

**CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE
REGIONAL COUNCILS
IN NAMIBIA**

**A RESEARCH PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFULMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC POLICY AND
ADMINISTRATION**

OF

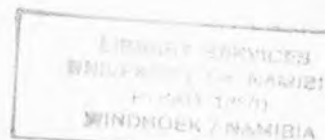
**THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
AND INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

BY

JONA AMUTENYA KASHEETA

**SUPERVISORS: PROF. GERHARD TÖTEMAYER (UNAM)
DR. JOOP DE WIT (ISS)**

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ABSTRACT

The study assesses the present capacity of the Regional Councils and investigates whether the available capacity building efforts in Namibia meet the needs of the Regional Councils. Since the needs of the Regional Councils are numerous, the study focuses on the problems of capacity building in terms of human resources development, finance and infrastructures. The Regional Councils are newly established government entities under the decentralization process with the aim to extend the government and democracy closer to the people. This study also looks at how far the Regional Councils have benefited from the available capacity building efforts since 1992.

A comparative approach is used in the study. Three Regional Councils namely Khomas, Oshana and Otjozondjupa were selected, which allows more room for a comparative framework. The fact that this study chose the three regions is that they give more information depending on their different structures, size, population and have different perspective methods of capacity building. They also give a good picture of finding out how the capacity building efforts met the needs of the different Regional Councils in Namibia. Since the MRLGH is one of the capacity building institutions to assist the Regional Councils, this study indicates how the national cake is distributed among the Councils. It also looks at how the other additional entities such as NGOs have rendered services to the Councils.

Since Namibia has adopted decentralization policies, it has reasonably succeeded in mobilizing every available capacity building effort in the country to give a helping hand in order to make decentralization programme a success. This study also looks at how best the Regional Councils under decentralization policy have taken the issue of gender in consideration. It is noted all along that history has seemingly been blind on gender and this is the issue of concern in the Namibian decentralization programme to make sure that the needs of gender are met.

Documentary search and interviews were used to collect data in this study. Resulting from good collaborations with the interviewees, empirical evidences are given that the Regional Councils have benefited and is still benefiting from the capacity building efforts available in Namibia in one way or the other. This study further notes that more efforts are busy registering themselves to give a push hand towards the decentralization policy. It is also indicated clearly by the respondents that the Regional Councils are experiencing lack of adequate capacity, especially in terms of financial resources. The Regional Councils are still depending on the Central Government. The Regional governors, officers, consultants and NGOs in their responses indicated with confidence that change is expected and things will be run in good manner as soon as the new introduced administrative structure is implemented. It is very much encouraging that the Namibian people are wholeheartedly waiting for a full implementation of the decentralization programme in the regions and this indicates a good picture towards enhancement of democracy.

A few policy recommendations are made at the end of the study, indicating the road ahead and the ways to improve on our Regional Councils and how to go about the decentralization. This study, therefore, notes that only through hard work and togetherness that Namibia can be listed as one of the best countries in Africa and in the world at large, if her democracy is respected and maintained.

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However, I remain totally responsible for any error or misinterpretation that may occur in this study

DEDICATION

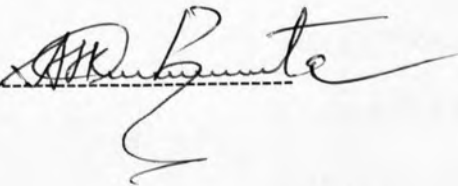
THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED TO:

**ALL THE REGIONAL COUNCILS IN NAMIBIA, MY WIFE MARIINA NEKANDJO,
CHILDREN AND IN MEMORY OF MY LATE PARENTS.**

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research paper entitled “Capacity Building of the Regional Councils in Namibia”, is a true reflection of the candidate, Jona Amutenya Kasheeta’s own research and has not been submitted before for a degree in any other institution of High Learning in the Republic of Namibia and the Netherlands or anywhere in the world.

No part of this research paper may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by means (e.g. electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without prior written permission of the author, then University of Namibia or the Institute of Social Studies.

Signed: 

ACRONYMS

AIMS	-	AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR MANAGEMENT SERVICES
ALAN	-	ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN NAMIBIA
ARC	-	ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS IN NAMIBIA
CA BLE	-	CAPACITYBUILDING FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES
CEO	-	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CBOs	-	COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS
DECD	-	DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DTA	-	DEMOCRATIC TURNHALLE ALLIANCE
DSE	-	DEUTCH STIFTUNG FÜR INTERNATIONALE ENTWICKLUNG
DPIC	-	DECENTRALIZATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
ESAMI	-	EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
GRN	-	GOVERNMENT REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
GTZ	-	DEUTSCH GESELLSCHAFT FÜR TECHNISCHE ZUSAMENARBEIT
GOF	-	GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FINLAND
HRD	-	HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

HIV/AIDS	-	HUMAN IMMUNO DEFICIENCY VIRUS /ACQUIRE IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME
ICT	-	INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
IMF	-	INTERNATIONAL MONITORY FUND
MOF	-	MINISTRY OF FINANCE
MRLGH	-	MINISTRY OF REGIONAL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING
NDI	-	NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE
NPC	-	NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
NGOs	-	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
NO.	-	NUMBER
PPP	-	PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP
PPPUE	-	PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP OF URBAN ENVIIRONMENT
PSC	-	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
SIPE	-	SOCIAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION PROGRAMME FOR EX-COMBATANTS
SQ	-	SQUARE
SWAPO	-	SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION
TCFPF	-	TRAPPED CHARGED PARTICLES FOR FUNDAMENTAL PHYSICS
UDF	-	UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT
UN	-	UNITED NATIONS

UNV - UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEER

UNDP - UNITED NATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

WWW.GENNET GOV.NA.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

Namibia with its area of 825 121 km sq, has been divided into thirteen (13) regions namely: Caprivi, Erongo, Hardap, Karas, Kavango, Khomas, Kunene, Ohangwena, Omaheke, Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto and Otjozondjupa. Since 1992, thirteen (13) Regional Councils have been established to cater for the needs of the Namibian people. The introduction of the Regional Councils in Namibia reflects the efforts by the government to enhance democracy through delegating and devolving power to the people at sub-national level, empowering them to exercise their political and economic rights and to execute their functions effectively, efficiently and cooperatively.

The underlying purpose of decentralization policy is to bring government closer to the people, to empower the people, to strengthen democratic values in society and to contribute to social and economic development. These objectives are in the end consequential for the survival of democracy, its credibility and functional purpose. (Töttemeyer 2002: 103)

In fulfilling all these, the capacity building efforts need to meet the needs of the Regional Councils adequately such as training and recruitment of staff, finance, infrastructures and general development of the regions in order to enable them to execute the regional development planning and the establishment of the settlement areas. To understand the term, “capacity building” more clearly, it is essential to define it.

Capacity building to improve public sector performance is thus an important focus of development initiatives. Several implicit assumptions underlie most such efforts, that organizations or training activities are the logical site for capacity-building interventions, that administrative structures and monetary rewards determine organizational and individual performance; that operates well when structures and control mechanisms are in place; and that individual performance improves as a result of skill and technology transfer through training activities (Grindle Hilderbrand: 1995:441).

This study, therefore, examines the capacity building efforts in Namibia through various programmes *inter alia*; MRLGH, GTZ, UNDP, CABLE and that of Namibia Public Service, pertaining to training and recruitment of staff particularly with strong emphasis on women involvement in sub-national governance and administration.

1.2 Background

Democratic countries in Africa are engaged in decentralization as a means to enhance and guarantee democratic participation by the majority of the people at grass-roots level as well as to achieve sustainable development. Namibia as one of the democratic countries in Africa is no exception. Decentralization as a GRN policy has been adopted by Cabinet and the implementation made effective on 1 April 1998. However, for someone to understand the rationale behind the establishment of the Regional Councils in Namibia, this study finds

it essential that the history of Namibia should not be neglected. Therefore, it is important to reflect on the background of governance in the country prior to attainment of independence.

Before independence in 1990, the people of Namibia were engaged in a protracted struggle against colonialism, racism, and apartheid, all of which had denied the majority of the people democracy and development. The people of Namibia did not have power as their legitimate right to make decisions on matters that affect their lives and were also not able to determine their own destiny. The Regional Councils as principal agencies of central government were not introduced to the rural areas and the then disadvantaged regions.

The conception and introduction of the decentralization policy in Namibia has its roots in the SWAPO Party's, Political Manifesto on Local Government and Housing of 1989, which provided that, "under the SWAPO government there will 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". The vision of SWAPO Party on local governance was then enshrined in the Constitution of an independent Namibia.

Chapter 12 of the Constitution provides for the system of regional and local government in Namibia. Article 102(1) specifically provides for the structures of regional and local government, which states, "For purpose of regional and local government, Namibia shall

be divided into regional goal units, which shall consist of such regional and local authorities as may be determined and defined by an Act of Parliament”.

Looking at the historical background of Namibia, gender is one of the most important areas that should play a vital role in the composition of Regional Councils. Women need to be fully incorporated in the development programmes of the Regional Councils. Calling for gender equality and the state in Africa is a fairly new approach. Whereas the dynamics of state-society relations have drawn substantial academic attention for many years, the relations between gender and state-related processes in Africa have remained a blind spot until recently.

Women political scientists have contended that the discipline of political studies has been particularly slow to incorporate gender equality, mainly due to the discipline’s traditional subject matter, the institutions and the distribution of power in the public sphere, and the focus on the exercise of power, on constitutional politics and on inputs into the formal political system (Barry 1993:41 – 42)(: Waylen 1996 b: 2).

Soon after independence, the government set up a Delimitation Commission to delimitate the country in 13 regions and eliminate the Bantustan policy of the colonial regime, which was founded on ethnic/tribal/racial criteria. In its report of 1991, the Commission recommended the sub-division of Namibia into thirteen (13) regions, based predominantly on geographic and economic factors.

In the proclamation that instituted the commission, it was unambiguously stated that ethnic, racial and tribal criteria could not be used in the regional division of Namibia.

Article 102 of the Namibian Constitution deals with the structures of regional and local government. It states, *inter alia*, that, “for purposes regional and local government, Namibia shall be divided into regional and local units, which shall consist of such regions and authorities as may be determined and defined by Act of Parliament.” Namibia has, thus, adopted decentralization through a policy of rationalization within a unitary state as a state policy.

The first Regional Councils Elections were held in 1992. Of the 95 constituencies, SWAPO Party won 71. Whereas 21 were won by the DTA of Namibia and 3 by the UDF of Namibia. Each Regional Council elects two of its members to simultaneously serve on the Regional Councils and the National Councils.

The thirteen established Regional Councils are each chaired by a Governor, elected from their own members for a period of three years. The governor can stand to be re-elected for another term of office after the expiring period. The chief executive officer of a regional administration is the Regional Officer appointed by the MRLGH.

The second Regional Council Elections were held in 1998. New regional representatives were elected for a period of six years term of office, which runs presently up to 2004.

Article 108 of the Namibia Constitution deals with the power of the Regional Councils in the regions:

- To elect members to the National Council.
- To exercise with the region for which they have been constituted such executive powers and to perform such duties in connection therewith as may be assigned to them by Act of Parliament and as may be delegated to them by the President.
- To raise revenue, or share in the revenue raised by the central government within the regions for which they have been established, as may be determined by Act of Parliament.
- To exercise power, perform any other functions and make such by-laws or regulations as may be determined by Act of Parliament.

The Regional Councils are tasked with the following functions:

- To take care of the needs and development of all areas outside existing municipalities, towns and villages on behalf of the central government.
- To intermediate between the central government and local authorities.
- To deal with socio-economic planning, the upliftment of people in the regions and encouraging people at the lowest level of local government, such as those in

settlements and villages, to become actively involved in the administration and development of defined local areas in the regions.

1.3 Statement of the problem

This study investigates whether the capacity building efforts in Namibia meet the needs of the Regional Councils. Since the needs of Regional Councils are numerous, this study intends to focus on the problem of human resources development, concentrating on training and recruitment of staff, finance and infrastructures. There are various capacity building programmes in Namibia organized by MRLGH, GTZ, UNDP, CABLE and the Public Service of the Republic of Namibia. In view of the availability of these capacity building programmes, the study finds it necessary to find out whether the Regional Councils have also benefited during the last few years in terms of human resources development and the involvement of women.

The study assesses the capacity building situation and the impacts of capacity building programme in three Regional Councils, using available sources and by doing a few case studies for primary data collected. In the past, Namibia suffered a heavy colonial blow under the racist South African rule. As a result, the Namibia people did not have any experience on regional governance, simply because they were administratively, politically and economically denied and neglected to do so.

Empirical evidence shows that: “The current institutional capacities of Regional Councils in Namibia are very limited. Indeed, the Regional Councils have inadequate capacity to carry out the present functions of regional development planning and the establishment and management of settlement areas. Further, the fact that the Ministry has thus far undertaken most of the Regional Councils financial and personnel activities is the evidence of the Regional Councils’ lack of capacity in those fields. Thus, Regional Councils need to have their capacity to carry out their present functions,”(Mukwena and Drake 2002: 50). This study evaluates also the present administration support structure that has been developed for the regions and whether it complies with the demands of the Regional Councils.

Considering the present lack of official funds, as well as regional economic and social discrepancies, a scarcity of trained and well-equipped officials at sub-national governmental level, lack of the necessary infrastructures and other imperfections, development agencies such as NGOs and inter-governmental organizations can play a particular supportive role in capacity-building and in the execution of decentralization. Such assistance requires a full understanding of the needs of each of the affected parties, and demands consultation with Regional and Local Authorities and community leaders. Furthermore, development skills are needed, particularly in respect of supporting those who are implementing their own development initiatives – rather than do it for them (MRLGH 1996b: 28).

Due to all these problems indicated above, the researcher developed a great interest to carry out an investigation whether and why the needs of the Regional Councils were not satisfactorily met since 1992 and try to review and recommend possible improvement. In addition, the researcher further investigates whether women have considerably been involved in any meaningful degree in capacity building programmes.

1.4 Objectives of Study

Following from the above the objectives of the study are to:

- Assess the present capacity of the Regional Councils and the new administrative support structure.
- Identify and review the capacity building efforts whether they meet the needs of the Regional Councils.
- Investigate whether the various capacity building programmes for the Regional Councils and whether they had been gender sensitive or not.
- Identify and recommend to the Regional Councils more potential capacity building programmes for improvement and effective management.

1.5 Research Questions

The study also addresses relevant questions, as the guidelines to the research process.

The primary question refers: do the Capacity Building efforts in Namibia meet the needs of the Regional Councils?

This study has also focused on other six sub-questions in order to allow ample space for a meaningful debate on the research process.

- What is the present capacity of the Regional Councils?
- Are there adequate capacity building programmes for enhancing effective and efficient management of the Regional Councils?
- Have the Regional Councils benefited from the capacity building efforts offered in Namibia?
- Is there any considerable improvement in the capacity of the Regional Councils since 1992?
- How is gender balance taken into consideration by various capacity building programmes?
- What are the outcomes and impacts of capacity building in the Regional Councils?

1.6 Justification of the study

Namibia's political system is constitutionally based on cooperative democracy, the separation of state powers, and the decentralization of authority and functions. The underlying policy is to relate decentralization to development and promote empowerment of people at local level (Töttemeyer 2002: 99 – 100).

Democracy in Namibia which is still in its infancy stage, requires a well, careful and undivided political commitment in order to avoid its failure. History had been so terribly blind on participation of women in social, political and economic activities. Participation of women being a global and burning issue today, the researcher, therefore, investigates whether women had considerably been involved in the capacity building programmes and to find out whether a significant number of women since the first election of the Regional Councils representatives in 1992 has been offered opportunity to exercise their democratic rights in decision making process in the Regional Councils of Namibia.

Depending on the availability of programmes and financial resources, the training courses, seminars and workshops for councilors and staff can be held within a particular region or at

a national level. Further, where there is a special need and suitable training opportunities are not available in Namibia, Regional Councils in conjunction with the MRLGH should make concerted efforts to find external scholarships to enable them to send councilors and officers for appropriate training courses, seminars and workshops abroad (Mukwena and Drake 2002: 67). This study finds the statement as a meaningful strategy of consolidating the capacity of the Regional Councils in Namibia that can lead to the achievement of the targeted goals.

1.7 Research Methodology

The researcher has adopted a comparative study approach. Only three Regional Councils are looked at, which allow more room for a comparative framework. The Regional Councils referred to are Khomas, Oshana, and Otjozondjupa. These are chosen due to the fact that they may give more information from their different structures and controlled by a regional governor each with similar national responsibilities, but having different perspective methods of capacity building in their respective regions. In addition to that, the three regions are having different population density. According to 2001 national census, Khomas has has the population of 250,305, Oshana 161,977 and Otjozondjupa 35,723. There is also different rapid sustainable economic development in these regions, which may on the other hand contribute to the availability of more information for the study.

Looking at the economic and population growth in the country, the details of the needs varied significantly between the Regional Councils and a number of common elements might be found. Very importantly, the researcher grew up in this country, therefore, his interaction with people, personal knowledge and experience significantly contribute to the study. However, both primary and secondary data have been collected for information to enrich the study.

For a good research design, the researcher has adopted an interview approach and the following people have been interviewed:

- The Minister of MRLGH.
- Permanent staff of MRLGH.
- Experts and consultants
- Three regional governors and a few councilors.
- Association of Regional Councils of Namibia (ARC)
- Association of Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN)
- The Public Service Commission
- Different NGOs
- UNDP
- NPC

Documentary research has been used. Usual sources of data collection such as books, published and unpublished literature, reports, journal articles, newspapers from the Netherlands and Namibian libraries as well as in the Internet are gathered.

Since this is a comparative study, the works of other researchers on Namibian and other countries on capacity building are used for empirical evidence.

Important Namibian legal documents are important for data such as:

- The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia (1990).
- Decentralization Enabling Act (2000).
- The Decentralization Policy Document (1996)
- The Electoral Act (1992) plus amendment.
- The Regional Councils Act (1992) plus amendment.
- The Local Authorities Act (1992) plus amendment.
- The Traditional Councils Act (1995)
- The Traditional Leaders Act (1997)
- Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provision Act (22 of 2000)
- The Communal Land Reform Bill (2000).
- Publications by the MRLGH.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

The study confines itself to only three Regional Councils and not to the local authorities.

The purpose of the study is to examine, whether the capacity building efforts in Namibia do

meet the needs of the Regional Councils. This study is limited to concentrate on human resources development in terms of training and recruitment of staff, finance, and infrastructures and also investigates how far women have been involved in the capacity building programmes for the Regional Councils. The study is limited to these areas and the period 1992 to 2002.

Furthermore, the limitation of this study is restricted to three Regional Councils with the aim that a proper and depth analysis of what is happening is effectively be carried out. The size of the country is one of the limitations, which prevents the researcher to visit all the regions and limited time period.

1.9 Organizational of the Study

The paper is organized in six chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter, which deals with the background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, justification of the study, research methodology as well as scope and limitation. Chapter two discusses the conceptual and general framework that gives good understanding on key concepts of the whole problem. Chapter three deals with capacity building of the three Regional Councils in Namibia, giving the background and the stage of the development. Chapter four presents capacity building with various programmes of management capacity of the Regional Councils. Chapter five deals with the outcomes and impacts of capacity on Regional Councils performance in Namibia. Chapter six is a concluding chapter, which gives the summary of the study and possible policy recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. ANALYTICAL AND GENERAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Analytical Framework is essential to examine, review and explain some of the concepts and terminologies of the study. There is a great need to develop the regions, but this can only be effectively achieved, if capacity building is taken as a major factor contributing to the success of Regional Councils and their development goals.

Scholars have not only concentrated on academic analysis, but have also reviewed and provided ways on how to improve capacity building. There are three important aspects underlying the study namely: Capacity Building, Regional Councils and Decentralization.

2.2 Capacity Building

Scholars have argued on the terms “Capacity Building”, “Technical Cooperation” and “Technical Assistance”. According to Van Monique (1995: 1), Capacity Building is about more than training. It concerns, as the bottom line, getting things done. In the end there should be water in the pipes, affordable housing, security, employment or whatever local

issue. Resources once created, need to be maintained. Capacity Building is about making conditions right for this to happen. Technical skills are needed, but also abilities in the consensus building processes. This includes training for men and women, but has to go beyond this to ensure that organizations are able to support individuals by giving them adequate respect, responsibility and conditions which encourage the motivation and energy that is necessary to make a difference. The organization also has to learn how to work more co-operatively and in partnership with others.



Figure 1: Concept of capacity building. **Source:** Van Monique (1995: 1)

Mahfuzul Haque (1998:14) states “the main point is that capacity building refers to the creation, expansion or upgrading of a stock of desired qualities and features called capabilities that could be continually drawn upon over time”. Deborah Eade (1997:24) points out “capacity building is an approach to development not something separate from it. It is a response to the multi-dimensional processes of change, not a set of

discrete or pre-packaged technical interventions intended to bring about a pre-defined outcome”.

The DECD defines, technical cooperation as: “Activities whose primary purpose is to augment the level of knowledge, skills, technical know-how, or productive aptitudes of the population of developing countries, i.e, increasing their stock of human intellectual capital or their capacity for more effective use of their existing factor endowment.”

Technical assistance: “Financing of services with the primary purpose of contributing to the design and/or implementation of a project or programme aiming to increase the physical capital stock of the recipient country” (Elliot 2000:44).

Ghana’s 1990 TCPFP defines technical cooperation as that, “aspect of international economic cooperation aimed at promoting the socio-economic development of developing countries through the transfer of technical knowledge and the development of human resources and institutions”.

2.3 Regional Council

This study recognizes the Regional Councils as a base of democracy, empowering the people socially, politically and economically to make their own decision at regional level. In Namibia, Regional Councils are defined as the “principal governing bodies, freely

elected in accordance with the Constitution and subsequent Acts of Parliament, which are entrusted with executive and administrative powers to carry out all lawful resolutions and policies of such Council, subject to the Constitution and any other relevant laws”(Tötemeyer 2000:124).

2.4 Decentralization

The key concept in the governance reforms is decentralization. Decentralization in the Namibian context is understood as a holistic approach to the reorganization of government. According to Rondineli & Nellis (1986: 5), “Decentralization is the transfer of responsibility for planning, management and the raising and allocation of resources from the central government and its agencies to field units of government, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, areas-wide, regional or functional authorities, or non-governmental private or voluntary organizations”.

There are five key dimensions of the decentralization process, such as political, and administrative, fiscal, changed central – local relations and functional decentralization. Political and administration decentralization have been more developed than others in the short history of local governance in Namibia since independence.

2.4.1 *Political Decentralization*

Political decentralization deals with the devolution of power and empowerment of Committees and Councils, which supplies a multi-functional government at regional level. It is also argued by many writers that political decentralization is both fundamental and also necessary to maintain stability.

2.4.2 *Administrative Decentralization*

This is the way how to de-linking local authorities staff from the central government so that they can establish their own payroll and recruit their personnel according to decision taken by the respective Councils in order to improve service delivery.

2.4.3 *Fiscal Decentralization*

This is a critical undertaking in a Namibia decentralization programme, which is based on the principal of discretionary powers of Local Councils over finance management to levy taxes, prepare and approve budgets and the obligation of central government to supply local government with unconditional grants and other forms of grants.

2.4.4 *Changed Central-Local Relations*

It is when the role of central government in relationship with Local and Regional Councils as sub-national change into a system of inter-governmental relations with central government having the over-riding powers within the framework of the national legal framework.

2.4.5 *Functional Decentralization*

This is a decentralization of public services to bring management and provision of public service closer to the communities with the intention of increasing the quality of these services and fully participate in decision making process.

Tötemeyer (2002) put across ten important points during the Namibian Parliament Session, indicating clearly the differences between the apartheid Bantustan or Homeland Policy and the Namibian Decentralization Policy.

- Namibia regionalization has been conceived by a free national government in a democratic framework, based on equality in an integrated whole.
- Namibia regionalization, a free voluntary choice, that is guaranteed in our own constitution for the benefit of a united Namibia.
- Regionalization is an open-ended concept which leaves ample space for development and creativity.

- Regions were devised by the First Delimitation Commission according to geographic, demographic, infrastructure and socio-economic criteria. According to the Proclamation, instituting the First Delimitation Commission, it was stated that border lines must be drawn “without reference to the race, colour or ethnic origin of the inhabitants thereof.” Traditional authority border lines were thus totally ignored in the demarcation of regional and constituency boundaries. Regions became politico-administrative units.
- Regional Councils are freely elected during democratically conducted elections. Traditional leaders are restricted to advisory power.
- The underlying principles in the administering and governing in regions is a bottom-up approach with substantive input by the grassroots level.
- Regional system is based on delegation and devolution powers within unitary state. No proclamation or bylaw can be made at sub-national level if it does not comply with national laws, thus emphasizing the principle of a unitary state thereby following the rules and policy governing the national state.
- Regionalization does the opposite to empower the national state at sub-national level, never allowing the development of regions into independent statal entities.
- Regionalization as aim equality of chances and justice to all. No competition between regions, but supplementary and supportive to each other within the concept of a national development process. Regionalization cannot be separated from considerations of a national development policy. One of its goals is the effective

translation of national policies and goals through meaningful regionalization. Economic and social justice to be distributed to all.

- Regionalization integrates and promotes unity and divergent interests. It is committed to equal development to all regions. It fosters communication and sharing of common interests between regions. All the regions are committed to one Namibia, one Nation.

2.5 Perspective

This study looks at different terminologies; “capacity building,” “technical cooperation” and “technical assistance”. Different authors used those terms, aiming of achieving the same goals. A slight difference can be made between technical cooperation and technical assistance. This paper looks at the term technical assistance in the sense that it concerns with direct financial support towards the regional development, while technical cooperation in many cases is a bit broader by including a number of development activities such as training and equipment supply. But all in all, these two terminologies mean the same thing in the sense that they are all focusing on capacity building. They are normally used by donor agencies in bilateral agreement with different countries. NGOs such as GTZ in Germany usual use the term technical cooperation. Technical assistance is mostly used by the World Bank.

This study goes along with Van Monique's definition on capacity building. It is clearly understood, because it emphasizes the overall policy framework in which the Namibian Regional Councils do operate. Capacity building shows that it responds to the challenges and needs of the regional development activities and creates societal supports for capacity raising changes. It also fully goes with the definition of Töttemeyer on the Regional Council in Namibia. One can also define the Regional Council as a regional house created by the central government with the aim to empower people at sub-national level in order to participate in decision-making processes. The Regional Councils are run by elected councilors and appointed administrators, who are entrusted with administrative, political and economical responsibilities.

Decentralization is one of the important policies, which pave the way of establishing the Regional Councils in order to enhance democracy by bringing the government closer to people. The Namibian decentralization needs to be understood by all the citizens of Namibia in order to help each other in formulating policies for a sustainable development. This study, agrees with these statements, because this is what democracy is all about by empowering people at local level to be fully involved in decision-making processes in Namibia and to take on full responsibility for co-governance at sub-national level.

CHAPTER THREE

3. CAPACITY BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCILS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the development of the present Regional Councils since their establishment in 1992 and looks at what stage the development of Regional Councils has reached. When one looks at the Regional Councils, it gives a picture of struggle gone through to achieve their different goals. The Regional Councils faced many obstacles during their development of capacity building such as human resources development, finance and infrastructures, despite different capacity building efforts available in Namibia to meet their needs. It is quite understandable, because Namibia put in place the decentralization programme right away after independence, a process that needs a lot of preparation and requires more efforts from the central government, CBOs and NGOs to be extended in order to avoid decentralization programme being a failure. This study feels that sharing of political power is the way of true democracy extended to the sub-national levels and this actual contributes to the stability of the nation-state.

3.2 Administration of the regional Councils

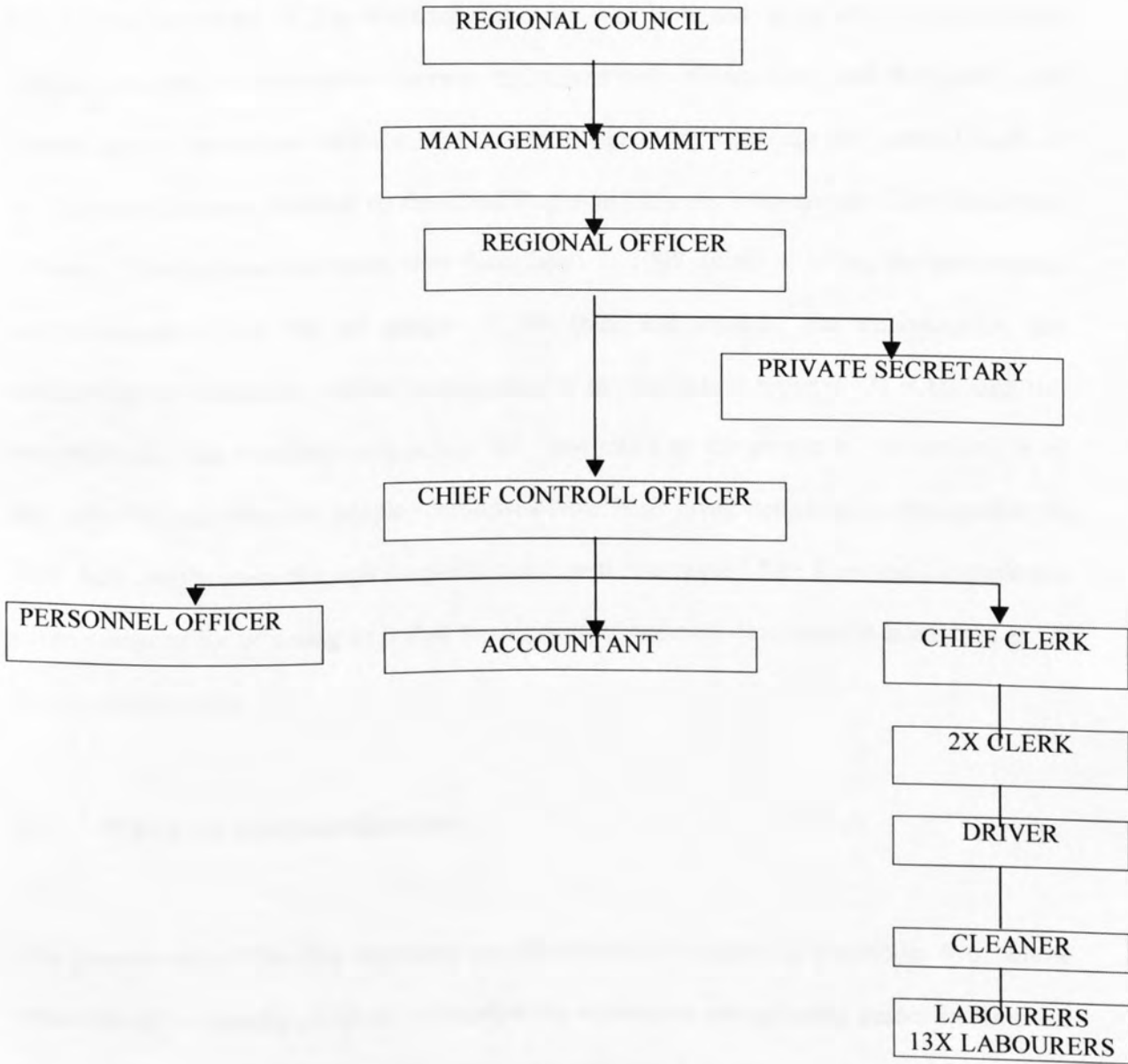


Figure 2: Current structure of the Regional Councils

The current structure of the Regional Councils was designed soon after independence. Elected regional representatives namely the Governors, Councilors, and MRLGH staff formed part of the current administrative structure. The Governors are the political heads of the Regional Councils assisted by the Chief Regional Officers, who are the Chief Executive Officers. The Regional Councils were established in 1992 aimed at taking the government and democracy closer to the people of Namibia, and creating the opportunities and mechanisms for increasing citizen participation in the legislation process. It is through this very structure that Namibia's democracy has been taken to the people at sub-national level and consolidated when the people themselves have been given democratic opportunities to elect their own leaders through Regional and Local Elections. The Regional Councils are entirely responsible of seeing to it that basic needs of regional development is enjoyed by all the Namibian people.

3.3 Policy on Decentralization

The government of Namibia approved the decentralization policy in December 1996, whose objectives is to transfer political, administrative, legislative and planning authority from the Central Government to Regional Councils. The Namibian government has committed itself to the speedy implementation of the decentralization process, but through a systematic manner, which requires a holistic approach to the reorganization of the government. The decentralization policy document identifies functions to be decentralized

and lays down implementation guidelines, resource strategies and the choice of the form of decentralization the country is going to use. The decentralization in Namibia is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To extend, enhance and guarantee participatory democracy.
- To ensure and safeguard rapid sustainable development.
- To transfer power to the regional and local authorities based on the ideas and values.
- To improve capacity of regional and local government council to plan, implement, manage and monitor delivery of services for their constituencies (DIP, 2001:15).

In 2000, two more important legal instruments for the decentralization programme were enhanced namely: The Decentralization Enabling Act provides for and regulates the delegation and decentralization to Regional Councils and the Trust Fund for Regional Development. On the other hand, the Equity Provisions Act provides regions with technical and financial assistance for development projects and framework for negotiations between the Board of Trustees and the regions. Namibia's decentralization strategy considers Regional Councils and Local Authorities as independent entities. The decentralization policy stipulates which ministerial functions should be decentralized to the Regional Councils in the short term, intermediate and long term.

Short-Term Functions

- Community Development
- Early Childhood Development
- Administration of Settlement Areas
- Rural Water Development and Management
- Management and Control of Communal Land
- Personnel
- Primary Education
- Pre-Primary Education
- Conservation
- Forest Development and Management
- Physical and Economic Planning
- Emergency Management
- Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Housing
- Agency Services to Villages Settlement

Intermediate Term Functions

- Regional Asset Management
- Small Miners Development
- Informal Tread Licenses
- Informal Market Dues
- Rural Electrifications

Long-Term Functions

All agreed government functions being implemented by line ministries at Regional Councils levels should eventually be decentralized to Regional Councils. There will always be those functions, which can be decentralized in a unitary state. All those functions, or parts of functions, which in theory can be decentralized, according to the above criteria, but are not listed above, will continue to be carried out by line-ministries in the foreseeable future. For that to happen, line-ministries should be organized in such a way that their representatives have specific regional responsibilities, and Regional Councils should know what these are and which regions they are responsible for (MRLGH 1998: 98).

3.2 Gender and Decentralization

History has been gender blind, regarding women predominantly as housewives who cannot take any decision. It is against this background, that the decentralization can only be considered viable, if gender balance is fully put in consideration by the implementing agencies. The Regional Councils as the planning authorities at grassroots level are obliged to involve women in all development efforts in the regions.

This study finds it essential that women should also be involved in advisory capacities, to become governors, councilors and representatives of different planning committees. Women must be empowered to become key players in the development plans of the Regional Councils. The Regional Councils should consider affirmative action policy as one of the priorities in order to create opportunities for women to get a fair share of the national cake in the decentralization process. Their voices must be heard and respected and become national contributors to the national goals. In doing so, it strengthens democratic values in society and, of course, contributes significantly towards social and economic development. The empowerment of women should be seen as a challenge by all the Namibian people and ensure that community is empowered at a sub-national level.

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Namibia's Women Affairs and Child Welfare Minister, has condemned cultural beliefs, which consider women as property and inferior to men. Men must distance themselves from negative attitudes against women. Violence was continuously committed against women and children, simply because they were targeted as weak and subordinates (The Namibian, 30 October 2002:30).

In the same newspaper article, the UN Secretary General Kofi Anan urged a greater role for female. He opines that women's contributions to peace making and peace-building are still less recognized and utilized. Women and girls are vulnerable to all forms of violence, in

particular sexual violence, exploitation, torture, individual and mass rape, forced pregnancy, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution and different trafficking.

3.3 Regional Councils and Traditional Leaders

Decentralization programme without involving the traditional leaders is a meaningless undertaking. This study is of the opinion that traditional leaders are the right assets for a successful decentralization programme. The bottom-up approach needs to be properly carried out by the Regional Councils management to make the decentralization process a successful. Traditional leaders are the people at the grass-roots level, who know their people and their needs.

This study feels that some of traditional leaders must be officially appointed to be part and parcel of Regional Councils management, which hopefully can significantly contribute towards the region's economic and political development. This study welcomes the establishment of the Traditional Authorities Act (2000), which empowers traditional leaders, giving them new administrative, judicial, consultative and advisory functions.

According to Töttemeyer (2000: 109), "Regional Councils are a new form of decentralized governance introduced after independence. They are often met with the same skepticism among traditional leaders as among some ruling party leaders, but for different reasons.

Traditional leaders fear that Regional Councils potentially threaten their authority structures. At this stage, Regional Councilors have not yet achieved the same standing in rural communities that traditional leaders still maintain. Till the benefits of decentralization have reached the rural areas and villages, traditional leaders will determine the direction of life in these areas.” This study realizes that it is only through proper consultations and information sharing between Regional Councils and Traditional Authorities that decentralization process can be finally realized.

3.4 Selected Regional Councils

At the second level of government, there exist thirteen Regional Councils established under the Regional Councils Act, 1992 (Act 22 of 1992). Three Regional Councils namely Khomas, Oshana and Otjozondjupa have been selected as case studies for this study and determine the present capacity of the Regional Councils in Namibia.

These Councils do not play a major role in the activities of the local authorities other than in the following four main areas:

- Regional Councils have the responsibility for the development of a regional plan in co-operation with National Planning Commission and must consult with local authorities in their region to ensure that the planning is compatible with that of the local authority.

- Local Authorities may act as agents for, or co-operate with, Regional Councils in the exercising of the latter's powers, duties or functions.
- Regional Councils may assist any Local Authority in the exercise of its powers, and
- Local Authorities are required to transfer 5 per cent of their income from assessment rates to the Regional Councils.

Within the urban management context, Regional Councils have a crucial role to play in providing urban services settlement areas located in their regions.

REGION	GOVENOR	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Caprivi	1	-	1	1
Erongo	1	-	1	1
Hardap	1	-	1	1
Karas	1	-	1	1
Kavango	1	-	1	1
Khomas	1	-	1	1
Kunene	1	-	1	1
Ohangwena	1	-	1	1
Omaheke	1	1	-	1
Omusati	1	-	1	1
Oshana	1	-	1	1
Oshikoto	1	-	1	1
Otjozondjupa	1	1	-	1
TOTAL	13	2	11	13

Figure 3: Namibian Regional Councils. **Source:** NPC 2001 Population and data.

3.4.1 Khomas

Khomas Region occupies an area of 36,805 km sq. It is situated in central Namibia. The capital city Windhoek falls within the Khomas Region. According to 2001 National Census, total population of Khomas is 250,305 out of which 122,503 are female and 127,802 are male, in total representing 13.7% of the Namibian population. (**Source:** National Planning Commission: 2001 Population data).

The Governor indicated that the Khomas Regional Councils, which was established in 1992 soon after independence, consists of nine constituencies of which two are represented by female councilors. The governor of Khomas expresses concern about the lack of capacity, which was described as a “wait and see activity.” The Regional Council feels that the Council did not really benefit from the capacity building efforts available in Namibia to its satisfaction. The Regional Council benefits partly from CABLE, NDI, ESAMI, and MRLGH training workshops organized in the country. Though staff members do receive training, they seem not to catch up with the training.

There is lack of commitment amongst the staff members to cope with the needs and performance delivery of the Regional Council. It is found that people are just sent to the workshop without targeting any goal. Since the staff is recruited through the same rule for employment of PSC, it is difficult to fire those who are incompetent and who are not well trained to delivery.

This Regional Council is assumed to have everything in place such as supporting services, because it is situated in the same capital city together with the central government. It is considered as a well equipped Council in terms of basic and the necessary needs, but this assumption is definitely amiss. The Council sometimes is omitted in receiving current information. This is one of the problems that this Council is facing. It is clear that the capacity of the Regional Council need to be enhanced. The Council has from time to time committed itself to send the cleaners and drivers to workshop, for example to Swakopmund, to familiarize themselves with rules and regulations of the government and inform them about the implementation of the forthcoming decentralization programme.

Good results have been obtained from this group of workers, because they do follow, accept and appreciate the efforts of the Council of sending them to courses. Other efforts of the Regional Council of Khomas have been to offer community leaders with training. This has been successfully carried out and it added value to the living standard of community leaders. This training has been an eye-opener to the community leaders on many government and regional issues for the sustainable development of the Khomas Regional Council.

Though a remarkable improvement has been noted in some of the capacity building fields, the human resources development is totally neglected. The Council consists only 15 staff members. When staff members of the Council are recruited, gender balance is seriously considered, making sure that women are empowered. Not only recruiting women and putting them in the offices, but also sending them to workshops, and seminars to improve their knowledge and skills as administrators. The Council expresses concern about some of the staff members leaving the Council to other institutions for green pastures after they have been trained. This has heavily hampered the progress and performance of the Council, because at the end of the day, the Council is forced to recruit and provide training once again. Khomas Regional Council like all other Regional Councils did not benefit much from the SIPE's programme. Only few ex-combatants are seconded to the Council by the MRLGH. The Council looks forward to benefit from the decentralization programme when the transfer of staff from line ministries is fully implemented.

Khomas Regional Council is occupying the rented offices in the City Center Building in Windhoek. Considering the number of present staff members, the office spaces seem to be sufficient and well equipped. In future, when the decentralization programme is effectively implemented, lack of offices could be experienced and the Council would be forced to use more financial resources to rent more other offices. Currently, the building of the regional headquarter is under construction and it is expected to be completed in 2003. Presently, the Council has 12 computers to utilize and has ordered three more to come. At least every staff will be

having access to the utilization of the computer. Only four vehicles allocated to Khomas Regional Council. The Council received also a new truck like all other Regional Councils.

Constituency	Councilor	Female	Male	Total
Windhoek Rural	1	-	1	1
Hakahana	1	-	1	1
Wanaheda	1	-	1	1
Soweto	1	-	1	1
Katutra Central	1	1	-	1
Katutura East	1	-	1	1
Windhoek West	1	-	1	1
Khomasdal North	1	-	1	1
Windhoek East	1	1	-	1
TOTAL	9	2	7	9

Figure 4: Khomas Regional Constituencies. **Source:** Primary Data.

REGION	STAFF NO.	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Khomas	15	10	5	15
TOTAL	15	10	5	15

Figure 5: Staff of Khomas Regional Council. **Source:** Primary Data.

3.4.2 Oshana

Oshana Region with the area of 5,291 km sq is situated in the North of Namibia. It is one of the four regions, which divided the former Ovamboland into four parts. It has a population of 161,977 of which 87,690 are female, 74,287 male, reflecting 8.9% of the total Namibian population. (**Source:** National Planning Commission: 2001 Population data).

To assess the present capacity of Oshana Regional Council, it clearly shows that there is lack of capacity in different fields. The Oshana Regional Council is run by a Governor with the assistance of one Regional Officer and 78 staff members. Out of 80 staffs of Oshana Regional Councils, 65 are female and 15 male. Oshana Regional Council is divided into ten constituencies run by elected Regional Councilors. Ompundja Constituency is the only one out of ten represented by a female councilor.

It is also realized that there is a lack of financial resources to hire tutors or consultants to conduct the in-service training, workshops and seminars for the Regional Councilors. The programmes of the civil staff of the Regional Council are identified and funding is available, therefore, staff members are introduced to in-service training and personnel development. The MRLGH has mobilized resources from institutions such as DSE, AIMS, ESAMI, INSIGHT etc. from which the civil staff of the Council have benefited and continue to benefit from in terms of capacity building programmes offered in the country. Unfortunately, there are no programmes for the number of ex-combatants, who are seconded to the Regional Council of Oshana by MRLGH through the SIPE's programmes of mainstream integration in the public service.

The politicians at the regional level such as Regional Councilors did seemingly not benefit much from the capacity building efforts in Namibia yet. This is attributed to two factors:

- Training Policy for the Regional Councilors (politicians) is still being conducted by the MRLGH Training Units.
- The Regional Council does not have enough funds to include the Regional Councilors on its in-service training programmes.

Capacity building programme as an activity in Oshana Regional Council does not necessary look at gender. However, staff members are introduced to in-service-training and human resources development on the basis of the training needs that particular job position requires. “Ninety (90%) percent of the civil staff of Oshana Regional Council are women.

The Oshana Regional Council has only six computers. It has nine vehicles and one (1) big truck for the use in the Regional Council. But it is well noted that the Council of Oshana is experiencing lack of office space. The public hall is too small, not well equipped and has not yet been air-conditioned. The Council expresses concern that when the decentralization is in full force and the staffs are transferred from line-ministries, then lack of infrastructures will really hamper the Council’s management and administration.

Constituency	Councilor	Female	Male	Total
Okatana	1	-	1	1
Okaku	1	-	1	1
Ongwediva	1	-	1	1
Oshakati East	1	-	1	1
Oshakati West	1	-	1	1
Ompundja	1	1	-	1
Uukwiyu	1	-	1	1
Okatjali	1	-	1	1
Uuvudhiya	1	-	1	1
Ondangwa	1	-	1	1
TOTAL	10	1	9	10

Figure 6: Oshana Constituencies. **Source:** Primary Data.

REGION	STAFF NO.	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Oshana	80	65	15	80
TOTAL	80	65	15	80

Figure 7: Staff of Oshana Regional Council. **Source:** Primary Data.

3.4.3 Otjozondjupa

The Otjozondjupa Region is situated in the Central North East of Namibia and comprises an area of 105,328 km sq. It has a total population of 135,723 of which 65,487 are female and 70,236 male, representing 7.4% of the total Namibian population (Source: National Planning Commission. 2001. Population data).

Soon after the Regional and Local elections in 1992, it was given limited functions, but allowed to carry out its own work of controlling its own resources,

which in the past has been done by the MRLGH. In doing so, the Otjozondjupa Regional Council has been able to build a limited capacity in human and material resources. At present, the capacity needs to be increased and consolidated in order to cope with both existing functions and the other functions that will be decentralized to Regional Council in the near future.

The human resources capacity of Otjozondjupa Regional Councils comprises the elected Regional Councilors and appointed officials as well as the employees by the Council, who work together to achieve national goals.

These officers and employees of the Regional Councils are part of the Public Service, which is governed by the same rules of employment as the civil servants. Appointment is done by the Regional Council. Promotional appointments need the approval of the Ministry. Only the future Chief Regional Officer will be appointed by the Ministry. The central government still controls the resources of the Regional Council. The number of staff and officers of the Regional Council to undertake the routine and statutory administrative functions is still inadequate. The quality administration, of course, depends very much on the commitment ability and experience of the Regional Office, the staff members and the Council itself.

The Otjozondjupa Regional Council is clearly affected by lack of adequate infrastructures, to enable them to carry out their functions effectively. There is a great need to enhancing capacity in terms of offices, transport and office equipment such as computers, to enable the Regional Council to have accurate and adequate source of information so that planning and taking of decisions can be carried out efficiently and effectively. At present, the Regional Council has no access to a comprehensive regional database. The Regional Economic Planner alone cannot satisfy the needs of the Regional Council. More economic planners need to be appointed to assist each other for better performance.

The Regional Council has from time to time sent staff members for short training courses within the boundaries of Namibia such as computer and administration courses run by ESAMI, AIMS, NDI and the MRLGH. The Regional Council of Otjozondjupa appreciates and welcomes the various capacity building training courses, but it feels that the duration is too short for the staff members to gain skills. But the remarkable improvement could be observed in the computer field, finance, transport and in the administrative sectors. The Council has twelve computers and eleven vehicles including one big truck. The Council is occupying a government building with small offices accommodating all officers during working hours.

Constituency	Councilor	Female	Male	Total
Grootfontein	1	1	-	1
Otavi	1	-	1	1
Otjiwarongo	1	-	1	1
Omatako	1	-	1	1
Okakarara	1	-	1	1
Okahandja	1	-	1	1
Tsumkwe	1	-	1	1
TOTAL	7	1	6	7

Figure 8: Otjozondjupa Regional Constituencies. **Source:** Primary Data

REGION	STAFF NO.	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Otjozondjupa	48	15	43	48
TOTAL	48	15	43	48

Figure 9: Staff of Otjozondjupa Regional Council. **Source:** Primary Data.

REGION	ESTABLISHMENT	LOCATION	SIZE	POPULATION	INFRA-STRUCTURE
Khomas	1992	Central	36,805 km ²	250,305	Poor
Oshana	1992	North	5,291 km ²	161,977	Poor
Otjozondjupa	1992	Central North East	105,328 km ²	135,723	Poor

Figure 10 Comparison of the Regions **Source:** Primary Data

3.4.4 Interviews

Interviews with staff members of the MRLGH, Regional Officers, Councilors, Consultants and NGOs

Question 1

Have you heard of decentralization before? What comment do you have?

All the interviewees responded positively on the question. Decentralization is a global programme implemented almost by all the countries in the world. Though it has not yet been explained to all clearly, the interviewees have heard about it, learnt that it is an expensive exercise, which creates jobs for the people in the regions in order to reduce unemployment and poverty in the country. It is because of the decentralization that many feel that they have a housing programme called Build Together. This programme is welcomed by the Namibian people because it is affordable. Most of the people benefited from this programme through the MRLGH under decentralization programme.

Question 2

Why do we need to decentralize the government?

The researcher experienced mixed feelings from the interviewees. All respondents agreed that decentralization is needed in order to enhance democracy and to bring the government closer to the people for self-determination.

They argued as follows:

- Decentralization is needed because it provides more jobs to the people, rather than waiting the central government to do everything.
- Decentralization strengthens political stability through power sharing by empowering the community taking part in decision-making process at sub-national level.

Some feel that:

- It is too early for Namibia to implement decentralization programme after twelve years of gaining independence.
- Namibia is a small country with only 1.8 million people.
- Some Regional Councils could be more developed than others due to sizes, nature attractions, colonial history and donors' preferences.
- Decentralization is costly and may force Namibia to borrow money from IMF and World Bank to support the programme.
- Decentralization is just a privatization type of government properties and can disrupt national reconciliation policy.

Question 3

Why is decentralization programme so slow to be fully implemented?

All agreed that the process of decentralization has to be slow so that it can be carefully tackled and they need people to be accountable. The government, however, is fully aware of different implications it is likely to face, if it rushes on it. But it is only political will, which plays a role and guides the progress of the decentralization programme.

Question 4

What are your comments on the new administrative structure of the Regional Councils?

Some of the interviewees responded that they did not come across the new structures so far. It is difficult to comment on something you have not seen. Some who happened to study the structure felt that there was no proper consultation made and no feedback was given afterwards. Therefore, the Regional Councils might be facing problems of capacity in terms of staff and infrastructures. There will be a conflict between the staff transferred from line Ministries to the Regional Councils and the senior staff of the council, because they feel sidelined and their positions will be taken over. There is also a lack of well-trained and qualified staff to run the Regional Councils. It also shows that some of the competent staff may refuse to be transferred due to problems they may encounter such as accommodation, better schools for their children and job opportunities for their spouses. But some feel comfortable with the transfer.

The structure is going to be too expensive, but nevertheless it has to be implemented. The government has to look close to the issue of capacity building of the Regional Councils since this is the most important part to gear the decentralization process.

The staffing problems are known by the government, that is why the Ministries have been asked to share the experts through ministerial taskforces.

There is a gap between the Regional Councils and the Local Authorities in terms of development. The development carried out by the Regional Councils is halfway done and people are migrating to bigger towns.

With the new structure of the Regional Council in pipeline, hopefully things will change and the needs of the people at sub-national will probably be met.

Question 5

What are your views on how the politicians feel towards decentralization programmes to the Regional Councils?

The respondents indicated that the most important issue is only the political will and the understanding about the decentralization programme. There is fear, cultural fear and fear of change among the politicians. Some of the politicians want to hold to power. Ministries need to be more involved and work hard to make the programme successful by transferring some government responsibilities to Regional Councils.

Question 6

Do you think financial assistance to the Regional Council will be shared on the same basis by the central government?

Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provision is in place, and the taskforces are put in place to closely work on that objective. One needs to be reminded that the sizes and population of the regions are different. It is true that Regional Councils have different problems and they have to learn how to solve them in their own ways. The Regional Councils do not need to be blamed since they are in a training process. One understands the level of education of some Regional Councilors, but they need to have initiatives and learn how to lobby so that Regional Councils cannot always continue depending only on the central government.

Question 7

Do you think gender balance is the issue of concern during the decentralization process?

Yes, the issue of gender is highly respected and regarded as one of the priorities to look at first and to be dealt with through affirmative action. The President of the Republic of Namibia Dr. Sam Shafishuna Nujoma has put strong emphasis on the issue that women should always come first before men and must be appointed to key positions of the government. The Ministry of Women and Child Welfare is always engaged in looking for training programmes for women in various fields of capacity building and encourages the NGOs to organize workshops and seminars for women.

Question 8

What do you have to say about corruption in the Regional Councils if the new administrative structure is implemented?

All the interviewees are confident. There is no fear about corruption. Corruption is a crime like all other crimes and it is everywhere. It is even worse in the central government. It is hoped that corruption will be reduced, when some of the responsibilities are transferred to the Regional Councils. But what one needs to do is to put a strong control mechanism in place so that the Regional Councils can be accountable, efficient and effective.

3.4.5 Conclusion

The Regional Councils as sub-national governance and in existence since 1992, could not yet function properly as a means of social-economic development of the country. Since the decentralization policy was put in place, Regional Councils worked through the path of evolution and reforms. This chapter gave more information on the current structure, policy and the overall picture on how the Regional Councils were and are governed and who was and is involved. Three Regional Councils have been selected as case studies for this study. Three Governors of the selected Councils were contacted to give empirical evidence on the overall set-up of the Regional Councils in terms of capacity building. The data collected

enriches this paper with up to date data, when the questions pertaining to this study were responded to. The study is also in position of a comprehensive database collected from various interviewees such as regional officers, councilors, staff of the MRLGH, consultants, different NGOs, and from government ministries and agencies. Fruitful discussions and information exchange took place, assessing the role of the Councils in the socio-economic development in Namibia.

However, looking at the information sharing, most of the people in Namibia do not know anything much about decentralization programme. Some happened to hear about it, but still they need to have detailed information about decentralization. Decentralization is a complicated and expensive undertaking, which need adequate capacity. In the case of Namibia, equipped councilors, well-trained personnel and infrastructures are lacking. It is, therefore, found that Namibia needs to adequately build its capacity towards the decentralization programme.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. VARIOUS CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS AND REGIONAL COUNCILS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at various capacity building efforts available in Namibia to meet the needs of the Regional Councils. The government of the Republic of Namibia committed itself to the efforts of assisting the Regional Councils in various capacity building fields. It offers training in finance, human resources development and also provides infrastructures. Since these cannot only be achieved by the government alone, other efforts such as NGOs, CBOs, and UNDP registered their interest to assist the Regional Councils so that the Namibia's decentralization programme can be successful with the aim to enhancing democracy and to take the government closer to the people for self-determination.

The stated objectives of government's decentralization process are to enhance participatory democracy and to bring services closer to the people. While the process of decentralization is still evolving, its success depends on meaningful stakeholders participation. In order to participate, stakeholders should have adequate knowledge, understanding of the process and its role. They should also have the sufficient capacities to fulfill their roles in that process (MRLGH Draft Research Report 2002: 2).

This chapter focuses mainly on the newly introduced administrative structure of the Regional Councils and the new initiative for reform. The support from various stakeholders, including government ministries and agencies, has been realized with full initiatives supporting the decentralization programme.

4.2 Proposed Administrative Structure of the Regional Councils

The MRLGH in consultation with other central agencies and Regional Councils prepared a Blue Print for a new regional administration structure, taking into consideration the implications of the enlarged responsibilities of the Regional Councils. The proposal envisages that the regional administration be headed by a Chief Regional Officer at Under-Secretary level, who will be the region's Chief Executive Officer and Accounting Officer. The CEO will be assisted by four Directors namely: Planning and Development, General Services, Education, and Community Health. When looking at the structure, the process for staffing of these structures is not entirely clear. The Decentralization Enabling Act, however, provides for line ministries' staff currently serving in the regional directorates or head quarters, which are identified as competent by the line ministries to be seconded to the Regional Councils. According to the Public Service Act, the positions in the regional structure are new ones and would have to be advertised. Regional Councils, therefore, are supposed to establish a Recruitment and Disciplinary Committee that would then have a role in the recruitment process.

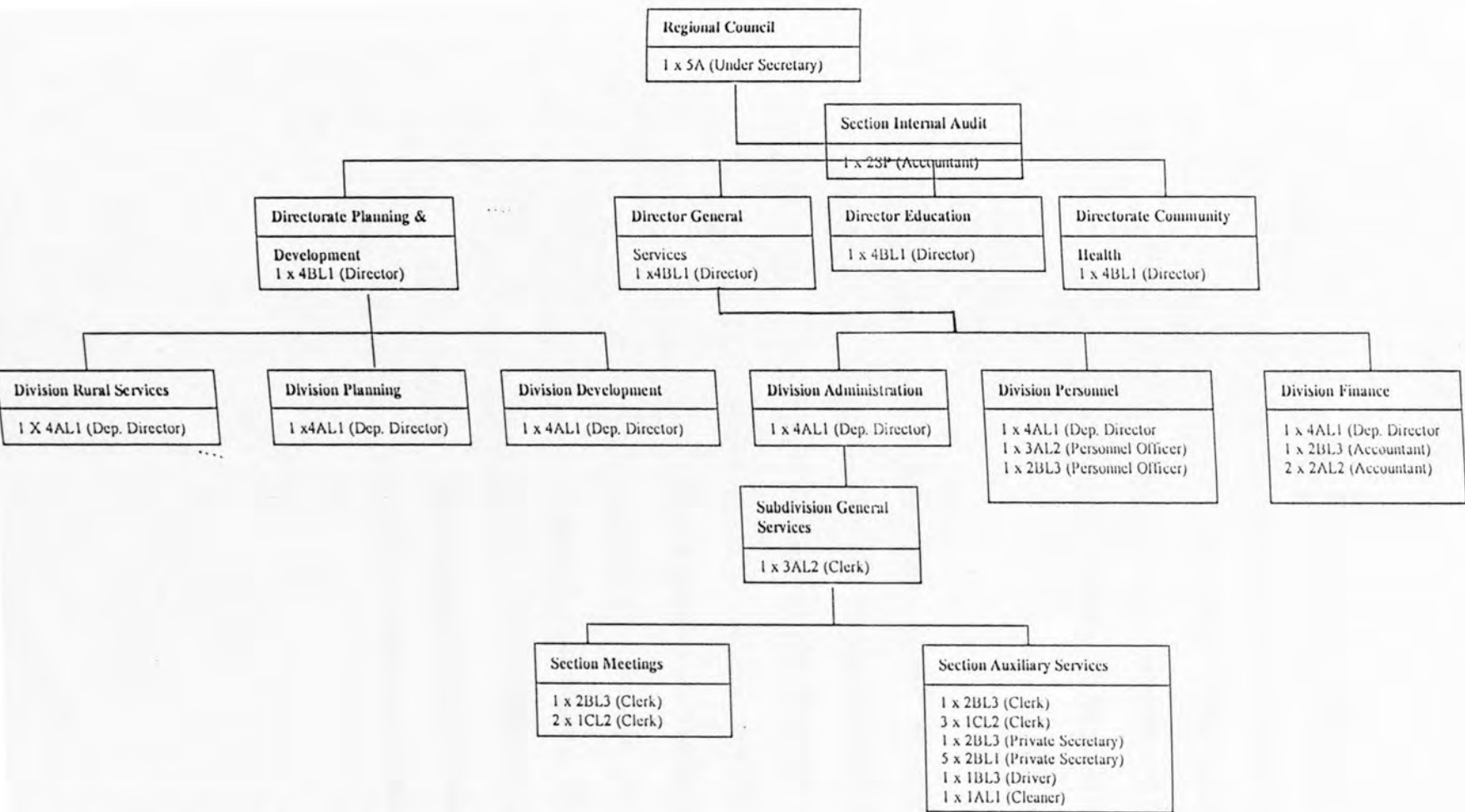


Figure 11: Regional Councils Structure (Blue Print) Sources: MRLGH

4.3 Cross-Ministerial Taskforce

The setting up of the cross-ministerial taskforces was realized to ensure structures of responsibilities and clear lines of command during the implementation of the decentralization programme. So far six areas have been identified. Cross-ministerial taskforces, therefore, are set up in the areas of financial management and intern-governmental transfers, personnel matters, development programmes and budget, training, housing and office matters and legislation.

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the activities outlined in the Decentralization Implementation Plan is vested with the MRLGH under the guidance of the Decentralization Policy Implementation Committee and the Directorate of Decentralization Co-ordination charged with the responsibility for the initiation, co-ordination and follow-up on the various tasks or projects to be executed. It is anticipated that the taskforces will work on most of the critical system issues outlined above. Although line ministries have an important part to play, progress will heavily depend on strengthening the involvement of the central agencies such as MOF, NPC and PSC in the Office of the Prime Minister. Furthermore, there will be need for a process of continuous consultation with Regional Councils. The taskforces will need to be well resourced, both financially and in human resources terms.

According to the Decentralization Implementation Plan, filling the position of a certain Regional Council establishment, the composition of a taskforces must consist of a Chief Personnel Officer, MRLGH, Director and the Personnel Division of the Regional Council concerned.

This taskforce is responsible for:

- Presenting a manpower plan to the PSC and the Regional Council, setting out the number and category of staff to be recruited, time and procedure for recruitment, skills requirements and cost implications.
- Receiving an assessment of required personnel from the Regional Council according to the specific needs and establishment guidelines including local priorities.
- Aiming at facilitating an efficient and smooth implementation of the first step of the Regional Council's decentralization process.
- Handling all arising issues during the project work and present them to the Director of Decentralization co-ordination, who will resolve or present the problem to the DPIC for final resolution.
- Reporting verbally on a monthly basis to the Director of Decentralization Co-ordination on the progress of the task assign to them.

4.4 Various Capacity Building efforts

The availability of various capacity building programmes are essential for the upliftment of sustainable development of the Regional Councils. Since the needs of the Regional Councils are numerous, the government, NGOs, and Private Sector are needed to supplement the efforts of the Regional Councils when applying the decentralization process. It is a fact that the government cannot be able to fulfill its national goals alone without the upper hand assistance from private sector. The capacity building efforts are many. Because of the limited space in this study, few indicated entities below have been discussed. Others such as UNDP, GTZ, DSE, PSC, NPC, AIMS, INSIGHT are left out, but interviewed and noted to have played indirect role in capacitating the Regional Councils in Namibia. The interviews were conducted with their training officers. Below is some of the identified capacity building efforts assisting the Namibian local governance.

4.4.1 Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing

The Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing as a coordinating ministry is one of the capacity building efforts in Namibia offered to the Regional Councils. The Directorate of Decentralization Co-ordination has offered the Regional Councils a Financial Management Capacity Building Program.

Such training courses are organized in order to equip the Regional Councils with knowledge and skills preparing for the new regional structure, to ensure efficiency and effective management and to promote a common understanding and encouragement skill transfers between individuals within each Regional Council. In addition, this financial course is principally targeting the accounting staff, as the course content is directly applicable to their duties. At least 19 female and 32 male received training.

The course includes:

- Volunteer Accountants
- Basic Accounting Training
- Financial Statement Training
- Budgeting Training
- Financial Training for Regional Officers and
- Pastel Accounting Software.

These types of courses in the MRLGH are addressed through the Cross-ministerial taskforce of Financial Management and Inter-governmental Transfer. Regional Council Finance Workshop, therefore, was subsequently held from 7 – 9 August 2002 in Tsumeb. The workshop has recommended that both accounting staff and executive management staff be included in the same training courses for Basic Accounting Training, Financial Statement Training and Budgeting Training and that an additional course is subsequently

provided, specifically to address the needs of further financial training for the Regional Officers, such as Management Accounting. The costs of such course are met by the MRLGH. Other taskforces engage themselves in a similar assistance of capacity building programmes for the Regional Councils.

4.4.2 Public Private Partnership

The National Programme for Public Partnership for Urban Environment (PPPUE) in Namibia is aimed at building capacity at the regional and local authority levels to create favourable conditions for the development of mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships among public, private and civil society actors for the provision and delivery of improved infrastructure and services to the poor in small towns and peri-urban areas.

PPP is described as a spectrum of possible relationships between the public and private actors for co-operative provision of infrastructure service. Private actors may include private business, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Though the PPP is a new concept to the MRLGH, the ministry sees this initiative as a strong means to support the on-going decentralization process in Namibia.

PPP can provide the opportunities to local governments to broaden services coverage and quality to local communities, particularly to the poor urban dwellers, on a sustainable basis through resource flow, know-how and efficiency from the private sector. Though PPP does not directly offer capacity building programs for the Regional Councils, it invites them to take part in its training program for Local Authorities. The PPP has its own development objectives that are to increase the access of the urban poor to basic urban environmental services, and thereby contributes to a healthy environment and the improvement of the living conditions in the peri-urban and urban areas of Namibia, by helping to:

- Articulate and facilitate partnerships between public sector, business and civil society,
- Develop sound policy and regulatory frameworks for private sector participation in urban service delivery, and
- Strengthen managerial, technical and organizational capacities of local authorities in Namibia for PPP development.

These objectives, therefore, are achieved through the following interventions:

- Development of PPP policy guidelines for local government in Namibia,
- Training and capacity building for selected municipalities and development training curricula,
- Provision of technical advice for the development of at least one partnership project in each selected municipalities,

- Co-ordination between stakeholder institutions and creation of synergies with existing government and donor funded programs. Thirteen (13) female twenty eight (28) male have been trained.

4.4.3 CABLE

The Cable project is implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing (MRLGH) in Namibia. The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) and the government of the Republic of Finland (GOF) signed an agreement on 22nd November 1999 to support the decentralization process by means of programmed support to the MRLGH. The project is co-financed by the two parties. One of the key policy objectives for Cable is the promotion of social equity, democracy, human rights and good governance (Horstia 2002: 1).

The Cable office is located within the MRLGH premises in order to facilitate good contact with key partners and to give a room for smooth running of the whole project. This is a pilot project, which is mainly targeting seven local authorities namely Katima Mulilo, Rundu, Otavi, Okahandja, Karibib, Khorixas and Opuwo. The Cable project has established that the development stages of the above mentioned towns are different, meaning that some are poor and some are better off. In fact all visited pilot local authorities were struggling with organizational development needs and HRD-related

situations such as planning, facing budgetary constraints, lack of capable and qualified staff and supporting services.

Despite all these, Cable project is serving well the needs in Namibia to decentralize the government functions to lower level, both to the Regional and Local Authorities. The important task for Cable is capacity building, especially within the Local Authorities. It is quite encouraging that the CABLE capacity building activities have mainly so far addressed the needs of the local administrators. Cable therefore has contributed significantly towards the enhancement of good governance and advance democracy to the Regional and Local political decision-makers and their people. Altogether fourteen (14) female and twenty four (24) male are trained.

The areas for training identified by the Cable project for 2002 on capacity building are:

- Community level program and democracy, dealing with the activities of decentralization process and legislation and councilors and staff relation activities.
- Financial Management, dealing with budgeting and fraud management.
- Strategic Management.
- Communication issues and ICT development.
- Administrative practices on human resources management, customer care and induction courses.

- Technical services, dealing with the training activity on water and sewerage, electrical, road maintenance, waste management, mechanical training and land use planning and management (MRLGH 2002: 1 – 5).

4.4.4 ESAMI

The Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) as it is known today, had its foundation laid down in 1974, when the three Eastern African countries Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania created the East African Community Management Institute to meet the training needs of the Eastern African Community. Since 1980 it was broadened to accommodate management-training needs for other countries in the sub-region, including Namibia. ESAMI was designated as “The African Center of Excellence in Management Training”, by the UN Economic Commission for Africa in 1997. Today ESAMI is one of the best NGOs in Namibia, which on regular basis organizes different capacity building courses, particularly aimed to improve the managerial skills for Regional Councils in different fields.

ESAMI has the following visions to:

- maintain its status as an African Center of Excellence in Management Training, Research and Consultancy, which ultimately will contribute to capacity building for social-economic development of Africa.

- Emerge as an international center for exchange of information and ideas on management strategies.
- Develop professional capacity to match its enhanced mandate and profile to improve Performance and Management Effectiveness.
- Play supportive role in strengthening management development of national and regional institutions.
- Collaborate with donor agencies and other institutions in specific training, authorities pertinent to Africa's needs (ESAMI 2002: 1-3).

ESAMI as one of the NGOs in Namibia has organized a number of capacity building courses for the Regional Councils in different fields with the aim to support and strengthen the decentralization policy for the Republic of Namibia.

Basic Financial Management for Regional Accountants of Namibia was held from 8 –19 December 1997 in Windhoek. The aim of this course was to promote the understanding of basics of macro-economic financial management, together with its relationship to fiscal, monetary and balance of payments policies and procedures among the regional staff. This course was attended by five female from MRLGH, Omaheke, Oshana, Ohangwena and Omusati Regional Councils. It was also attended by eight male from Otjozondjupa, Caprivi, Erongo, Kunene, Hardap, Oshikoto, Karas and Kavango Regional Councils. All together thirteen (13) councilors attended the course.

Tailor-made on Basic Computer Skills was held from 4 – 22 December 2000 at the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing in Windhoek, Namibia. The aim was to equip the staff from Regional Councils with basic computers and data communication network systems in order to improve Information Management and Communication for better delivery of quality services through the use of information technology. Eleven female from MRLGH, Oshana, Otjozondjupa, Erongo, Karas, Omaheke, Kavango, Omusati, and Oshikoto attended the Computer Workshop. Eight male from Oshana, Otjozondjupa, Omusati, Oshikoto, Kunene and Ohangwena attended the course.

Workshop on Development Result Oriented Management in the Public Service was conducted from 30 September – 4 October 2002 in Cape Town, South Africa. The workshop was attended by the Regional Governors from Khomas, Otjozondjupa, Oshana, Oshikoto, Omaheke and Erongo. Sixteen (16) male councilors and five (5) five female attended the workshop. The total number of Regional Councils staff attended was 21. The aim was to equip participants with management capacity of the Regional Councils.

Project Management and Entrepreneurship Development Program took place from 7 – 18 October 2002 in Thuringerhof Hotel, Windhoek, Namibia. This capacity building program was held with the aim to teach the Regional Councilors about project formulation and management to enable them to lead the people to economic perspective and freedom. One

Governor from Omusati attended the Workshop. Two female from Otjozondjupa and Ohangwena Regional Council were delegated to attend the Workshop. Seventeen (17) male Regional Councilors from Ohangwena, Kunene, Otjozondjupa, Omusati, Erongo Regional Councilors attended. This workshop of Capacity Building was dominated by eight councilors from the Omusati Regional Council.

Governance, Gender and Change Management was organized from 18 – 22 November 2002. This course was aimed to analyze governance issues that hinder development efforts, to identify linkages between Good Governance, Gender and Management of Change and to promote engendered democratic governance in the public and corporate sector. The workshop was attended by two Governors from Khomas and Kunene and seven male councilors from Khomas and Otjozondjupa Regional Councils.

ESAMI is one of the active capacity building efforts aiming to equip the Regional Councils with modern information technology and to ensure improvement of the Regional Councils management capacity. About twenty four (24) female and fifty eight (58) male were trained.

4.4.5 National Democratic Institute (NDI)

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) is a non-profit organization involved in strengthening and expanding democracy worldwide, while calling on a global network of volunteer experts. NDI provides practical assistance to civil and political leaders advancing democratic values, practices and institutions. NDI works with democrats in every region of the world to build political and civil organization, safeguard elections and to promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. It worked in Namibia since 1989 and conducted a variety of programs to support the consolidation of its parliamentary democracy. NDI has been involved in voter education, electoral administration, parliamentary development, political part training, and NGOs capacity building (Understand the National Budget 1999: 2).

The NDI is currently working in partnership with the elected and staff leadership of the National Assembly and National Council to strengthen the operations in Parliament. The NDI give training to the Regional Councils staff members, teaching them how to use ITC and makes them aware of the modern technology.

NDI engages itself in training the Regional Councilors to communicate with each other. Every Regional Council office has Video Conference facilities installed to communicate with and has access to the Internet. This has enabled the Regional Councilors to sit in their

offices in front of the TV and communicate with other regions, asking questions directly. Almost 80% of the elected officials at national and regional levels have been exposed to Information Technology through training. This has enabled the Regional Councils to cut costs and have less traveling. The NDI assists with the training of Regional Councilors in identifying the needs of the communities. The challenge is to turn these skills into tools of efficiency and development.

The NDI Namibia has worked with the National Council since its inception in 1993 and started working with committees since they were instituted in 1999 through series of workshops, training and publications. The study mission was part of a series of activities to enhance the capacity of the National Council, in particular the committees to effectively incorporate public inputs into their deliberations, policies, mechanism and linkages.

With support from the NDI, the National Council held a National Conference, the first of its kind in the history of the National Council that focused on Public Participation with the view of identifying mechanisms that will enhance public participation in the legislative process. The two days conference brought together members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, and Regional Governors from all thirteen regions of Namibia, representative of the Local Government, representative of the NGO sector and academics.

On 11 November 2002, the NDI organized a two days Constituency Outreach Conference in Windhoek aimed at consulting each other in order to find solutions to challenges facing the Namibian communities. The conference was attended by Regional Governors, Councilors and Members of Parliament. At least twenty (20) female and thirty four (34) male have been trained.

Capacity Efforts	No. of Women Trained	No. of Men Trained	Total	%
MRLGH	19	32	51	
CABLE	14	24	38	
PPP	13	28	41	
ESAMI	24	58	82	
NDI	20	34	54	
TOTAL	90	176	266	

Figure 12: Capacity building efforts. **Sources:** Primary Data.

Figure 11 indicates the capacity building efforts, which are directly involved in providing various training programmes to the Regional Councils. This study, however, identified a number of different capacity building efforts in Namibia in which some are indicated at page 57 of this study. Since the decentralization programme is at its infancy stage, these capacity building efforts showed their interest to assist the Regional Councils few years after independence. ESAMI, the longest training entity, started in 1997. The numbers indicated in this figure, are people trained since the establishment of the Regional Councils and the inception of the decentralization programme in the Republic of Namibia. This study found that the people trained under these programmes are well trained, gained knowledge, skills and advanced experiences. Unfortunately, the number trained so far is not enough to meet the

needs of all the 13 Regional Councils on various fields of capacity building. Despite the availability of more capacity building efforts, training opportunities of the Regional Councils staff need to be regularly provided.

The state of affairs convinced the Ministry of Regional and Local government and Housing (MRLGH) of the need for orderly planning and coordination of the activities of domestic and international NGOs operating under the umbrella of the ministry. Overlapping existed in task performance and project implementation by NGOs cooperation with the Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing during the first nine years of independence. Since then, however, within the newly adopted decentralization policy, which aims at improving regional and local governance, a clearly defined policy of cooperation with NGOs has been developed which is demand and need driven (United Nations Centre for Regional Development 2002: 93).

4.5 Regional Economic Development

The establishment of Regional Councils and the introduction and implementation of decentralization policy is not only meant for administration and independent political development, but it is also meant for regional economic development. Namibia attained its political independence from its colonial masters twelve years ago, and still depends on them for socio-economic development. The government is committed to assist the Regional

Councils with all capacity building assistance, including the maintenance of sustainable economic development in all the regions.

Theo Ben Gurirab the Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia stated; "Today we can stand tall as we look at how we have successfully established genuine democratic structures at all spheres of government. The challenge we now face is to ensure that these structures are serving to entrench democracy in our country and help us to end the great divide between the rich and poor, between the developed and the under-developed communities in Namibia. Through concrete development programmes, we must instill the hope and conviction among our people that together with their government, at national and sub-national levels they can and must defeat poverty, disease and marginalisation"(www.gennt.gov.Na.November 2002).

Following the current railway construction from Tsumeb-Oshikoto to Oshakati-Oshana and Oshikango- Ohangwena Regions, there will be an economic boost and improvement in reducing unemployment and poverty in these regions. This is one of the innovative concepts and programmes that the government is searching in order to effectively develop and address the shortage problem of critical capacity required developing, implementing and sustaining economic growth in the regions. In completion of this government undertaking, the people in Namibians will be able to buy, sell and transport their goods from the South, West, Central and North of the country. Since the neighbouring Angola is now enjoying peace and

stability, more trade between two countries will be strengthened and the trade traffic is expected to increase with new potential customers in addition to those that are already there.

African states are faced with severe economic constraints and problems. The essence of economic decentralization is the scope of initiative delegated to, and taken by, a region without being negated by the economic constraints that hamper successful decentralization measures such as the lack of resources, lack of capital, lack of know-how, lack of trained and professional human resources and lack of commitments. Implementation of decentralization measures involves costs and the deployment of facilities such as adequate infrastructure, the distribution of goods and personnel and also maintenance (Töttemeyer 2000: 106).

However, the construction of a new railway line, which is considered as a viable project to the Namibian economy, needs to be capacitated with local volunteers in order to achieve the aimed goal. "Capacity development programmes should also give particular attention to the strengths and potential of individual volunteer workers. Experienced volunteer workers can display a set of "soft skills" that prove to be critical for capacity development. With approaches sensitive to people and culture, volunteer workers gain trust and confidence that are necessary to enable local partners to take the lead and become gradually empowered (UNV. 2002: 39).

4.6 Conclusion

It is a fact that the Regional Councils are not able to fulfill their responsibilities and functions without the additional assistance from somewhere. The new Regional Council administrative structure needs more strong efforts to realize its success during its implementation. In this chapter, more capacity building efforts have been identified within the MRLGH, government agencies and non-governmental organizations. Interview and collection of materials were carried out in order to collect comprehensive data. This study agrees that it is not enough to expect the people to participate in the legislative and policymaking process, if they do not have the knowledge, skills and the capacity to do so. For the people to participate they need information, mechanism to express themselves, initiatives and they need opportunities to learn from the experiences of others. It is now time that people need changes. People are hungry for overall development and economic development in particular. People are conscious of their role in developing themselves and their own country. Therefore, changes can only be brought by capacity building efforts, which can commit themselves to assist the Regional Councils towards regional development. A considerable number of capacity building efforts have been found in Namibia, but little has been achieved in providing capacity to the Regional Councils. It is also found that a lack of funds has led to the inadequate training programmes.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS OF CAPACITY ON REGIONAL PERFORMANCE IN NAMIBIA

5.1 Introduction

This is a comparative study through which interviews has been conducted to collect empirical evidence. Regional governors, officers, councilors, MRLGH staff, consultants and NGOs were interviewed. Decentralization process is a broad aspect and to understand its conclusions, one needs to meet different level of people to gather information. This study gives its findings as data collected from individuals and organizations about capacity building and gender balance in the Regional Councils in Namibia.

Presently, many capacity building efforts in developing countries are financed through donor support and are thus dependent on project and programme funding. Though this support in itself is useful, its contribution is low in terms of the total capacity building requirements. National and local level organizations have limited access to alternative sources of finance for capacity building efforts, particularly training and research. In several cases, loans from international development banks have been taken to finance programmes for institutional reform, training and research. There are, however, few responsibilities to tap funds for such capacity building programmes through national financing agencies.

The lack of access to alternative funding and the absence of reservations in routine budgets hamper the translation of articulated needs into effective demand (Van Monique: 1996: 13).

5.2 Analysis of Data

This study presents its findings according to its three objectives based on its primary question as the guidelines to the research process. The fourth objective is dealt with in chapter six in conclusion and recommendations. All three regional governors echo the same problems affecting their Regional Councils. The findings, therefore, depend on the following objectives: assessment of present capacity of the Regional Councils whether the capacity building meet the needs of the Regional Councils and whether they have been gender sensitive.

The various sources of information and data collected, which are presented in this study indicate and reveal clearly that the Regional Councils do not have adequate capacity to perform their functions. A comparison of three Regional Councils of Khomas, Oshana and Otjozondjupa is made to learn from each other.

The findings reveal that lack of financial resources is the major field that hampers the capacity building of the Regional Councils and their development in Namibia. It is clearly indicated that the Regional Councils are not yet at the level of generating self-income, therefore the funds for development work is indeed seen to be very limited and this causes the continued dependency of the Regional Councils on the central government resources. It has also been found that Regional Councils in Namibia have over a couple of years been too much involved in evolution and have been regularly been used for political purposes rather than regional development. This study found that there is lack of emphasis on collection of own regional tax to maintain a considerable standard of performance by Regional Councils. Though there are many possible courses of fees and tax-collection, the Regional Councils could not explore that opportunity. The 5% levy they receive from the local authority seems to be inadequate in one-way or the other.

Based on the findings, it is clearly indicated that most of the funds of the Regional Councils are used on personnel. But most of the workers are not well qualified yet to assist in proper planning, giving initiatives and implementing the decisions of the Councils effectively. Depending on the argument of the findings, this study also found that the Regional Councils are not much to be blamed, because they are not really independent to develop their own programs yet, but rather depend on the central government.

This study engages itself in identifying and reviewing the capacity building efforts in Namibia in order to reveal whether they meet the needs of the Regional Councils in terms of capacity building. The researcher visited and interviewed the staff of the ministries, councilors, regional officers, consultants and NGOs and the findings were that capacity building efforts are more than enough available in Namibia to meet the needs of the Regional Councils. The empirical data used in this study shows that the available capacity building programmes are operating in different ways. Some are preferably targeting to provide capacity building programmes for the Regional Councils and some for the Local Authorities. The study therefore found clearly that most of the capacity building efforts, especially initiated by NGOs, prefer to assist the Local Authorities. This is a clear testimony that it is a cultural belief of the NGOs to associate themselves with autonomous entities rather than political oriented bodies.

The second complaint is that NGOs sometimes dabble in party politics and support causes that are inimical to government interests (United Nations Centre for Regional Development 2002: 98).

But it was also found that most of the capacity building programmes were organized for both Regional Councils and Local Authorities. Empirical evidence shows that ESAMI, NDI and MRLGH programs provided the Regional Councils with capacity building programmes in different fields, such as computers, technology, transport, finance, human resources development, administrative and gender programmes.

The data based on the findings shows clearly that capacity building efforts are available and organized in the country, but that Regional Councils due to shortage of funds are unable to send their staff to workshops and seminars.

On the other hand, if funds happen to be available, the same staff and councilors are sent to the workshops and seminars on regularly basis more than others. It was also found that some of the workshops are so expensive that Regional Councils cannot afford to fund for one or more of their staff members to attend. Inadequate improvement in the capacity of the Regional Councils has however been noted since their establishment in 1992. Data collected indicates that the Councils are learning to respect gender, but still there is a long way to go. Comparing the three Councils taken as case studies together, the male councilors are dominating the political scene. Namibia is having eleven male regional governors and only two are female.

Some of the negative impacts noted by this study are that:

- Some capacity building programmes are exclusively targeted for the civil staff of the Councils establishment and as such leave out the politicians and the seconded staff of the MRLGH, especially the ex-combatants.
- Some staff members are leaving the Councils after the completion of the training for greener pastures.
- Lack of office space and equipment to be used by the trained and new recruited staff hamper the progress and performance of the Regional Councils.
- Still a lack of well-trained and qualified personnel despite training efforts.

- The HIV-AIDS epidemic affects the staff of Regional Councils (e.g. dying and absent from work).

5.3 Conclusion

It is only through action that capacity is to be improved. It is through this statement that the MRLGH has taken action to put up taskforces to assist and improve the performance of the Regional Councils. From the views of the governors, regional officers, consultants, NGOs, and the staff of the MRLGH, it has been clearly indicated that there is lack of capacity in the Regional Councils. The outcomes and impacts of capacity on Regional Councils performance in Namibia indicated that the central government needs to accelerate the expansion of responsibilities to the regions in order to meet its goal of extending government and democracy to the regions. The capacity building efforts available have met the needs of the Regional Councils, but they need to be directed. Efforts need to be exerted to include more women in capacity building programmes in order to enable them to gain knowledge and skills.

CHAPTER SIX

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Adequate capacity within the administration is essential to ensure any wider impacts and sustainability of the Regional Councils performances under decentralization. It is against this background that the Regional Councils in Namibia need to be well equipped with full capacity in all fields in order to be able to fulfill their goals and objectives. The needs of the people at grassroots level can only be met, if the capacity is adequate to make things work towards sustainable and socio-economic development. It is only through the decentralization policy that democracy and development can reach the people at sub-national levels by delegating some of the central government responsibilities to the regions and thereby empower the people. This study is of the opinion that Namibia can achieve sustained economic development, if the people participate and become agents of the decentralization process. Women and traditional leaders must be empowered to be part and parcel of decision-making process in Regional Councils under the decentralization programme. Decentralization policy paves the way for the 13 Regional Councils in Namibia to take the government and democracy closer to the people. The people at sub-national levels need to be made to understand the decentralization programme and the legitimate role of the Regional Councils in this process. But to succeed with decentralization programme, the Regional Councils need to have enough financial resources, human resources development and sufficient infrastructures.

Capacity building is one of the important areas that the Namibian decentralization program needs to tackle. This study appreciates the efforts of the MRLGH of undertaking a wide range of targeting training and capacity building initiatives by establishing training units in all the 13 Regional Councils. It is also encouraging that different capacity building efforts have identified themselves to become part and parcel of the Namibian decentralization by providing good opportunities for training programmes, workshops and seminars in order to capacitate the Regional Councils to meet their goals and objectives. The efforts of various capacity building institutions are very essential weapons to combat the problems facing the communities and the people of Namibia at grassroots level. It is through these efforts that Namibia can start to learn how to solve their own problems, to respect and recognize the suffering of women and other social disadvantaged group such as people with disabilities and to protect children against social evils in Namibia.

The economic development in our country is the challenge ahead to be tackled through the decentralization programme. Poverty and unemployment and other social evils can only be eradicated, if the Namibian people are united with one aim to work together, help each other, teach each other, accept and recognize national contributions from other fellow countrymen and women. There is a big challenge ahead for the Regional Councils to look seriously at ways and means on how to uplift the economy of this country. Decentralization programs must empower them to use all means of business practices to develop each region. All these can be realized, if the bottom-up approach is carried out among the communities and to stimulate the participation of all the Namibian people at all levels of governance.

The recommendations of this study can enhance true democracy, sustainable socio-economic development and can consolidate the efforts of the government of taking the government to the people at sub-national level. But to achieve all these objectives, the good understanding of Namibia's decentralization policy is of utmost importance.

6.2 Recommendations

From the preceding scenarios the study recommends that:

- Capacity building in terms of human resources, finance and infrastructures should be the first priority to enable the Regional Councils perform better and provide better services to the people. The central government should urgently expedite the process of decentralizing decision making of making available financial resources to the Regional Councils. This enables the Councils to mobilize their resources freely and accelerate the regions' development. The erection of constituency offices for councilors should be accelerated so that they can have enough space to operate from and perform their duties effectively. Regional Councils' new building facilities must be planned properly to provide possible facilities and needs for women and for people with disabilities. The MRLGH should double its efforts in continuing to provide the Regional Councils with staff training courses till such a time they stand on their own feet.

- The 5% property rate assigned to the regions from the Local Authorities should be encouraged. Written reports on how the funds have been utilized by the Regional Councils should be submitted to the Local Authorities annually, and regular round table discussion should be encouraged for the purpose of accountability, efficiency and effective management. The Regional Councils Act 1992 should be amended to accommodate the usage of the 5% levy received from Local Authorities.
- A national capacity building policy and strategies for the implementation of integrated components of regional development policies and programmes for local government must be created and developed. This can direct various capacity building efforts on how to conduct the programmes and to avoid expensive training courses on local governance.
- An annual calendar for training courses, workshops, and seminars must be compiled before the budget preparations to allow ample space for the Regional Councils to budget for their programmes. This will assist the Regional Councils to avoid sending their staff to attend workshops unprepared. The MRLGH should discuss, in detail with all the stakeholders, the available capacity building efforts and table their intentions to conduct annual training programmes timorously. They need to be sent to the different Regional Councils to choose and decide when and whom to send according to their budgetary limits.

- The Regional Councils should consider including women, people with disabilities and traditional leaders in some of the decision-making committees in order to air their views and contribute towards sustainable development of the Regions. The Regional Councils should in future avoid creating unnecessary autonomous committees and control the sizes of committees. Frequency of meetings should be properly planned to cut down and facilitate faster decision-making.
- Since the decentralization is a constitutional requirement, all politicians must be made to understand and accept the important role of the programme and make sure that a positive message is delivered to the public at large. The purpose of the decentralization is to ensure fair allocation of resources. If politicians are not committed to the course of the decentralization, it can easily cause big confusion. They should take a leading role to make the communities understand the decentralization programme in Namibia. Decentralization is implemented in different ways in different countries. It is a historical and incremental process. It needs a political will from political leaders, knowledge of experts, support from the public, skilled and knowledgeable people to bring changes.
- A Department of Decentralization should be introduced in the Polytechnic of Namibia and the University of Namibia in order for Namibia to produce her own well-trained, well-skilled and well-qualified cadres for the big challenges

decentralization programmes are faced with. Scholarships should be sought to send Namibians to courses in order to fight dependence on expatriates who come and go. To prepare and have own personnel, Namibia would be better off. It cuts on costs and creates efficiency and trust in the Regional Councils. This is one of the measures to widen the supply of capacity building services and encourage the Namibian people to become more responsive to demand.

- The Regional Councils should create strong HIV-AIDS civic education committees in each constituency to make the people more aware of the killer disease, which has negative impact on the socio-economic development in Namibia.

6.3 Appendix

Appendix 1

Regional Governors Interview Questions

1. Do the Capacity Building efforts in Namibia meet the needs of the Regional Councils?
2. What is the present capacity of the Regional Councils?
3. Are there adequate capacity building programmes for enhancing effective and efficient management of the Regional Councils?
4. Have the Regional Councils benefited from the capacity building efforts offered in Namibia?
5. Is there any considerable improvement in the capacity of the Regional Councils since 1992?
6. How is gender balance taken into consideration by various capacity building programs?
7. What are the outcomes and impacts of capacity building in the Regional Councils?

Appendix 2

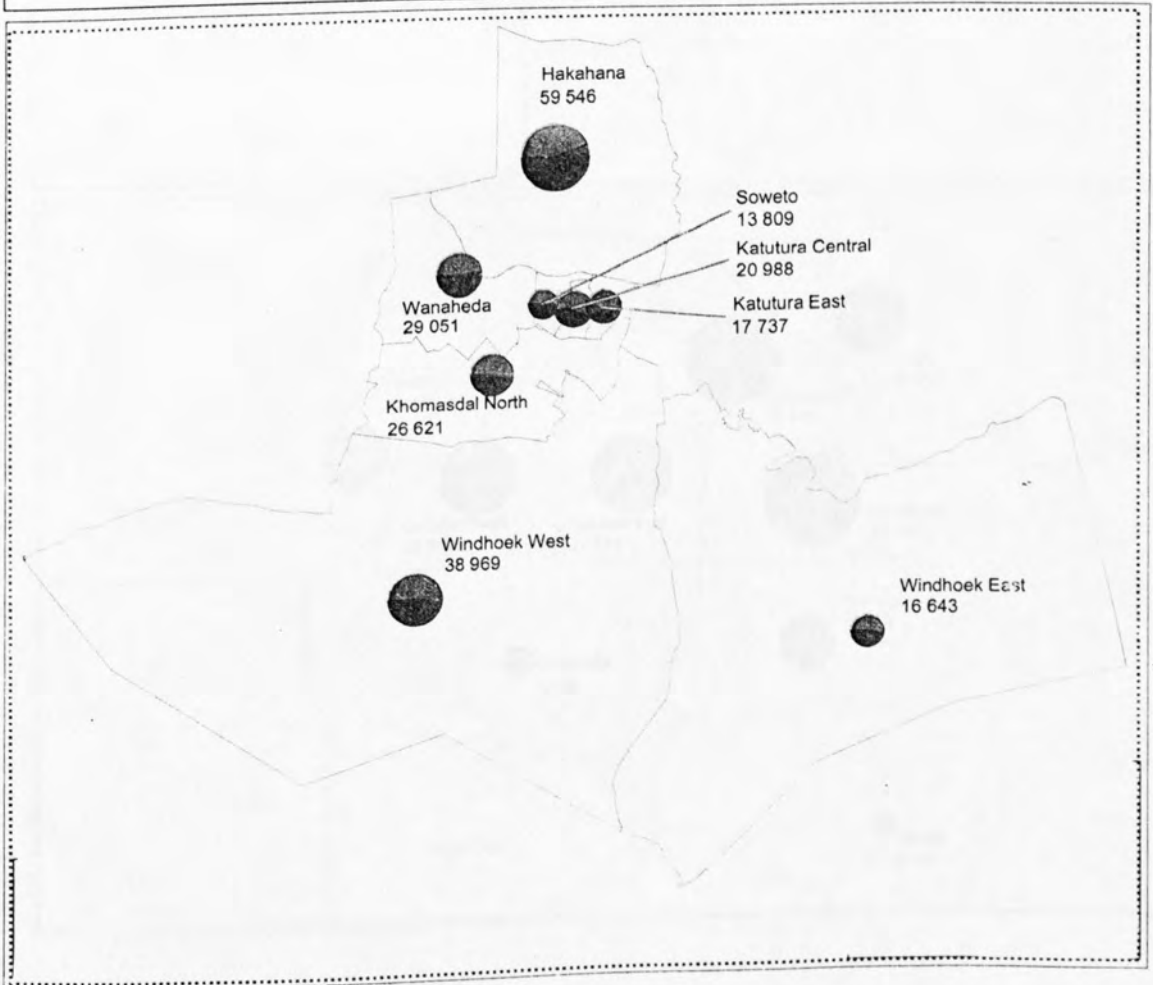
Questions for Staff of the MRLGH, Regional Officers, Consultants and NGOs

1. Have you heard of decentralization before? What comment do you have?
2. Why do we need to decentralize the government?
3. Why is decentralization programme so slow to be fully implemented?
4. What are your comments on the new administrative structure of the Regional Councils?
5. What are your views on how the politicians feel towards decentralization program to the Regional Councils?
6. Do you think financial assistance to the Regional Council will be shared on the same basis by the central government?
7. Do you think gender balance is the issue of concern during the decentralization process?
8. What do you have to say about corruption in the Regional Councils if the new administrative structure is implemented?

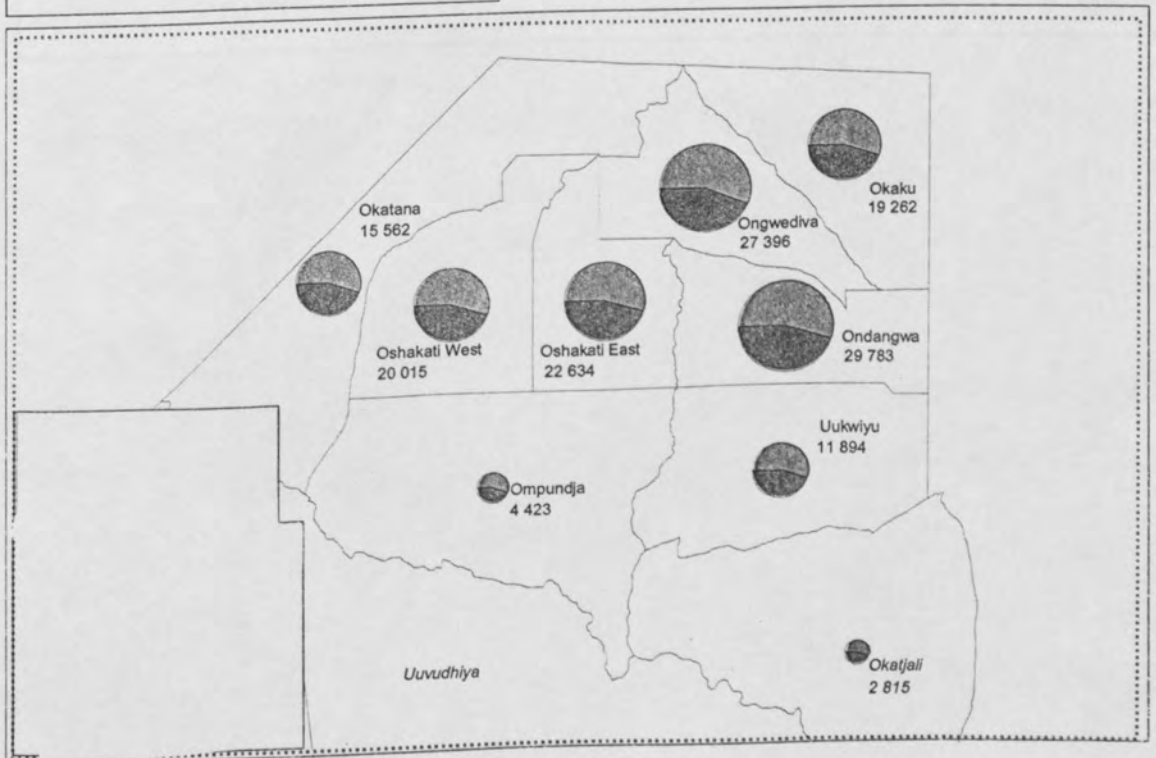
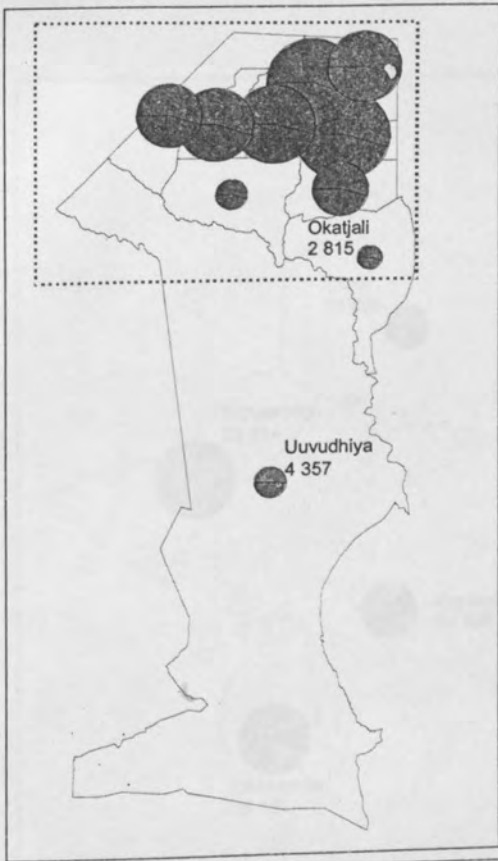
Appendix 3 : REGIONS OF NAMIBIA



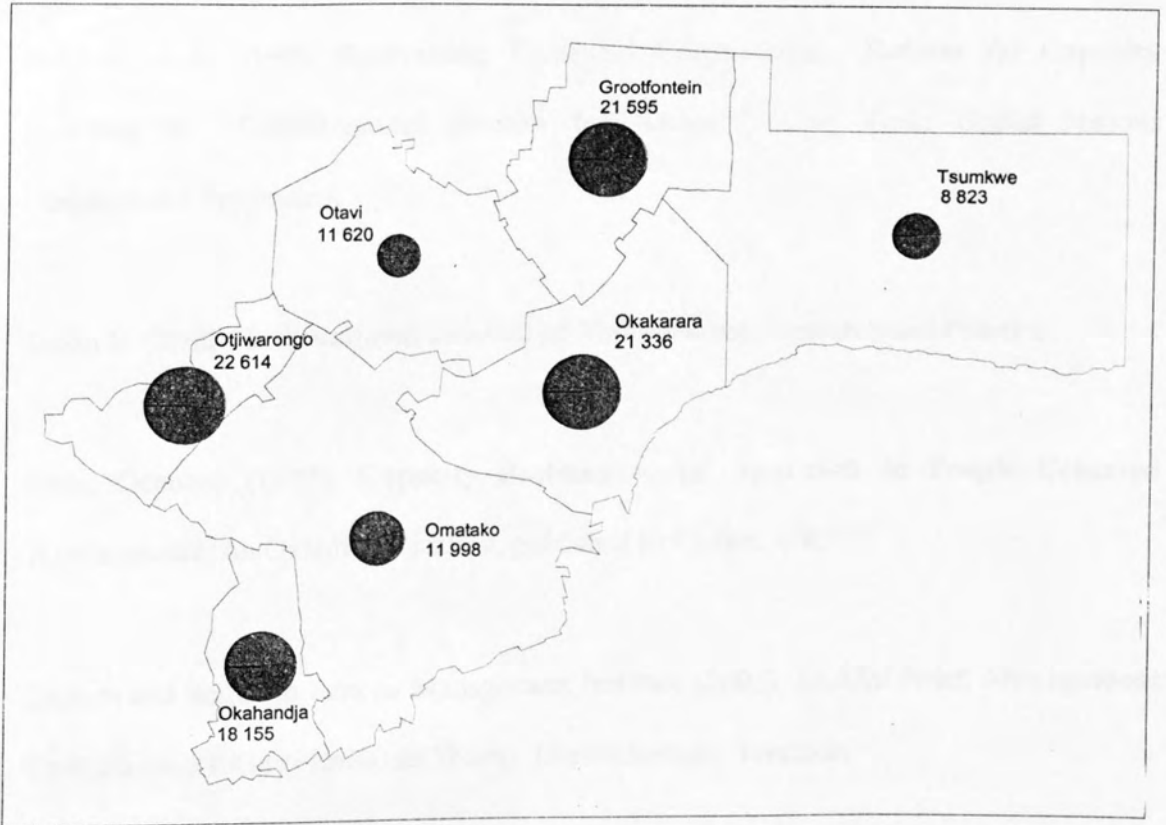
Appendix 4: Khomas Region and Constituencies



Appendix 5: Oshana Region and Constituencies



Appendix 6: Otjozondjupa Region and Constituencies



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