evolution of Bantustans was said to be a consequence of the adoption of the apartheid policy in 1948 as a regional policy applicable to South Africa and Namibia. A Website Encyclopedia reference on apartheid (<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/history/A0856652.html>) informs us that under the prime ministership of Hendrik Verwoerd, apartheid developed into a policy known as “separate development” whereby initially each of the South African and later Namibian Bantu groups were to become a nation with its own homeland or Bantustan. The apartheid policy was meant to promote the supremacy of Whites and racial segregation, not only of Whites from non-whites, but also of non-whites from each other.

Similarly, as earlier indicated Butler, et al. (1977) and Egero (1991) reiterated the same views that the Bantustan development in South Africa draws its origin from both the

work of the South African Native Affairs Commission established in 1903 and the Land Act of 1913. Reference is made to South Africa because the apartheid regional policy was transplanted from there to Namibia. Chapter two has it that the aims of those two pieces of legislations were to create a cheap, controllable African workforce for the farms and mines, crush the independent peasantry outside the reserves and restrict its size inside the reserves, because they posed formidable competition to white farmers, and to prevent an alliance developing between the “poor Whites” rurally based and urban workers, and the dispossessed Africans.

Furthermore, as has been noted, the evolution of these self-governing areas (Bantustans) was seen as South Africa’s answer to de-colonisation. Hence, in 1962 the infamous Odendaal Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs was appointed. Its task was to define the geographic, economic and political aspects for the implementation of apartheid in the country. This Commission’s recommendations formed the cornerstone of South Africa’s policies in South West Africa. It recommended the systematic extension of South Africa’s ethnic fragmentation and partitioning of South West Africa’s communal areas into ten homelands, namely, Damaraland, Hereroland, Kaokoland, Bushmanland, Tswanaland, Namaland, Rehoboth, Okavangoland, East Caprivi, and Ovamboland (Du Pisani, 1986 and Forrest, 1998). See Figure 1: The Bantustan Map as recommended by the Odendaal Commission. Each group except for Whites and Coloureds occupied and were confined to their own “homelands” (Du Pisani, 1986, Cohen, 1994, SWAPO, 1981, Katjavivi, 1989). Du Pisani (1986) went

further to say that Owambo, Kavango and Eastern Caprivi were later granted “self-government” status.

The implementation of the Odendaal Commission’s recommendations commenced with the passage of the Development of Self-Government for Native Nations in the South West Africa Act, No. 54 of 1968. In terms of this act, those areas under traditional/tribal authorities were set aside to be “reserved and set apart for the exclusive use and occupation by the respective ethnic groups who lived in them. Therefore, The Development of Self-government for Native Nations in South West Africa Act (Act No 54 of 1968) set the stage for extending self-government to the “Native Nations of South West Africa”.

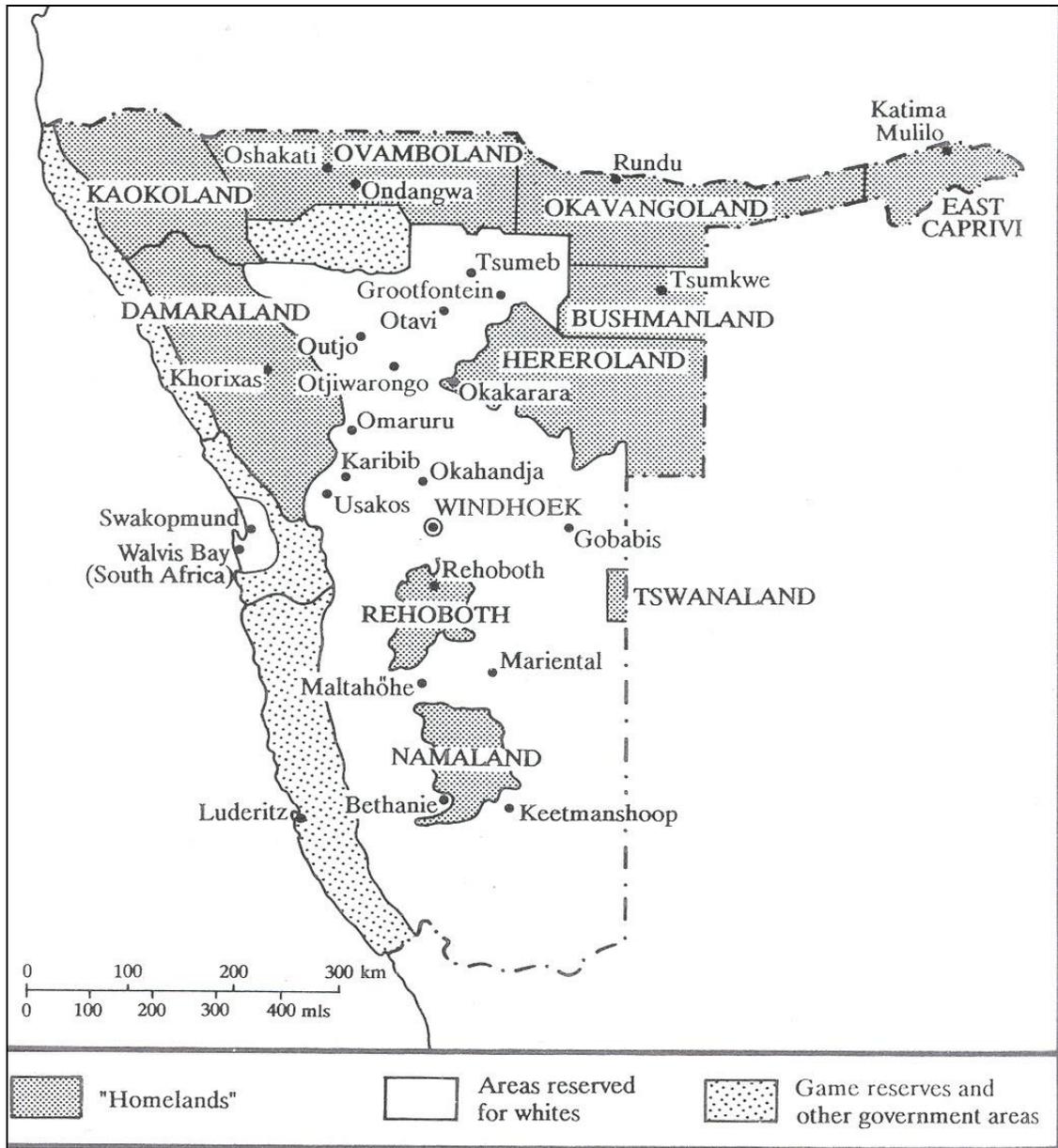
Furthermore, the Bantustan proposal in SWA/Namibia was supplemented and consolidated by the Ethnic/Second Tier Government Proclamation AG8 of 1980. The Proclamation was regarded as the Territory’s new Constitution that further made provision for a three-tier government system based on ethnicity. As a result, Ten Second Tier Representative Authorities came into being, namely Caprivi, Coloured, Damara, Herero, Kavango, Nama, Owambo, Rehoboth, Tswana and Whites (Putz, et al (1989).

None of these Native reserves were viable for agricultural production because they were made up of broken tracts of poor-quality land riddled with erosion, and incapable of

supporting their large designated populations. With no industry, employment opportunities were few (<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/history/A0856652.html>). SWAPO (1981) states that small, arable and useless country land to white farmers was set aside for homelands, and the remaining bigger portion of the land that included the major mineral areas and cities was reserved for the Whites.

There is a link between the expropriation of native land and Bantustans/homelands, in the context that some African groups were initially relocated and settled in reserves, which white settlers found useless and unsuitable for agricultural purposes. Governance in homelands was characterised by being discriminatory and non-participatory, and to the extreme non-existent. The majority of the African population was not permitted to participate in local government administration.

Figure: 1. Ethnic 'Homeland Map' according to the Odendaal Plan



Source: Cohen, 1994

In 1978 elections on non-party basis were held in Bantustans and culminated in the establishment of Legislative Assemblies and Executive Committees in homelands. However, as has been earlier noted that some tribal groups and political parties like the Damara Council, SWAPO and DEMCOP boycotted the 1978 elections either because their demands for a constitutional conference to be internationally supervised and to include all political parties not only ethnic traditional leaders were not met, or because they were not allowed to partake, and/or elections were held on non-party basis.

Those elections meant that each of the homelands was to have its own legislative councils with limited political autonomy, nominal ordinance-making powers and executive council with similar administrative powers. However, the State President of South Africa retained the right to amend or repeal legislations, to make new laws for any black group by proclamation, and to replace the government of any ethnic group or community. S/he was also vested with the power to establish additional homelands by proclamation and was further empowered to establish tribal, community and regional authorities, and to determine their functions, duties and powers (Du Pisani (1986). The homeland administrations were assigned responsibilities for among other purposes education, welfare services, business and trading undertakings of the local communities, roads, administration of justice, agriculture, labour and taxation (Cohen, 1994). However, as time went on the South African government took over some of those responsibilities like provision of education services.

Despite the black population resistance, which was usually brutally suppressed by force (the case of King Mandume and Chief Ipumbu in Cohen 1994), extremely restrictive and discriminatory orders were imposed on them. For example, they were not allowed to own land or raise cattle; they had to carry passes at the age of seven and produce proof of their livelihood or face prosecution; and they were punished for leaving their reserves because movement was restricted except when they were working for Whites. Even if workers had permits, they did not include spouses and families of the permit holders, thus, contributing to the breakup of family life among many Africans. These restrictive orders were further supplemented by the curfew orders for Blacks in white areas (Curfew Regulations Proclamation No. 33 of 1922) and the Masters and Servants Proclamation No. 34 of 1920, which controlled employment conditions. This Act further legitimised a system of child labour through compulsory apprenticeship of children born to farm labourers under service contracts.

Cohen (1994) summarised the effects of this situation by stating that “These developments resulted in a situation whereby class became directly linked to political and economic power. The Whites constituted a ruling class, Blacks a working class without any significant political and economic power or leverage”. Du Pisani (1986) adds to this list the creation of fear and hopelessness in the black communities. In Mamdani (1996) the following remarks were made: “The native should only be allowed to enter urban areas, which are essentially the white man’s creation, when he is willing to enter and to minister to the needs of the white man, and should depart therefore when

he ceases so to minister”. These remarks manifest how exploitative and abusive the apartheid system was towards the African population.

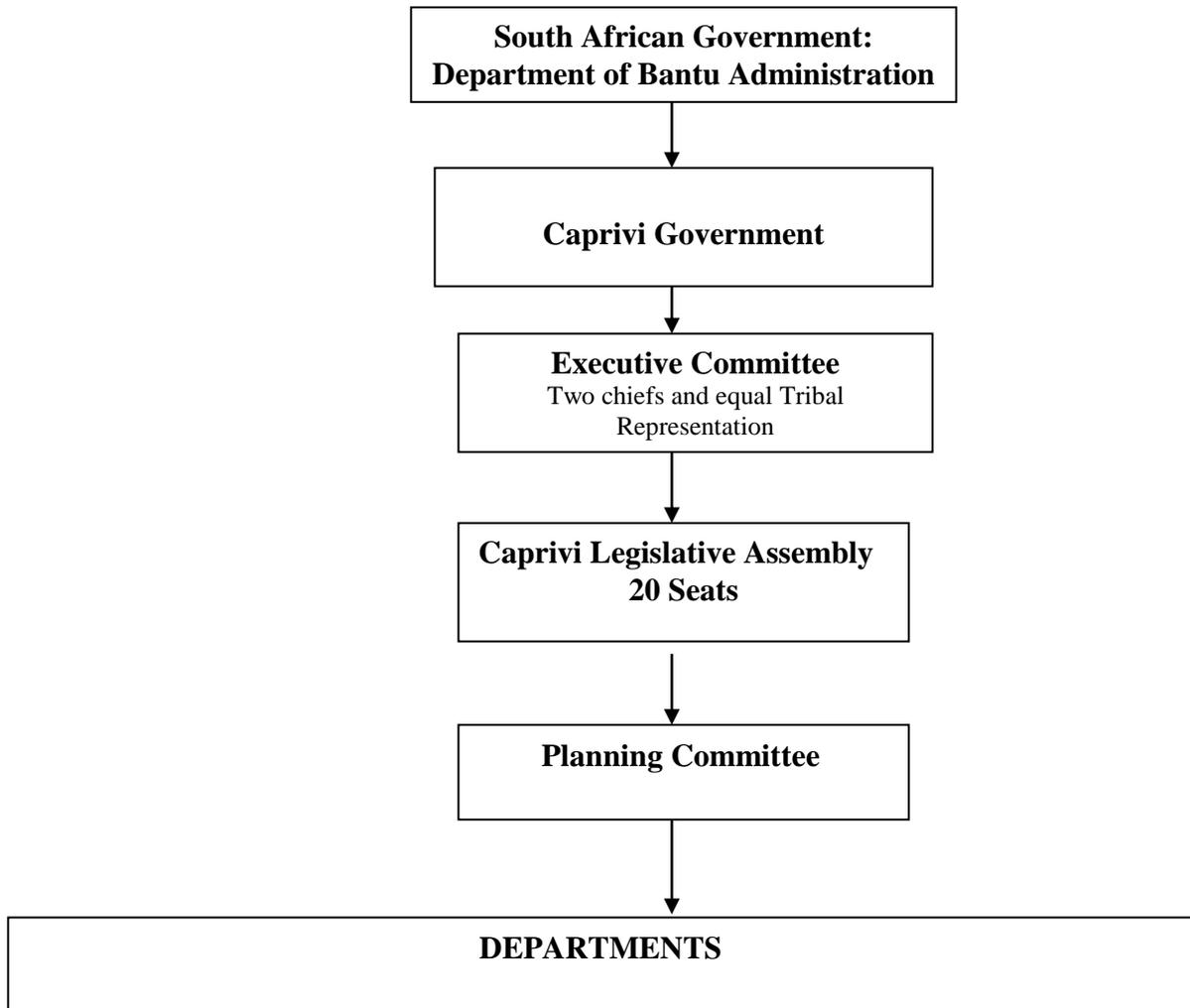
As if this was not enough, further legislations (Education Ordinance No. 27 of 1962) were enacted and the Dr H. J. Van Zyl’s Commission was instituted to assess the possibility of extending the South African Bantu Education into the South West Africa (Namibia). The rationale of this ordinance was to confine the indigenous people to the roles of subordinate workers, to increase government’s control over black education, reduce funding for black education, as well as to be able to alter the actual content of black education (Cohen, 1994). The educational content only covered basic literacy in the mother tongue and a working knowledge of English and Afrikaans to facilitate communication with Whites. Chapter two made reference to the fact that education stressed the values of tribal life and rural skills, religion, and hygiene rather than academic subjects. The explicit intention was that Blacks be confined to the lowest grades, with their ambitions restricted to the tribal context. The perception and attitude about the black population was that they are born slaves, lazy, and in need of constant supervision, harsh punishment and education for work was rapidly ingrained and widespread in then South West Africa. (Töttemeyer, 2002).

To conclude this section on the evolution of Bantustans, a summary of the policy process or cycle is hereby discussed below. Policy Conception: The Apartheid Policy was first conceived in South Africa by the then South African government before the democratic transition in 1994. After the realisation of the effects of this policy, political

parties had options to either do nothing about it or opt for a multi-racial solution. According to Anthony Damato, “Between these two alternatives, a host of partition schemes were advocated and one of them was accepted, “Bantustan proposal”. The Nationalist government was reacting to international pressure when it adopted the Bantustan Policy, because it believed through physical separation of the races, the rest of the world would stop threats of attacking white minority rule in Southern Africa. Through the Odendaal Commission of 1962, public hearings were held. However, since the Commission’s mandate was to extend the establishment of the South African policy of “Homelands” to SWA/Namibia (Cohen, 1994), one may think that the public hearings were just a mere formality and indication of the participation of people, while the decision was already taken. This researcher believes that public input could not at all influence the policy otherwise.

Policy Design: Taking the Caprivi Bantustan as a case study, the administrative and communication structure was as indicated below:

**Figure 2: Bantustan Policy Design Structure**



The Bantustanisation Policy had full government support and legal frameworks or backing. The ultimate goal was the pseudo-independence of Bantustans. The Bantustan independence plan was implemented in phases and was supposed to be attained in the following sequence: Bantustans have own legislative assemblies and executive committees, coat of arms, flags and national anthems and constitutions among others. By 1984 Caprivi, for example, was at the stage of drafting its constitution (Putz et al. (1989). There were administrators appointed to each Bantustan whose responsibility was to ensure public compliance (monitoring) with the policy. Law enforcement agencies also played that role.

Policy Termination: The plans to turn homelands into independent homelands were never realised. This was due to the fact that the policy was terminated and structures abolished in 1989 after the implementation of UN Resolution 435, which led to Namibia's independence in March 1990. Therefore, the policy could not be evaluated.

### **3.2.3.2 Local Government Administration**

#### **3.2.3.2.1 Municipalities**

According to Töttemeyer (2001) municipalities were instituted for a given community within a determined geographic area as proclaimed by law. Municipal Councils administered municipalities and their functions and powers were provided for in South West Africa Municipal Ordinance No. 13 of 1963, as amended. This especially applied

to Whites and Coloured segments of urban areas. Municipal councils consisted of only Whites and only they had voting rights.

Black townships within municipal areas were administered by municipalities on an agency basis for the central government in terms of the Urban Areas Proclamation No. 56 of 1951. Local government and administration had to comply with the South African imposed policy of separate development according to ethnic and racial criteria. Accordingly, each municipality had separate residential areas for Whites, Coloureds and Blacks.

#### **3.2.3.2.2 Village Management Boards**

The Village Management Boards were established in various localities south of the Red Line and were controlled by Ordinance No. 14 of 1963. Any area that was situated outside a municipal area could be proclaimed a Village Management Board Area with a board appointed by central government. These boards, like the municipalities, were subject to the overriding control by the central government in respect of the appointment of senior officials, estimates of annual expenditure, making of regulations and the purchase, acquisition or hiring of fixed property (Töttemeyer, 2001).

#### **3.2.3.2.3 Peri Urban Development Board**

The Peri Urban Development Boards were instituted in terms of Ordinance No. 19 of 1970. These boards had the right to formulate policies and to exercise defined executive

powers. Their functions, according to Töttemeyer (2001), ranged from the whole spectrum of municipal services to the mere supply of water, and included the tasks previously assigned to Village Management Boards. Stampriet was a Peri Urban Development Board.

#### **3.2.3.2.4 Local Government in the “Homelands”**

Töttemeyer (2001) confirms that “No formal local government was ever instituted in the so-called “homelands” in Namibia, thereby depriving nearly seventy percent of the total population’s participation in local government and administration”.

In summary, during the South African Regime, the policy of apartheid and racial discrimination was practiced at all levels of governance and administration. Only the white minorities were entitled to full and direct participation in local governance. Ninety-five percent of the black population was thus excluded from direct participation in local governance, from policy formulation, decision-making and from controlling the implementation of policy. Most of the central power and partly also at “homeland” level, was directly or indirectly exercised by South Africa (Töttemeyer, 2002).

In summary, Bantustans were built on native reserves and their intentions were to divide and rule Africans while keeping them in homelands. Africans were subjected to various discriminatory legislations, exploitation, restriction of movement, abuse, denial of land and other important resources and proper education. Consequently, the creation of

Bantustans resulted in the creation of pools of labour for agriculture and mines sectors. The researcher strongly believes that Africans suffered psychological effects in the context of inferiority complex, submissiveness and hopelessness as a result of the apartheid policy. Thus, there is a high possibility of emulating such governance in the post-independent Namibia because it is all they know about governance.

Finally, the bottom line that should be understood about Bantustans is that they were unauthoritative, tailor-made to extend the strong hold of the colonial authorities in the then South West Africa, and were viewed by colonial authorities as extensions of the state. This was in the sense that they did not advance or represent the community interests but those of central government. Bantustans were established through subordinate legislations that allowed the colonial state presidents to dissolve such bodies without seeking recourse from the territorial citizenry. In addition, these bodies were dependent on the benevolence or kindness of the Administrator General of then SWA/Namibia.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DECENTRALISATION IN NAMIBIA**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the decentralisation process in the post-independent Namibia and how it is viewed, defined and motivated in the Namibian context.

In a research study conducted and earlier cited in chapter one by Justine Hunter (2004), Political Parties contesting the 2004 Regional, Presidential and Parliamentary Elections had interesting and diverse viewpoints about “Decentralization in Namibia”. Though all the parties alluded to the importance of the devolution of powers and resources to sub-national government levels, the SWAPO Party classified the implementation of decentralisation within the overall goals of national reconciliation and fostering peace and common loyalty to a unitary state; SWANU argued that decentralisation could easily be misunderstood as a different form of apartheid; and MAG demanded a federal system based on ethnic origin. These diverse views depict the extent and importance that political parties attach to decentralisation and how far it should go.

Nevertheless, the IHUDS (2002) put forth the argument that decentralisation is unlikely to achieve its broader objectives unless it is accompanied and supported by structural, functional, and fiscal reforms along with reforms leading to a participatory approach in local planning and management, and capacity building. Moreover, all these reforms

must be backed up by clear and precise legislation. These reforms are regarded as the parameters and requirements for effective decentralisation. To this end, in the discussion about the Namibian decentralisation process, reference and comparison will often be made to these requirements to determine whether the Namibian decentralization process meets those requirements or not.

#### **4.1 Definition of Key Concepts**

In Namibia, as has been noted in chapter two decentralization is understood to be a process through which power, responsibilities and resources for public functions are delegated or devolved from central government line ministries to Regional and Local Authorities within the framework of a unitary state and under the guiding principle-functions-follow-funds and personnel (Decentralization Enabling Act, No. 33 of 2000 & Hunter, 2004).

#### **4.2 Background**

Decentralisation in Africa dates back to the late 1960s. Particular reference is made to Sudan's and Zambia's decentralisation reforms of 1960 and 1965 respectively (Oluwo, 1990). The motivational or motivating factors for embarking upon decentralisation then, were attributed to the realisation of the ever-increasing costs of over-centralisation and internal and external political pressure from the World Bank, International Monetary

Fund and donors. Since then, decentralisation has been a popular theme or concept in development thinking and practice. To date, there is an increasing willingness/movement across the globe to decentralise governance, expenditure assignment and tax authority for enhancing national development (Conyers, 1984) in the (IHUDS, 2002). The notion of decentralising planning and development, especially to the institutions of local government, is nowadays advocated by government, the World Bank, IMF and donor organisations as an effective mechanism to respond to the needs and grievances of the local communities—in particular the low-income and marginalized groups. Hence, decentralisation has become an increasingly acceptable and preferred strategy and approach to address grassroots needs in developing countries.

#### **4.2.1 Policy Conception**

The Policy of Decentralisation in Namibia was first conceptualised and introduced in 1989 in SWAPO's Political Manifesto on Local Government and Housing. The Manifesto provided that "Under SWAPO government there would be democratically elected authorities in rural and urban areas, in order to give power to the people at grassroots level, to make decisions affecting their lives" (MRLGH, 1998). That vision was later enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, Article 102, subsection (1) which states that " For purposes of regional and local government, Namibia shall be divided into regional and local units, which shall consist of such regions and local authorities as may be determined and defined by Act of Parliament".

The enactment of the Regional Councils Act, 1992 and the Local Authorities Act, 1992 created these sub-national structures. This instituted and marked the formal introduction and implementation of decentralisation in Namibia. It should be noted that wide consultation of all key stakeholders in the form of seminars and workshops was undertaken from the inception of the policy in 1989 to date, in a bid to gain their input and consensus in the decentralisation process.

#### **4.2.2. Motivation for Decentralisation**

The introduction of decentralisation in Namibia should be viewed against the historical background of the un-democratic and discriminatory form of governance before independence. At that time, the majority of the people did not have the right to make decisions on matters that directly affected their lives, and were not given opportunities to determine their own destiny (NDP II, 2001). However, at independence the Republic of Namibia was established as a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary state founded upon the principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all in an attempt to redress past imbalances which were based on colour and race criteria.. Article 10, subsection (1) and (2) of the Namibian Constitution states that “All persons shall be equal before the law, and no persons may be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status”. Article 23 (1) of the Constitution, which abolishes and prohibits apartheid practices, is applicable too (The Namibian Constitution, 1990). In the same manner, the Policy of

Decentralisation is anticipated to operate and function within the above constitutional frameworks, principles and requirements.

Equally important due to historical reasons, decentralisation in Namibia was adopted as the state's approach to guarantee democratic participation and achieve sustainable development. Decentralisation is seen as the guarantor for democracy and development. Testimony to this are the remarks by former Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing, Dr Nicky Iyambo, on the tabling of the Decentralisation Policy in Parliament: "This provision in the Constitution should not be seen as merely requiring decentralisation, but also demanding the type of decentralisation which constitutes the extension of democracy and participation for development to the furthest corner of our country and to the humblest of our citizens" (MRLGH, 1997). The Policy was introduced in 1997 and its implementation followed in 1998.

### **4.3. Legal Frameworks**

The ideals of decentralisation are enshrined in The Namibian Constitution, Chapter 12, Article 102 (1), and the fundamental principles are embodied in the Decentralisation Policy, which came into being in 1997. To fulfill this constitutional requirement the Regional Councils Act (No. 22 of 1992) as amended, Local Authorities Act (No.23 of 1992) as amended, and Traditional Authorities Act (No.25 of 2000) were enacted and adopted by parliament respectively. These legislations gave these authorities the

necessary framework for the delivery of specific public services, and promoted a decentralised three-tiered government structure.

Besides those, other legislations were enacted such as the Decentralisation Enabling Act, (No.33 of 2000) to provide a legal framework for the implementation and regulation of the decentralisation of functions to both the Regional Councils and Local Authority Councils, and the Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provisions Act, (No.22 of 2000) to assist with the process of decentralisation and regional development in terms of offering financial assistance and technical expertise to the Regional Councils and Local Authorities, to help them address the current regional inequalities, promote sustainable development and enable comprehensive capacity building.

Equally important to note is that these institutions draw their existence and authority from the Constitution and Acts of Parliament. Therefore, they cannot be abolished at the will of central government without regard to proper procedures. These structures, due to their proximity to grassroots people, are intended to promote participatory democracy, bring government closer to the people and sustainable development to Namibians regardless of their race, colour, religion or sex.

#### **4.4. Objectives of Decentralisation**

At independence, the new government inherited an unequal society with deep-rooted social and economic disparities based on grounds of race, ethnicity, colour, and sex ingrained in both people and institutions. Therefore, decentralisation in post independence Namibia is designed to achieve the following key objectives: to extend, enhance and guarantee participatory democracy; to ensure and safeguard sustainable development and positive change; to transfer power to the regional councils and local authorities based on national ideals and values; and to improve the capacity of regional and local authority councils to plan, implement, manage and monitor the delivery of services to their constituents (MRLGH,1997). In addition, Töttemeyer (2002) cites bringing government closer to the people, supporting grassroots empowerment, quality governance and administration, enhancement of accountability and promotion of local economic development.

Decentralisation is thus, aimed at devolution but within the framework of a unitary state. Once more, the system of governance during the colonial and apartheid-era necessitated the choice of decentralisation within the framework of a unitary state. Due to the vastness of the country, and the unequal distribution of the Namibian population of 1.8 million today, centralisation could not work (Census Report, 2001). Some people argued that a federal dispensation could be appropriate, because inherited structures like Bantustans were federal. However, as pointed out earlier Töttemeyer (2002) shot down

the arguments for a federal dispensation stating that “The disparities and inequalities between black and white, dis-empowered and empowered, rich and poor, which were often based on the colour of the skin”, had to be rectified. In addition, “There were differences in the quality of life between parts of the country, the unequal stages of development in such parts and the disunity in the population”.

As has been noted, Töttemeyer (2002) felt that “a strong integrative and regulative political system was best embodied in a unitary state and could through a strong central authority best reconcile and unify a disunited and conflict-ridden society that was inherited from the dispensation of colonial rule”. Despite this justification, there are still calls, mostly from political parties, for a federal system in Namibia and the debate for and against federal and unitary state continues hence, partly influencing this study. The arguments for federalism are non-representative-ness of government, dominance of one tribe, uneven distribution of power and resources.

To sum up, decentralisation within a unitary state is firstly significant for the unification and reconciliation of the Namibian population. Secondly, it implies that under the devolution phase, central government will change its roles and functions into becoming policy making/formulation, standard setting, monitoring and quality assurance, supportive and capacity building and regulating bodies. This situation would in a way prevent the repeat and perpetuation of history and gives government ample time to redress the historical inequalities and disparities that were based on colour and racial

criteria. In a unitary Namibian state, the general public would not be restricted to their own ethnic regions, but enjoy the freedom of mobility and settlement anywhere across the country at their pleasure. However, there is a perception among Namibians that under a unitary state, “People are treated the same but not equal” thus, favouring a federal system. The argument put forth here is that “In a unitary state all people are treated the same, but in reality people are not treated equal. For example, communal land allocation conditions are the same in all the regions. However, ownership of this communal land differs in the northern and southern regions. In the northern regions, communal land can be transferred from one family member to another, whereas in the southern regions ownership of the same land cannot be transferred from one family member to another, but rather to the particular community for re-allocation.

#### **4.5 Implementation Approach**

The decentralisation implementation process is to be phased in systematically and functions to be decentralised have been identified and categorized into immediate, medium and long term, and may be decentralised to either Regional Councils or Local Authorities. The Decentralisation Policy and Decentralisation Enabling Act (No. 33 of 2000) states that decentralisation would pass through various stages, starting with the delegation of functions and ending up with devolution. In this context, Delegation means the decentralisation of a function from a Line Ministry to enable and empower a Regional Council or Local Authority to perform the function as an agent on behalf of the

Line Ministry. Devolution means the decentralisation of a function empowering the Regional Council or Local Authority with full administrative decision-making and budgetary control. Under devolution, the line ministries' roles would be limited to policy making, standard setting, and monitoring and evaluation of devolved functions.

As mentioned above, the implementation of decentralisation is planned to start with the delegation of functions to Regional Councils or Local Authorities. At this phase these institutions or entities will become responsible for the operational matters of the delegated functions. Line Ministries would be responsible for listing all operational matters concerning the delegated functions and to provide guidelines for them, including the professional and technical standards to be attained, and for financing the cost of programmes under the delegated functions. To this end, the Line Ministries have been requested to indicate the amount of funds budgeted and approved for the delegated functions and services by programme and per region.

The MRLGH is the lead agency tasked to coordinate the decentralisation implementation process. Other key players include the National Planning Commission, Office of the Prime Minister, Line Ministries, RCs and LAs, trade unions and civil society organizations. The Decentralisation Policy Implementation Committee (DPIC), which is a committee of Permanent Secretaries, is tasked to provide policy guidance, management and direction to the whole process of decentralisation. However, this committee is dormant and inactive, and does not meet regularly as expected because of

lack of political direction, commitment and interest in the process. DPIC operates as if it is not responsible for overseeing the decentralisation implementation process and/or decentralisation is not its priority. The researcher attributes the dormancy and inactivity of DPIC to the fact that its role over the decentralisation implementation process is not legislated thus, it has no legal backing to oblige it to perform that responsibility. Furthermore, the Secretary to Cabinet in the Office of the Prime Minister who chairs this committee have not shown enough political commitment or use the authority of this office to rally the committee to action for deliberations on decentralisation issues due to perhaps other pressing demands.

In order to provide all stakeholders involved in the decentralisation process with a guiding instrument through the delegation phase of decentralisation, the MRLGH prepared the Decentralisation Implementation Plan (DIP). DIP gives guidance to the central level in the preparation of handing over procedures, the actual transfer of staff and resources, and the follow-up and support services provided. For the regional and local levels it provides guidance with regard to the preparation and the actual implementation of delegation. Furthermore, the DIP recommended the establishment of cross-ministerial taskforces to address crosscutting issues and problems encountered during the decentralization implementation process and to prepare for the delegation of functions. These taskforces were established in the areas of finance, personnel, training, legislation, development planning and budgeting, housing and office matters. To date these taskforces have produced draft documents on financial guidelines for RCs and

LAs, secondment guidelines, development and budgeting guidelines and a legislation harmonisation report which identified sector legislations which are inconsistent with the decentralisation policy.

Those draft documents by the taskforces were submitted to the DPIC for further consideration. However, due to this committee's inactivity, the documents have not been reviewed or considered for approval yet, thus delaying the process.

#### **4.6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Decentralisation Process**

For central government to ensure that the decentralisation process is smoothly implemented, implementation targets were set, monitoring mechanisms were to be put in place, and a review timetable worked out though now outdated. Some of the monitoring activities of the decentralisation process are performed by the cross-ministerial taskforces mentioned above. For instance, there is a taskforce on legislation harmonisation which is responsible for reviewing legislations inconsistent with the decentralisation policy. Similarly performance indicators were developed such as political consensus, resource mobilisation and utilisation, delivery of services and accountability among others, which were meant to assist the evaluation process. To date, five years since the commencement of the decentralisation process, no evaluation has been done to assess whether the policy implementation is on course and if there is a need for any adjustment in the process.

#### **4.7. Regional and Local Authority Dispensation**

Local Authorities existed during both the German and South Africa period. To date, major alterations and adjustments have been made in terms of their governing legislations, structures, responsibilities, autonomy and scope of operation. In addition to this, Töttemeyer (2002) adds that the inherited forms of local governance are constantly evaluated to determine whether they comply with day-to-day demands.

Regions and their governing authorities were instituted as new entities in the political-administrative dispensation of Namibia. They never existed during the colonial era and are not comparable to the despised ethnic "homelands/Bantustans" established on the basis of racial and ethnic criteria (Töttemeyer, 2002). They are not comparable in the sense that they differ in terms of structures, objectives and philosophies, functions/responsibilities and other constituent elements like the criteria for the separate development and demarcation of regions or Bantustans.

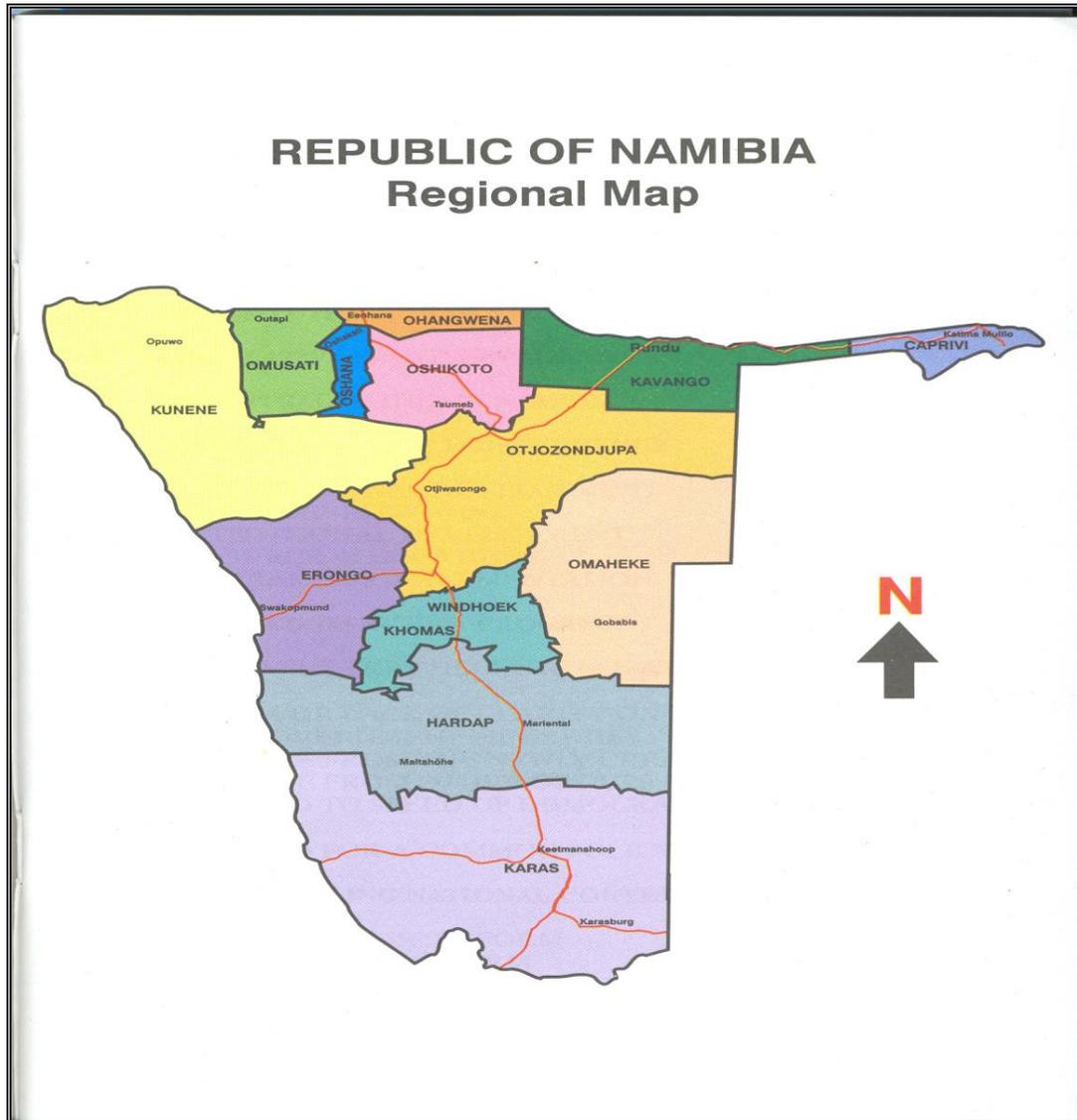
However, Forrest (1998) informs us that "The establishment of regional governance was a compromise by SWAPO leadership, who were of the idea that regional governance was associated with the second tier ethnic governments of the South African period". This was an anathema to SWAPO members, because they had no interest in constructing any type of regional governing structure that bore even a faint resemblance to that apartheid-era system. SWAPO had instead intended for the government ministries to control the regions centrally from Windhoek. But how does this idea of regions being

controlled from Windhoek relate to SWAPO's 1989 Manifesto of having local government structures in urban and rural areas as well as decentralisation?

Apparently, due to SWAPO's weary sensitivity to ethnicity, regional governance structures were not established until Cabinet appointed the Delimitation Commission after independence. Consequently, when the Delimitation Commission decided on the thirteen regions, it paid particular attention to regions as coherent and interdependent dynamic entities with particular attention to their economic potential and geographical consideration within the context of overall national development rather than ethnicity (Töttemeyer, 2002, 2<sup>nd</sup> Delimitation Commission, 1988).

Consequently, Namibia has thirteen Regions that cover the entire geographical area of the country. Each region is further divided into a number of constituencies, each with an elected councillor. Regional Councils play a planning role that is aimed at promoting development in their respective regions. There is no direct responsibility for rendering municipal services (except in settlement areas), but they have a broader mandate to ensure that governmental services are rendered in their respective regional areas, either through Line Ministries, such as Health and Education, as well as through parastatals (NamWater and NamPower) that render services such as the provision of water and electricity. Therefore, Regional Councils have a more direct linkage to national government than to local government.

**Figure: 3. Regional Map of the Republic of Namibia**



Source MRLGH, 1997

Under the new post-independent legal framework (Regional Councils Act, 1992 as amended), Regional Councils have been tasked with the responsibilities to assist and consult central government on all proposed legislation and development planning for the

region, play an initiating role in identifying and managing settlement areas, advising the president or minister on matters referred to by the president or minister, and making recommendations to the Minister of Finance on financial matters relating to regions. Regional Councils have coordinative and residual functional responsibilities of an agent in lieu of central government (MRLGH, 1997 and Tötemeyer 2002). Mukwena & Drake (2000) summarized the powers and functions of Regional Councils as: Socio-economic development planning in their respective regions; Establishing, administering and controlling of settlement areas in their respective regions; Providing support to local authorities in their regions in order to enable such local authorities to improve their status; and Advising national government on matters affecting their respective regions.

In addition to the thirteen political regions and Regional Councils, there are forty-seven Local Authorities that are classified into four types, namely, Part I & II Municipalities, Town Councils and Village Councils. LAs and VCs in accordance to the Local Authorities Act (1992) as amended, are also mandated to provide municipal services in their areas of jurisdiction. Both the Regional and Local Authorities are legal and autonomous entities established on the principle of non-subordination. The relationship between them is built on the premise of mutual autonomy. The key functional relationship between the two is that of collaboration and cooperation (NDP II).

The observation in this regard, and despite what the legal framework advocates, is that the relationship between the two entities varies from good to bad to worse from one

region to another. This is attributed to the silence of the legal framework on which of the two entities is superior. According to Mukwena et al. (2000) RCs are supposed to support LAs in their regions to improve their status, and on top of that they have an upper hand on regional development planning. However, the legal framework says the two entities are on par, without having regard to functions RCs perform over LAs. These are some of areas which have led to the poor relations between the RCs and LAs. Furthermore, the relationship between Regional Councils and Local Authorities is superficial in practice, as each undertakes its roles and functions independent of the other. Despite the legal framework having put in place mechanisms for them to be in constant communication through exchanging minutes of their respective meetings and joint development planning and budgeting sessions through structures such as the RDCC, the relationship has in certain cases worsened.

Since both the RCs and LAs play a pivotal development planning role, structures like the RDCC, LADC, VDC and SDC have been put in place at all levels. These structures further provide platforms for citizens at regional and local levels to raise their problems and needs. Presently these structures are dormant because of lack of support, lack of incentives to the membership, and representatives of lower level of line ministerial taking major decisions.

Article 108 (c) of the Constitution empowers Regional and Local Authorities to raise revenue through tax collection. The ultimate goal is fiscal autonomy, implying that

regional and local authorities should have the capacity and ability to raise resources by themselves and thus reduce their dependence on central government. Financial decentralisation is based on the definition of the principles of financial discretionary powers of RCs and LAs Councils i.e. powers to levy local taxes and the obligation of central government to supply local governments with adequate grants. The principle allows these councils to pass their own budgets reflecting their own priorities. However, further observations reflect that though the legal provision provides for grants from central government, to date no grants have been allocated or disbursed to regional and local authorities, thus leading to distressed local authority finances. In addition, RCs' financial base is narrower and line ministries still budget for RC and LAs, thereby denying them financial autonomy.

Local Authorities in Namibia operate on the principle of cost and debt recovery. Their financial positions vary from those independent of financial support from central government and thus to a large extent autonomous such as City of Windhoek, Walvis Bay and Swakopmund, to those that are fully dependent on government support (mostly Part II municipalities, Town and Village Councils). Their financial problems are justifiable because most local authorities in Namibia function in communities with low incomes, insufficient housing, low employment opportunities, underdeveloped infrastructures and services, a weak economic base, high rate of the HIV/AIDS victims, and reluctance by central government to provide grants to sub-national authorities. They are further faced with growing demands for scarce financial, managerial, administrative

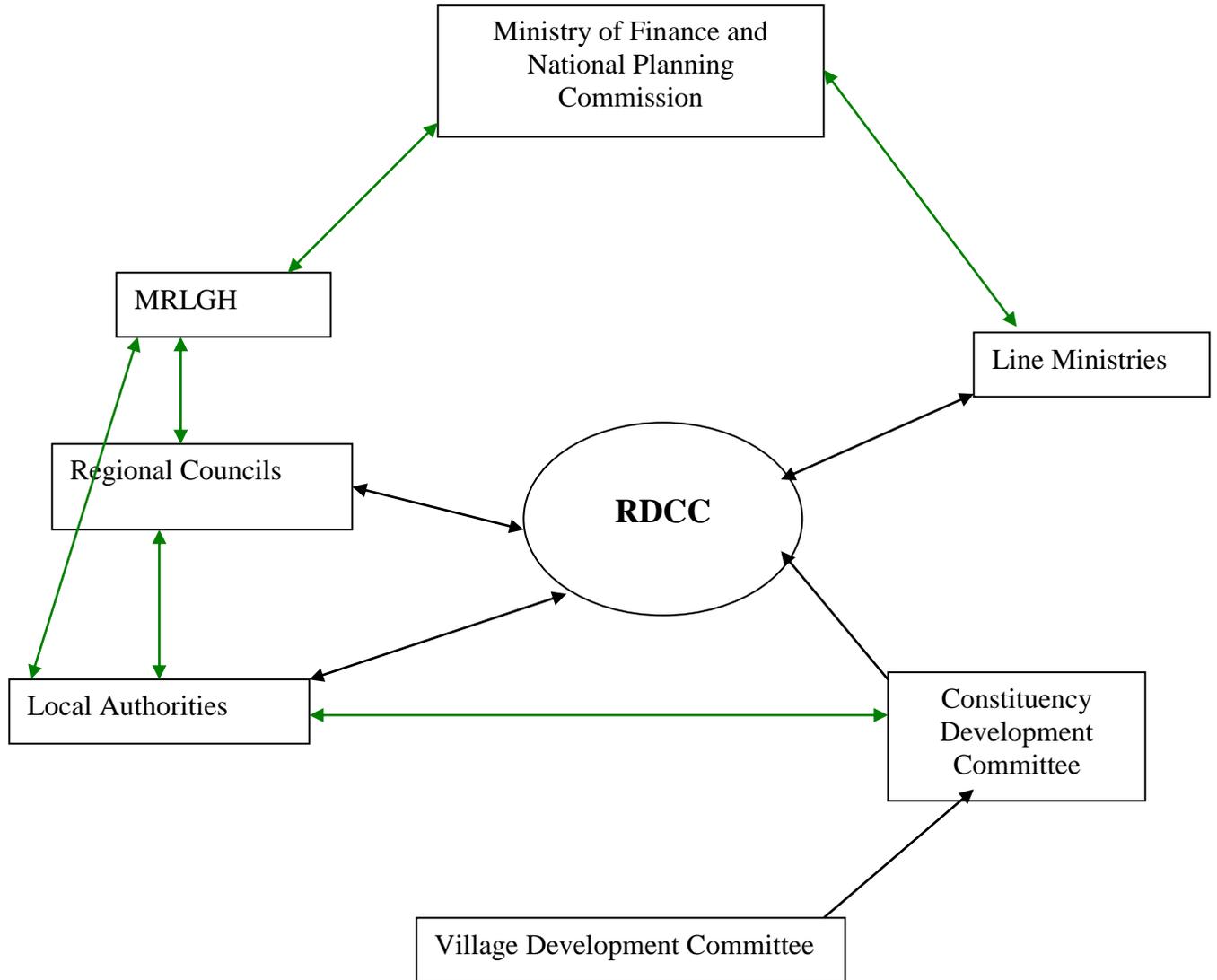
and planning resources/skills. This scenario does not depict a favourable situation for a successful decentralisation in Namibia.

Decentralisation in Namibia seems to be in line with the parameters set by IHUDS (2002), because it seeks to transfer political, administrative, financial and planning authority from the centre to regional and local authorities. Decentralisation is seen as a reform which will reorganise the functioning of the national and sub-national governments, and empowerment tool for the communities. However, like any other process, it is faced with challenges such as corruption and mismanagement of resources in local authorities, lack of financial resources (the case of Otavi, Katima Mulilo and Okakarara Town Councils), inability to develop, maintain and upgrade municipal infrastructures, lack of capacity, human resources and infrastructures (housing and office) in Regional Councils, for instance Ohangwena RC and regional disparities at sub-national government levels (NDP II, MRLGH-DIP, 2004). In terms of capacity and human resources, the situation has improved through the recruitment/or filling of top regional management positions such as Chief Regional Officers, Directors and Deputy Directors in Human Resources, Administration, Finance and Planning.

In conclusion, despite having commenced with the decentralisation implemented process since 1998, to date the government remains highly centralised, the process is still in the preparatory/planning phase, there is no sub-national government financial autonomy, and the line ministerial role has not changed. The process moves haphazardly, very

slowly and at times uncoordinated. This is mostly attributed to the lack of political direction and commitment. The enactment of the legal framework on decentralisation is neither sufficient, nor is a clear indication of the political will and commitment to the decentralisation process. In any event, Olowu (1990) informs us that in Africa decentralisation has failed not because of lack of legislation, but lack of financial resources. The coordination of the process is weak, and this has been observed to be a result of the fact that decentralisation is seen by other line ministries as a line function of the MRLGH and hence, does not have that extra power and authority to enforce compliance to the policy on fellow line ministries. DPIC, which is suppose to enforce that is inactive and the Permanent Secretary of MRLGH is just a member and not the chairperson of this committee. So, relocation of the Directorate of Decentralisation Coordination to a higher office could be an alternative to ensure compliance by line ministries. Despite the above observations, decentralisation in Namibia remains aimed at devolution within the framework of a unitary state, and this is commendable. However, the objectives of democracy and development will not be attained through implementation of decentralisation alone, but require commitment on the part of both central government, sub-national governments and the general public to practice good governance for the sake of the decentralisation process to achieve its set goals.

**Figure: 4. Decentralisation Flow Chart: Showing the Intergovernmental Relationship**



NB: The green arrows represent budget allocations, planning; communication and advice while the black arrows depict representation and coordination.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents data gathered through a survey based on questionnaires and interviews to the target population as well as the analysis thereof.

### **5.1. Data Presentation and Analysis**

This section presents, interprets and analyses in depth the data captured during the data collection process, to give meaning to and implications of some of the information obtained. The questions and responses were grouped into four thematic headings, namely, public awareness and understanding on decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans, public support to decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans, public perception on performance of decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans and public perception on government support to decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans.

### **5.2. Public Awareness and Understanding on Decentralisation and Bantustans**

An overwhelming public knowledge and awareness of decentralisation was evident and prominent among the study participants. All the fourteen members of the public (representing 100%) thus, confirmed that they had prior knowledge of the concept of decentralization. This can be attributed to the fact that in addition to MRLGH's efforts to

popularise the concept countrywide, most of the study participants were employees of Line Ministries, Regional Councils and Local Authorities. Testimony to this is the fact that participants did not only answer yes to the question “Have you ever heard about decentralisation in Namibia?” but also managed to interpret and relate the aims of decentralisation in Namibia, which are to bring government closer to people by transferring central government functions; power for decision-making, responsibilities and resources to sub-national governments as a measure for allowing people to plan and administer their economic development, promote socio- economic development; and to devolve power to Regional Councils and Local Authorities within the framework of a unitary state.

Similarly, 93% of the members of the public surveyed agreed that decentralisation was necessary in Namibia against 7% who abstained. The arguments of those who agreed were that in Namibia, a big country with diverse needs, centralisation would not have worked. In this context decentralisation is seen as a means for enabling people to engage in economic planning of their respective regions, for facilitating government to reach rural people and enhance their participation, and for preventing mass migration of people to urban areas. It is also seen as a necessity for improvement and extension of service delivery, and empowerment of rural communities. Besides the necessity of decentralisation, 36% of members of the public surveyed were however, of the view that decentralisation was not being implemented properly because the implementation

process was haphazard and very slow due to lack of capacity and financial resources, against 57% who held views to the contrary, and 7% abstaining.

Nonetheless, this study also observed a 100% awareness and understanding among participants of Bantustans. This researcher attributes this to the fact that both key informants and members of the public were selected on the basis of their expertise in Bantustans and the fact that most of the participants in the study might have either studied, experienced or lived in Bantustans. As with decentralisation, participants were able to identify the aims of Bantustans as self-determination and separation of communities based on ethnic, race and colour; as racial segregation aimed at divide and rule; and as marginalisation of people and deprivation of the indigenous people of land and other valuable resources to mention but a few. However, the views of key informants on the question of whether there was a need for retaining certain characteristics of Bantustans in the context of the post-independence policy of decentralisation revealed that the majority of them (60%) argued that nothing about Bantustans should be retained under decentralisation because the two systems had different ideologies and objectives, and that there was a need for a total change in doing things after independence. However, 40% felt that signs and symbols like flags and Coat of Arms to identify and unite tribes and the autonomy and intergovernmental relations were some of the characteristics or aspects that could be retained. The proposal to retain Coats of Arms and flags in the context of decentralisation is unfortunately not feasible under a unitary state such as Namibia.

Nevertheless, it is the conviction of this researcher that certain symbols and flags that identify or distinguish one tribe or ethnic group from another are still in existence and operational in traditional authorities. For example, the Katima Town Council logo still bears two elephants representing two traditional authorities which existed before independence, and should be no longer relevant because the number of chiefs has since increased from two to four.

### **5.2.1 Similarities and Differences between Bantustanisation and Decentralisation**

The questionnaires were summarised in such a way that the views of the respondents were prescribed along a YES and NO continuum. The aggregation of responses reflect that 20% of key informants and 7% of members of the public surveyed agreed that decentralisation is similar to Bantustans, in contrast to 60% of key informants and 93% of members of the public surveyed holding a view to the contrary, while 20% opted to remain neutral. The justification for those who agreed was that in both systems decisions are taken at regional level and power is transferred to sub-national government level. Likewise, participation, development and democracy which are some of the core values that decentralisation promotes, were also said to have been embodied in the Bantustan Policy because there were elections, and from a socio-demographic point of view there seems to be a persistence of the dominance of one tribal group in both regimes i.e. in the former regime it was Whites and in the present one it is the Oshiwambo-speaking people. The dominance of Oshiwambo-speaking Namibians in government should not be misconstrued as the same as former white minority regime because they constitute

50% of the Namibian population. With regard to elections in Bantustans, Putz et al. (1989) and Töttemeyer (2003) as earlier highlighted acknowledge the holding of elections but also noted that such elections lacked legitimacy, because political parties like SWAPO and DEMCOP in Owamboland and the Damara Council in Damaraland boycotted them.

Töttemeyer (2003) dismissed the views linked to the similarities between decentralization and Bantustans, stating that “Bantustans were ethnic based or tribal dispensations, which promoted the geographic separation of black, brown and white inhabitants from one another. Bantustans were based on group rights, race and ethnicity, imposed top-down governance, restriction of movements, and selective land policy favouring Whites as opposed to decentralisation”.

With regard to the determination of traditional leaders in Bantustans, Mamdani (1996) in chapter three argued that chieftainship was manufactured and imposed on people and was an indirect strategy used by colonizers to pursue their own political and economic aspirations. The difference between then and now is that, by then, colonizers appointed chiefs who they could work with and use on behalf of the communities. Whereas today the Traditional Authorities Act, 2000, empowers communities to appoint their own chiefs through the traditional channels e.g. some traditional seats are hereditary. This process normally concludes by submitting the name of the appointed/nominated chief to the Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing and the Head of State for

endorsement or acceptance (no rejection) and gazetting. The claim by one key informant that the Bantustan Policy was also development oriented is nullified by the fact that development was based on colour and ethnicity, and that it was only for military purposes.

In contrast, the 60% of key informants and 93% of members of the public surveyed who disagreed with 20% of the key informants and 7% of the members of the public saying that decentralisation was similar to Bantustans, indicated and concurred with Töttemeyer's views that decentralisation is different from Bantustanisation in the context of their ideologies and objectives. In addition, Bantustans heavily emphasized symbols and tribal identity, whereas decentralisation emphasises national unity, service delivery, democracy and development at all levels of government.

Even though a substantial percentage of respondents indicated that decentralisation is different from Bantustans, 20% indicated a YES and NO to the question of whether decentralisation was similar to Bantustanisation, citing reasons such as both systems advocate transference of power, resources, and responsibilities from central government to sub-national governments. Decentralisation emphasizes more on service delivery, development and democracy as opposed to much emphasis on racial separation for Bantustans.

### **5.2.2 Public Support to Decentralisation**

In an attempt to establish further differences between the two policies, participants were asked questions to ascertain the public support for decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans on a scale of high, moderate, low and very low. The results are as follows: Decentralisation: high 43%, moderate 29% low 21% very low 0% and 7% abstained. Bantustans: high 0%, moderate 21%, low 21%, very low 43% and 14% abstained. To this end, the study notes that the support for the Bantustan Policy among the members of the public rates very low in comparison to the support for decentralisation.

The fundamental reason for such support for decentralisation could be attributed to the assumptions that decentralisation contributes to the democratisation process; empowerment of people; and promotion of participation, good governance and development. Similarly, support for decentralization can be connected to the benefits that participants of this study indicated are being enjoyed by Namibians, namely increased government consultation of the public, the participatory nature of the decentralization process, payment for traditional leaders and elevated honor to go with their positions, freedom of choice and movement regardless of race and colour, empowerment of rural communities, and improved infrastructures such as roads, schools and hospitals. The fact that decentralisation connotes all positive developments that have happened in an independent Namibia, such as improved road infrastructures, schools and hospitals in the regions, people are persuaded to support it. However, this statement does

not imply that there are no negative views against decentralisation. One of such views is that the policy is being used by government to marginalise certain communities or promote certain communities' interests at the others' expense.

In contrast, the Bantustan Policy was observed to be less supported among both the key informants and participating members of the public. The principal reasons for this are: firstly, the Bantustan Policy carries a negative connotation of apartheid, which is accused by many for its inhuman injustices, abuses and discriminatory policies that prevailed prior to independence. Secondly, the Bantustan Policy was imposed on the people and was often seen as a form of control, not development oriented, unaccommodative, exploitative and restrictive in comparison to decentralisation.

Thirdly, the key informants attributed Bantustans' unpopularity to the few benefits and opportunities that it created for the majority of the African population, added to the fact that only 12% of Whites were interviewed in comparison to 88% of Africans. This should not be interpreted as implying only Whites supported Bantustans, because some Blacks were treated differently under the Bantustan Policy. In fact this system was designed to benefit only Whites and if a large number of them could have been interviewed for this study's purposes, they could cite more and better benefits from the Bantustanisation Policy.

Notwithstanding that, study participants indicated that the following factors greatly contributed to the unpopularity of Bantustans. These were, non-permanent houses were built in some communities, sub-standard service delivery was provided, and schools that were built faraway from communities. Beside this, 20% of key informants against 80% felt that although the public support for the Bantustan Policy is very low, it strengthened tribal and cultural communities to protect their own interests. Seemingly, it allowed indigenous people to assume responsibilities; increased the power base of regional government; created opportunities for better support and commitment to serve one's tribe; and created equal bursary allocation for the Bantustans and provided job opportunities for the few through appointments as chief ministers or ministers. In sum, the power of patronage benefited the elites more than the majority; and it is being perpetuated even in the post-independent Namibia. For instance one may interpret the statement by SWAPO politicians that "Only SWAPO loyalists will be employed in top positions of government and parastatals" as another way that will promote patronage.

On the question of whether decentralisation promotes tribalism, 71% of the members of the public surveyed replied to the contrary (NO) compared to 21% (YES), and 7% neutral (YES & NO). Those who replied NO, justified that thirteen political regions were not demarcated on tribal or ethnic lines, there is freedom of movement and settlement, and there is freedom to take up employment opportunities anywhere in Namibia. Whereas the respondents who replied YES, argued that decentralisation could promote tribalism if not properly implemented; while the respondents who answered

YES&NO argued that “People feel decentralisation should benefit exclusively particular groups of people who originate from those regions e.g. Caprivi for Mafwes and Subias, Omusati for Mbalantus; and because regions recruit other people from other regions”.

It seems that there is a misunderstanding of the fact that even if one ethnic group is dominant in a particular region, that may not necessarily be true in terms of employment statistics or records. This researcher is of the opinion and it is permitted by the Affirmative Action Act, that if a region is constituted by for example 75% of one tribe, such dominance should be so reflected in employment statistics as well.

Responding to the same question of whether decentralisation promotes tribalism, 20% of the key informants replied YES compared to 20% replying NO, and 60% remarking “it depends”. The 20% who responded that decentralisation promotes tribalism argued that the first Regional Officers or Regional Administrators were appointed on tribal lines because they all originated from those regions; in Caprivi Region most councilors and the governor come from one tribe. The recently recruited Chief Regional Officers (CROs) also reflect promoting ethnicity or tribalism because all the CROs for regions like Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshana, Oshikoto, Kavango, Caprivi and Karas come from those regions. Similarly, in Ohangwena and Caprivi Regions all directors as well come from those regions.

However, directors appointed at Caprivi Regional Council, although they hail from that region, come from different tribes, but the fact remains that the Caprivi RC is 100% constituted of people from Caprivi thus, a perpetuation of ethnicity. With regard to the dominance of one tribe as councilors in Caprivi RC, this cannot be controlled because these were elected by their respective communities. It is important to note that in Caprivi Region or the rest of Namibia, ethnic groups or tribes associate themselves with particular political parties. Given these facts some people use them to argue that decentralisation is similar to Bantustans because they all promote tribalism.

On the other hand, 20% said NO to the question of whether decentralisation promotes tribalism because power is not allocated to Regional and Local Authorities as ethnic institutions and they are not based on tribal lines. Instead, "Power goes to elected bodies and tribal institutions as per Traditional Authorities Act, 2000". The remaining 60% remarked that "If decentralisation is implemented based on Bantustans, and if allowed to deviate from the policy and objectives, then it is likely to promote tribalism. In the same vein, proposals were put forth to counteract or prevent decentralisation from promoting tribalism. For instance, there must be guidelines for the recruitment process in the regions preventing them from promoting ethnicity; the present Affirmative Action Act should be amended to cover recruitments based on ethnic grounds; the management cadres of Regional Councils should be recruited in such a way that they represent all Namibian racial groups; RCs & LAs should be even-handed in terms of allocation of resources; and guidelines on how national goals can be realised in accordance with

national criteria e.g. status of development of a region should be provided. The lack of housing was identified to be contributing to or influencing the recruitment process because only those people from such regions would be willing and prepared to take up job opportunities in the same region because they can get accommodation easily.

### **5.2.3 Demarcation of Regions**

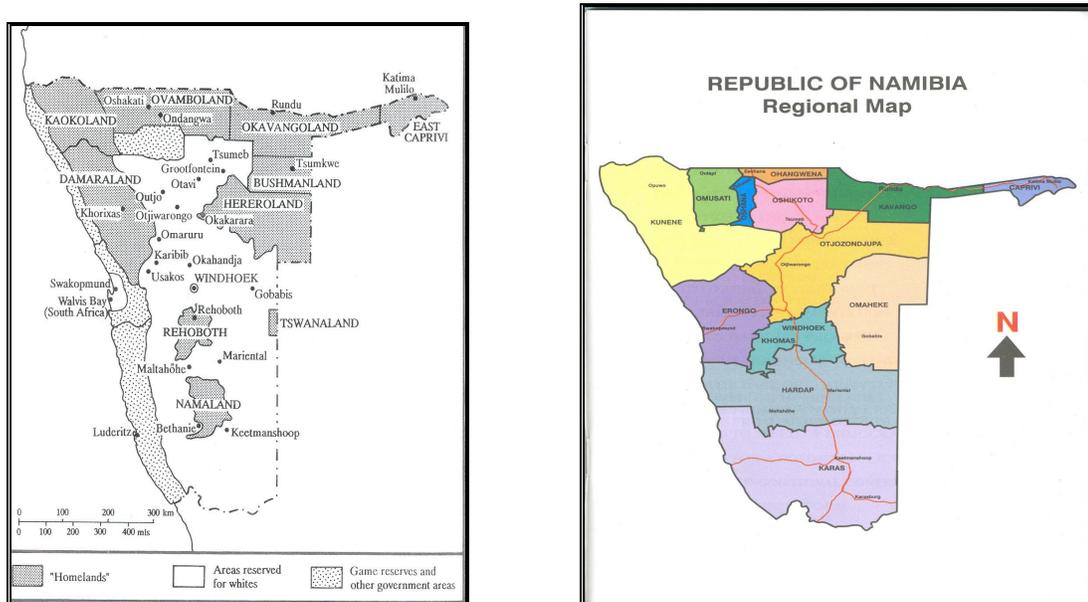
This section addresses two questions firstly, to ascertain from key informants and members of the public whether they were content or discontent with the way regions are demarcated, and secondly, whether the regional demarcation or boundaries were similar to Bantustans. To this end, 50% of the members of the public expressed their dissatisfaction with the way their regions were demarcated, while 43% disagreed and 7% did not respond. The arguments put forth by those who agreed are that some regions are inclusive of different ethnic groups and are demarcated according to economic considerations and population size. The participants who disagreed pointed to the tribally motivated demands by some groups for the Katima Rural constituency to be divided into two constituencies. Those making these demands feel that there are two different tribal/traditional authorities in the same constituency where people are answerable. It also appears as if one tribe dominates the constituency to the dislike of the other tribe. It is on this basis that these people appealed to government to split the constituency into two. Likewise people also appealed for the return of Mukwe Constituency to Caprivi Region as recommended by the first Delimitation Commission. The reason for their appeal is that they feel the region has become smaller as a result and

is now wrongly demarcated as far as historical boundaries are concerned. This is one of the misconceptions of the exercise of regional delimitation in the context of the Decentralisation Policy. To those making these demands, the policy objective is misrepresented and misunderstood.

With regard to the second question on the similarity of regions to Bantustans, 93% of the members of the public said they are not similar, against 7% who abstained. The arguments put forth were that the Namibian Constitution, Article 102 (2) states: “The delineation of the boundaries of the regions and local authorities shall be geographical only, without any reference to the race, colour or ethnic origin of the inhabitants of such areas”. By contrast, Bantustans were ethnic based with boundaries determined on the basis of one ethnic group’s area of jurisdiction. Owamboland was one Bantustan, whereas today there are four regions. Bantustans also restricted the exercise of political rights and movement. On the contrary, the key informants’ responses were divided, with 40% replying YES, 40% replying NO, and 20% responding YES&NO simultaneously. The participants who agreed commented: “Bantustans fitted well into the new regions for example Tswanaland, even though we have four regions in the former Owamboland, their boundaries are largely based on ethnic grounds”. One respondent said “Yes Kavango, Caprivi and northern regions are to a large extent replications of Bantustan boundaries”. The Delimitation Commission reports in Töttemeyer (2002) that it did not take into account the ethnicity factor during the demarcation of regions, but instead geographic and economic potential of regions in terms of development plans. For

example Rehoboth was integrated into the Hardap Region to benefit from the agricultural sector of that region (Figure: 5). The comments by some key informants that Caprivi, and Kavango Regions resemble former Bantustans can be confirmed as it can be noticed from figure 5 that little or nothing was changed. Similarly, in the former Owamboland, regions retained the ethno-dominance. For instance, as alluded to earlier Ohangwena is predominantly for Kwanyamas and Omusati for Mbalantus which existed in “Owamboland” as a Bantustan.

**Figure: 5 Bantustan and Regional Maps in Comparison**



As for the participants who said NO, they cited reasons such as “the demarcation of Caprivi and Kavango Regions combines the two because Caprivi extended into Kavango (Figure: 5), Owamboland was one Bantustan in comparison to four regions today,

Otjozondjupa and Omaheke were called Hereroland but are now divided into two regions, the demarcation of regions was not based on ethnic criteria”. One key informant remarked that the demarcation of regions might still represent the dominance of ethnic groups especially in the northern regions. However, this should not be misconstrued to mean promoting tribalism or ethnicity because geographical and economic factors were considered during the demarcation of regions instead of the factors of ethnicity. Finally as for the participants who replied YES and NO at the same time, they cited the following reasons: “Caprivi and Kavango Regions reflect ethno-geographical features to Bantustans, the Delimitation Commission attempted to avoid ethnicity for example by combining former Kaokoland and Damaraland as Kunene Region (Figure: 5) where Bantustans were based on ethnicity, and decentralisation attempts to integrate the population”.

#### **5.2.4. Political Party Support**

The 1989 SWAPO Political Manifesto on Local Government and Housing, as previously quoted advocated for “Under SWAPO government there would be democratically elected authorities in rural and urban areas, in order to give power to the people at grassroots level, to make decisions affecting their lives”. According to Hunter (2004) NUDO in its party manifesto (n.d.: 1) asserted that “The regions should receive additional governing powers and the potential to earn more revenue”; while Republikien Party’s manifesto called for “A ward system of voter representation to be reintroduced into local government”. Lastly, as has been noted, MAG called for a federal system

based on ethnic origin in Namibia. The above quotes reflect how different political parties view decentralisation in Namibia and to what extent or extreme it should be implemented. To this end, key informants were asked to shed light on the reasons why political parties called for a federal system in Namibia. The responses obtained were “The call came from smaller political parties who want to have different policies from the ruling party which however, lack the necessary capacity to influence policy making and therefore, prefer a different approach based on ethnic grounds.” They also claim that resource allocation is not equitable, there is dominance by one tribal group, politically motivated, and unbalanced power distribution. They further argued that decentralisation within a unitary state requires more accountability to central government than in a federal system, and that some political parties are ethnically based. However, one key informant agreed with Töttemeyer (2002) that a federal system was not viable for Namibia on the grounds of the population size.

### **5.2.5 Public Perception on Performance of Decentralisation and Bantustans**

This section attempted to gauge in a comparative manner the performance of Bantustans vis-à-vis decentralised structures hoping to identify similarities and differences. The dominant response was that “The two systems were not comparable” due to their different objectives. The question was thus, rendered irrelevant in the sense that sub-national governments today aim at developing regions irrespective of race and/or tribal elements of their respective residents. Bantustans did not approve the appointments of

people in regions other than those they originated from. As a result, there was no sharing of professional expertise in Bantustans. Therefore, one's expertise was only valued in his/her home area.

In terms of capacity to perform assigned responsibilities between decentralised and Bantustan structures, there was a sort of consensus that both systems and structures lack capacity to perform as expected by the general public, hence the following comments: "There was no training provided in Bantustans," and "Regional Councils and Traditional Authorities lack capacity and experience". These comments prompted the researcher to conclude that both decentralised and Bantustan structures are not performing up to the expectations of the public. However, under decentralisation capacity building of sub-national governments is being promoted as the process continues to be implemented. Furthermore, Regional Councils' and Traditional Authorities' roles were proposed to focus on collecting revenues from general public to fund economic activities such as roads, schools and hospitals, to serve as information filters between central government and communities, represent the communities to improve their social, economic and moral emancipation, and to unite and promote development among their communities and subjects.

### **5.2.6 Participation**

This section presents the views of the informants regarding how the scope for public participation in the affairs of Regional Councils and Local Authorities were in terms of

decision-making in comparison to Bantustans. The findings were as follows: The RCs scored high 21%, moderate 29%, low 36%, very low 7%, and 7% did not respond, LAs-high 14%, moderate 50%, low 21%, very low 7%, and 7% did not respond. Whereas, for Bantustans, high 0%, moderate 21%, low 14%, very low 57%, and 7% abstained.

According to these results, in terms of allowing the public to participate in the decision-making process RCs were rated low with 36%, LAs 50% moderate against a very low rating of 57% for Bantustans. One can only speculate that perhaps decentralised structures are more accessible and participatory than Bantustans were. However, the 36% low rating for Regional Councils could be attributed to the fact that they are either distant from the rural communities they suppose to serve or the structures which are meant for public participation such as the Regional Development Coordinating Committees (RDCC) are dormant or non-functioning. To this end, RCs should attempt to improve their consultation, accessibility and involvement of people in decision-making through community meetings. Furthermore, the study found out that 79% of the members of the public disagreed against 7% in agreement, and 14% did not respond on the issue of whether RCs or Traditional Authorities operate or function like former administrations. The reasons for disagreements were that “members of councils are democratically elected”. Those in agreement made a vague statement that they are more like former administrations without any qualification or motivation. This researcher can only speculate that perhaps not much is known about what Regional Councils and Traditional Authorities do and/or because of the earlier stated reasons such as

dominance of one ethnic group in the political and administration components of Regional Councils.

Nevertheless, 12% of both key informants and members of the public combined singled out the health and rural water supply sectors as some of the areas where better services were provided in Bantustans, against 88% who disagreed. This refers to the availability of doctors and medicines, and provision of free water to communities. The unavailability of doctors in Namibia is a result of the historical factor that Africans were not allowed to study or take science courses which are pre-requisites for such professions; whereas the negative rating of the performance of rural water supply may be a result of the commercialisation of water in the country. With regard to the present health statistics, they reflect great improvement in terms of national budget allocation, number of Namibian doctors (87 in 1998), health infrastructures such as clinics (246 in 2000), health centers (37 in 2000), and health personnel (99% in 1998). Overall health coverage improved and sanitation also improved tremendously with 28% in rural areas and 92% in urban areas (NDP II). Similarly, the Department of Rural Water Supply also recorded improvements in establishment of regional water supply offices (9), construction of earth dams (31), 1336 water points, water point committees in rural areas and provision of training to water committee members to manage water points (NDP II).

The participants in this study felt that RCs and LAs are sufficiently empowered to use their resources to attain institutional objectives and goals at the rate of 50% compared to

29% against and 21% abstaining. Some of the arguments against were that ministers and traditional authorities could overrule them, or that they lacked financial resources and skills. The overruling by ministers and traditional leaders is indeed seen to be a negative as it undermines the autonomy of these institutions.

Regarding the improvement of the capacity and performance of sub-national governments, most of participants in the study felt that the appointment of people from other regions was a good thing. “As long as language barriers would not affect their involvement with communities, this will strengthen unity, promote competition, fairness and inter-racial relationship. However, staff at the lower end of the same scale should be appointed from within the specific regions”. They argued that regions are not tribal entities. Therefore, qualified personnel should be appointed on merit.

In conclusion, the successes of decentralisation were observed to be neither measurable nor insignificant because not much has been attained. However, participants cited proclamation of towns, establishment of RCs and LAs, building of constituency offices, recruitment of thirteen Chief Regional Officers and setting up of Regional Tender Boards as evidence of the achievements and successes of decentralization in Namibia. However, proclamation of towns based on political reasons, is tantamount to killing small towns because the public is not used to paying for services, and in most cases they lack financial and technical skills to manage such institutions. The proclamation of towns based on political reasons entails that there are stages through which an area

should go through before it is proclaimed as a town, namely settlement, village, town and municipality. However, those that get proclaimed on political grounds jump those first two phases. There is connection between “political reasons” and “paying for services”. It is in the context that towns should be nurtured and allowed to grow through those prescribed stages to develop and strengthen their capacities, rather than shortening the process through political decisions. Communities should be made aware of their responsibilities and implications such as “paying for services” during the phases of settlement and villages, before their areas of settlement are proclaimed as towns. Moreover, implications and responsibilities when well articulated and agreed upon would lead to communities advocating for proclamation of their areas into either a town and/or municipality.

## **5.2.7 Public Perception on Government Support to Decentralisation**

### **5.2.7.1 Namibian Government**

The Namibian government’s financial support of the decentralisation project was rated as follows: high 7%, moderate, 57%, low 21%, very low 0%, and 7% did not respond.

With these results in mind, the Namibian government’s support for decentralisation was rated 57% thus, it is inadequate. The explanation given was that sub-national government and the decentralisation process lack financial resources. Although to some degree it is true that the Namibian government managed to bring government closer to

the people, transfer of decision-making and involvement of people in the planning process, the issue of lack of financial resources by sub-national governments appeared not to have been adequately addressed yet (The Namibian, February 3, 2004). This is attributed to the fact that resources are still centralised and central government continues to retain the overall responsibility for public budgeting. Kaakunga (2003) as previously alluded to supplements that it is so because presently RCs and LAs function as extensions of central government, therefore, no funds are transferred from the center to RCs and LAs except for operating expenditures and subsidies for particular services such as fire brigade. It was on these grounds that some key informants questioned the true autonomy of the sub-national governments and favoured the quota system of allocation of resources in Bantustans. Testimony to this is the failure of some local authorities such as Katima Mulilo and Okakarara Town Councils to pay for employee salaries and water and electricity bills to NamWater and NamPower (The Namibian, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004). The consequent effect of the lack of resources and own budgets are poor service delivery, failure to realise the underlying objectives of the decentralisation policy; and failure to overcome underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment in the regions.

#### **5.2.7.2 South African Government (Pre-1994)**

The South African government support to Bantustans was rated as follows: high 7%, moderate, 38%, low 38%, very low 0% and 7% did not respond.

The respondents in this regard indicated 38% for both moderate and low in terms of the South African government support to Bantustans. This can be attributed to the fact that some benefited from the system while others did not. However, the overall comments were that South African government invested a lot in military infrastructure such as aircrafts, armaments/equipment and/or roads, railways and military airports rather than in communities/people. Most of the investments were for attraction purposes to make people to join and support the regime's course. The consequence of the South African government's low support to Bantustans was that after independence Namibian communities were left with a high rate of poverty, underdevelopment, and unemployment among others.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.0 Introduction**

Based on the findings of the study and final analysis thereof, this chapter presents the author's concluding remarks and recommendations.

### **6.1. Conclusions of the Study**

It was the objective of this study to systematically evaluate both the pre and post independence local governance framework and structures in Namibia, in order to thoroughly point out the political, developmental and philosophical differences. In this regard the study focused on contrasting the post independent policy of decentralization and former Bantustan or Homelands Policy. Moreover, the study also evaluated public perceptions on decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustans, as well as investigated the actual and possible impact of associating or equating decentralisation to Bantustans in Namibia.

Similarly the study was guided by the following research question: "Does the decentralisation process in post independence Namibia differ substantively from the Bantustanisation process that was undertaken in then South West Africa/Namibia between 1900-1989?". The statement of the problem centered on the criticism that the present decentralisation plans revived the Bantustans Policy hence, the calls for a

federalism system in Namibia. To this end, the study arrived at the following conclusions:

The study noted that the public is able to distinguish the differences and similarities between the policy of decentralisation vis-à-vis Bantustanisation in the context that the two policies differed to a large extent in political and philosophical orientations. These differences were cited in terms of their respective ideologies, philosophies and objectives, governance, government's legitimacy, legal framework structures for their implementation, focus and approaches, federal/unitary of the state, representation, benefits, freedom and rights extended to the citizens, functioning/operations, accessibility and accountability. Moreover it was observed that the policy on Bantustans put emphasis on symbols and tribal identity rather than on service delivery, development and democracy. Similarly, the two policies were noted to have commonalities in terms of their advocacy for self-governance and administration, encouragement for participatory decision-making at regional and local levels, and transference of power, resources and responsibilities from central government to sub-national government level.

On the contrary, the study noted that the manner in which the implementation of the decentralisation policy is pursued is the root cause of the criticism, skepticism and misconceptions contributing to why some people equate this policy with the policy of Bantustans. The misconceptions are brought about and attributed firstly, to the

recruitment process at sub-national government level, which reflects a tendency to recruit people from those particular regions or dominant tribal groups in the regions concerned, for instance in the cases of Chief Regional Officers in Omusati, Ohangwena, Kavango, Karas, and Caprivi Regions, Directors in Ohangwena and Caprivi Regions, and the 100% composition of the Caprivi Regional Council by people from Caprivi. These tendencies are seen to be manifesting, perpetuating and promoting tribalism and/or ethnicity, which was one of the primary objectives of the Bantustan Policy. The second misconception relates to the demarcation of regional boundaries, for instance the Kavango, Caprivi, Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Oshana, and Omahake Regions which retained boundaries with ethno-socio-demographic and geographical features of the former Bantustans.

Despite all this, the study observed that the tendency of associating regional governance to Bantustans or homelands in Namibia is not a new phenomenon, but was also evident in the Constituent Assembly when the Constitution was being drafted. Therefore, Nahas Angula's comments that "Decentralisation plans seem like reviving Bantustans" depict those of SWAPO leadership during the Constituent Assembly, meaning that ever since this idea is still lingering in many people's minds. It is concluded that the SWAPO leadership assumed the national power highly suspicious of "regionalism" despite their insistence that new regions would be redrawn on a non-ethnic basis. This continuing skepticism also strongly conditioned the national government's actual treatment of the regional governance structures.

The misconceptions of associating decentralisation with the policy of Bantustans were attributed to the legacy of Bantustans, whereby some people benefited from the system and could not easily forget about it, ignorance, and a paradigm shift, meaning that people take long to change their mindset on such issues. These misconceptions of equating decentralisation to Bantustans have a negative and serious impact on the implementation of the policy of decentralization, namely, delaying the process of decentralisation, hesitation to accept the process as well as to acknowledge that there is freedom in the country, loss of accountability and abuse of decentralised resources. It will also jeopardise the reconciliation policy, cause delays in the development because people will disassociate themselves from the process, resistance to decentralisation because it will seem like divide and rule, failure of decentralisation, reluctance of government to devolve power, and less involvement of people. All these factors have cost implications for decentralisation, both in monetary and non-monetary terms.

The study also observed the following general concerns related to the implementation of the decentralisation policy in the independent Namibia. Firstly, the reasons for calling for a federal system in Namibia are many, namely, it is for political reasons to gain support by ethnic based political parties and to influence policy-making, the present formula of resource allocation is not equitable, there is unbalanced power distribution, and perceived dominance by one tribal or ethnic group.

This researcher argues that the idea of a federal system in Namibia is presently impracticable because there are only three regions, which can sustain themselves under a federal system namely, Khomas, Karas and Erongo Regions, while the rest would be heavily financially dependent on central government. Moreover, general sales tax, income tax, import tax and revenues generated from the national parks are all channeled to central government instead of sub-national governments.

Secondly, though decentralisation has good intentions, the study found out that it was vulnerable to be hijacked by technocrats/politicians in the absence of very clear and enforceable guidelines to direct the implementation. These arguments are based on the view that “Though central government may be seen to be promoting inclusion”, their sub-national governments are in most cases dominated by various tribes. Thus, the dominant tribe can easily advance its interests to the disadvantage of the minority groups.

Thirdly, the Namibian government’s financial support to decentralisation was found to be inadequate. Testimony to this were the responses stating “There is a lack of financial resources and capacity at sub-national governments to carry out the delegated functions”. This situation holds negative impacts for the whole decentralisation process which could easily lead to policy failure, poor service delivery, poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment in the regions.

Fourth, the implementation of decentralisation is at times haphazard and very slow. Thus, to date no major achievements in terms of delegation of functions have been realised. The government remains highly centralised, central government roles have not changed, and no delegation of resources to RCs and LAs have been effected. This slow implementation is attributed to lack of political will and direction, lack of commitment and readiness for the internalisation of decentralisation. These delays have consequently caused frustrations particularly at the level of Regional Councils who are eagerly waiting to take over functions from central government.

Fifth, logistical factors such as housing and office infrastructures were noted to directly or indirectly influence the recruitment process at sub-national government levels, because only those from such regions applied for job opportunities there, because it would be easier for them to get accommodation.

Sixth, it seems that there is discontentment among some residents of Caprivi, Otjo zondjupa, and Omaheke Regions with regard to the demarcation of the Katima Rural Constituency. Controversy also surrounds Otjinene and Epukiro Constituencies and separation of the Otjituuo Constituency from Okakarara. They want them re-demarcated into two constituencies. Similarly, some residents also feel that the Mukwe Constituency should be “returned” as part of the Caprivi Region as was previously recommended by the First Delimitation Commission.

Finally, the study concludes that the rationale and satisfaction of the two policies is dependent on the scenario of money, human resources, services and skills. With this object, the decentralisation policy was found rational but not satisfying because sub-national governments still lacked financial resources, while the central government continues to assert its control over budgets and other resources. Furthermore, sub-national governments still lack capacity/skills and infrastructures (municipal, housing and offices) to properly execute the decentralised functions and deliver services to the communities. On the contrary, the Bantustan Policy was found to be irrational and not satisfying because it was racially oriented; concentration was on acquisition and development of military infrastructures rather than on service delivery like refuse disposal; and central government appointed officials who administered the periphery, often with little input from locally elected officials or citizens.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

The study recommends the following to be strengthened:

Due to the hostility left by the apartheid legacy towards regional governments, as well as lack of awareness and understanding coupled with the misconceptions surrounding decentralisation on the part of some Namibians, it is hereby recommended that the MRLGH as the decentralisation coordinating agency, in conjunction with Regional Councils, should carry out vigorous nation wide awareness campaigns or education on

decentralisation through various media, targeting policy makers, political parties and rural communities in order to get rid of these misconceptions and skepticisms surrounding decentralisation in Namibia. The same platform should be used to outline benefits, advantages and disadvantages, differences between decentralisation and Bantustans in an attempt to also change the people's mindsets. Similarly, the general public should familiarise themselves with the objectives of the Decentralisation Policy, and should be encouraged to share their fears with the Directorate of Decentralisation Coordination in the MRLGH through their respective organisations, structures and leaders.

In an attempt to prevent the technocrats and politicians from hijacking the implementation of the policy of decentralisation in order to promote ethnicity through recruitment processes at sub-national government levels, it is recommended that the Public Service Commission in the Office of the Prime Minister and MRLGH develop guidelines/regulations on ethnic balance. Alternatively, they could amend the present Affirmative Action Act so that it articulates the need for ethnic balance in the public service including sub-national governments. Frameworks should be developed for implementation and proper management of the decentralisation implementation process. This could help to avoid perpetuation or a repeat of ethnic discrimination through the post independence decentralisation policy. In the same vein, they should put in place guidelines on the recruitment of personnel at sub-national government level, which could forbid them from promoting ethnicity through recruitment, to ensure that

dominant ethnic groups do not have a free hand in promoting and advancing their interests through the recruitment process.

The call for a federal system in Namibia and the secessionist attempt in Caprivi are politically and tribally motivated, and partly attributed to the unbalanced power distribution, inequitable distribution of resources and the legacy of Bantustans, which had a federal character. These demands are based on the need for the full control and management of resources in their particular regions, as they did during the homeland administration. To this end, government should be more representative and inclusive of all ethnic groups (through the use of ward system), and resources should be distributed on equitable basis. Devolution of power to sub-national governments should also be speeded up in order to guarantee the autonomy of regions in terms of resource allocation and budgeting.

To alleviate financial constraints of sub-national governments, central government should commence disbursing grants to sub-national governments to address the financial problems and lack of capacities. It should also continue supporting Regional Councils and Local Authorities in building their capacities as the decentralization process continues.

It is also recommended that central government should address the lack of housing through encouraging parastatals like the National Housing Enterprise to start investing in regions. Office infrastructures can be addressed through gradual establishment of

regional office parks across all regions, as these have been identified as some of the factors delaying the implementation of decentralisation as well as influencing the recruitment process at regional level.

Further investigation into the need to re-demarcate the Katima Rural Constituency into two constituencies, controversy surrounding Otjinene vis-à-vis Epukiro, separation of Otjituuo from Okakarara as well as the appeal for the return of Mukwe Constituency to the Caprivi Region is recommended. In the same vein, the study recommends that the utilisation in the present dispensation of symbols like coats of arms previously used during the Bantustan Regime, need to be constantly reviewed to ensure and maintain their relevancy in communities. Reference is made here to the Katima Mulilo Town Council logo, which still bears two elephants representing two traditional authorities that existed before independence, but which is no longer relevant because the number of tribal chiefs has since increased to four.

Finally, as the process of delegating and devolving of functions advances to its concluding end, the Directorate of Decentralisation Coordination should be transformed into a unit of conflict resolution between sub-national governments and decentralised Line Ministries. Furthermore, as decentralisation gains momentum, intergovernmental relations should be highly promoted to ensure smooth implementation of decentralization, improved governance and reduction in the level of corruption at sub-national governments in Namibia.

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## INTERVIEWS

Honorable K. Pretorius	:	Monitor Action Group
Dr C. B. Botha	:	University of Namibia
Mr G. P. Kamseb	:	Ministry of Regional and Local Government
Mr H. Koch	:	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development
Mr C. Mafwila	:	Khomas Regional Council
Mr E. Ndala	:	Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation

## APPENDICES

### 1. QUESTIONNAIRE

#### FROM BANTUSTANISATION TO DECENTRALISATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SUB-NATIONAL GOVERNANCE IN NAMIBIA

*This questionnaire is compiled to evaluate, analyze and highlight the perceptions and extent to which the Namibian public is able to distinguish between the post independent policy of decentralisation on the one hand and former Bantustans or homelands that existed prior to independence on the other.*

This questionnaire is targeted at MRLGH, MBESC, Political Parties, Councilors, Chief Regional Officers, Traditional Authorities and Residents of Caprivi, Hardap and Khomas Regions.

#### SECTION 1: INTERVIEWEE DETAILS

**GENDER:**

**MALE**

**FEMALE**

**REGION:**

**CAPRIVI**

**HARDAP**

**KHOMAS**

**AGE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LANGUAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION A: DECENTRALISATION

For the purposes of this questionnaire, decentralisation refers to the process of transferring functions, power, responsibilities and resources from central government to the Regional and Local Authorities.

NB. Please use a [X] sign where you are required to answer yes or no, high, moderate, low or very low.

1. Have you ever heard about decentralisation in Namibia?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------

NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
----	--------------------------

- (a) If **yes**, what in your view are the aims of the decentralisation policy?
- (b) Is decentralisation necessary or needed? Please explain.
- (c) In your view is it being properly implemented?
- (d) What successes have been reached due to the implementation of decentralisation?
- (e) Does decentralisation promote tribalism? Why do you say so?
- (f) How do you feel about the appointment of people from other regions as heads of the Regional Councils, Local Authorities, Parastals and other institutions in your region? Explain.
- (g) In your view, do you think your region is properly demarcated the way it is supposed to be? Explain your answer.

(h) In your view does decentralisation give Regional Councils, Traditional Authorities and Local Authorities enough power to decide, use and manage their own resources the way they want to? Please explain.

2. In your view what are the specific roles that Regional Councils and Traditional Authorities should perform under decentralisation?

3. How would you rate the general public's support for decentralisation in your region?

**HIGH**

**MODERATE**

**LOW**

**VERY LOW**





4. What benefits are people in your region getting from the decentralisation process?

5. Does the Regional Council allow for people to participate in the decision - making processes?

**HIGH**

**MODERATE**

**LOW**

**VERY LOW**





6. Does the Local Authority allow for people to participate in the decision- making processes?

**HIGH**

**MODERATE**

**LOW**

**VERY LOW**





7. How would you rate the Namibian central government's financial support to Regional and Local Authority Councils?

**HIGH**

**MODERATE**

**LOW**

**VERY LOW**





(a) Please explain your answer.

8. Are traditional leaders properly recognized under the decentralisation policy?

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**SECTION B: BANTUSTANS**

For the purposes of this questionnaire, Bantustans or homelands refers to ethnically or tribally defined communal areas e.g. former Administration for Caprivians, Hereros, Kavangos, Owambos, Damaras, and Whites etc.

1. Did you ever hear about Bantustans or homelands before independence in Namibia?

YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------

NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
----	--------------------------

- (a) If **yes**, in your view what were the aims of Bantustans or homelands in Namibia before independence?

2. Some of the aims of Bantustans were to provide space for various ethnic groups and self –rule. In your view would you like to see this continue happening under the decentralization policy? Please explain.
3. How does the performance of the various Bantustans administrations (Administration for Owambos, Caprivians, Hereros, Whites, Kavango, Damaras etc.) compare with that of Regional and Local Authorities established after independence?
4. How would you rate the general public’s support for Bantustans then?
- |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>HIGH</b>              | <b>MODERATE</b>          | <b>LOW</b>               | <b>VERY LOW</b>          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
5. How do you compare the benefits of decentralisation with that of Bantustans?

6. Did Bantustan or homeland structures allow people to participate in the decision-making processes?

<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>VERY LOW</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How would you rate the South African government's financial support to Bantustans?

<b>HIGH</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>VERY LOW</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **SECTION C: BANTUSTANS AND DECENTRALISATION**

### **C: BANTUSTANS AND DECENTRALISATION**

Bantustans existed in Namibia before independence and decentralisation is being presently implemented as well.

1. Is decentralisation similar to Bantustans or homelands?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

- 1.1 If yes, what are the similarities?

- 1.2 If No, what are the differences?

2. Is the demarcation (division or boundaries) of today's regions similar to those of Bantustans?

YES		NO	
-----	--	----	--

- (a) If yes, motivate your response.

(b) If no, motivate your response.

3. Why in your view do people associate or equate the policy of decentralisation to Bantustans?
  4. Why do you think people expect decentralised structures to function like former Bantustans?
  5. In your opinion, what are the reasons for political parties calling for a federal system in Namibia?
  6. Does your Regional Council or Traditional Authority operate or function like the former Administration for Hereros, Owambos, Caprivians or Damaras etc? Explain your response.
  7. In what areas e.g. education, health, transport etc. did the Bantustans provide better services than decentralised structures today?
  8. What do you think is the impact of associating decentralisation with former Bantustans or homelands?
  9. What solutions can you propose to people who think decentralisation is similar to Bantustans? Explain briefly.
-

## 2. KEY INFORMANTS' QUESTIONS

1. In what ways is decentralisation similar or different from Bantustans or homelands?
2. Is the demarcation of today's regions similar to Bantustans?
  - 2.1 If yes, motivate your response.
  - 2.2 If no, motivate your response.
3. Why in your view do people associate or equate the policy of decentralisation with Bantustans?
4. Why do you think people expect decentralised structures to function like the former Bantustans?
5. What benefits did people get from Bantustans that they are not getting from the decentralised structures today?
6. How do you compare the support for Bantustans verses decentralisation by the general public?
7. In your opinion what are the reasons for political parties calling for a federal system in Namibia?
8. What aspects of Bantustans could have been retained under the decentralisation policy?
9. What do you think is the impact of associating decentralisation to former Bantustans or homelands?

10. What solutions can you propose to people who think decentralisation is similar to Bantustans?
11. Does your Regional Council or Traditional Authority operate or function like the former Administration for Hereros, Owambos, Caprivians or Damaras etc? Explain your response.
12. In what areas e.g. education, health, transport, rural water supply etc. did the Bantustans provides better services than decentralised structures today?
13. How do you compare the Namibian government's financial support to decentralisation and the South African government's support to Bantustans?
14. Does decentralisation promote tribalism or ethnicity?