

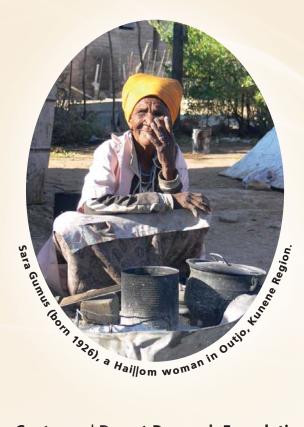


San in Namibia Two Decades After Independence

Edited by Ute Dieckmann Maarit Thiem Erik Dirkx Jennifer Hays







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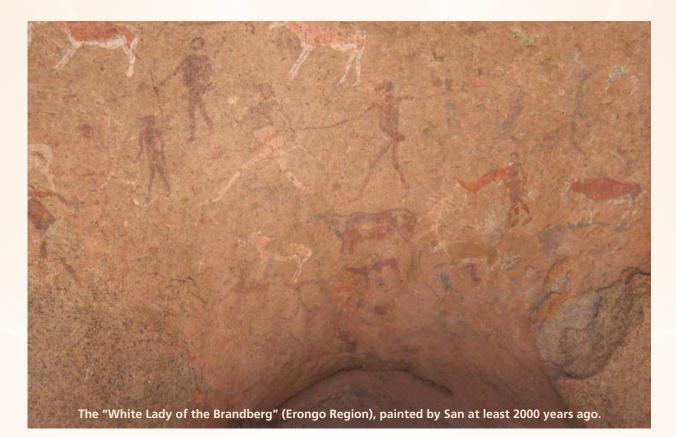


Land, Environment and Development Project of the Legal Assistance Centre and Desert Research Foundation of Namibia

> Windhoek NAMIBIA 2014

Dedication

This report is dedicated to Namibia's "first people" – the San.



The title of this report: "Scraping the Pot"

The term "scraping the pot" derives from a popular Jul'hoan folk tale, "Tug of War" (recorded in Biesele 2009: 39-44), which tells the story of how San people came to be oppressed by others. The notion of "scraping the pot" after all the others have eaten summarises the feelings of many San today, two decades after Namibia's Independence: they feel left behind while other Namibians enjoy the fruits of Independence.

The Namibian Government and many other stakeholders have put much effort into improving the circumstances of the San, yet still, everywhere in the country, they remain in a very marginal position. This report sheds light on their current circumstances, and provides insight into the underlying causes of their continued marginalisation. We hope that a better understanding will lead to more effective cooperation between the San communities and those who wish to support them in confronting the challenges still facing them.

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Ute Dieckmann, Maarit Thiem, Erik Dirkx, Jennifer Hays Editors

Foreword

The San, the first people to inhabit southern Africa, represent a 100000-year-old culture which should be considered one of the world's treasures. Their DNA incorporates an unbroken chain of wisdom, knowledge of nature and community.

I had the pleasure of visiting Namibia and meeting some of its San people in 2010 after finding out that I, like many others in Africa, have a distinct genetic lineage from these people who have walked upon the soils of southern Africa for so many centuries.

Namibia, with the second largest population of San people, and such a rich and diverse range of peoples and cultures, has the wonderful distinction of some of the most enduring branches of our human family – something that I found widely recognised by Namibians and their government.

Nevertheless I am aware of the continued struggle that many of these people, including the San, still face to live dignified lives free from poverty and discrimination, with access to education, healthcare and other services for themselves and their children.

Every country needs a model of development which works for their own situation, and I hope this comprehensive report will assist the people of Namibia to make further tangible progress to ensure that the human rights, cultures, languages and livelihoods of all of the people of Africa are respected, especially its oldest inhabitants.

Wherever we are in the world, and however we look, we are members of one family – God's family. In accepting this fact we press forward together in our goal to ensure that all people are able to embrace the rights and opportunities to which they are entitled.

92 Bron E

Archbishop Desmond Tutu Cape Town, South Africa

Preface

The date 9 February 1990 marked a milestone in the short history of the Namibian nation. The people of Namibia declared that they "desire to promote amongst all of us the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Namibian nation among and in association with the nations of the world" (Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990).

The dignity sought can only be attained if all basic necessities of life – chiefly food, housing, work, water, sanitation, health care and education – are adequately and equitably available to everyone. These rights are all essentials in fighting poverty.

This study on the San of Namibia has again brought to light the need for a more broad-based approach involving all stakeholders, through participatory democracy, a legal framework for the recognition and enforcement of the rights of indigenous and marginalised peoples, and the establishment of a mechanism for participation and consultation. Such legal framework must be based on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Namibia has endorsed, and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, which I hope Namibia will ratify soon.

This study report is a stark reminder of the situation in which the San people live, and I trust that it will be widely distributed to gain societal understanding and appreciation of the need for specific legislation, programmes and projects aimed at ensuring equal enjoyment of all human rights and improvement of the lives of the San people.

Finally, this study report is not only special but also much needed, and I commend the researchers and authors.

Advocate John R. Walters Ombudsman, Republic of Namibia

Executive Summary

Namibia's San population constitutes about 2% of the national population. Numbering between 27 000 and 38 000 people in total, the overarching category known as "San", denoting former hunter-gatherer communities, includes several different ethnic groups with distinct languages and dialects. Despite this diversity, many features are common to all the groups, including languages characterised by 'click' sounds. In general, San individuals identify themselves according to their ethnic group, i.e. Ju|'hoansi, !Xun, Hai||om, Naro, Khwe or !Xoon, rather than as "San", which is, like "Bushmen", an external term. A handful of smaller San communities in northern Namibia have lost their language completely and now speak the language/s of their neighbouring ethnic group/s.

The San live on commercial farms, in the corridors between these farms, on resettlement farms, in communal areas among other stronger ethnic groups, in conservancies or community forests, in national parks and in urban townships. The socio-economic situations in which San groups/families/ individuals currently live differ in many respects, depending primarily on the geographical region and the form of land tenure. Their livelihood strategies vary, depending on their socio-economic context. Despite these variations, all of the San groups share both a history and current experience of marginalisation. The level of poverty of the San is unmatched by that of any other group in Namibia. In the Human Development Index they are ranked at 0.35, whereas the national average is 0.55. The per capita income of the San is the lowest of all groups in Namibia, with an annual average adjusted per capita income of N\$3 263 compared to the national average of N\$10 358 (Levine 2007: 16).

In 2001, 11 years after Namibia became an independent state, the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) published a comprehensive study report, compiled by James Suzman, entitled *An Assessment of the Status of the San in Namibia*. The study drew the following conclusion:

"A decade after independence, San stand out due to their dependency, extreme poverty, political alienation and a variety of social, educational and health problems. Of course, these problems are not unique to San, and many other Namibians are just as poor and marginalised as they are. However, what makes San conspicuous among Namibia's poor is the fact that while only a proportion of the members of each other language group are extremely poor, San are almost universally extremely poor." (Suzman 2001:143)

Since the publication of the Suzman report, diverse development initiatives aimed at reducing the San communities' severe poverty have been implemented or initiated. The Namibian Government has taken a number of measures to end the discrimination of San communities and address their depressed socio-economic situation. Most important of these is the San Development Programme (SDP) established in late 2005, run by the Division of San Development in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Also, many NGOs have increased their support for San over the last decade.

The study reported on herein was initiated in 2010 with the aim of reassessing the situation of the San two decades after Namibia's Independence. The overall objective is to provide livelihood assessments of the different San groups in Namibia to help the stakeholders – including the OPM, line ministries, NGOs and development partners – to ultimately develop a San-driven advocacy agenda. The findings can also help to improve the quality of the design and implementation of projects.

The study was undertaken in cooperation with the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN), and was funded by the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA), the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation) (AECID), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation) (GIZ), Afrikagrupperna (Africa Groups of Sweden) (AGS), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (Church Development Service) (EED) and Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World) (BfdW) contributed to the study by way of their continuous financial support to the LAC's Land, Environment and Development (LEAD) Project over the years. The Centrum für Internationale Migration und Entwicklung (Centre for International Migration and Development) (CIM) contributed to the study by funding the position of an integrated expert.

The research team visited 42 sites in Caprivi, Kavango, Kunene, Omaheke, Ohangwena, Omusati, Otjozondjupa, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions.¹ The selection of sites was based on specific criteria. Two to five team members were assigned to each site, where they usually stayed for two-and-a-half days. The team selected a set of participatory research methods to be used in the field, and underwent training in participatory research. Focus group discussions (FGDs) supplemented the participatory research methods. Gender and culture were cross-cutting issues covered in most of the FGDs. The research methodology also included stakeholder interviews and a literature review. After the field research, the team held 10 workshops (from October 2012 to April 2013) to discuss the preliminary findings of the field research with representatives of the San communities visited as well as government and NGO representatives.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Part I:** This part provides the background and context of the "San Study". Chapter 1 presents the purpose of the study, the research methodology used and the major problems encountered with quantitative data on San in Namibia. Chapter 2 presents the legal framework in Namibia, and Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of the San communities in Namibia, their history, and their development since 1990 when Namibia became an independent state (hereinafter referred to simply as "Independence"). In Chapter 3, special attention is given to the main stakeholders in San support initiatives in the last 12 years.
- **Part II:** This part, comprising the bulk of the report, consists of chapters covering the regions in which most of the San communities live in other words these chapters are arranged by region rather than by San group. In this general arrangement there are four deviations:
 - Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana (specifically Etosha) are covered in a single chapter, because most of the San inhabitants of these regions are Haillom, and their circumstances are similar.
 - The Khwe living in the Bwabwata National Park (Caprivi/Kavango) are discussed in a separate chapter, because the socio-economic context of Bwabwata is not comparable to other areas where San live in Caprivi and Kavango.
 - The Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies in Otjozondjupa Region also merit separate treatment to allow for exploring the particularities of the conservancy situation.
 - The status of San farmworkers merits a separate chapter.
- **Part III:** This final part presents comparisons, conclusions and recommendations with regard to the most important aspects of the current status of San in Namibia. In each case, we present regional comparisons, analyse similarities and differences between the San communities and

¹ At the time of editing this report in August 2013, the name *Caprivi* Region was changed to *Zambezi* Region, and Kavango Region was split into two regions, namely *Kavango East* and *Kavango West*. As all of our research was conducted prior to these changes, we have retained the names Caprivi Region and Kavango Region in this report.

their socio-economic setups, draw conclusions about the impact of San support initiatives over the last decade, and put forward specific recommendations. These aspects are:

- access to land;
- livelihoods, food security and poverty;
- culture, discrimination and development;
- education;
- health;
- gender; and
- consultation, participation and representation.

In the concluding chapter, we identify the key factors contributing to the ongoing marginalisation and poverty of San communities in Namibia, and provide overall recommendations for future support of San communities in Namibia.

This study has shown that despite the efforts to ameliorate the situation of San communities, the perception of many San in Namibia in 2013 is that they are "left behind" or "scraping the pot" – as the title of this report reflects – and indeed, we found that the vast majority of Namibia's San do experience serious marginalisation. This is manifested in poverty and food insecurity, a lack of secure access to land and natural resources, a lack of education, a lack of access to services, discrimination and limited political representation.

The widespread poverty among the San is attributable to numerous factors which are interrelated and partly conditional upon each other. The analyses of the study findings brought to light the key factors:

- lack of access to land / lack of secure land tenure;
- limited post-settlement support / lack of access to productive assets;
- very low levels of education;
- discrimination and culture; and
- limited political representation, participation and consultation.

The participatory approach employed in the study made it possible to identify many reasons for the lack of success of government and NGO initiatives aimed at reducing the levels of San marginalisation and poverty. Major cross-cutting issues (i.e. issues relevant to all regions and all topics covered in this report) are *the lack of*:

- an integrated strategy;
- a focus on empowerment;
- coordination between stakeholders;
- participatory involvement and consultation in all stages of project implementation;
- cultural sensitivity in the design and implementation of projects;
- long-term initiatives and commitment, including a local presence at grassroots level;
- adequate monitoring and evaluation of projects; and
- organisational capacity building.

In this regard the following interventions are recommended, based on the study findings:

• **Development of an integrated development strategy:** Currently, different stakeholders, taking different approaches, impose different development strategies on San communities. Some of these strategies are more effective and more appropriate than others, but in any case, this lack of coordination is generally problematic. Without an integrated strategy, initiatives supporting San will remain patchy and rather ineffective, and stakeholders will continue to risk impeding each

other's efforts. A **specific policy on indigenous peoples/marginalised communities in Namibia** would be a major step towards addressing these concerns. This policy would give stakeholders a common set of guidelines to direct their development efforts, and would inculcate a rights-based approach to development. Further, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has recommended that Namibia ratify **ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples** (ILO169) (see ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 26). This would be a major step forward, and could go hand in hand with the above-mentioned policy. Along with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), ILO169 would reinforce the protection and recognition of indigenous minorities at national level (see also ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 26). Furthermore, ILO169 and UNDRIP provide frameworks for Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), which could go a long way to addressing the shortcomings in consultation, empowerment, cultural sensitivity and organisational capacity described in detail in this report.

- *Improving coordination:* A National Coordinating Forum on Indigenous Peoples/Marginalised Communities should be formed to ensure integrated multi-sectoral coordinated and systematic development in line with the above-mentioned integrated strategy. This body should be composed of representatives of the San TAs and the Namibian San Council, the SDP in the OPM, the relevant line ministries, national NGOs (i.e. members of the San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia) and international development partners. Further, **Regional Coordinating Committees on Indigenous Peoples/Marginalised Communities** could be established to deal in more detail with the specific problems of the San in each region. Such committees should include representatives of the SDP in the OPM, regional councils, line ministries, NGOs working with the San in each region, San TAs and/or other TAs under whose jurisdiction the San live, regional representatives of the Namibian San Council and representatives of San CBOs. Regional coordination could also be strengthened through improved information exchange within the existing Regional Development Coordinating Committees. To ensure San participation, funds would have to be allocated for transporting and accommodating the San attendees of the meetings of the coordinating bodies at both national and regional level.
- *Improving monitoring and evaluation*: Quantitative data is essential for adequately evaluating, in detail, poverty-reduction and other development efforts. Quantitative data would also be a means to compare the wellbeing of San communities with that of other Namibian communities. Undeniably, 23 years after Independence, ethnic affiliations still play a role in the redistribution of wealth and resources. Quantitative data on the basis of language categories as provided by the National Planning Commission and the Namibia Statistics Agency do not reliably capture socio-economic differences between ethnic groups, e.g. the various San groups and the Himba (another marginalised indigenous group in Namibia). Only the government can provide comprehensive and reliable quantitative data, and we urge the government to: (a) include in the census and various surveys questionnaires one question on ethnic affiliation; and (b) analyse specific data accordingly, or otherwise make the data accessible to others for analysis.

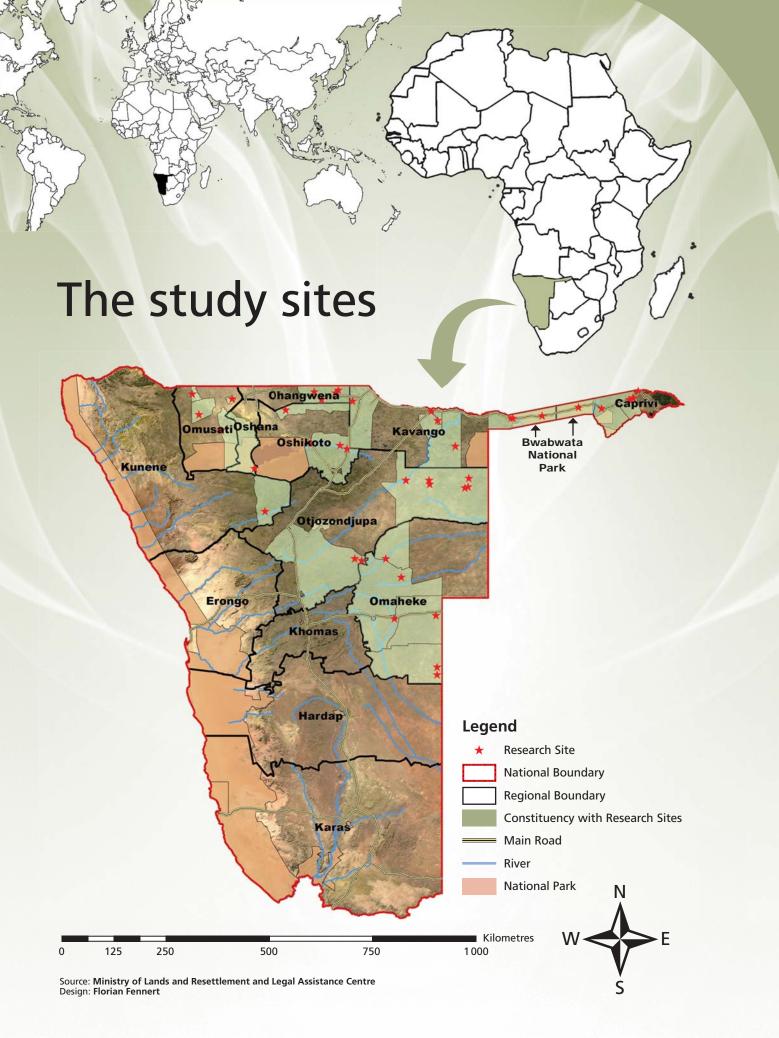
The aim of this report is to provide a solid basis for future policy, programmes and projects for *and with* San communities in Namibia, in order to finally ensure that San communities have equal opportunities and enjoy equal rights in Namibian society. The study shows that the situation is complex, and that factors influencing the current marginalisation of the San are interrelated and conditional upon each other. It has also made clear that concerted efforts are needed. Eventually, improving the situation will depend on the political will and commitment of the Government of Namibia, the commitment and capacity of civil society, and last but not least, the initiative and advocacy of the San themselves.

Part Background to the Study

Photo: A Jul'hoan boy cooking in Skoonheid, Omaheke Region

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Chapter 1 Introduction

By Ute Dieckmann, Maarit Thiem and Jennifer Hays



1.1 Background and purpose of the study

The San population of Namibia constitutes about 2% of the national population. Numbering 27 000 to 38 000 people in total,¹ the San of Namibia hail from several different ethnic (San) groups. They speak different languages and dialects, but many features are common to all the groups, including languages characterised by 'click' sounds. In general, San individuals identify themselves according to their ethnic group: they prefer to be identified as Jul'hoansi, !Xun, Haillom, Naro, Khwe or !Xõon rather than as "San", which is an external term denoting the overarching group of former hunter-gatherers. Some of the San groups have lost their language completely; they now speak the language/s of their neighbouring group/s. The geographical regions and the socio-economic situations in which San groups/families/individuals currently live differ in many respects, in that they live on commercial farms, in the corridors between the farms, on resettlement farms, in communal areas among other stronger ethnic groups, within conservancies, in national parks and in urban townships. Their livelihood strategies vary, depending on their socio-economic context. Their poverty levels and educational levels differ somewhat, and there are substantial differences in the amounts of support that different communities receive from the Namibian Government and NGOs. Some communities enjoy strong support from capable NGOs which are also locally based, whereas other communities receive very little support.

¹ See section 3.1 for a more specific discussion of numbers.

Despite these variations, all of the San groups share both a history and current experience of marginalisation. The level of poverty of the San is unmatched by that of any other ethnic group in Namibia. In the Human Development Index they are at 0.35 compared to the national average of 0.55. The per capita income of the San is the lowest of all groups, with an annual average adjusted per capita income of N\$3 263 compared to the national average of N\$10 358 (Levine 2007: 16).

In 2001, 11 years after Namibia became an independent state, the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) published a comprehensive study report, compiled by James Suzman, entitled *An Assessment of the Status of the San in Namibia*.² The study drew the following conclusion:

"Beyond conferring valuable political rights and the chance to participate in a functioning democracy, independence has brought few immediate collective benefits to San, the majority of whom still battle with the continuing legacy of the apartheid system, which denied them even the limited land and cultural rights granted to the majority of the other non-white Namibians during the apartheid era. A decade after independence, San stand out due to their dependency, extreme poverty, political alienation and a variety of social, educational and health problems. Of course, these problems are not unique to San, and many other Namibians are just as poor and marginalised as they are. However, what makes San conspicuous among Namibia's poor is the fact that while only a proportion of the members of each other language group are extremely poor, San are almost universally extremely poor." (Suzman 2001b: 143)

Since the publication of the Suzman report, diverse development initiatives aimed at reducing the San communities' severe poverty have been implemented or initiated. The Namibian Government has taken a number of measures to end the discrimination of San communities and address their depressed socio-economic situation. Also, many NGOs increased their support for San during the last decade (see paragraph on San support initiatives in the last 10 years).

In 2010, the International Labour Organization (ILO) contracted the LAC's Land, Environment and Development (LEAD) Project to compile a "Review Report on Ongoing San Development Initiatives in Namibia".³ The report (Dieckmann 2010) identified the main stakeholders in San development, outlined their activities and analysed shortcomings, lessons learnt and best practices in the ongoing initiatives. The report concluded that an integrated strategy for San development was missing, despite the various stakeholders' efforts. It found that an overall coordination of San development initiatives was non-existent. One of the study recommendations was an assessment of the current status of the San in Namibia – distinguished by language group and socio-economic contexts – to serve as the basis for establishing an integrated strategy for San development. This assessment would entail an analysis of the available data/documents and additional field research to provide baseline data. The report stressed the necessity of taking into account the differences between the San communities when developing an integrated development strategy. Based on the assessment findings, the San development initiatives should be integrated into a coherent strategy (Dieckmann 2010: 32-34).

² This study, being the only extensive study conducted to date on the living conditions of San in Namibia, was not based on a comprehensive field survey, but drew its findings mainly from data provided in other publications. The study was conducted as part of the "Regional Assessment of the Status of the San in Southern Africa", which was reported on in five volumes (Suzman 2001b).

³ This was one of three reports commissioned from the LEAD Project under the ILO programme named "Promoting and Implementing the Rights of the San People in Namibia", the other two being a "Review of the Existing Legal and Regulatory Framework for the Promotion and Protection of San Peoples' Rights in Namibia" and a "Training Needs Analysis for Government Staff in respect of the International Debate on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Principles of ILO Conventions 111 and 169, and their Relevance for San Development Initiatives in Namibia".

The LAC initiated the recommended assessment in 2010. The overall objective of the study, referred to as the "Reassessment of the Current Status of the San of Namibia" (hereinafter "the San Study") is to provide livelihood assessments of the different San groups in Namibia to help the stakeholders – including the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), line ministries, NGOs and development partners – to ultimately develop a San-driven advocacy agenda. The findings will also help to improve the quality of the design and implementation of projects.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Part I:** Chapter 1 presents the background and purpose of the San Study, the study methodology and the major problems encountered with quantitative data on San in Namibia. Chapter 2 presents the legal framework in Namibia. Chapter 3 provides a brief overview of the San communities in Namibia, their history and their development since 1990 when Namibia became an independent state (hereinafter referred to simply as "Independence"). In Chapter 3, special attention is given to the main stakeholders in San support initiatives in the last 12 years.
- **Part II:** This part of the report consists of regional chapters covering the regions in which most of the San communities live with Kunene, Oshana (Etosha) and Oshikoto combined in a single chapter as their San inhabitants are mainly Hai||om. The Khwe living in the Bwabwata National Park (Caprivi/Kavango) are discussed in a separate chapter because the socio-economic context of Bwabwata is not comparable to other areas where San live in Caprivi and Kavango. The Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies are the focus of the chapter on Otjozondjupa Region, and are treated separately to allow for exploring the particularities of the conservancy situation. The status of San farmworkers merits a separate chapter in Part II.
- **Part III:** The final part of the report presents comparisons, conclusions and recommendations with regard to the most important aspects of the current status of San in Namibia, namely:
 - access to land;
 - livelihoods, food security and poverty;
 - culture, discrimination and development;
 - education;
 - health;
 - gender; and
 - consultation, participation and representation.

For each of these aspects, we present regional comparisons, analyse similarities and differences between the San communities and their socio-economic setups, draw conclusions about the impact of San support initiatives over the last decade, and put forward specific recommendations. In the concluding chapter, we identify the key factors contributing to the ongoing marginalisation and poverty of San communities in Namibia, and provide overall recommendations for future support of San communities in Namibia.



1.2 Methodology

The LAC started with the preparations for the study in late 2010. With the assistance of two interns, we reviewed existing data on San in Namibia, approaching line ministries, NGOs and development partners for information and data on their activities aimed at supporting San communities in the various regions. As expected, the review did not suffice to provide a comprehensive picture of the situation of San in the country.⁴ For our field research we decided to use qualitative methodology as the main tool because qualitative methods are better suited to capturing the factors defining different livelihoods in their specific socio-economic contexts. Subsequently, the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) was asked for assistance, as this organisation could bring in valuable insights through its long involvement in project support in Omaheke and Ohangwena Regions. Also, one of the DRFN's staff members had been involved in the Regional Poverty Assessments conducted by the National Planning Commission (NPC) in the years 2005-2007.⁵ Since we planned to use similar methodology, the expertise within the DRFN enriched the design of the research.

In August 2012 we held a training workshop with the research team members to get acquainted with the participatory research techniques, and to decide which tools were relevant for our purposes. Thereafter we developed a "Manual for Researchers", which provided guidelines on the tools to be used, a time schedule for the research trips, precise directions on the sequence of the tools, and the questions to be asked using each tool. Further, the manual gave assignments for conducting stakeholder interviews, and ensured that the fieldwork undertaken by different team members in the different regions led to comparable data. The manual gave clear guidelines for the implementation of the tools in the field, allowing for enough flexibility to adapt to local circumstances. All sites were unique in terms of specific context, and the community members could use the forum to discuss site-specific problems in detail. The structure of the guidelines allowed for the researchers to accommodate unforeseen discussions.

The research team was composed of the following people:

- Ute Dieckmann, LAC, research coordinator, PhD in Social Anthropology
- Maarit Thiem, LAC, MA in Social Anthropology
- Erik Dirkx, DRFN, Programme Manager Sustainable Livelihoods, M.Sc. in Human Geography of Developing (Rural Development Studies)
- Jennifer Hays, Research Fellow at Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Project SOGIP, PhD in Social Anthropology
- Theodor Muduva, LAC, research assistant and public outreach officer, Post-Graduate Diploma (Honours) in Land and Agrarian Studies
- Brian Jones, freelance consultant, M.Phil. in Applied Social Sciences
- **Randolph Mouton**, freelance consultant, MA in Development Studies, M.Sc. in Social Science Research Methods (comparative cross-cultural research methods)
- Wendy Viall, NNDFN, Manager, BA in Social Science
- **Richard Kiaka**, LAC research assistant, M.Sc. in International Development Studies (Rural Development Sociology)
- Ben Begbie-Clench, freelance consultant
- Arja Schreij, LAC intern, MA in International Development Studies

⁴ This was later confirmed by the socio-economic study of the San in Namibia conducted by Arowolo, commissioned by the OPM in 2011 (Arowolo 2011).

⁵ This report on the San Study cites findings of the Regional Poverty Assessments conducted in Ohangwena, Omaheke, Caprivi, Oshana, Oshikoto and Kavango (NPC 2003b, 2004b, 2006b, 2007a, 2007b and 2007c respectively).

- Jana Bielick, LAC intern, MA in Sociology (extensive SPSS knowledge)
- Florian Fennert, LEAD intern, student of Geography (extensive GIS and SPSS knowledge)
- Anna Hüncke, LEAD intern, MA in Social Anthropology
- Anne-Kathrin Schwab, LEAD intern, BA in Sociology

1.2.1 Site selection

From October 2011 to October 2012, the research team visited 42 sites in Caprivi, Kavango, Kunene, Omaheke, Ohangwena, Omusati, Otjozondjupa, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions. (See Annex A, page 631, for a list of the sites visited in the different regions.)

The following criteria were applied for selecting the research sites:

- Ethnic groups: !Xun, Ju|'hoansi, Hai||om, Khwe, !Xoon and Naro communities were covered.
- Livelihood contexts: The different livelihood contexts were covered, in that the study covered San living in remote rural areas, semi-urban areas and urban areas.
- Land tenure systems: Resettlement farms, town land (i.e. informal settlements), communal land (e.g. conservancies), national parks and freehold farms were covered.
- **Minority vs majority ethnic status:** We visited sites where San constitute the majority of the inhabitants; sites where they constitute the minority of inhabitants; and sites where they live among other ethnic groups. Sometimes it was not clear at the outset how the San are positioned in term of numbers vis-à-vis other ethnic groups;
- **Institutional support:** We visited sites which had received very little institutional support from the government or NGOs, and sites which had received more support. The levels of support for the different communities differed considerably.

Generally, 2-5 team members were assigned to each site, and usually they stayed at the site for two-and-a-half days. The researchers informed the applicable regional councillor and traditional authority (TA) in advance about the project and their time of arrival. Informing the villagers in advance about the research plan was not always possible due to the remote location of some of the villages and the absence of a mobile connection.



1.2.2 Participatory research methods

Participatory research methods have gained popularity among researchers, field practitioners and development professionals, as they offer the possibility of involving local people so as to include their perceptions in the research. The participatory research tools help to reveal underlying connections, identify cause-effect linkages and shed light on differentiations within communities. The food security pathway, for example, helped to uncover the impacts of different livelihood strategies on food security. The wealth-ranking exercise depicted social differentiation in small communities that might otherwise be difficult to grasp within the relatively short time frame. We were not interested in objective measures of poverty;⁶ first and foremost we were interested in the perception of San regarding their livelihoods, access to services and their evaluation of the impact of external support. The importance of taking local perspectives into account – for instance to improve external support initiatives - is common knowledge, yet is often ignored. This report makes clear that local perceptions often differ considerably to those of government and NGO representatives, and that the difference in perception - which in many cases is due to a lack of communication or misunderstandings hampers effective project implementation. For all of these reasons, participatory methods were the ideal instrument. Participatory methods are also more cost-effective than conventional social science methods, as they involve larger groups and help to identify connections and contexts that might take longer to detect through conventional methods (Evans et al. 2006: 5).

The following participatory research methods were applied in this study:

- Village Resource Map: Community members constructed a village map on the ground, using ropes, stones, cards, old tins and other common objects. The maps depicted the general layout of the site and its neighbourhoods, and the residents' access to and utilisation of infrastructure, land, water, schools, hospitals, etc.
- Food Security Pathway: In this session community members listed the foods that they consume, and ranked them according to frequency of consumption. The discussion also addressed seasonal variability of the different food products, and the strategies employed to acquire each product, e.g. employment, piecework, gathering and food aid. This method delivered data on existing livelihood strategies and the importance thereof, and provided an indication of food security.
- Wealth ranking: This method is used to collect data on social stratification at community level. Community members discussed key local criteria or characteristics of poverty and wellbeing, and then described how people in their own community move up or down the poverty/wellbeing scale. This exercise was particularly important for revealing internal stratification in each San community. Frequently the discussants first said, "We are all poor," but during the discussion, internal differentiations became evident, not only between the San and other ethnic groups in the community, but also among the San themselves. The wealth-ranking tool gave an indication of the factors defining poverty in the local context, and revealed whether or not the community is highly differentiated in terms of wellbeing, and how the San position their own community vis-à-vis other ethnic groups. The World Bank describes this tool as essential for developing strategies for poverty reduction as it provides realistic indicators for measuring poverty.
- **Timeline:** This method is used to collect data on changes in quality of life over time the focus being on the general village situation, not the fate of individual villagers. The discussants identified important events in the history of their village, e.g. droughts, war, Namibia's Independence and outside support received, and then determined the importance of each event. Thereafter they ranked the different stages in the village timeline in terms of "good" and "bad" quality of life.

⁶ For example, in the Namibia Household Income and Expenditore Survey (NHIES) 2009/2010, poverty was measured by way of the "cost of basic needs" approach (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2012: xi).



1.2.3 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) – some based on the outcomes of the prior participatory exercises – were conducted on the following topics:

- Access to land and resources: This discussion was based on the village resource map constructed earlier at each site.
- Health, education and social networks: This discussion, focusing also on food security, was useful for establishing the extent of human and social capital within the community, and for assessing the community's health and education status in light of the problems identified in the FGD with regard to food security, health and education.
- **Political participation and representation**: This discussion revealed the extent to which the San participate in local, regional and national institutions whose decisions affect the livelihoods of San communities.
- Visions for the future: In this discussion the participants shared their thoughts about the future they desired the developments they would like to see for their community and for themselves individually.

Gender and culture were crosscutting issues covered in most of the FGDs. At some sites the researchers held separate discussions with women and men on specific issues.

All discussions were recorded by way of handwritten notes, and in most cases digital recordings complemented the note-taking. The village resource maps and other visual exercises were captured by both drawings and photos. After the field trips, the notes were typed up and field trip reports were compiled. These reports formed the basis for the writing of the regional chapters in this report.

1.2.4 Stakeholder interviews

Participatory research methods are designed to reveal a community's own perspectives, which, although central to our study, are necessarily limited. Therefore, to complement the community inputs, it was necessary to obtain input from other stakeholders. While in the field, the researchers interviewed key stakeholders (depending on availability) such as TA members, community chiefs, nurses, doctors, teachers, regional representatives of line ministries and representatives of NGOs working in each region. Further interviews were conducted in Windhoek with national stakeholders such as the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) and trade union representatives. (See Annex B, page 632, for the full list of stakeholders interviewed.) The information gathered in these interviews helped to contextualise the information gathered from the San communities at local level. All of the stakeholder interviews were digitally recorded and digitally transcribed.

1.2.5 Literature review

Throughout the research phase, the research team undertook a thorough review of literature, including anthropological literature (e.g. theses on specific San groups and articles on specific issues such as gender), project documents and evaluations (e.g. of the DRFN's Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP)), consultancy reports (e.g. on conservancies, resettlement farms and Etosha), and international recommendations of regional and international human rights bodies and of the National Planning Commission's Regional Poverty Profile reports. The research team's analyses flowing from the literature review complement the data gathered in the field.

1.2.6 Regional and national workshops

To comply with recommendations of the San Study Monitoring Committee (comprised of research team members and representatives of donor organisations and NGOs), the research team held 10 workshops (from October 2012 to April 2013) to discuss the preliminary findings of the field research with representatives of the San communities visited as well as government and NGO representatives.

Seven workshops were held in the regions visited for the field research. The objective of the regional workshops was to discuss the findings with regional representatives. The research team considered this discussion crucial because one complaint regularly encountered in the communities visited was that the results of studies and meetings were never revealed to the communities. The study findings and recommendations were discussed jointly with the San participants and other regional stakeholders to ensure that the findings reflect reality and that the recommendations will be viable.



Above left: Tsamkxao‡Oma (Chief Bobo) from Tsumkwe East and Sara Zunga, Chair of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, in the Otjozondjupa regional workshop in Otjiwarongo in November 2012 Above right: Discussing San access to land and resettlement during the Caprivi regional workshop in Katima Mulilo in December 2012

Three national workshops were held in Windhoek in January, March and April 2013. For the first workshop, San community representatives from the applicable regions were invited to discuss the most important findings of the study, being those on livelihood strategies, access to land, education and political representation. The San representatives were selected on the basis of their experience within their respective communities combined with their experiences outside their communities while serving as San Council members, conservancy chairpersons or NGO employees – positions which enabled them to act as 'brokers' between their communities and outsiders. The second workshop brought together representatives of the NGOs which are members of the San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia (SSOAN – see page 31) to discuss the recommendations on the above-mentioned issues. In the final workshop (a one-day workshop), attended by representatives who

attended the first workshop, the research team presented the findings and recommendations of the study and the outcomes of the discussions in the previous two workshops. The plenary discussions in this third workshop focused on the viable recommendations to be taken up in this final report.

The key points of discussion and the recommendations flowing from the regional and national workshops have been integrated into the final regional and national analyses comprising Part III of this report, and also into the study recommendations set down herein, therefore the outcomes of all the workshops are central to this report.

1.2.7 Compilation of the regional chapters

The regional chapters were compiled primarily by the team leader of each field trip, with input from their team members and then from the report editors who reviewed the drafts. The field teams collected massive amounts of data, deriving from a variety of perspectives. This raised two key questions concerning the regional chapters: how much and which data should be included, and whose perspectives should be prioritised?

We aimed to reflect the perspectives of the community members first and foremost, and also we aimed to contextualise and analyse their perspectives (see also section 1.2.8). But this approach could render every regional chapter worthy of being a publication on its own. Therefore, rather than including all of the analysis in the regional chapters, we have shifted some of it to the comparative and concluding parts of the report. In the regional chapters we have prioritised the descriptive data provided by the communities and other key stakeholders.

Since one aim of this report is to contribute to improving project implementation, we decided to include a lot of 'minute detail' in the regional chapters. Although this might make for a 'long-winded' read for those who are unfamiliar with the topics and sites, such detailed information will prove useful to readers who are involved in implementing projects – those constituting the writers' primary target audience.

1.2.8 Limitations of participatory research methods

Before we report on the problems encountered in gathering and using *quantitative data* on San in Namibia (section 1.3), we must point out some limitations of the participatory research methods used in this study, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the methodological challenges involved in conducting social science research, in particular with San.

Participatory tools are based mainly on discussions with large groups of participants, including people from as many sectors of the community as possible. Such inclusion is key, but one drawback is that those with the strongest voices tend to dominate the discussion. This was certainly a challenge in the San Study. At times, less eloquent individuals – in this case particularly women and young people – struggled to express their opinions or were hesitant to speak. Often it was difficult to include them in the discussion on an equal basis. Although we were usually able to gather equal numbers of men and women for a discussion, many women were very shy, so, on the whole, women did not contribute to the discussions to the same extent as did men.

The researchers sometimes divided the groups to obtain the perspectives of the women or the youth on a specific issue. But even in the smaller, somewhat homogenous groups, it was sometimes difficult to initiate a lively discussion. Women in particular often merely repeated the statements of the men

in previous discussions. For example, women in Tsumkwe said that they they did not know how to answer questions because they were not used to participating in workshops. However, they stressed that their involvement in this kind of activity is very important because only by participating can they learn to express themselves. This experience shows that to acquire a deeper understanding of gender or youth issues, more time and financial resources have to be included in the project design. It takes time to build up trust and confidence so that the target groups feel comfortable expressing their own views.

Another limitation that the research team experienced is related to the fact that the focus of participatory methods is on local perceptions and understandings. Although we want to prioritise this perspective, we realised that the information given by the communities, especially with regard to outside support received, was often incomplete. For example, discussion participants tended to complain that they did not receive any outside "help" – even though the village resource map or other discussions contradicted this view. Careful probing was often necessary to uncover a more accurate picture of support provided by the government and NGOs.

There are a few important points to emphasise here. First, this common response is a cultural phenomenon, described by Richard Lee (2003) as a "culture of complaint", which one must understand as being part of a broader cultural pattern and logic rather than an intentional misrepresentation. Secondly, one has to bear in mind that most local participants in this study were illiterate, and much of the information they provided was obtained by hearsay or own experience. At times it was evident that participants were not properly informed as to which NGO or government agency had provided specific support, and the purpose, duration, requirements or other specifics of the project. Finally, it must be noted that government and NGO assistance was often conceived and implemented with very little consultation with the beneficiary community. Sometimes what was generally perceived as "help" from the outside proved to be of little use to the community, for numerous reasons discussed below and noted throughout this report.

Being aware of these complications, we did not take the community perspectives at face value, but rather used various strategies to uncover the most complete picture in each community. As noted above, to complement the information provided by community members, we interviewed other stakeholders (representatives of line ministries, donor organisations and NGOs, teachers, etc.) in the field, in regional centres and in Windhoek, so as to better understand the nature of support efforts. Our analyses take 'both sides' into account; we do not discount community members' perspectives even if their accounts appear to be factually erroneous. Understanding how community members perceive and present their own situation – including the "help" received from external individuals and organisations – is critical to understanding the nature of the problems confronting both the communities and those who wish to help improve their situation.



1.2.9 Limitations of quantitative data on San in Namibia

Quantitative data is often prioritised in analysing social issues such as poverty, marginalisation, health and education. Such data can seem more 'solid', more valid and easier to understand. While we acknowledge the usefulness of statistical and other quantitative data, we are also aware of its limitations, the most problematic of which is expressed in the famous quote attributed to Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881): "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." This quote is often invoked to illustrate a fundamental problem with statistics: although they appear to be straightforward and clear depictions of reality, in fact they can also very easily *misrepresent* the truth – which is doubly problematic because of the supposed accuracy of statistics. There are several ways in which statistics misrepresent reality. Firstly, they may depict only a limited aspect of reality, ignoring important complementary information. Secondly, the numbers themselves can be inaccurate for any number of reasons, e.g. if language is used as an indicator of ethnicity where there is no one-to-one relationship or if the data-gathering methods are faulty. Finally, the statistics themselves may not be available, and if numerical representation of an issue is not possible, this tends to make the issue 'invisible'. All of these problems become manifest in using statistics and quantitative data for a study on the San in Namibia.

One problem in Namibia relates to the official stance that ethnicity is a legacy of apartheid, and thus is not a meaningful category of analysis. However, as Clement Daniels correctly points out, "In reality, and although the constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of ethnic or tribal affiliation, ethnic identities are difficult to ignore and tribal affiliation still plays a very prominent role when it comes to the redistribution of wealth and national resources. It is also sometimes politically expedient and convenient to use tribal and ethnic alliances." (Daniels 2004: 44)

Thus, although ethnicity is an important category for analysing poverty and access to resources, the official position leads to a lack of reliable official data reflecting this critical category. For example, the Namibia Population and Housing Census surveys refer to language groups ("language spoken at household level") rather than to the ethnic group with which people identify themselves. In some cases the language and group might be the same, but in other cases they are clearly not. Furthermore, the linguistic categorisation of "San"⁷ differs from survey to survey, and in some cases is incorrect, which leads to both inaccurate and inconsistent data. In the 1991 census, the overall category used was "Bushman" (San), divided into sub-categories of "Kung", "Heikum" and "other Bushman languages" (NPC 1993: xviii), but neither "Bushman" nor "San" is a linguistic category. In the 2011 census the "Bushman" label no longer appeared (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 171). To confuse the issue even further, in the Namibia Household Income and Expenditore Survey (NHIES) data, San are linguistically labelled as *Khoisan* whereas Nama/Damara are not (NSA 2012: e.g. 27). As mentioned in section 3.1 (page 22), both "San" and Nama/Damara are Khoisan languages. One is left with the impression that the categorisation of languages applied in these surveys represents a rather shallow mixture of ethnic and language groups.

This ignorance of linguistic factors and ethnic realities obstructs a proper quantitative examination of the socio-economic differences of ethnic groups in Namibia, and thus impedes the implementation of affirmative action to overcome these differences. Namibia, 23 years after Independence, is still using the categories of "previously advantaged" and "previously disadvantaged" people, and this, being a categorisation along racial lines based on apartheid categories, does not allow for an internal (ethnic) categorisation within the "previously disadvantaged" category.

⁷ Apparently, in the census enumeration sheets, "San" language is split into !Xun, Hai||om and other San languages.

In addition to these problems of categorisation, there is also the problem of data *collection*. The majority of San have limited literacy skills, but survey data-collection methods require such skills. For example, for the NHIES, each household was given a daily record book each week for four weeks, in which they were required to record transactions, item by item, for all expenditures and receipts, including incomes and gifts received or given out (NSA 2012: 6). The NSA informed the research team that the illiterate people were helped to fill in the questionnaires and expenditure books, but the NSA did not record the exact procedures. Considerable time and effort would be required to sit with every illiterate respondent every night for a month, and it is not clear that this was done, thus the accuracy of the responses of illiterate respondents in the NHIES is questionable.

Despite all of these problems with the reliability of quantitative data on the San in Namibia, we felt that it was important to use the available data, for two main reasons: firstly, this data does provide for a rough positioning of the socio-economic status of the San in each of the applicable regions of Namibia; and secondly, it is important to directly address the limitations and errors in this data.

Therefore, for this study we engaged interns with in-depth knowledge of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The NSA granted us access to the raw data from the Population and Housing Census of 2001,⁸ the NHIES data and the data from the Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey (NIDS) of 2006. These surveys provide mostly general information about the living conditions, housing, income, employment, education and other basic socio-economic characteristics of the Namibian population at large, but each set of raw data makes it possible to identify some San through "main language spoken at home".⁹

Only the Population and Housing Census, conducted every 10 years, covers all Namibians present in the country on the census reference night, but the information collected on socio-economic status is not as comprehensive as the information collected in the NHIES. In the other surveys conducted by the NSA, a representative sample of the population is taken and the results are extrapolated for the total population – to some extent based on the most recent census data. We invested a great deal of time in computing the raw data from the surveys to serve our own research purposes (e.g. we needed calculations of all data on a regional basis). However, the results of these computations deviated greatly from our own data as well as other available data on San. One of the most prominent examples of this deviation was that of ownership of a motor vehicle by language group in Kavango Region (see Table 1.1): according to the NHIES data, 12.1% of the Khoisan-speaking people in Kavango owned a car, and 100% the German speakers there *did not* own a car, but it is very unlikely that this finding reflects the reality.

We now go on to discuss the results of different surveys, noting the parallels and discrepancies between their findings and our own.

⁸ The raw data from the 2011 census were not available for distribution at the time of writing in March 2013.

The NSA conducts several surveys on a regular basis (every 5 or 10 years). As most of the surveys cover the same topics, it is possible to monitor changes by comparing the results over the years. However, these are surveys of the Namibian population in general, so they do not make it possible to trace individuals and the change they undergo over time. A longitudinal study, for example a panel study that samples the same individuals over time, would be necessary to detect changes in living conditions. Unfortunately, only cross-sectional studies are carried out.

		MOTOR VEHICLE OWNERSHIP/ACCESS				
KAVANGO REGION			Owns	Does not own, but has access	Neither owns nor has access	Total
	Khoisan	Count	453	162	3 1 3 4	3749
		% within main language spoken	12,1%	4,3%	83,6%	100,0%
	Caprivi languages	Count	0	0	245	245
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	Otjiherero	Count	0	251	451	702
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	35,8%	64,2%	100,0%
	Rukavango	Count	18591	69922	180683	269 196
MAIN LANGUAGE SPOKEN		% within main language spoken	6,9%	26,0%	67,1%	100,0%
	Nama/Damara	Count	0	0	103	103
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	Oshiwambo	Count	723	1 789	3 187	5699
		% within main language spoken	12,7%	31,4%	55,9%	100,0%
	Afrikaans	Count	127	27	209	363
		% within main language spoken	35,0%	7,4%	57,6%	100,0%
	German	Count	0	26	0	26
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%	100,0%
	English	Count	539	77	285	901
		% within main language spoken	59,8%	8,5%	31,6%	100,0%
	Other European	Count	125	254	1317	1696
		% within main language spoken	7,4%	15,0%	77,7%	100,0%
	Other African	Count	0	180	278	458
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	39,3%	60,7%	100,0%
	Not stated	Count	0	0	676	676
		% within main language spoken	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		Count	20 558	72688	190 568	283 814
	Total	% within main language spoken	7,2%	25,6%	67,1%	100,0%

Table 1.1: Cross-tabulation of main language spoken and motor vehicle ownership/access - Kavango sample (NHIES 2009/2010 and authors' calculations)

We took a closer look at the design of the survey samples and encountered the following problems: In both the NIDS 2006 and the NHIES 2009/2010, a stratified two-stage probability sample was drawn. The selection of units to be sampled was based on the number of households in the region and the characteristics of households in that region – as known from the 2001 census. The NSA explains its sampling for the NHIES as follows: "The [sampling] frame was stratified first by regions and then by urban/rural areas within each region. The Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) in urban areas were further stratified into high, middle or low levels of living according to the geographical location and the standard of housing. In rural areas, PSUs were further stratified into villages or settlements and communal or commercial farmer areas." (NSA 2006: 4) These sampling criteria do not include language spoken at home. Once the sampling is complete, the numbers for the whole population are extrapolated based on the latest census findings. For languages widely spoken it is likely that the group participating in the survey is a representative sample of the whole language group, but for small language groups this is unlikely. Looking more closely at the numbers of households that actually participated (sample size) sheds more light on this issue.

In both the NIDS 2006 and the NHIES 2009/2010 data sets (NSA 2006: 5; and NSA 2012: 3), the percentage of people who actually participated ranged between 1.9 and 4.9% of the total population in each region, with an average of 2.8/2.9% for Namibia as a whole. "The [NIDS] estimated a household population of 1952 454 as on the 19th November 2006 in 419 804 households. The average household size in Namibia is estimated to be about 5 people." (NSA 2006: 3). There are approximately 32 000 San in Namibia. Dividing 32 000 by an average household size of 5 gives 6400 households. If only 2.9% of 6400 San households were surveyed, this means that only 186 San households were surveyed out of the total of 10000 households surveyed as a representative sample in the NHIES 2009/2010. Clearly this cannot give a representative picture of the San in Namibia. Ultimately, the heads of the few San households questioned were answering for all San in the country, which makes for a lot of invalid data.

Considering the national totals in the NIDS and NHIES data sets, it is obvious that the number of San households actually questioned was minimal, or even zero in some regions. Looking again at the example of Kavango, the calculations in the paragraph above would mean that only 20 Khoisan-speaking households in the whole of Kavango actually participated in the NHIES.

Consequently, after all our efforts to make use of the available data for our study, we decided not to use NHIES and NIDS regional-level data sets, because they are not representative of the San in any region. It also has to be noted that the Human Development and Human Poverty Indices in Namibia are calculated from NHIES data, so the validity of these indices is questionable. However, we included them as they provide a rough idea of the socio-economic statuts of 'Khoisan' speakers.



Chapter 2 The Legal Framework in Namibia

By Ute Dieckmann, Maarit Thiem and Jennifer Hays

2.1 What 'indigenous' means in Africa

It is often said that all Africans are indigenous, and therefore that the concept of "indigenous peoples" does not really apply in Africa. But the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities does recognise this as a relevant concept for Africa, and summarises the overall characteristics of groups which identify themselves as indigenous peoples as follows:

"Their cultures and ways of life differ considerably from the dominant society and their cultures are under threat, in some cases to the extent of extinction. A key characteristic for most of them is that the survival of their particular way of life depends on access and rights to their traditional land and the natural resources thereon. They suffer from discrimination as they are being regarded as less developed and less advanced than other more dominant sectors of society. They often live in inaccessible regions, often geographically isolated and suffer from various forms of marginalisation, both politically and socially. They are subject to domination and exploitation within national political and economic structures that are commonly designed to reflect the interests and activities of the national majority. This discrimination, domination and marginalisation violates their human rights as peoples/communities, threatens the continuation of their cultures and ways of life and prevents them from being able to genuinely participate in deciding their own future and forms of development." (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights 2005: 89)

Although there is no formal clear-cut definition of the term "indigenous peoples" in international human rights mechanisms, several characteristics are commonly highlighted. For example, the Preamble to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples makes reference to dispossession of lands, territories and resources, cultural and linguistic distinctiveness, historical and pre-colonial presence in certain territories, and current political and legal marginalisation. Evidently, self-identification is also regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining indigenous peoples.

It is important to emphasise that the international instruments on the rights of indigenous peoples (see section 2.2 of this chapter), are not calling for special rights for indigenous peoples; rather, they acknowledge that indigenous peoples do not enjoy their basic human rights, and that their access to public services (e.g. health and education services) is far below the national averages. Indigenous rights mechanisms thus re-state the principle of equality as articulated in all universal human rights instruments, and provide not for special rights but for special measures to ensure access to basic human rights, "with the view to closing socio economic gaps and taking into account specificities of indigenous peoples" (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 10).

2.2 International framework addressing indigenous peoples' rights

According to Article 144 of the Namibian Constitution, public international law and international agreements binding upon Namibia form part of the law of Namibia, and Namibia has signed or ratified several international instruments that address the rights of indigenous peoples. Most of the rights outlined in these international instruments are also guaranteed according to Namibian domestic law, even where the language used does not specifically refer to indigenous peoples.

Namibia has signed or ratified a range of international instruments that address the rights of indigenous peoples – directly or indirectly.¹ Namibia signed the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (UNDRIP) in 2007. Although UNDRIP itself is not binding, the UNDRIP standards are all based on existing human rights mechanisms to which Namibia is a signatory, thus these standards are compulsory.

Namibia has not yet ratified the International Labour Organization's **Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention** (ILO Convention 169). This is a legally binding international instrument, consisting of 34 articles divided into sections on: general policies; land; recruitment and employment; vocational training, handicrafts and rural industries; social security and health; education and means of communication, contacts and cooperation across borders; and administration and other provisions (ILO 1989). According to Namibia's Deputy Prime Minister, Marco Hausiko, "deliberations are underway to interrogate the intrinsic merits of ratifying the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 169 and 111".²

Several other binding international agreements play an important role in affirming and further building the already established human rights norms represented by UNDRIP and ILO 169.

Namibia ratified the **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination** (ICERD) in 1992 (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 9). ICERD is the primary international instrument addressing the issue of racial discrimination. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination submitted a report on Namibia after considering the Namibia State Report in August 2008. The Committee raised a number of concerns regarding indigenous peoples in Namibia, and included recommendations on several aspects of indigenous peoples' rights in Namibia, with particular reference to the San, emphasising the following: the process of selection of traditional leaders for San communities; the rights of indigenous peoples residing in national parks and protected areas; the extreme poverty, low education levels, high rates of HIV and other infectious diseases and low life expectancy of the San; the low levels of political participation among San; the high incidence of rape of San women; and the problem of programmes focusing only on the integration of indigenous minorities in view of the need to protect ethnic and cultural diversity (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 37-40; and Hays and Dieckmann (in press)).

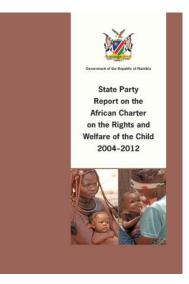
Furthermore, Namibia is a signatory to the **African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights** (1986 – hereinafter "African Charter", also known as the "Banjul Charter"), which stands as the primary human rights instrument in Africa. The African Charter does not specifically deal with indigenous peoples, but the term "peoples" is interpreted to include indigenous peoples. Article 30 of the

¹ For a more detailed overview of the international legislation which is legally binding on Namibia, see Hays and Dieckmann (in press).

² Office of the Prime Minister 2011, accessed at www.sandevelopment.gov.na/index.htm.

African Charter established the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR – also referred to as the "African Commission"), the body responsible for monitoring State Parties' compliance with the rights set down in the Charter. The ACHPR set up a Working Group on the Rights of Indigenous Populations/ Communities, consisting of members of the ACHPR, expert representative of indigenous communities and an independent expert (ACHPR 2005: 8). The ACHPR conducted a survey of indigenous rights in Namibia in 2005, and made several recommendations for education, leadership, health, poverty, land and stigmatisation (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008).

Namibia ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC) in 1990. Article 30 refers specifically to indigenous children. In 2009 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child published its *General Comment No. 11: Indigenous Children and their Rights under the Convention*, the primary objectives being "to provide States with guidance on how to implement their obligations under the Convention with respect to indigenous children", and to "highlight special measures required to be undertaken by States in order to guarantee the effective exercise of indigenous children's rights" (UN General Assembly 2009).



In picturing Ovahimba (left) and San (right) women and children on the front cover of this recent State Party report on Namibia's implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the government is conveying its focus on the rights of the country's indigenous peoples as well as its women and children.

Further, in 1994 Namibia signed the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR, 1966) (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 9), Article 27 of which states: "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language." (UN General Assembly 1966) The Human Rights Committee, the body authorised to oversee state compliance with the rights set down in the ICCPR, conducted a Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for Namibia in 2011.³ In the *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Namibia* (UN General Assembly 2011b), various countries strongly encouraged Namibia to go much further in securing rights, especially in respect of access to land and livelihoods for indigenous peoples. Namibia accepted all of the recommendations on indigenous peoples – including that of developing a white paper on indigenous peoples' rights.

Namibia ratified the **Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD) in 2005. Articles 10(c) and 8(j) of the CBD deal specifically with indigenous peoples' rights (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 9).

Thus, Namibia is a party to several international agreements dealing with indigenous rights, many being legally binding agreements with evaluation cycles. It must be noted that although evaluation reports recognise the Namibian Government's good intentions and a supportive policy environment, it is very evident that international indigenous rights principles are still far from being fully implemented in Namibia. We will refer in more detail to the recommendations of various evaluation reports in the chapters constituting Part III of this report.

³ The UN General Assembly created the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2006, for which every country is to be evaluated in 4-year cycles. This process is driven by the State itself, and provides a chance for the State to introduce and respond to issues, and to say what actions it will take (or has taken) to improve human rights in the country (Hays, Dieckmann (in press)).

2.3 Namibian legislation regarding indigenous peoples' rights and the rights of the San

The Namibian Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of ethnic or tribal affiliation, but does not specifically recognise the rights of indigenous peoples or minorities. The Namibian Government prefers to speak about "marginalised" rather than "indigenous" communities, defining "indigenous" by reference to European colonialism, implying that the vast majority of Namibians are in fact "indigenous" (Daniels 2004: 44, 46).

Thus, Namibia itself has no legislation dealing directly with indigenous peoples. However, Namibia has a number of interconnected Acts of Parliament which provide for implementing certain rights of indigenous peoples, particularly in the areas of land, leadership, natural resource management and education, examples being the Communal Land Reform Act of 2002, the Traditional Authorities Act of 2000 and the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996. These Acts can assist in implementing San rights regarding land, leadership and resources. In addition, the *National Resettlement Policy* targets San, among other groups (i.e. ex-soldiers; displaced, destitute and landless Namibians; and people with disabilities), as beneficiaries (Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) 2001: 3-4). Furthermore, the policy document entitled *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children* (Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) 2000a) identifies the San, the Ovahimba and the children of farmworkers (many of whom are San) as "educationally marginalised". This document is a very relevant means to achieve education for marginalised children and affirmative action that is appropriate to the San communities and the distinct challenges they face with regard to education (Hays and Dieckmann, in press).

In sum, there is strong legal and political support for the rights of indigenous peoples in Namibia, including the San (see for example the Fourth National Development Plan and Vision 2030). However, as this report will show (again), the overall majority of the San in Namibia do not enjoy these rights.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, visited Namibia from 20-28 September 2012. In his end-of-mission statement he concluded:

"I am pleased to see that Namibia has dedicated attention to the development of San and other minority indigenous communities at a high level Overall, however, I have detected a lack of coherent Government policy that assigns a positive value to the distinctive identities and practices of these indigenous peoples, or that promotes their ability to survive as peoples with their distinct cultures intact in the fullest sense, including in relation to their traditional lands, authorities, and languages." (Anaya 2012)

The UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Magdalena Sepúlveda, though not looking specifically at indigenous peoples' rights, stated the following in her "Preliminary Observations and Recommendations" following her mission to Namibia from 1-8 October 2012:

"While I recognise the immense levels of inequality that existed at independence as a legacy of colonial rule, progress has not been quick enough. There are still unacceptable levels of inequality along the lines of gender, race, region, ethnicity and class. More systematic structural changes are needed to redress the enormous levels of socio-economic inequality." (Sepúlveda 2012: 2).

Although Sepúlveda does not specifically mention the San, according to all measures it is clear that the San experience the greatest ethnicity-based inequality in the country.

Chapter 3 A Brief Profile of the San in Namibia and the San Development Initiatives

By Ute Dieckmann, Maarit Thiem and Jennifer Hays

3.1 The San of today

"The process of identifying San as a social category or class is highly problematic, not least because many of the people whom we now consider and who consider themselves to be San did not share a common identify in the past. The category 'San' or 'Bushman' was in fact imposed from outside on the diverse indigenous inhabitants of southern Africa following the in-migration of pastoralist and agrarian Bantu-speaking societies, and later white colonials."

- Suzman 2001b: 2

Estimations of the numbers of San vary considerably. According to the 2001 Namibia Population and Housing Census data (National Planning Commission 2003a), there were 4 229 households (1.2% of the total population) in Namibia speaking a San language at home. Table 3.1 on the next page shows the numbers of speakers of San languages as enumerated in the censuses of 2001 and 2011 – but this reflects only those who reported speaking a San language as the main language spoken in their household. The differences between 2001 and 2011 in respect of Kavango, Ohangwena, Omaheke, Omusati and Otjozondjupa Regions would need further explanation.



Table 3.1: Speakers of San languages in Namibia – individuals (census 2001) and households (census 2011)¹

REGIONS	Caprivi	Erongo	Hardap	Karas	Kavango	Khomas	Kunene	Ohangwena	Omaheke	Omusati	Oshana	Oshikoto	Otjozondjupa	Total
# of San language speakers, 2001	839	180	127	59	2277	722	448	1 5 3 5	5069	547	284	3614	7859	23 560
% per region, 2001	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	1.3	0.3	0.7	0.8	8.5	0.3	0.2	2.4	6.8	
% of San households per region, 2011	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.7	0.2	4.9	0.0	0.1	1.6	4.8	

According to the 2001 census data, there were 23 560 individuals speaking a San language at home. However, reportedly, many of the Hai||om – the largest San group in Namibia – were enumerated in the census as Damara/Nama-speaking people, as their language is a variant of Khoekhoe or Nama/Damara (see Table 3.2). Other San, especially in the northern regions, no longer speak any San language; rather they speak the language of their respective neighbouring groups.

All told, it can be concluded that the total number of San in Namibia is considerably higher than the 2001 census data reflects. Even the quantitative data on main language spoken in the household differs considerably from study to study. Estimations in other studies are as follows:

- In 2001, Suzman reported an approximate total of 32 000 San in Namibia (Suzman 2001b: 4).
- In 2008, the *Report on the Indigenous Peoples Rights: Namibia* recorded a total of 35 000 San in Namibia (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 7).
- The NHIES 2009/2010 found "Khoisan" (not Nama/Damara)² to be the main language in 5 954 households (1.4% of total population), and a total San population of 27 764 (NSA 2012: 27).
- In 2011, Biesele and Hitchcock recorded a total of 34000 (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 6).
- Also in 2011, WIMSA estimated a total of 38 000 (Arowolo 2011: 7).

It is important to note that the San communities belong to different language clusters and language families, and although all these belong to the Khoisan (also Khoesan) language family,³ San speaking the different 'sub-languages' either cannot or can hardly understand each other (Suzman 2001a). Most speakers of the Khoisan languages are found in southern Africa.

Table 3.2 provides a broad overview of a linguistic classification of the San languages in Namibia, the autonyms of the respective groups and the approximate numbers of speakers.⁴

- ² The linguistic incorrectness of this is outlined above in section 1.2.9 on the problems with quantitative data on San.
- ³ Linguists are still debating the classification of Khoisan languages, and different linguists suggest different nomenclature. Tom Güldemann (2013, in press) correctly notes: "One of the many challenges in Khoisan linguistics is the issue of names for the individual ethno-linguistic groups and the language varieties they speak, in terms of both the choice of names and their spelling It is also common in Khoisan linguistics that (a) alternative names exist for one and the same language variety, and (b) one and the same term had different semantic extensions, for example, denoting a group of language varieties or a single variety within the group. Further confusing the issue is the fact that many of the language groups are dialect continua or so-called "language complexes' All in all, the language-related Khoisan terminology varies considerably across publications, authors and time of research."
- ⁴ We owe thanks to Biesele, Boden, Brenzinger, Güldemann, Hitchcock, Gordon and Widlok for advice on this matter.

¹ The 2011 figures in this table are the numbers of *households*, not the numbers of individuals. The cleaned raw data for 2011 was not yet available at the time of our research.

Table 3.2: San	groups in	Namibia and	their	languages
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Autonym/s	Language family	Dialect cluster	Region/s	Numbers*
!Xun (or !Kung)	Kx'a	Ju (also known as Northern Khoisan)	Kavango, Otjozondjupa, Ohangwena, Oshikoto	6000-7500
Ju 'hoansi	Kx'a	Ju (also known as Northern Khoisan)	Otjozondjupa, Omaheke	6000-7000
Naro	Khoe (also known as Central Khoisan)	Naro	Omaheke	1000-2000
Khwe	Khoe (also known as Central Khoisan)	Кхое	Caprivi, Kavango	4000-5000
Hai om and ‡Akhoe * *	Khoe (also known as Central Khoisan)	Khoekhoe	Kunene, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Oshana	7 000 - 18 000
!Xoon and 'N oha	Tuu (also known as Southern Khoisan)	Таа	Omaheke, Hardap	550
Total				24550-40050

* The numbers were provided by Brenzinger (1998), Widlok (1999), Boden (2007), Takada (2007), Biesele and Hitchcock (2011) and Vossen (2013).

** According to Widlok, "‡Akhwe is a way in which some Hailom speak their language" (cited in Vossen 2013: 10).

As Table 3.2 shows, the estimations according to strict linguistic classifications also vary considerably. Furthermore, the origins of the estimations in the various reports are not always clear. In sum, reliable numbers of San in Namibia are missing.

There are many other names for the different San groups in Namibia, some of which linguists have recorded according to how San people referred to themselves, and some of which are names that neighbouring language groups used in referring to San people. To mention a few:

- The Ju'|hoansi in Omaheke were also classified as *‡Kao||'aesi* ('People from the North').
- Oshiwambo-speaking communities in Ohangwena and Omusati commonly refer to San as *Kwangara* which many San do not appreciate as this name has a negative connotation; they understand it to mean "people who do not know how to save" or "someone who lives in the bush".
- The Nama-speaking communities call the Hai||om /apakhwe ('red people').
- In Kavango, the Gciriku and Sambyu call the San *Mucu* (singular) or *Vacu* (plural); the Kwangali and Mbunza call them *Muduni* (singular) or *Vaduni* (plural); and the Mbukushu call them *Mukwengo* (singular) or *Hakwengo* (plural).
- For the Khwe San in Caprivi, many different labels were used in the past, including *Bugakhwe*, *Kxoe*, *Hukwe*, *Bawakwena* or *Barakwengu*.

In general, Namibian San groups prefer to be called by the name that they use in referring to themselves, which is usually also the name of their language group. We decided to respect that preference in the regional chapters, as long as it is clear which language group/s specific workshop participants belong to. However, to avoid confusion where participants at a specific site belonged to different groups, we use the overarching term "San". Likewise, in the concluding and comparative part of the report, we use "San" when referring to issues that are common to all or most San communities, and/or which affect San differently to how they affect other sectors of the Namibian population.⁵

⁵ Regarding the names of other ethnic groups mentioned herein, we have adopted the terminology used by the San respondents in our regional surveys. For example, many of them refer to their Bantu-speaking neighbours as "the black people", which this report reflects. In the data analyses, however, wherever possible we differentiate between the various neighbouring groups, using either linguistic terminology (e.g. Oshiwambo-speaking people) or ethnic terms (e.g. Owambo).

3.2 Labels and history

The terms "Bushmen" and "San" are used to refer to mainly former hunter and gatherer groups in southern Africa.⁶ However, both terms have a complex and problematic history. Gordon and Douglas note that "San" was the term used for the Hai||om, whereas "Bushmen" was used for the !Xun (Gordon and Douglas 2000: 17).⁷ Over time this distinction became blurred and both terms were used synonymously for peoples formerly referred to as "Bushmen".⁸ In 1996, representatives of several San groups across southern Africa met in Namibia, and agreed to use the term "San" in referring to all the language groups to denote a single group. In 1997 this agreement was reaffirmed in a meeting on "Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage" in Cape Town, South Africa (Hitchcock et al. 2006: 5-6). In Namibia over the last 20 years, the term "San" has been used increasingly.

However, as is clear throughout this report, "San" is not a term that many of those categorised as such use to identify themselves; most identify themselves according to their ethnic group, e.g. as Ju|'hoansi, !Xun, Hai||om or Naro. Nonetheless, the categories "San" or "Bushmen", imposed by outsiders (European colonialists and Bantu-speaking groups), have become a social reality. And, despite the many differences between the various San groups, several attributes are common to all of them, including, inter alia: an 'underclass' status; a high level of political, social and economic marginalisation in the country; limited access to social services; and – a commonality revealed by this study – a sense of being "left behind". In sum, marginalisation and poverty have become common features of the San identity.

It is commonly acknowledged that the San were the first inhabitants of southern Africa. In precolonial and early colonial times, they typically lived in small, flexible and dispersed groups in areas with sufficient natural resources. They survived mainly from hunting and gathering, and had an excellent knowledge of their natural environment. Some groups also traded with other groups, or mined or raised livestock. The in-migration of Bantu-speaking people to Namibia around 500 years ago was followed by a significant relocation of local groups, and the process of displacement was accelerated with the arrival of the German colonialists (Suzman 2001b: 5). When the German colonial administration established a white settler agriculture in Namibia (then known as South West Africa) following the anti-colonial wars in the years 1904-1907, the access of San communities to their ancestral lands and the natural resources on those lands became increasingly restricted. Under South African rule following the First World War and until Independence in 1990, the process of dispossessing Namibian San of their land continued (Dieckmann 2007b: 70, 123ff; and Suzman 2000b: 29ff). Whereas most other non-white Namibians were granted "homelands", only the San living in the areas today known as Tsumkwe District West and Tsumkwe District East were allocated a "homeland", namely "Bushmanland". Created in 1971, Bushmanland encompassed just a fraction of the territory used by the Jul'hoansi to date. In the 1970s, less than 3% of the San in Namibia (i.e. only those living in Bushmanland) retained limited *de jure* rights to any land.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the South African Defence Force (SADF) recruited many San (especially !Xun and Khwe) to serve as trackers in its fight against the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN – the armed wing of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO)).

⁶ Gordon and Douglas have provided a detailed description of the politics of labelling "Bushmen" or "San" (Gordon and Douglas 2000: 4-8).

⁷ See Dieckmann 2007b (p. 43) for details as to how different authors have applied the different categorisations of Khoisan-speaking groups.

⁸ For example, in the 1960s the Harvard Kalahari Research Group replaced the term "Bushmen" with "San", as these researchers felt that the term "Bushmen" had negative connotations (Hitchcock et al. 2006: 5).



A taste of history in the Etosha area: colonial hunters used the Haillom for their hunting skills; Haillom hunters wore grass to blend in with the surroundings; a Haillom hunter with the plant used to make poison (*Ikhores*) for the arrows. (Photos from the Denver Expedition Collection, 1923, housed in the National Archives of Namibia.)

The reputation of the "Bushmen" for their tracking and bush skills linked popular mythology with military strategy, and the "Bushman Battalion" was formed. In both Bushmanland and Caprivi, military camps were established and most of the adult men in those areas were recruited for service in the SADF. And, as Suzman conveys, "The amount of money poured into West Caprivi and Bushmanland by the SADF meant that in the 1980s San living in these areas had per capita incomes 12 times greater than San living on white farms and 30 times higher than San living in communal areas." (Suzman 2001b: 56, citing Marais 1984). At Independence, some 3 500 !Xun and Khwe opted to emigrate to South Africa due to fears of possible SWAPO retaliation, while at least as many others decided to stay and put their faith in the new (SWAPO-led) Namibian Government. Today, more than two decades after Independence, many San in the country feel that the former involvement of San in Namibia's war for independence on the side of the SADF is one reason for their being "left behind" by the government.

At Independence, "the majority of San in Namibia lacked rights to land and resources, were materially dependent on others and desperately poor with little or no access to channels of empowerment" (Suzman 2001b: 5). Most of the San were living on commercial farms (e.g. in Kunene, Oshikoto, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa), or as minorities in communal areas (e.g. Kavango, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Omaheke and Omusati), or in game reserves (e.g. Caprivi) or national parks (Etosha).



"From the outset I want to emphasise that the San community is an integral part of the Namibian nation and that the government regards it as such. ... The Namibian Government is aware of the dire plight of the San community and has made their development and social uplifting a priority within its budgetary limitations"

 Namibia's Founding President, H.E. Sam Nujoma, in his opening address to the Regional Conference on Development Programmes for Africa's San/Basarwa Population in 1992 (quoted in Suzman 2001b: 155)

At the outset, the Namibian Government showed willingness to tackle San-related issues, despite the involvement of some San in the SADF. In 1992, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), in cooperation with the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (now named Ministry of Lands and Resettlement), organised a Regional Conference on Development Programmes for Africa's San/Basarwa Population, held in Windhoek. In his opening address, President Sam Nujoma categorically affirmed the government's commitment to Namibia's San, and the conference passed a number of resolutions (Suzman 2001b: 71 and Appendix B). In a follow-up conference in Gaborone, Botswana, in 1993, attended by 15 government representatives and 21 San representatives, more resolutions were passed and the government representatives undertook to follow up on these. Ten years later, Suzman concluded the following:

"While NGOs and several line ministries in Namibia have followed up on some of the resolutions ..., the government as a whole paid scant attention to them. Indeed, outside of policy-making on education and to a lesser extent conservation, there is little to indicate that the government has paid any attention at all to these resolutions." (Suzman 2001b: 71)

Rather than go into too much detail regarding government initiatives supporting San development in the first decade after Independence (see Suzman 2001b), we will only outline one encouraging example and one problematic example, being those of education and the land reform programme respectively. We will also outline the most important initiative undertaken by the San themselves. From the outset to date, the Ministry of Education (MoE)⁹ has demonstrated a strong commitment to San education. Soon after Independence, the government implemented an education system aimed at ensuring equal education for all Namibians. The then-named Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC) committed itself to improving San participation in the formal education system, and developed far-reaching national policies to address the educational needs of the country's indigenous minorities. The Language Policy for Schools in Namibia (MBESC 2003) allows for mother-tongue education for the first three years, and the document entitled National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children (MBESC 2000) recognises the San as one of the most educationally marginalised groups. The strong focus on mother-tongue education is supported by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED)¹⁰ which spearheaded the efforts to produce mother-tongue educational material for San. In addition, various NGOs have assisted the government's efforts over the years to provide adequate education to the San. However, despite these concerted efforts and commitments and the promising policy framework, the San have continued to perform far below the national average in terms of both school enrolment and completion of primary and secondary education. San participation in the education system at tertiary level has dwindled to a small fraction of a percent.

⁹ The Ministry's name has changed thrice since Independence: from Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC), to Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC), to Ministry of Education (now responsible for all levels of education – pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary).

¹⁰ NIED was established in 1990 as a department of the MBEC and today is a directorate in the MoE.

On the other hand, the land reform programme, also initiated shortly after Independence, has been extremely problematic for San communities. At Independence, the government began to implement an ambitious land reform programme of restoring "customary lands" to communities defined as "ethnic groups". The 1991 National Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question ruled out restitution of "ancestral" land to any group or individual as a basis for land redistribution. As Suzman points out, "if a land restitution programme were run on the basis of aboriginal title, San would be entitled to claim much of Namibia" (Suzman 2001b: 85). Perhaps to avoid such aboriginal land claims, the government 'converted' the former "homelands" created by the "Odendaal Plan" into communal lands for specific groups: "Damaraland" became the customary land of the Damara; "Hereroland" became the customary land of the Herero; and so forth. However, the South African regime's homeland policy had left the San largely landless, so this was the policy legacy perpetuated in independent Namibia. In 1990, only a tiny minority of Namibia's San were living in the homeland designated as customary land of the "Bushmen", and they were among the very small number of San who benefited from the land reform programme in the first decade after Independence (Suzman 2001b: 86). It was not until 2001 and the release of the National Resettlement Policy that San were specifically included in the land reform programme as part of the target group for resettlement initiatives (MLR 2001: 3-4). The regional chapters of this report provide detailed accounts of San resettlement in each region.



Regarding initiatives of the San themselves in the first decade after Independence, the establishment of the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) in 1996 was a major milestone in for the organisation and empowerment of San in southern Africa as a whole. WIMSA was established "with the purpose of creating a platform where the San of the southern African region have the opportunity to voice their problems and tackle them in a common effort" (Brörmann 1997: 7). Although not explicitly expressed in the name, WIMSA is exclusively a San organisation, whose activities are focused particularly on land claims, building institutional capacity, education, training and networking of the various San communities in the region (Brörmann 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001 and 2003). From the outset, WIMSA's activities fostered San organisation and unification, and spawned a pan-San consciousness. (WIMSA is covered further in section 3.4.)

3.4 Main stakeholders in San support initiatives over the last 10 years

Since 2001 when the report on the *Assessment of the Status of the San in Namibia* was published (Suzman 2001b), a variety of support initiatives aimed at reducing San poverty and/or empowering the San have been developed and implemented. In this section we describe these efforts to provide the background against which this report assesses the *current* status of the San in Namibia. We focus on the organisations and initiatives that focus on San specifically. An overview of *all* development programmes that include a particular San group as a target group would go beyond the scope of this introduction.¹¹ However, development programmes that have a tangible impact on the situation on the ground, especially those identified by San in our field research, are described in the regional chapters.

3.4.1 Government – particularly the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)

The Namibian Government adopted a special focus on the San and other marginalised communities in 2005 when Dr Libertina Amathila became Namibia's Deputy Prime Minister (2005-2010). A question in Parliament about a San man who had died of starvation in 2005 drew her attention, and she undertook a trip through the various San communities to assess their living conditions. She found San communities living in terrible conditions, e.g. in an abandoned pool, on the side of the road and in makeshift huts in squatter camps. Thus she decided that during her tenure as Deputy Prime Minister, she would focus on the "development" of the San. After the trip she compiled a report on the living conditions of San people (see *The Namibian*, 14 December 2012), to which the government responded with support in the form of the San Development Programme (SDP), resorting under the OPM. The Cabinet approved the SDP in November 2005 (Cabinet Decision No. 25/29, 11.05/001).

The main objective of the SDP is to ensure San integration into the mainstream Namibian economy, in line with Vision 2030 (the country's long-term development policy) and specific national development programmes (OPM 2008). The earlier SDP documentation makes reference to the Third National Development Plan (NDP3), which categorises San welfare/development as a priority under "Key Result Area: Quality of Life", with the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. At the outset, the OPM formed an Ad Hoc Cabinet Committee on the SDP, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and including representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET); the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR); the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD); and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF). Nevertheless, the first budget allocated to the SDP was very limited given the above-mentioned NDP3 objective.¹² In the initial phase of the programme, the OPM provided support exclusively to the San. In 2007, the programme's mandate was expanded to cover other marginalised communities as well, i.e. the Ovatue, Ovatjimba and Ovahimba, who, it was argued, were also marginalised and would need special support. In 2009, Cabinet transformed the SDP (Cabinet Decision No. 9/28, 05.09/005) into the Division for San Development (DSD), still resorting under the OPM, to better address the "endless needs of the marginalised communities in Namibia" (OPM 2011). This upgrade was effectively a political statement conveying the government's intention to prioritise the needs of all marginalised communities. It is unclear why the name "San Development" was retained when the programme activities were extended beyond San communities.

¹¹ For a more detailed overview of initiatives supporting San in Namibia, see Dieckmann 2010.

¹² The budget for 2006/07 was N\$300000 (US\$33623); for 2007/08 it was N\$400000, and a private donor donated another N\$500000 in September 2007; for 2008/09 it was N\$800000; and for 2009/10 it was N\$2000000 (OPM n.d.: 31).

Projects of the SDP and the DSD since 2005 are as follows (OPM 2011):

- Resettlement: More than seven commercial farms were acquired, and members of marginalised communities were resettled on these farms.
- Youth Skills Development and Employment Opportunities: The OPM facilitates the recruitment of youth in marginalised communities, in collaboration with various line ministries and other governmental or parastatal institutions.
- San Women Projects: These have included needlework and tailoring projects to produce school uniforms, a general tailoring project and a bread-baking project.
- Apiculture (Beekeeping) Projects
- Education Projects
- Coffin-Manufacturing Projects
- Aquaculture Projects
- Gardening Projects
- San Feeding Programme: This is a monthly feeding programme for San and other marginalised communities run with the assistance of the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) which also resorts under the OPM.

In short, the clearly stated main aim of the DSD is to assimilate the San into the "mainstream". There are three important points to be made here. First, this aim is not in line with the indigenous peoples' rights movement which stresses the right to self-determination as articulated in, inter alia, Article 7(1) of ILO Convention 169: "The peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development …" (ILO 1989). Second, the programme encompasses various development initiatives which appear to be a conglomeration of arbitrarily selected projects rather than a well-planned, integrated and focused comprehensive programme for achieving the above-mentioned main aim. Third, the programme is clearly characterised by a top-down approach and a paternalistic attitude of the government towards the San communities (ILO 2008: 12).



The former Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Libertina Amathila, took a special interest in San development (see previous page).



3.4.2 International Labour Organization (ILO): "Promoting and Implementing the Rights of the San Peoples of the Republic of Namibia"

Inspired by the Namibian Government's recognition of the special needs of the San, in 2008 the ILO implemented the Namibia component of its global Promotion and Application of Indigenous Peoples' Rights Programme (ILO PRO 169), aimed at promoting ILO Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. Namibia is currently the only African country with an ILO PRO 169 country programme. The ILO office in Geneva selected the San of Namibia for this programme largely because of the existence of the (then) SDP and its potential to provide a platform for promoting ILO Convention 169 in the Southern African region as a whole (Hays and Dieckmann, in press). The overall objective was to contribute to reducing poverty levels and to improve the socio-economic situation of the San peoples through a rights-based approach.

The approach of the ILO programme in Namibia is centred around improving public and private stakeholders' awareness and acknowledgement of indigenous peoples' rights, and building the capacity of government ministries and other selected actors to apply the principles of ILO Conventions 169 and 111 in development programmes and activities with San communities across Namibia. The ILO has acknowledged the goodwill of the Namibian Government as well as various shortcomings of its approach. According to the "Project Document" (ILO 2008), a main objective of the PRO 169 in Namibia is to shift from paternalistic aid and welfare to a sustainable rights-based approach to community development.

The ILO hoped that Namibia would be one of the first African countries to sign Convention 169¹³ and develop a regulatory policy framework on indigenous peoples. However, in 2011 the DSD announced that an "additional assessment of government interventions and impact on San communities" was needed before policy discussions could be taken further (ILO 2012). This assessment of government interventions took place in 2012, but, at the time of writing this report, the results have not been shared with other shareholders; neither has there been further progress from the side of OPM on the development of the policy framework. In the interim, the ILO has begun to collaborate more closely with other stakeholders in its Namibia programme, including the Office of the Ombudsman and the San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia (SSOAN).

Funding for the programme ceased in 2012, but, due to delays in starting the programme, it was granted a no-cost extension through 2013. In January 2013, however, due to limited funds, the ILO decided to close the Windhoek office and terminate the post of National Progamme Coordinator. Since then, the ILO office in Pretoria has been responsible for coordinating the Namibia component.

3.4.3 Office of the Ombudsman

The Office of the Ombudsman (established by the government but functioning independently as 'watchdog for the people') recently announced that it is planning to spearhead the development of a regulatory framework on indigenous peoples (Nakuta 2012; Ombudsman Walters, interview on 25/02/2013). Established at Independence by the Ombudsman Act of 1990, this Office "strives to promote and protect human rights, promote fair and effective administration, combat corrupt practices and protect the environment and natural resources of Namibia through independent and impartial investigation and resolution of complaints, as well as raising public awareness"

¹³ The Central African Republic was the first to sign – in 2010.

(Office of the Ombudsman 2011). This Office has "the mandate to investigate complaints of maladministration against government and public officials with the additional mandate to investigate complaints relating to violations of fundamental rights and freedoms" (Office of the Ombudsman 2012a: 9), and also serves as Namibia's National Human Rights Institution (NHRI).

The Office of the Ombudsman is in the process of developing the National Human Rights Action Plan, with the goal of "improvement in both institutional and individual culture of respect for human rights and increased ratification of and compliance to the international human rights instruments by the Namibian government" (Office of the Ombudsman 2012a: 13). The target group is all vulnerable groups, including marginalised groups such as the San and Ovahimba. For the purpose of developing the Action Plan, the Ombudsman commissioned a baseline study on human rights in Namibia which was published in 2013 (Office of the Ombudsman 2013: 13).

The Office of the Ombudsman credits the ILO programme in Namibia (described above) for drawing its attention to indigenous peoples in general and the San in particular. The coordinators of the ILO programme approached the Office to publish the Guide to Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Namibia (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b), which provides an overview of the legal framework concerning indigenous peoples' rights and the observations and recommendations of regional and international human rights bodies on these rights in Namibia. In addition, in 2012, with support from the ILO progamme and in cooperation with the Human Rights Research and Documentation Centre of the University of Namibia, the Ombudsman organised training workshops on indigenous peoples' rights in Namibia, primarily for its own staff. The major objectives of these workshops were, inter alia "to achieve a greater awareness, understanding and implementation of relevant policy guidance on indigenous issues, particularity related to the effective engagement of indigenous peoples and recognition of indigenous peoples' rights in development processes" (Office of the Ombudsman 2012c). During the workshop, a San pilot strategic intervention plan was developed, including the above-mentioned initiative to "spearhead the development of a white paper on IPs as per the UPR recommendations" (Nakuta 2012c).14 Clearly the Ombudsman is not reluctant to address indigenous peoples' rights as a special focus. The Office took the first steps in developing the white paper or regulatory framework in 2013 (Walters, interview 25/02/2013).

Additionally, the Office of the Ombudsman is planning to address the lack of national documents (birth certificates, IDs, etc.) among the San, as such documents would entitle San individuals to receive social grants (old-age pension, child welfare grants, etc.) (Walters, interview 25/02/2013). However, the Office of the Ombudsman is also short of staff and capacity.

3.4.4 San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia (SSOAN)

The members of SSOAN are NGOs (international, national and community-based organisations), multilateral/bilateral organisations, and research and training institutions. The full members are Namibian NGOs (see below) involved in supporting San in one or more areas – chiefly livelihood projects, conservancies, capacity building, education, income generation, health and law (legal advice and litigation). The idea to form SSOAN was first mooted in 2009 when several organisations working to support San in Namibia recognised a need for a formal platform to strengthen their

¹⁴ As already noted, the UN Human Rights Council's Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review in February 2011 made the following recommendation, inter alia: formulate a white paper in accordance with UNDRIP, taking into consideration the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the ILO and the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities (Office of the Ombudsman 2012b: 37).

collaboration. Such a platform would offer ongoing opportunities to present their activities, to share ideas, lessons learnt and best practices, and to coordinate activities between organisations. In 2011, having collaborated as an informal forum in the interim, the decision was taken to establish SSOAN, which was officially launched on 23 August 2012.

The objectives of this umbrella organisation are to closely collaborate to promote the rights of the San in Namibia, to improve coordination of the various San support initiatives and to harmonise the approaches to San development. SSOAN also aims "to support the development of awareness and capacity in regard to UNDRIP, ILO Convention 169 and other international instruments related to the rights of indigenous people on the part of government ministries and institutions, regional authorities (government and traditional), NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), research institutions and similar organisations" (SSOAN 2012a). The member organisations hope that this formal umbrella body will give them a stronger voice in negotiations with the government. SSOAN is represented on the steering committee of the ILO programme, and the Association hopes that by strengthening its partnership with the ILO, it will be able to influence, albeit carefully, government policy regarding support for San.

The Namibian NGOs which are voting members of SSOAN are active in different geographical areas of the country. The full members are the Centre for Research-Information-Action in Africa – Southern African Development and Consulting (CRIAA SA-DC), the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN), the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA), Habitafrica, Health Unlimited, the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), the Namibian Red Cross Society (NRCS), the Omba Arts Trust (OAT), and the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA). The observer members are Spanish Cooperation for Development (AECID), the International Labour Organization (ILO), Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and UNESCO.

SSOAN as a formalised institution is still very young, so it is difficult to anticipate its actual impact on external stakeholders such as the government. Internally, through the inception of SSOAN as an informal forum in 2009, the coordination and cooperation of civil society organisations working in the field of San support has improved considerably. In October 2012, SSOAN submitted a joint statement to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, and also met with him to explain the members' concerns regarding these rights in Namibia (SSOAN 2012b). SSOAN cooperates with the ILO PRO 169 programme, with which it shares many goals, and the programme might fund specific projects under this umbrella organisation. However, SSOAN still lacks the human capacity needed to have a major impact: the member organisations, all funded by donor organisations, are overwhelmed with their own day-to-day business and the need to achieve their own outcomes and outputs as required by their donors, and they have little time to spend on the strategic thinking and networking that SSOAN stands for. The Association is still seeking funding to establish a part-time secretariat.

3.4.5 Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA)

WIMSA is a full (voting) member of SSOAN. It deserves a specific outline in this section of the report because, in theory, it is the most important NGO in the San support sector in Namibia, with a board of trustees composed of San community representatives who oversee the organisation's activities. Established in 1996 after extensive consultation with San communities in the Southern African region, WIMSA's initial aim was to provide a platform from which to address the many problems commonly shared by these communities wherever they reside in this region. Although

A demonstration on planting crops at Donkerbos (a San resettlement farm in Omaheke Region), under the DRFN Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP) (see pp. 52-54)





An NNDFN workshop with members of Nyae Nyae Conservancy, Otjozondjupa Region





One of the range of conservancy constitution posters produced by IRDNC in 2013



the organisation's name refers generally to indigenous minorities in Southern Africa, in practice WIMSA deals exclusively with the San communities, both nationally and regionally. For example, WIMSA's programmes include the Regional San Education Programme, initiated in 2002 with the aim of improving access to formal education and encouraging mother-tongue education and the development of materials to support mother-tongue education.

One of WIMSA's main functions is to help San communities to assert their basic human rights. An important example in this regard is WIMSA's coordination of activities for the protection and promotion of San culture and heritage, one aim of which is to secure San intellectual property rights. Finally, although WIMSA is not a development organisation per se, it helps San communities and individuals to set up their own development initiatives, CBOs and commercial ventures (see the WIMSA website: www.wim-sa.org). Although WIMSA is a regional network organisation, it has established an internal Support Unit for San in Namibia specifically, which supports and coordinates CBOs and grassroots development initiatives across the country in the fields of education, youth development, culture and heritage, capacity building and income generation.

WIMSA has a wide range of responsibilities and shoulders high expectations. But, like many other organisations, it suffers from a lack of capacity and thus faces many difficulties in its efforts to fulfil its important role as a regional organisation. Despite this limitation, it has generated a great many important developments, two of which should be noted here.

- WIMSA co-organised two conferences in 2012: first, the Southern African Indigenous Peoples Consultation Dialogue with the theme "Indigenous Voices for Good Governance and Human Rights" (initiated by the Norwegian Church Aid Alliance); and then the Southern Africa Regional San Rights Conference. In the latter conference, the Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of the San People of Southern Africa was developed, and was signed by eight regional/national organisations, among them, for Namibia, WIMSA and the Namibian San Council (covered in section 3.4.7).
- WIMSA supported the establishment of the Namibian San Council and continues to support it, but ultimately this council will be a wholly independent body (see section 3.4.7).

3.4.6 San Traditional Authorities (TAs)

The San TAs, which are government-recognised San community representatives, constitute another group of stakeholders playing an important role in the sphere of San support. Government bodies, including the OPM Division for San Development, communicate with San communities primarily through the San TAs. The main functions of all of Namibia's TAs are established by the Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000 (*Government Gazette* No. 2456, 22/12/2000) which outlines the legal framework for the recognition of traditional leadership and its structure.¹⁵ Their main functions are: to cooperate with and assist the government; to supervise and ensure the observance of the customary law; to give support, advice and information; and to promote the welfare and peace of rural communities.

In the past, as with many other hunter-gatherer societies, the traditional social organisation of all San groups was "egalitarian" in general, and rarely made provision for a single traditional leader. (Guenther 1999: 41-45). Headmen of smaller family groups had certain responsibilities, especially in the context of managing natural resources, but decisions were made by consensus, not by one individual. The Traditional Authorities Act essentially applies the traditional system of Oshiwambo-

¹⁵ The Traditional Authority includes a chief and a traditional council (comprising senior traditional and traditional councillors and a secretary).

speaking groups (who constitute over 50% of the Namibian population) as a model, and this model is characterised by a hierarchical authority structure with a single representative leader for a large group. This model does not work well for all leadership structures in the country, and the San in particular find it difficult to access their right to self-government within this structure (an issue discussed in more detail below).

Nonetheless, the Act makes (albeit limited) provision for the involvement of rural communities, via their TAs, in decision-making processes, and San communities perceive the institution as an important tool for making their voices heard. Consequently, San communities, with the support of NGOs, fought for recognition of their own TAs – a process which took many years. At the time of writing, five San TAs (Hai||om, !Xun, Ju|'hoansi, Omaheke North and Omaheke South) have been recognised; the Khwe of West Caprivi are still waiting for official recognition – for over 10 years now. The chief of the neighbouring Hambukushu ethnic group opposes the recognition of the Khwe TA, claiming that the Khwe fall under his authority, and the government has yet to take a decision in this regard.

Over the past few years, three of the five recognised San TAs (!Xun, Hai||om and !Xoo) have faced serious complaints from their communities on issues such as a lack of communication, corruption, a lack of transparency and favouritism. One way to understand this is as a conflict between the structures and processes of each community and those defined by the Traditional Authorities Act. The Act stipulates that TAs should be designated according to the customary law of the applicable traditional community. However, unlike the customary laws of many other traditional communities in Namibia, those of San communities do not make any provision for the establishment of authorities. Further, whereas local and national political leaders come to power through elections, traditional leaders are appointed, and there is little transparency in the appointment process, so the system is open to abuse.¹⁶ In some cases the process through which a TA comes to power is very obscure, and often it is said that party politics has played a role.

Furthermore, the lack of powerful individual leaders in 'traditional' San societies means that San TAs lack internal role models to emulate in their own leadership positions. Training for Namibian TAs in general, and monitoring of their performance and accountability, are virtually non-existent, and the government does not provide support or training to help TAs to acquire the necessary competencies to fulfil their roles as community leaders.

Another difficulty is posed by the fact that all TAs in Namibia receive monthly remuneration – far above the average San income – as well as a car and other provisions from the government. For many reasons this access to money, transportation, etc. can be the source of conflict in a community, especially in poor communities which have limited mechanisms for addressing social inequalities.

Government institutions (the Division for San Development, line ministries and others) negotiate mainly with the TAs of the San communities, therefore benefits intended for the communities (access to land and natural resources, job opportunities, etc.) are channelled through the TAs, and this system can be problematic, as is illustrated by some of the cases described in this report. The existence of a TA office gives the government an obvious avenue for including San communities in the development process, but whether or not this institution ensures real consultation with San communities and their participation in development initiatives is a question for debate.

¹⁶ It is also open for the creation of new "customary laws" and the invention of royal bloodlines.

3.4.7 Namibian San Council

WIMSA has supported the development of representative national San Councils that lobby on behalf of the San communities in Namibia, South Africa, Botswana and Angola. It was envisaged that these bodies would give the San communities a voice and the opportunity to carry out their own advocacy and lobbying work.

The Namibian San Council has the potential to play an important role for the San in this country in terms of representing San interests in decision-making processes – especially given the perception of many San that their TAs are not fulfilling this responsibility. Thus it is intended that the Namibian San Council will become an advocacy body representing San interests at national level. However, this council, despite being in place for several years, is still not fully functional. Two difficulties have been negotiating the structure of the council and the process of choosing representatives. Initially it was agreed that the council should consist of one member of each TA (but not the chief), and one elected community representative from each of the six main San groups (Hai||om, Ju|'hoansi, Khwe, Naro, !Xoon and !Xun). Later, however, differences of opinion arose with regard to the council's composition: the OPM and some of the chiefs requested the inclusion of the chiefs as well as a representative of the OPM, whereas many community members preferred the initial arrangement. Ultimately the council members respected the latter preference and elected to exclude the chiefs and the OPM representative. Currently the council consists of 14 members – including two newly elected representatives of the San in Ohangwena Region who do not have a TA to date.

Financial support and human capacity are problems that the Namibian San Council has to address before it can become fully operational. The first Council Coordinator passed away after less than a year in this position. The position was advertised in 2011, and a new coordinator was appointed and trained for the responsibility of coordinating the San communities. However, before he could fully assume his position, the government offered him a job and he resigned as Council Coordinator. This example illustrates another problem with San leadership: there are still few San in Namibia with a level of education that suffices for filling such positions as a Council Coordinator. Those who do have sufficient education may choose to take up other positions which they perceive as being better career development opportunities.

The San Council was revitalised in 2012 with the assistance of WIMSA and the ILO programme. Two of a series of four training workshops on institutional strengthening and capacity building for the San Council took place in the second half of 2012 and in 2013 with the assistance of the Human Rights Research and Documentation Centre at the University of Namibia. The long-term results of the workshops are as yet undetermined. Clearly one should not expect the process of developing representative leadership structures that can serve unrelated groups, who themselves have little tradition of hierarchical leadership structures, to be a smooth one. Ongoing support, such as that provided by the ILO and WIMSA, will continue to be critical in the near future.

In summary, the three bodies which could theoretically represent San interests at national level, i.e. the San Traditional Authorities, the Namibian San Council and WIMSA, presently face many difficulties which prevent their effective operation. In addition to these bodies there are a number of smaller San CBOs, some of them fairly successful, others not (yet). Their main areas of work are tourism, culture, capacity building and conservancies. None of them, however, has a major say on San issues at national level.

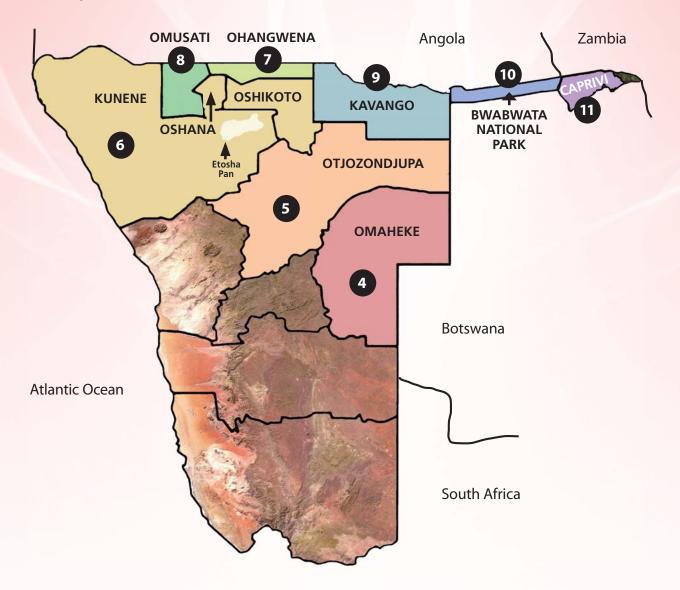
Part II Geographical Analysis

Photo: A Hailom elder with Hailom children in Etosha.

A note about the arrangement of the regional chapters

The regional chapters (4-11) are arranged in a 'circular' pattern *and* according to the area of habitation of the different San language groups, thus this arrangement provides for some continuity in reporting on San groups whose cultures and traditional practices are the same or similar. Starting in Omaheke (Chapter 4), we move north-west and then east, ending in Caprivi (Chapter 11). Ohangwena precedes Omusati in this pattern because the San in Ohangwena are Hailor and !Xun, as in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto.

For ease of reference and navigation, these chapters are colour coded as indicated in the map below.



Chapter 4 Omaheke Region

By Erik Dirkx and Maarit Thiem



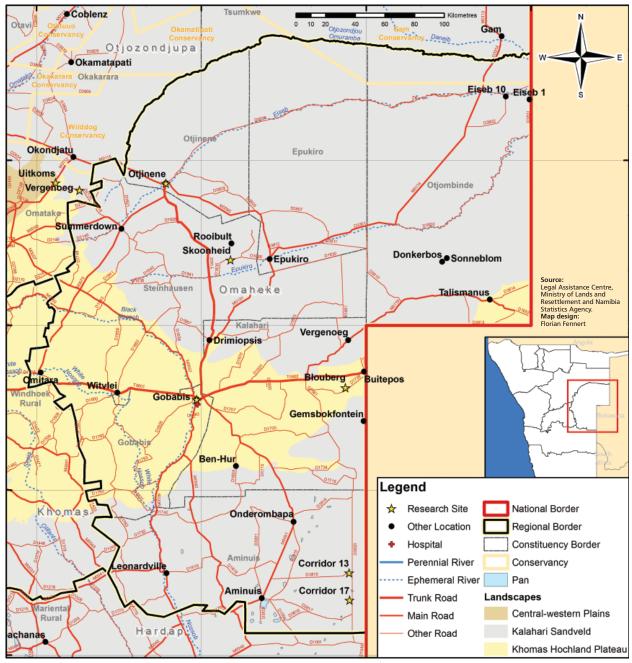
Juj'hoan women carrying firewood for domestic use in Skoonheid, Omaheke Region (Photo by Velina Ninkova)

4.1 General background

Omaheke Region consists of the former Gobabis District and the former homeland/reserve areas of Aminuis, Tswanaland and part of Hereroland East. The borders of the region enclose an area of about 84 981 km². The bordering regions are Otjozondjupa Region to the north and north-east, Khomas Region to the west and south-west, and Hardap Region to the south; to the east Omaheke borders Botswana. Omaheke Region comprised seven constituencies at the time of the research: Aminuis, Gobabis, Kalahari, Otjinene, Otjombinde, Steinhausen and Epukiro. The administrative centre is Gobabis (National Planning Commission (NPC) 2006a: 1).

Mean annual precipitation varies across the region, ranging from 250 mm per annum in the south (Aminuis Constituency) to 400 mm per annum in the north. The areas north of Gobabis show an average rainfall of 350-400 mm per annum (NPC 2006a: 3). The dominant vegetation zones are

Omaheke Region and the research sites



typical of the central and southern Kalahari Basin, consisting predominantly of camelthorn savannas and mixed shrublands, with isolated forest and woodland savannas. There are no perennial surface water sources and the only notable drainage channels in the entire Omaheke Region are the Black and White Nossob Rivers and the shallow *omiramba* (ancient river beds) of Eiseb, Epukiro and Otjozondjou. Only the Nossob Rivers are active, however, flowing after exceptionally good rains; the porous sands of the Kalahari make almost all rainfall infiltrate immediately. The Tilda Viljoen and Otjivero Dams are the only notable surface water reservoirs, impounding the ephemeral rivers and supplying Gobabis with water; however unreliable dam capacities result in a continued reliance on groundwater and boreholes (NPC 2006a: 5).

According to the findings of the Namibia 2011 Population and Housing Census, Omaheke Region has a population of 71 233 persons, which constitutes 3.4% of the total population of Namibia. The population density is low (0.8 persons/km²) compared with the Namibian average (2.6 persons/km²);

in fact Omaheke has the lowest number of inhabitants of all Namibian regions. The census found 16174 households in the region, with an average household size of 4.3 persons (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 17).

Almost 50% (3543044ha) of the land in Omaheke is privately owned by individuals or companies under the freehold tenure system. The largest parts of the western, central and south-western areas are occupied by freehold farms comprising around 900 households (NPC 2006a: 1); the remainder of the land is communal land. In 2001, approximately 800 commercial farms with an average size of 7000 hectares were registered (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 54). Most of the commercial farms are owned by Afrikaans- and German-speaking farmers. The local authorities of Gobabis, Leonardville, Witvlei and Otjinene control a small percentage of the land, and the central government holds the remainder through communal lands, resettlement farms and experimental agricultural farms (NPC 2006a: 9).

Due to scarcity of water and fertile land, Omaheke is regarded as having a low suitability for crop production; rain-fed agriculture is not very reliable due to poor soil quality and rainfall variability. Therefore, extensive cattle ranching dominates land-use patterns in Omaheke. Inhabitants of the region refer to it as the "cattle country' – it has some of the best grazing areas in Namibia" (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 54).

In recent years commercial farmers have increasingly diversified their income strategies by expanding into game farming, hunting and tourism activities. Werner and Odendaal report that although there are no figures available, anecdotal evidence indicates that this aforementioned shift has been substantial for commercial farms wishing to complement income derived from cattle farming (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 54).

4.2 The San in Omaheke Region

The San were the earliest inhabitants of Omaheke Region (Sylvain 1999: 22). They practised a nomadic lifestyle, relying on hunting and gathering. Around the turn of the 18th century, new inhabitants, mainly Mbanderu, Herero and Tswana people, started settling in the area. These stock herders began to push the San into the western fringes of the Kalahari Desert and started to use them as an occasional labour force. However, until white settlers arrived in the region at the beginning of the 20th century, the San were only temporarily incorporated into the broader political economy and managed to resist penetration into their lands to a certain degree. White settlement in Omaheke began after the Herero-German war (1904-1907), and the biggest influx of white farmers took place in the 1920s when the League of Nations granted the mandate of the Territory of South West Africa to the Union of South Africa. Impoverished South Africans relocated to Omaheke Region, and a decade later Angolan Boers were also resettled in the area. By the 1950s, more than 700 farms were established in the area, with fencing being well advanced (Sylvain 2001: 719).

As the influx of white farmers resulted in increased pressure on the land, the Union Government established reserves for the 'natives'. Epukiro (later Hereroland East) and Aminuis were established as 'native reserves', chiefly for the Herero and Mbanderu people. Later, as more people moved in, the Eiseb and Rietfontein areas were incorporated – these were occupied by Jul'hoansi San at that time (Sylvain 1999: 46). Although the San were the first inhabitants of Omaheke Region, they were not granted any land for themselves as a group throughout this process since only pastoralism was recognised as a viable land-use option. The establishment of the native reserves, as well as the fast-growing number of fenced commercial farms, reduced the area in which the San could still hunt and gather. Simultaneously they were being incorporated into the wider political economy

as farmworkers. Initially, many reverted to the veld in the rainy season and returned to the farms when food and water were becoming scarce. With the introduction of the Masters and Servants Proclamation of 1920, however, these practices ceased, as the farmers were granted the right to pursue farmworkers who left the farm without the farmer's permission. Consequently many San abandoned hunting and gathering (Suzman 1999: 38). The Odendaal Commission's recommendations further prohibited free movement in corridors and between the farms by declaring all unoccupied areas as state property at the beginning of the 1970s (Suzman 1999: 39-40).

Today the San are the fourth largest language group (7.0%) in Omaheke Region, after the Herero (39.0%), Nama/Damara (27.0%) and Afrikaans-speaking people (12.0%) (NSA 2013: 14). There are three main San groups: the Ju|'hoansi, living primarily in the northern and central areas; the Naro in the east; and the !Xoon in the south (Sylvain 2006: 132). There are also a small number of 'N|oha families living in the southern part of the so-called 'Corridor area' in southern Omaheke.¹

There are two San traditional authorities (TAs), each with their own chief. Chief Frederik Langman of the Omaheke Ju|'hoansi was elected in 1996, but was formally recognised by the Namibian Government only in 2009. This delay in recognition meant that neither he nor his TA could exercise any power in the intervening 13 years. Chief Sofia Jakob (popularly known as "Chief Sofia"), with her TA representing the Omaheke !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha, was elected in 2003 and recognised in 2009.

Commercial farms employ about 60% of the Omaheke workforce (NPC 2006a: 10). Sylvain reported in 2001 that 4 000 out of 6 500 Ju|'hoansi in Omaheke worked on commercial Afrikaner farms, comprising 27% of the workforce at the time (Sylvain 2001: 719). Other groups of San are working on communal farms, but estimates of the numbers could not be obtained as information on San communal farmworkers is scarce. Our analyses indicate that the total number of San farmworkers has dropped in the last decade as farm owners are more and more reluctant to employ San; they would rather employ workers from other language groups (see Chapter 12 on San farmworkers). The CEO of the Gobabis Municipality reported in an interview that the influx of former San farmworkers to Gobabis has grown considerably in the last few years, and the growing number of people living in the informal settlements presents the town with increasing difficulties.

Most San who are not presently living and working on commercial farms are living in communal areas, or on resettlement farms, or in the informal settlement of Epako in Gobabis, and some are living on the road verges between commercial farms.



The Omaheke Regional Poverty Profile report published by the NPC in 2006 describes the San of this region as "... the most vulnerable in most localities because of the nature and mode of their livelihoods" (NPC 2006a: 41). Traditional ways of securing food have been limited by government regulations, the fencing of land and the prohibition on hunting game: "In the opinion of the San, poverty has been artificially created by modern-way developments such as fencing off land, laws that prohibit hunting, and the erosion of culture and way of life. In their perception, poverty was a hitherto unknown phenomenon among the San." (NPC 2006a: 37)

¹ Noha speak the same language as !Xoon (Taa) but a different dialect.

4.3 Research sites in Omaheke Region

This section introduces the six research sites in Omaheke Region: Skoonheid, Kanaan (Epako), Blouberg, Corridor 17-b, Corridor 13 and Goreseb (Otjinene). Table 4.1 below summarises the main characteristics of these sites. The sites selected for the research in Omaheke cover the spectrum of remote rural locations to urban informal settlements. These sites also represent different types of land tenure, the different San language groups and San majority and minority populations in this region, and different types of institutional support provided to San at these sites.

Research	Urban/	Land	San	Population	Institutional support*		
site	rural status	tenure	language groups	status (numerical)	GRN	NGOs and others	
Skoonheid	Rural	Resettlement project (on a former commercial farm purchased by the GRN)	Ju 'hoansi	San majority with Damara minority	MLRMGECW	 DRFN Habitafrica Foundation Dr De Kok NGSIP 	
Kanaan (in Epako)	Urban	Informal settlement on town land	Naro and Ju 'hoansi	San minority among various other groups	No specific support reported beyond normal GRN services	None	
Blouberg	Rural	Resettlement project (on a farm inherited from the pre- Independence Damara Legislative Authority)	Naro, Jul'hoansi and !Xoon	San and Damara	No specific support reported beyond normal GRN rural services	None	
Corridor 17-b	Remote rural	Communal land (formerly a farm under the Odendaal Plan)	!Xoon, Naro and 'N∣oha	San groups only	MAWF NPCS	 WIMSA OST Kalahari Garden Project Komeho Namibia Catholic Church 	
Corridor 13	Remote rural	Communal land declared as a settlement (not proclaimed)	!Xoon, Naro and 'N oha	San minority among Herero, Tswana and Kgalagadi people	Various line ministries have offices/ facilities here: • NAMPOL • MoHSS • MoE • MAWF	 WIMSA OST in the past 	
Goreseb (near Otjinene)	Rural	Communal land	Ju 'hoansi	San minority surrounded by Damara majority	No specific project or institutional support	None	

* Abbreviations/acronyms:

NAMPOL Namibian Police

MAWFMinistry of Agriculture, Water and ForestryMGECWMinistry of Gender Equality and Child WelfareMLRMinistry of Lands and ResettlementMOEMinistry of EducationMOHSSMinistry of Health and Social Services

NPCS National Planning Commission Secretariat

DRFN Desert Research Foundation of Namibia

NGSIP Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme

OST Omaheke San Trust

WIMSA Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa



4.3.1 Skoonheid

Skoonheid Resettlement Project is located 120 km north of Gobabis, some 10 km north of the road from Farm Du Plessis to Epukiro Post 3. The government bought the original farm in 1993 and initially resettled about 12 families there, mainly Ju|'hoan and Damara. The number of families gradually increased as other beneficiaries moved in over time. The government enabled the influx of new people by constructing approximately 60 brick houses for the project within a few years of acquiring the farm. By 2010 the project population had grown to 63 households, comprising approximately 280 individuals who resided at Skoonheid on a near-permanent basis. The average household size was 4.6 persons (Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 5).² Ju|'hoan households comprised 66% of the population, and Damara households 24%. The remaining 10% comprised Owambo, Kavango and Herero households (Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 14). The former commercial farm originally encompassed 7 104 ha, but by late 2010, an area of only 2 100 ha (30% of the farm area) was available for San and Damara beneficiaries. The remaining part of the farm was occupied by 14 farmers whom Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) officials had 'temporarily' settled at Skoonheid in

² The household definition applied by the NSA for the Population and Housing Census was used in computing these figures. Accordingly, a household member who is not present for at least four days in the week before the day of the interview is not considered to be a regular household member. Given that many children at Skoonheid (and other rural sites) stay in school hostels in other communities during the school term, the household and total population sizes computed in this study may be somewhat smaller than figures cited in other reports.

1995 (GRN 2010: 52). According to this 2010 report, the influx of laid-off San (former farmworkers) to the Skoonheid Resettlement Project was still continuing.

The ablution facilities in most of the project houses were connected to a sewerage system, with water supplied from four boreholes equipped with solar water pumps. Skoonheid had a kindergarten, and a Dr De Kok ran a clinic there on a fortnightly basis. Resettled beneficiaries made a living by means of on-site rain-fed and irrigated crop production. Livestock (large and small) were also important, and the large-stock population increased to 640 units following a donation of livestock by the Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP) in 2009. However, given that only 30% of the original farm area was available for the resettlement project, the project site became overstocked, resulting in livestock losses during the dry season. Other income-generating activities at Skoonheid were brickmaking and craft production.

4.3.2 Kanaan (in Epako, Gobabis)

Epako lies some 4 km east of Gobabis. Most residents of the settlement are Damara, Herero, Tswana, Owambo and Nama, and there are a number of San residents, i.e. Ju|'hoansi and Naro. The different sections of the settlement have names such as 'Freedom Square' and 'Independence Island', but the research team found that most Epako residents still referred to the sections by their ethnic designations, such as 'Hereroblok' and 'Damarablok'. Most San of Epako live on the borders of different sections, some in corrugated-iron shacks, and some in dwellings constructed of various scrap materials including plastic bags – a situation which has persisted for several years (see Sylvain 2006: 139).

The research discussions were held with San living in Kanaan, a neighbourhood of Epako with a mixed populace of Owambo, Damara, Herero, Tswana and San. Discussion participants explained that they had moved to this neighbourhood from one named 'Do Not Fight'. They decided to call the new neighbourhood 'Kanaan' after the biblical land of milk and honey.

For their livelihoods the San in Kanaan depended primarily on doing piecework (temporary manual work) for their neighbours: fetching water, washing, ironing and other kinds of domestic work. There was no electricity in the neighbourhood, therefore residents used firewood for cooking. However, at times it was difficult for them to access firewood as the surrounding area did not offer large quantities of such wood for collection. If there was none to be found, they bought firewood from the surrounding farmers who offered the wood at prices that were sometimes unaffordable for the San. There were public water taps – 25 litres cost N\$1. There were no toilets in Kanaan; the residents had to use the surrounding bushes for this purpose.



San dwellings in Kanaan – made of corrugated ironand/or scrap materials, and sometimes only plastic bags



A communal water point in Kanaan, and a San boy carrying firewood home for cooking

4.3.3 Blouberg

Blouberg Resettlement Project is situated some 20 km south-west of the Buitepos border post on the border with Botswana, in the eastern part of Omaheke. At the time of the research the Blouberg community consisted of 32 Damara and 35 San households – the San being Ju|'hoansi, Naro and !Xoon. Although the farm is relatively close to the Buitepos-Gobabis tar road, the community should be considered as remote. Apart from a government primary school and the constituency councillor's regular visits, no government institutions provided services at Blouberg at the time of the research. In 2011, a private donor – working through the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) and the Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC) – made some improvements in the water-supply systems at Blouberg. According to beneficiaries, this was the first time that the government had been involved in working on the project's water-supply systems.

Today Blouberg is a resettlement farm. At Independence the government took the farm over from the Damara Legislative Authority. Two other resettlement communities, i.e. those at Farms Vergenoeg and Gemsbok in Omaheke, have a similar history. The three former commercial farms had been acquired by the Damara Legislative Authority in 1981 with the permission of the South African authorities under a legal framework that evolved from the Odendaal Plan. This was in order to address a shortage of grazing land in Damaraland during a drought in the early 1980s. After the drought, the Damara farmers returned with their livestock to the area from which they had come, but the Damara Legislative Authority decided to keep the farms so that other Damara farmers (i.e. those from what is now Omaheke Region) would get more access to land in their area. The San who had been working for the previous farm owner were allowed to remain at Farm Blouberg as they had nowhere else to go. Later, relatives and other San who were retrenched from farms nearby also found a place to stay at Blouberg. According to a former member of the Damara Legislative Authority, the decision to allow the San to remain at Blouberg was also informed by the joint history of the San and the Damara people. As former farmworkers, the San of Blouberg did not have any livestock or other assets with which to make a living. Consequently they depended on doing piecework for the Damara settlers at Blouberg and on work at farms in the vicinity. The socio-economic situation of the San at Blouberg has remained more or less the same to date.

4.3.4 Corridor 17-b

Farm Corridor 17-b is situated some 25 km south of the settlement of Corridor 13, in the southeastern corner of Aminuis Constituency in southern Omaheke. The farm is located at the southern end of the so-called 'Corridor area' (a.k.a. 'the Corridor'), a narrow area of communal land along the border with Botswana, designated by the Odendaal Commission in 1964 as the Tswana homeland. The distances from Corridor 17-b to Aminuis and Gobabis are 100 km and 300 km respectively. !Xoon, 'N|oha and Naro have lived in this part of the country for a long time, but they settled as farmers at Corridor 17-b only as recently as 1990. At the time of the research there were 20 San households at Corridor 17-b, with different linguistic backgrounds: there were !Xoon and 'N|oha, and there were Naro (see Table 3.2, page 23). At present the farm is not shared with people of other language groups – unlike the San at Corridor 17-a, Corridor 17-c, and Corridor 18 (all in the vicinity of Corridor 17-b) who share the land with Herero, Kgalagadi or Tswana farmers.

Over the years, the San at Corridor 17-b have received assistance from the Catholic Church and four NGOs: WIMSA, the Omaheke San Trust (OST), the Kalahari Garden Project and Komeho Namibia. Corridor 17-b was also the 'home base' of Chief Sofia Jakob of the Traditional Authority



representing !Xoon, 'N|oha and Naro of southern Omaheke. The government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) and the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme (RPRP) of the National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS), provided assistance for a revolving goat project in the past. Recently the San Development Programme (SDP) of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP) initiated assistance for this San community.

Corridor 17-b represents a very remote rural farm where !Xoon, 'N|oha and Naro people reside and farm relatively autonomously, i.e. without having to share the farm's resources with people of other ethnic groups. It also represents a community which has received a fair amount of support and attention from the Catholic Church, NGOs and the government over the years.

4.3.5 Corridor 13

Corridor 13 is a small settlement in south-eastern Omaheke and the base of various government agencies and services in Aminuis Constituency. At the time of the research, Corridor 13 had a clinic, a police station, a primary school with a hostel, an MAWF extension office, a few churches, three auction pens, two kindergartens, an open market, five shops, one service station, two traditional courts (Tswana and Kgalagadi³), a brickyard and a project of the Build Together Programme.

³ The researchers were informed that the Kgalagadi (*Bakgalagadi* in Setswana) are a minority group in the Corridor area, with their own TA and traditional court at Corridor 13. Their heritage is a mix of Tswana and San, but their language is closer to Tswana than any of the San languages spoken in the Corridor. They originated in Botswana.



The population of Corridor 13 comprised 26 San households and many more households of different origins and cultural backgrounds. The San families, as in Corridor 17-b, were !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha. They had come to the settlement from various places in Namibia, such as Aranos, Aminuis, Leonardville, other cattle posts in the Corridor area and other farms in the vicinity of the Corridor area. Most San in Corridor 13 made a living from piecework for farmers, local shops (including cuca shops, a.k.a. shebeens⁴) or domestic work on a casual basis. Agricultural livelihoods were virtually non-existent within the boundaries of the settlement.

4.3.6 Goreseb, Otjinene

Goreseb village is situated approximately 40 km north-west of Otjinene in Omaheke Region. At the time of the field research there were approximately 20 Jul'hoan households in the village, many of which consisted of former farmworkers and their families. They had originally settled in Goreseb on communal land with the permission of the Damara Traditional Authority. As few Jul'hoansi could afford to buy new iron or zinc sheets, dwellings were made of corrugated-iron collected in the village surroundings, or of a plaster made of mud and dung. Although the land at Goreseb belongs to the Jul'hoansi, discussion participants said that people from other language groups, especially Damara families, had invaded their land recently - to the extent that only the land around their dwellings had remained for the use of Jul'hoansi. The Jul'hoansi of Goreseb made a living from cattle and small stock farming, and by doing piecework for Herero and Damara farmers in the area. Six Ju]'hoan families of Goreseb owned animals; the most successful farmers had 10 cattle and two goats per household, while the other farmer had 19 goats. The Old Age Pension also featured as a major source of income and basically provided for the supply of maize-meal (the staple food) to the community. Formal employment opportunities in Goreseb were very limited: only two San were employed (as a kindergarten teacher and a primary school teacher), while a third individual had found work with the Office of the Prime Minister. Piecework for men primarily comprised fencing and looking after cattle, whereas women carried out domestic chores for other farmers.

⁴ A shebeen is bar or club where excisable alcoholic beverages are sold (with or without a licence). In Namibia such an establishment is also known as a 'cuca shop'. Some people in Namibia also use the term *bierhuis* (Afrikaans for 'beer house') in referring to a cuca shop or shebeen. In this chapter, the term 'cuca shop' will be used. Some cuca shops sell food and other items in addition to alcohol.

4.4 Research findings

4.4.1 Livelihoods, employment and income opportunities

In this section we report on the various livelihood strategies employed at the Omaheke research sites. After an analysis of the different livelihood options, the food security of the San in Omaheke will be discussed. Finally poverty, wellbeing and social mobility will be described.

Livelihood strategies	Skoonheid	Corridor 17-b	Corridor 13	Blouberg	Kanaan (in Epako)	Goreseb (near Otjinene)
Agricultural (subsistence) production	Rain-fed and irrigated crop cultivation	Irrigated crop cultivation			Small backyard gardens	
Cattle and small stock	Goat rearing	Revolving goat project				
farming	 Livestock farming Revolving cattle scheme (NGSIP)* 					Small stock rearing
Casual labour	Casual farmwork for farmers in the vicinity	Farm work for farmers at Post 17-A or 17-C (e.g. looking after goats)	Domestic work: cleaning, laundry and ironing	Casual farmwork for neighbouring farmers (e.g. looking after goats)	Domestic work: cleaning, laundry and ironing	Piecework on farms in the vicinity (e.g. fencing and herding)
			Looking after goats and cleaning goat skins	Caretaker of water point(s)	Piecework in the vicinity	
			Piecework at cuca shops: making fire and fetching water and firewood	Domestic work for staff at the local school (very few opportunities)	Piecework at cuca shops: making fire and fetching water and firewood	
Regular employment	Kindergarten teacher		Hostel workPolice			Farmworkers
Grants	Pension	Pension	Pension	Pension	Pension	Pension
 Income- generating activities Veldfood gathering 	Craft production	Craft production no longer supported by OST*			Remittances from children/ relatives in Windhoek	
	Brickmaking project	Looking for veldfood and occasionally small game		Looking for veldfood	Looking for veldfood and occasionally small game	Looking for veldfood and occasionally small game

Table 4.2: Livelihood strategies of San in six locations in Omaheke Region in 2011/12

* Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme Omaheke San Trust

The income-generating opportunities for San at the six research sites varied considerably. In general it should be noted that, with the exception of Kanaan (in Epako), all research sites were rural and should be considered as remote areas where the opportunities for formal employment are generally limited.

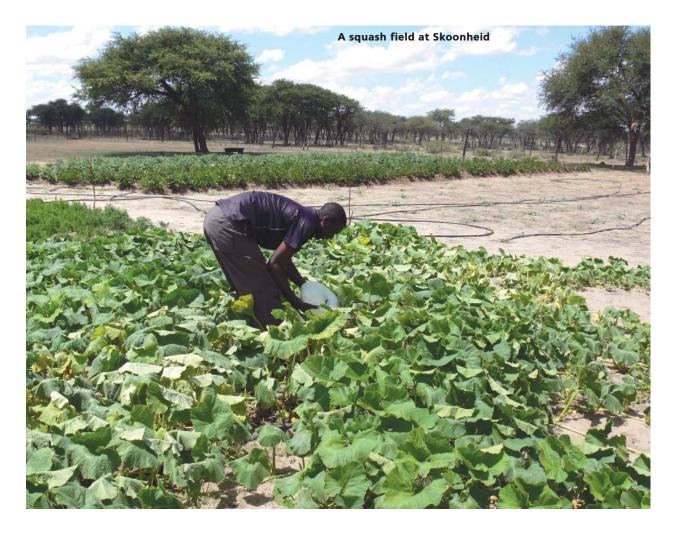
Table 4.2 shows that the Old Age Pension played an important role in the livelihoods of the San at all six sites. Although the Old Age Pension was often complemented by subsistence farming and non-farm income, it was the most regular income – and usually the largest amount of money – received by elderly people and their families. As such it served as a safety net for many San in the rural areas and the urban area.

Table 4.2 underscores that San people's best opportunities to eke out a living as subsistence farmers were on the resettlement farms, such as Skoonheid, or in relatively homogeneous San communities on communal land in the Corridor area, provided that the lands were not being illegally fenced off. The San at Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b made a living by means of rain-fed and irrigated crop cultivation, farming with small stock (Corridor 17-b), or farming with both small stock and cattle (Skoonheid). On resettlement farms there were also some opportunities to obtain non-farm income, e.g. at Skoonheid a small group of men made additional income by means of brickmaking and about 55 men and women were engaged in a craft project. (Similar income-generating opportunities have been created at other resettlement projects in Omaheke which were not visited for this study, e.g. craft production is also supported at Drimiopsis (15 beneficiaries) and Donkerbos-Sonneblom (30 beneficiaries), and brickmaking also takes place at Drimiopsis.) These subsistence farming and non-farm income-generating activities had been made possible through support by the following programmes and agencies, among others:

- Livelihood support initiatives such as the Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP, Phases I and II) and the Water Supply and Sanitation in Namibia (WATSAN) projects implemented by the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) and the Habitafrica Foundation in Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom, in partnership with the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR).
- Gardening initiatives of the Kalahari Garden Project and later Komeho Namibia in the Corridor area.
- Brickmaking at Skoonheid received support from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), and at Drimiopsis from the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture (MYNSSC). LISUP-II/WATSAN also renders additional support to these brickmaking projects and at times serves as a client.
- Livestock (cattle and small stock) development projects at Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b were supported by the first phase of the NGSIP and by the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme (RPRP) respectively, in collaboration with the GRN (the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the National Planning Commission respectively).

The livelihood opportunities for San living on the Blouberg Resettlement Project farm were far more limited than for San at Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b, as the San on this farm had merely been allowed to stay on land that had been acquired by the Damara Traditional Authority in the early 1980s (prior to Independence). The San residents of Blouberg did not receive any external support. The San who had been working on the previous commercial farms, and San who were later retrenched from farms in the area around Blouberg, were allowed to stay at Blouberg as they had nowhere else to go to. These San usually did not have any livestock or other assets from which to make a living, as they had always been employed as farmworkers.⁵ Although nearly 30 years have passed since the first San people found refuge at Blouberg, the majority of the San there still did not own any livestock or any other farm assets; they merely had a place to stay – usually an informal corrugated-iron dwelling – and access to water points. As a consequence of this, and because of the farm's remoteness, the San were dependent on the Damara livestock farmers who control the

⁵ Before Independence, farmworkers did not have the right to keep livestock of their own on the land of the farmer they worked for.



Blouberg grazing land, and on commercial farmers, for employment or piecework. However, the opportunities were in both cases rather scarce and not necessarily very rewarding – for example, a few farmworkers in 2012 earned approximately N\$200 per month when they took care of the goats of local farmers. For jobs on commercial farms, farmworkers could be paid as much as N\$600 per month, although some of that money might be deducted for food rations (see Chapter 12 on San farmworkers). As a consequence of these socio-economic conditions, the San of Blouberg still had limited means to survive, and this may explain why veldfood gathering was a relatively important source of income and food for them (see section 4.4.2 on food security in Omaheke).

In contrast to the situation at Blouberg, the livelihoods of former Ju|'hoan farmworkers in Goreseb village near Otjinene was partially based on cattle or small stock rearing, as this could be combined with long-term farm employment or doing piecework for farmers in the vicinity. Nevertheless, they faced challenges with access to grazing land, because, according to discussion participants, more and more communal land in the vicinity of Goreseb was being fenced off. The Ju|'hoansi concerned claimed that the fences were erected illegally, and constrained their livestock farming practices as they could no longer access grazing areas. This was a matter of concern as the lands in question were believed to belong to the Ju|'hoan community, as they had settled at Goreseb before any other farmers.

In Kanaan, Epako (an urban area) and at Corridor 13 (a rural settlement), piecework appeared to be the main source of income and employment for San – men and women alike. Women were mostly involved with domestic piecework, consisting of house cleaning and doing the laundry and ironing. In Corridor 13 the San women complained that the opportunities were relatively scarce

and irregular, and that they could earn only about N\$20 per day from such work. Some women indicated that they could barely make a living this way. Men carried out piecework such as fencing and herding goats and other livestock on farms in the vicinity of Corridor 13. For men in Kanaan the piecework opportunities were of a slightly different nature to those in the rural areas: for example, they could earn money by offloading trucks in Gobabis.

Some of the San at Corridor 13 and in Kanaan were dependent on doing piecework at local cuca shops, but some of the tasks, such as fetching water and firewood, were very basic and yielded little income (N\$1 or N\$2 per job or task). Slaughtering, de-skinning and cleaning the carcasses of goats and sheep were also common piecework jobs at cuca shops. Much of the money earned from these odd jobs was directly spent at the cuca shops. Community members felt that the San who survived in this manner were addicted to beer ("they are in the beer"). It was also said that the San concerned tended to sleep at the premises of the cuca shops as they did not have any shelter or other belongings of their own. Moreover, some of the people concerned allegedly could not resist offers to 'share a blanket' with someone in return for food, money or other privileges. The reasons for such behaviour were said to be hunger, loss of all hope, and being under the influence of alcohol. It was not only young girls and women who engaged in this practice; young men would also render sexual favours to older women in return for money.

Box 4.1: Group resettlement farms in Omaheke Region

A few group resettlement farms in Omaheke (e.g. Skoonheid, Vasdraai and Donkerbos-Sonneblom) were acquired by the GRN in the mid-1990s for resettling primarily San or a mix of San and predominantly Damara people. In addition, considerably smaller numbers of people of other language groups (e.g. Tswana, Herero, Mbanderu and occasionally Owambo and Kavango people) were resettled on these farms. Other farms (e.g. Blouberg, Vergenoeg and Gemsbok), first acquired by the Damara Legislative Authority of Justus Garoëb from the South African authorities in the 1980s, were taken over by the GRN after Independence and placed under the control of the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR). Mostly San and Damara live on these farms. (Farms such as Drimiopsis and Tsjaka/Ben Hur were inherited from the Tswana Legislative Authority after Independence in a similar way.) The San – as former farmworkers on the commercial farms acquired by the Damara or Tswana authorities prior to Independence – were allowed to stay on these farms as they had no other place to go to. As former farmworkers, the vast majority of the San had no livestock or other assets, and to make a living they undertook piecework for the new settlers. In many instances the socio-economic situation of the San has not changed much since that time; they still rely on piecework for other livestock farmers on a number of these resettlement farms.

The remainder of Box 4.1 summarises the situation at three resettlement farms – one of which was a research site for this study and two of which were not research sites: **Skoonheid** (covered in section 4.3.1), **Drimiopsis** and **Donkerbos-Sonneblom**.

Drimiopsis is located about 45 km north of Gobabis and covers around 2262 ha. After Independence the MLR took over the farm from the Tswana Legislative Authority and started to support the eight beneficiary households in 1993 – with the intention of accommodating more people as the GRN constructed about 60 houses there. By 2007 the Drimiopsis Resettlement Project had 82 households comprising 668 individuals (DRFN and FCEAR 2007: 10), and by 2010 there were 140 households comprising close to 830 individuals (Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 8), as new inhabitants continued to move in unchecked: "These illegal settlers interfere with the support programme to the extent of vandalizing the project properties." (GRN 2010: 54-55) The GRN report (2010) recommended that the MLR 'wean off' the farm after the expiry of the support contract with the DRFN and transfer it to the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing (MRLGH) (GRN 2010: 72).

Donkerbos-Sonneblom, located 230 km north-east of Gobabis, is a unique resettlement project as it was established in 1995 following efforts of the Mbanderu Traditional Authority and Mbanderu residents in the Rietfontein area to initiate the Omaheke San Community Project in 1993/94. The aim of this project was to resettle San from Omaheke Region on farm land in the Rietfontein area, and to provide financial assistance for infrastructure and livestock development to enable the San to become self-sufficient. Subsequently Headman E. Kahuure allocated close to 13 000 ha of communal land (farms 895 and 906) to the San. Thereafter, 43 households settled next to two boreholes drilled close to the Steenboklaagte *omuramba* in the north-western part of the project farm.

All three farms together currently accommodate approximately 1 300 people, the majority being San. However, due to a high influx of new inhabitants and the high fluctuation in the numbers of San moving in and out in the pursuit of employment, an exact estimate is difficult (Mouton 2013: 8).

The MLR initiated a post-resettlement support programme for these three and other resettlement projects in Omaheke in the early 1990s with the aim of empowering the new farmers to manage the land productively. A range of line ministries, donors and stakeholders have assisted the MLR with the support programme since its inception. As far as the GRN is concerned, the MLR caters for the maintenance and upgrading of farm infrastructure (such as water points and fences) with technical support from the MAWF Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC). The MAWF Department of Extension and Engineering Services (DEES) renders agricultural extension services to a few resettlement projects in addition to its work in the communal areas. The period of post-settlement support was originally defined as five years, whereafter the farms were supposed to work independently in a sustainable manner. However, the original goal could not be achieved due to a range of challenges, and only two of the 21 farms could be weaned off by 2009 (GRN 2010: 3). Various agencies (e.g. the Omaheke San Trust (OST), Health Unlimited, Catholic Aids Action, San Alive, Omba Arts Trust and the Centre for Research Information Action in Africa, Southern Africa - Development and Consulting (CRIAA SA-DC)) have at different stages implemented support at these three resettlement farms (and others) since the 1990s in areas such as human rights, HIV and AIDS awareness, home-based care, and craft production and marketing. Three group resettlement projects - i.e. Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom - still receive post-resettlement support today through Phase II of the Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP II) implemented by the DRFN and the Habitafrica Foundation, Spain, in partnership with the MLR and the Omaheke Regional Council. LISUP is an integrated rural development programme aimed at improving living conditions and food security in the resettlement projects by building capacity and developing skills. The first phase (LISUP I) ran from 2007 to 2010. At the end of LISUP I, beneficiaries at all three farms were still struggling with a range of livelihood issues, so a second phase was designed to ensure sustainable and integrated livelihoods. LISUP II is co-sponsored by the MLR and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID), with the DRFN and Habitafrica again providing technical support. LISUP II started in October 2010 and will end in March 2014 (DRFN 2010: 10-12).

The LISUP II mid-term evaluation report describes the impacts of the programme since 2010, and shows that the support for agricultural activities and capacity building contributed to improving livelihoods: "The project has been effective in strengthening technical knowledge and skills on sustainable (agricultural) practices through training, mentoring, monitoring and the provision of sufficient agricultural equipment and tools for beneficiaries." (Mouton 2013: 39)

LISUP II continued with initial efforts under LISUP I to change the approach from providing support on a collective basis to allocating support on an individual basis. In order to enhance sustainability and self-reliance, the focus was further shifted from providing infrastructural inputs to providing mentoring and capacity-building support. This shift appears to have resulted in stronger beneficiary involvement and ownership. However, the evaluation suggests that sufficient time has to be allowed for continued ownership development, as six years of project support proved insufficient to nurture a sense of ownership of 'one's own development' effectively (meaning the degree to which beneficiaries can manage the farms independently) (Mouton 2013: 69). Nonetheless, LISUP has been able to raise sincere interest in vegetable gardening among individual beneficiaries, resulting in advances in food security (Mouton 2013: 9, 39-40). LISUP II reports also underscore that 70% of households at both Drimiopsis and Skoonheid were able to consume three meals per day during the post-harvest season (May to August/September). During the dry season (September to November/December), 45% of households at these two projects could consume three meals per day (DRFN and Habitafrica 2013: 32, 76). Therefore, the evaluation suggests that continued capacity building for irrigated vegetable gardening could continue to advance food security.

However, challenges remain, since successful gardening is dependent on external environmental factors over which the beneficiaries have little control, such as rainfall and pests, as well as human factors such as attitudes and behaviour (e.g. unwillingness to pay for seeds and water), management capacity, and collaboration (e.g. irregular support by borehole caretakers). The evaluation shows that good governance and learning to manage shared land and water resources require adequate time to develop. Mismanagement of funds occasionally occurs, which leads to mistrust among community members as well as members of the development community. Resettled beneficiaries also do not constitute homogenous units, and local dynamics and power relations have to be taken into account – even if it might be time consuming to understand them. The influx of outsiders to the resettlement farms further weakens the coherence of the communities (Mouton 2013: 11).

The production and marketing of art and craft products help to supplement the few sources of cash income, as craft sales in the three LISUP II-supported projects increased to N\$158 000 in 2012 (Omba Arts Trust 2013: 5). In 2011, 7% of the heads of households on the three farms regarded arts and crafts as the main source of income for their households (Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 35). In addition, for 12% of households in Skoonheid and 34% of households in Donkerbos-Sonneblom, crafts constituted the most important secondary source of income. However, despite the positive impact of craft production, challenges were reported: a lack of understanding of trading and marketing processes due to a high illiteracy rate, and sometimes a lack of ownership of the activities in which they are engaged (Mouton 2013: 10).

For all three farms, the high influx of outsiders poses a serious risk to development, and the influx seems to go unchecked since the MLR is not taking a major decisive role. The influx increases the vulnerability of the San on the resettlement farms as resources have to be divided among a greater number of beneficiaries, overgrazing is taking place, etc. (Mouton 2013: 66).

Notwithstanding the challenges encountered, it is noteworthy that "[m]ost community members appreciate resettlement farms as the only way in which they can make a living, as they have nowhere else to go" (Mouton 2013: 70). They particularly appreciate that they have a place for themselves, where they can try making a living by means of small-scale farming with the support of LISUP II.



4.4.2 Food security

Number of meals per day and type of food consumed

The San communities visited in Omaheke had difficulty achieving a reasonable degree of food security. The majority of the people interviewed did not necessarily consume three meals a day, but the data indicates that the San living on resettlement farms had higher food security as they could rely on agriculture to some extent. There was a fair amount of seasonal variation in this regard: in the dry season many San households struggled to eat enough because little food was available from gardens or in the veld. At this time of the year many households consumed only one meal a day, and this was usually supplemented by tea with sugar several times a day. Only some families manage to retain some food for a second meal.

During summer, or the rainy season, the majority of San in Omaheke ate two or more meals a day. San residents of Kanaan (Epako) appear to be the exception as discussion participants said that they usually ate only once a day. A few San households in Kanaan managed to improve their food situation by cultivating home gardens on their erven or on the outer borders of Epako, with differing degrees of success: the soils were reportedly not very good, theft of crops was common, and some gardens were simply too small to support families over longer periods as the erven in Epako are not very large.

Importance / frequency	Skoonheid	Corridor 17-b	Corridor 13	Kanaan	Blouberg	Goreseb
Main source	Maize porridge	 Maize porridge Tea Potatoes 	Maize porridge	 Maize porridge Tea with sugar 	Maize porridge	Maize porridge
Secondary source	 Beans (cowpea) Fresh corn 	Beans (cowpea)	Tea with sugar	Milk or fat	Veldfood	Milk
Third source	 Tea with sugar Milk 	Fresh corn	Sour milk and vegetables (after pension payout)	Some meat	Soup or meat	Veldfood
Fourth source		Sometimes meat from small animals		Veldfood		Occasionally meat from small animals

Table 4.3: Main sources of staple food by research site in Omaheke Region, 2011/12

"Tea is the boss," said a man at Corridor 13 in discussing the most common types of food consumed by San in Omaheke. Others were of the opinion that maize porridge is the most common and most important type of food consumed in the Omaheke San communities. Table 4.3 shows that the type of food consumed by communities was not very diverse, e.g. tea with sugar was a source of food at four of the six sites. Maize porridge was often just prepared with water and salt as there was no relish of any kind available. Most of the time maize-meal was purchased with income from piecework or Old Age Pensions. Another important source of maize-meal was the government drought relief programme coordinated by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), through which food is distributed by the regional council in each region. San in Omaheke, however, underscored that drought relief arrived only once in a while, e.g. every three or four months rather than on a monthly basis. Other complaints regarding drought relief were that: the quantities of maize-meal did not suffice; the supply of cooking oil was not guaranteed; and the drought relief did not reach the intended beneficiaries, but sometimes ended up in the hands of intermediaries or wealthy people. The second and third most common types of food consumed by the San in Omaheke were beans (cowpea) and fresh corn respectively, especially in communities where households had access to rain-fed or irrigated gardens, but also tea as well as milk or fat from livestock. In a few communities (e.g. Blouberg and Skoonheid) veldfoods were important additions to the maize staple, but it was not always easy to obtain. The Jul'hoansi of Goreseb, for example, complained that they were forced to enter other people's farms to gather veldfood as more land in the vicinity of Goreseb came to be fenced off illegally. San in Kanaan apparently also collected veldfood on the boundary of Epako township or even on neighbouring farms. At a few research sites, soup or meat constituted only the third or fourth most important source of food (i.e. it took the form of relish) as it had to be purchased or traded for labour. At Blouberg and Corridor 13, some San occasionally obtained some *afval* (internal organs) if they assisted other farmers (Blouberg) or cuca shop owners (Corridor 13) with slaughtering animals.

At sites such as Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b where San are engaged in rain-fed and irrigated gardening with the support of the GRN and NGOs, the majority of households manage to consume two or three meals a day from the late summer season onwards.⁶ Of course the amount of fresh produce available for families is subject to the amount of rainfall during the rainy season, but following a reasonably good rainy season, maize porridge and tea may be complemented by fresh corn, cowpeas or other vegetables (e.g. spinach, melon, squash, butternut or pumpkin) for a period of three to four months after the harvesting season (i.e. up to July/August). As households also rationed the crops harvested, certain families managed to store (and consume) fresh corn for up to six to seven months after harvesting (i.e. up to October/November).7 Cowpea is usually sold off at an earlier stage because it gets more easily infested with bugs if stored in common maize-meal bags.8 In the late dry season (September to December), vegetables such as carrots, beetroot, onions and green peppers may be harvested from irrigated gardens.^{9, 10} The LISUP II annual report for 2012 underscored that in the post-harvest season at Drimiopsis and Skoonheid, 70% of the households are able to consume three or more meals a day, and in the dry season 45% of households at these sites could consume three meals a day (DRFN and Habitafrica 2013: 76). Therefore it may be concluded that the livelihood support received contributed to advances in the number of meals and the diversity of the food consumed by the beneficiary communities during an important part of the year.

Against this background it is regrettable to note that the future of support from Komeho Namibia for the gardening activities at Corridor 17-b and other communities in the Corridor area is not very clear, with potentially negative implications for the food security of the San families in question in the near future.

⁶ LISUP provides seeds for rain-fed and irrigated crop cultivation in Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Projects on a subsidised basis: beneficiaries need to contribute from 10% up to 33% of the value of seeds. Extension support is further provided to improve crop-management practices.

⁷ In 2012, Skoonheid's farmers complained of very limited rain-fed yields due to late rains, among other factors.

⁸ In 2013 LISUP II started to improve the storage capacity at household level to address some of the constraints encountered by beneficiary households with storing grains and pulses.

⁹ The cultivation of winter crops such as carrots, beetroot, spinach and onions is not as popular as planting corn, cowpea, pumpkin and melons under irrigation during the hot dry months (October/November) or in rain-fed and irrigated fields during the normal rainy season. Local customs as well as the effort needed to ensure that crops survive the colder winter months appear to play a role in this regard.

¹⁰ The San at Corridor 17-b complained that technical challenges and a lack of spare parts affected the distribution of water to their gardens during the winter (dry) season. A water-distribution schedule seemed to be lacking, resulting in a 'first come, first serve' culture, while the water point committee did not collect any household contributions for maintenance and repairs. The supply of seeds by Komeho Namibia to garden owners at Corridor 17-b and other San communities in the Corridor area was no longer guaranteed as the support seemed to have been discontinued.



In a few communities, discussion participants admitted that they still hunted for small game, such as hares, porcupines, duiker, steenbok and jackal, but stressed that they only consumed meat occasionally as it is difficult to hunt with traps. The quantity of small game was very limited at all but one of the six sites, the exception being Skoonheid. Participants at all six sites hesitated to discuss this matter with the researchers as hunting is no longer legal and people who are apprehended for hunting could face stiff sentences, especially if large game were involved. However, bushmeat was reportedly eaten relatively often at Skoonheid. Two to three households hunted on a regular basis and supplied the inhabitants of the resettlement farm with meat 'exchanged' for money. It was also possible to order game meat in advance, and the hunters would go and hunt for it. Warthog seemed to be the most common species hunted, together with small antelope and sometimes kudu too. In winter more species were hunted as it is easier to detect the animals. The bushmeat compensated for the veldfood that is not available in large quantities in winter.¹¹

4.4.3 Poverty and wellbeing

The data on poverty and wellbeing is based on criteria reported by discussion participants to the research team and therefore represents a subjective picture. Factors defining poverty and wellbeing – like social networks which can be activated in times of need – encompass more than measurable factors, but the indicators provided by the participants focused very much on measurable economic factors – the most visible and easiest factors to observe on the ground. Nevertheless, the discussions of these factors did allow for an assessment of the importance of other factors (e.g. social support networks in time of need), which are also reported on in this section on poverty and wellbeing.

Poverty was common among the San at all six research sites, and was most often associated with a dearth of meaningful employment opportunities in remote areas and the high degree of illiteracy among the San. When San found work, the remuneration was usually very low, and participants also complained that they often received information about potential employment opportunities too late. However, there were differences from site to site in the degree of deprivation suffered. To analyse the degree of wellbeing and social mobility, the San at each site identified three to five wellbeing groups in their own community, based on criteria that they chose themselves. The majority of San households (70% or more) at all six sites considered themselves to be 'poor' or 'very poor', and some households belonged to a 'halfway' or 'middle' group. Hardly any San families belong to the class referred to as 'better off' or 'moving forward', let alone to the 'wealthy' or 'middle-class' categories (see Table 4.4 on page 60).

¹¹ Information provided by Velina Ninkova.

Poverty and wellbeing in remote rural areas

In rural areas where people's livelihoods are informed by farming activities (Skoonheid, Corridor 17-b, Blouberg), the '**very poor**' in general lacked any assets; did not own any livestock or goats; did not cultivate gardens; and did not receive any assistance or support from extended family members. There was consequently a relatively high risk of these households going hungry from time to time, as was mentioned at Blouberg.

'**Poor**' people in rural locations are distinguished from the 'very poor' in their communities due to the fact that they cultivate irrigated and/or rain-fed gardens (i.e. at Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b) and they may own a small number of cattle (1-3 head) and/or a couple of goats. In Blouberg, however, 'poor' people did not have any cattle or goats, and could not afford to cultivate irrigated gardens as they would have to pay even more for water than they were already paying. A Blouberg household was basically categorised as 'poor' if a household member carried out piecework and if the family lived in a corrugated-iron dwelling.

The 'halfway' group of households in remote rural areas may be distinguished from the 'poor' group by the fact that at least one household member received a pension or another regular source of income. Consequently the households concerned were allowed to buy food from local shops on credit, or they opened a bank account to receive their pension. In contrast to Blouberg, where none of the 'halfway' households owned any livestock, at Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b some 'halfway' households managed to keep a small number of cattle or goats. It can therefore be concluded that due to the support rendered by government (MLR) and donors (AECID and NGSIP), the livelihood options for 'poor' and 'halfway' households have become more diversified. The receipt of the state Old Age Pension and other social welfare grants (e.g. the Maintenance Grant, the Foster Care Grant and the disability grants for adults and children), in the perception of discussion participants, also elevates a family to a higher standard of living or wellbeing.

Households in the 'better-off' or 'moving forward' category in rural remote locations tended to have a household member with a regular salaried job, often with the government. Alternatively, a household member would have found employment elsewhere and sent remittances back home. If a household was capable of investing in cattle or goats rather than receiving livestock from a donor-funded project, it was also considered to be 'moving forward'. The households concerned were also often considered to have animal husbandry skills: they were "good with livestock".

'Wealthy', 'middle-class' (in the sense that this word is normally understood) or 'rich' people could be found in remote rural San communities, albeit in small numbers. They tended to have well-built houses, operated a small business or shop, and may have had a car. They often had a household member with a government job, and owned lots of cattle, goats, chickens, donkeys and/or horses (i.e. more than 25-30 head cattle in addition to goats, donkeys and horses). This group was not identified at Corridor 17-b; at Blouberg it was identified, but only comprised non-San people; and at Skoonheid, three out of roughly 58 households were classified as 'rich' or 'wealthy'. Access to information and greater physical mobility were perceived as a characteristic of the 'rich' at Skoonheid.

Poverty and wellbeing in rural settlements and urban informal settings

In rural settlements and urban informal settlements, such as Corridor 13 and Kanaan (in Epako, Gobabis), poverty appears to have more severe dimensions than in rural areas, as the characteristics of the livelihoods of '**very poor**' reveal starvation and hunger, a lack of any sort of income, or a

reliance on running errands for owners of cuca shops. Other characteristics are a lack of shelter, a heavy reliance on drinking, and varying degrees of hopelessness and deprivation – to the extent that other San individuals allege or assume that some of the individuals concerned cannot refuse offers 'to share a blanket' in return for food or other privileges (e.g. this characterises the perception of the San of Corridor 17-b about very poor San at Corridor 13).

The **'poor**' at Corridor 13 and Kanaan, on the other hand, have at least one meal per day, which they obtain by looking in rubbish bins, and by cleaning the skins and intestines of slaughtered animals. "They clean intestines" for owners of cuca shops, but they do not have any regular type of work with a monthly salary, unlike domestic workers and farmworkers. Some people do casual work such as house cleaning, laundry and ironing, or looking after other people's goats. The 'poor' tend to live in houses made of plastic bags or other scrap material (Epako) or loam/clay (Corridor 13), rather than in corrugated-iron or zinc structures. The 'poor' cannot afford school fees for their children. Drinking out of hopelessness was also common in this category.

The livelihoods of the households in the 'halfway' and 'moving forward' categories at Corridor 13 and Kanaan were different from those of 'poor' households because household members had stopped drinking, had started listening to other people's advice, and had found a low-paid but regular job. Some households in this category also received a pension, whereas others got remittances from family members who worked elsewhere, which enabled them to buy groceries from local shops on credit. Those classified as 'moving forward' simply held jobs with more security than the jobs held by members of the 'halfway' class. In Kanaan, some households in this group had also taken the initiative of cultivating home gardens on their erven or on the boundaries of Epako.

As in some of the remote rural settings, 'wealthy' or 'rich' people in Kanaan were usually non-San. According to the San, they owned well-built houses, worked for the municipality, owned land or an erf, and often owned a car and cattle. At Corridor 13 participants listed the same criteria, the difference being that only a few wealthy San households had a car, but nearly all had a TV. Some lived in a Build Together (national housing programme) house.

The research team did not cover the analysis of poverty and wellbeing in Goreseb near Otjinene as the team aimed to investigate farmworker issues in this community.



Table 4.4: Characteristics of wellbeing categories by research site as defined by discussionparticipants, Omaheke Region, 2011/12

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Wellbeing category	Skoonheid	Corridor 17-b	Corridor 13	Blouberg	Kanaan			
Very poor or "Very weak life"	 Lack assets No livestock No support from children or extended family No gardens 		 Eat once a day or not at all Run errands for cuca shops Drink tombo (home-brewed beer) or eat leftovers from other people Lack a dwelling/ shelter Sleep elsewhere 	 Lack assets Lack any income Are hungry 	 Lack food Go hungry or starve Lack drought relief Heavy drinking 			
Poor or "Weak life"	 Own very few livestock (cattle or goats) Some get a pension Some have many children Have a garden 	 No livestock No goats or only very few goats Garden only 	 Casual work for other people, such as: domestic work goat herding cleaning skins or intestines One meal per day and lots of tea Loam/clay houses 	 No livestock (cattle or goats) Zinc houses Irregular income (piecework) 	 One meal per day Cannot afford school fees Plastic/scrap houses Food from rubbish bins No work Drink out of hopelessness 			
Halfway group	 Have cattle, goats and chickens Get a pension Have some savings or a bank account Have donkeys and/or carts 	 Same as the poor above, but: get a pension and some have a few goats 	 Casual work for other people, such as: domestic work goat herding cleaning skins or intestines Elderly receive pension Can buy food on credit Loam/clay houses 	Have a monthly salary or many goats (>50)	 Same as the poor but stopped drinking Found a job Family support Started listening to other people's advice 			
Better off or "Moving forward"	 Lots of cattle and goats, which they bought Good with livestock Donkey-carts Household member has a job Can stand on own feet 	 Household member has a government job Remittances from household or extended family Some have more goats 	• Have government jobs		 Found a low-paid job Have a garden 			
Wealthy / stable / rich / middle class	 Lots of goats and horses Run local cuca shops or other businesses or have a job (salary) Some own a vehicle, so are mobile Access to information 		 Have jobs Have livestock Have Build Together houses Have a TV Few own a car 	 Own cattle, goats and sheep Well-built house Can look after themselves Never hungry All households in this group are non-San 	 Work for municipality Brick house Own land or an erf Car Cattle Only non-San people 			

Comparisons of the wellbeing of the San and neighbouring communities

Participants in the discussions with the researchers also compared the degree of wellbeing in their communities with the quality of life in neighbouring communities. The following points summarise the findings for Corridor 17-b and Skoonheid only, as similar comparisons were not made at the other research sites due to time constraints.

The San at both Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b thought that the quality of life of farmers at neighbouring cattle posts and in neighbouring communities was better than their own. Most of those farmers were Herero or Kgalagadi people, and they managed to keep sheep, goats and cattle and to employ San as farmworkers. Their San workers were usually paid in kind (with food), or they received a little money and were allowed to eat with the farm owner's family. It should be pointed out that these situations were not necessarily seen as exploitative, as the two groups (the farmer and his workers) "helped each other". In line with these statements, the San at Corridor 17-b were of the opinion that the quality of life at Corridor 17-a and Corridor 20 was better than in their own community (i.e. Corridor 17-b). Similarly, the people of Skoonheid felt that farmers at Epukiro RC, Rooibult, Rosenhof and the outer cattle posts of Skoonheid all had a better quality of life than the richest people of Skoonheid Resettlement Project, as they had their own cattle posts with lots of cattle which they were sometimes able to sell. Furthermore, they owned cars and they allegedly worked harder than the San in Skoonheid.

In addition, it is notable that the San at Corridor 17-b and Skoonheid considered the quality of life of fellow San living in rural settlements and urban informal settlements, such as Corridor 13 and Epako, to be worse than their own. The San at Corridor 17-b seemed to look down on the majority of the San at Corridor 13, who, according to them, existed only as water carriers for the local cuca shops in return for *tombo* (home-brewed beer). Allegedly these people did not have any shelter and were often sick (suffering from TB or HIV/AIDS). Similarly, the Ju]'hoansi at Skoonheid were of the opinion that the San living in Epako were the most poor and most vulnerable in Omaheke Region because they usually drank a lot and didn't do anything to support themselves. It may tentatively be concluded that the perceptions of the San living in remote rural areas about the more urban San seem to be informed by a negative picture of the most destitute people in the informal settlements of Kanaan (Epako) and Corridor 13.¹²

4.4.4 Social mobility

According to the San who were consulted for the study in Omaheke Region, it is possible to move ahead in life and to become wealthier, even though it is considered difficult. Discussion participants identified certain factors as being responsible for upward social mobility. In order to attain a better quality of life, they stated that San needed to do the following:

¹² There is a general tendency among San at many of the research sites in Omaheke and elsewhere in Namibia to claim that everyone else is better off than the San. According to Velina Ninkova, the Jul'hoansi at Skoonheid have said that the San residents of Epako have a better life than those of Skoonheid because they are close to town and have access to goods and services that are lacking at Skoonheid. At the same time, they often pity those in Epako for the poor conditions in which they live. They reportedly also said that the San in Botswana are better off, as are the San in the north (Tsumkwe) and in the Corridor area in southern Omaheke. These comparisons might have to do with the fact that they talk to outsiders whom they perceive as potential helpers, and/or the fact that individuals don't want their wider community to perceive them as too well off on a personal level, thus they transfer this attitude to the whole group.

- Stop drinking and smoking.
- Get an education.
- Get a job, work hard and save money.
- Receive or buy livestock and use it wisely (meaning that the animals should not be slaughtered off for consumption).
- Have children who get an education, work hard and thereafter support the family or at least their parents.
- Earn some extra income by making crafts although Ju|'hoansi at Skoonheid said that this no longer improved their quality of life, but only provided a small buffer which allowed them to retain the quality of life thus far achieved.
- Cultivate gardens, as these provided food for the family at certain times of the year, and if the harvest was decent, then they could also sell some food to make a little income.

However, according to participants, it was far easier to become more vulnerable and poorer in life than to become wealthier. They identified certain conditions that could place a family at risk of becoming poorer:

- Having many children or grandchildren to look after, especially given the costs involved in the education of children.
- Having a poor health status and/or the death (of a breadwinner) in the family, as both could lead to debts.
- A shortage of manpower in the household, so not enough work could be carried out on time.
- The impact of seasonal variations and droughts.
- A lack of ownership in respect of cattle or goats donated by the government. This constrained people's efforts to move ahead in life as they first had to pay off their debt to the government's revolving scheme (one calf or goat for each cow or goat received from the donor) before they were allowed to make money by selling cattle or goats to third parties themselves.¹³
- Possessing only limited farming skills.
- Not knowing how to save money.
- Experiencing a loss of hope, drinking and abusing alcohol.
- Physical abuse by other people, e.g. after disagreements over pay for farmwork or casual labour.

Farmworkers whose salaries were reduced by deductions to cover the costs of the food, wood or power that they consumed were also at risk of becoming much poorer, as their salaries diminished more and more. They could then end up feeling that their work was useless, which could result in a decision to leave the job altogether, and they would then be forced to rely on piecework at cuca shops. Participants stated that farmworkers with little or no education were especially susceptible to such circumstances.

Similarly, San who had recently been employed in entry-level positions in the civil service (such as the police force and school hostels) were sometimes vulnerable, as they might not be used to the demands of a regular job. They might feel that they were being bossed around or even discriminated against, as they were not necessarily used to being told what to do on a daily basis. This could cause stress, and the individual concerned might leave the job for a week or two and then return to work, with negative consequences. In other instances a person might not return to work at all, or might lose the job after recurring absences without leave.

¹³ In situations where group resettlement projects are overstocked and rangeland conditions are poor, such guidelines meant that the livestock (cattle and small stock) populations increased rather slowly and thus delivered hardly any tangible benefits for livelihoods of the project beneficiaries.

4.4.5 Alcohol, drugs and violence

Alcohol and drugs were considered a major concern at most of the Omaheke research sites. Stories and statements across this region underscored that drugs and alcohol had had a significant negative influence on the standard of living of the San. Participants at Blouberg related that the little money that San earned was often used to buy alcohol in the local shops, rather than food. At Skoonheid participants said, "Tombo and wine run like honey," and a much-used phrase at both Corridor 17-b and Corridor 13 was, "They are in the beer." This statement referred to San who had left their farms to go to Post 13 and lived around the cuca shops. Many of the individuals concerned had turned into homeless beggars, who were prepared 'to share a blanket' for food or money, and many had given up all hope after encountering problems and setbacks in life. Drugs were also having an increasingly bad influence on some communities. A person at Skoonheid said, "Dagga roams around like a lion." The abuse of alcohol and drugs caused domestic violence, including rape, and could also lead to deaths in San communities. The community of Skoonheid had recently been disturbed by a case of a man who had raped and stabbed his spouse when he was under the influence of alcohol. When he was reported to the police, he had threatened those who had reported him.

In contrast to some of the people affected, certain participants in the research discussions described how they had found the willpower to choose differently: "I have decided not to drink any beer, but to make crafts. In that way I can maybe earn about N\$500 a month. I will not throw my house away." Similarly, some individuals said that they did not understand why people wanted to continue using alcohol or drugs: "When you drink, you cannot improve your life."

Therefore, a few San communities, such as those of Skoonheid and Donkerbos-Sonneblom, had decided that alcohol should no longer be sold in their community. But banning alcohol does not necessarily prevent community members from drinking, as alcohol is occasionally sold by outsiders in the very communities that banned its sale, and community members may still choose to drink outside the community or brew their own beer illegally. Still, in remote communities the decision to ban the sale of alcohol locally may still have some merit as the ban limits the opportunities for San to drink on a regular basis. However, a decision to ban the sale of alcohol on a farm or in a community requires the support of people of other language groups who live or work there: because money is made from the sale of alcohol, agreements to ban alcohol in a community may not be reached easily, or may be circumvented by those who want to make money from vulnerable people.

4.4.6 Social support networks

Generally, to address some of the adverse conditions described in the previous two subsections, San individuals sought assistance from each other – and especially from family members or friends – in situations where they were short of food or had some other pressing need.

It was also very common for them to help each other when someone had fallen seriously ill and when a person had died. The government renders financial assistance to the families of formally registered pensioners who have passed away, but when a younger person dies, and the government cannot assist, the family and community members were usually expected to assist with covering the costs of the burial. The assistance of churches is generally limited to spiritual support, benediction and some help with the burial. Given that many San have limited means, bodies may sometimes remain in the morgue for several months before the descendants and family members have the money to arrange for a coffin, transport and a burial.

However, the traditional authority in southern Omaheke had received some government funds to assist San families with the burial of deceased family members when such families did not own anything and were without any source of income. The budget catered for approximately N\$4000 per deceased person to cover costs of the morgue, the cleaning and preparation of the body, the coffin, transport and the burial. But in many cases the amount provided was inadequate to cover all these expenses, and family and community members would also be expected to pay for food during a funeral.

4.4.7 Education

Many elderly San had hardly received any education and were illiterate. San at several Omaheke research sites stated that times have changed; they emphasised that nowadays, having an education is very important for achieving a better standard of living. At school, San children are expected to learn to speak proper English, and to acquire certain vocational skills, such sewing or brickmaking skills. School also occupies the children's time, reducing boredom and potential social concerns. The following subsections describe the educational backgrounds of elderly and younger San in Omaheke.

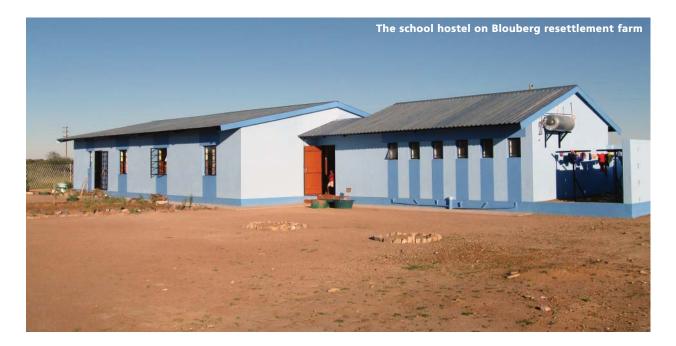
Educational background

Educational backgrounds were evaluated in detail with discussion participants in Goreseb and with a group of women at Skoonheid. Due to time constraints the research team could not cover the educational backgrounds of all participants in the research discussions, and of their children, elaborately at all sites. To address this shortcoming, this section on education also refers to information gathered in the *2011 LISUP Baseline Survey*. In Skoonheid only three women in the discussion group had attended school, and they had completed only grades 2, 3 and 4 respectively. None of the other women who took part in this discussion had received any education. This information is substantiated by the *2011 LISUP Baseline Survey* carried out in Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom in 2011. This study underlined that the majority of the heads of households in the three projects did not have any form of formal education (see Table 4.5). There were hardly any major differences in this pattern if gender factors were taken into consideration, as 67% of both the male- and female-headed households had not received any form of education (Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 15).

Level of education	Drimiopsis		Skoonheid		Donkerbos- Sonneblom		Grand total	
education	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No education	79	62%	44	76%	23	72%	146	67%
Lower primary	15	12%	5	8%	1	3%	21	10%
Upper primary	16	13%	5	9%	4	13%	25	11%
Junior secondary	12	9%	2	4%	2	6%	16	7%
Senior secondary	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%
Adult literacy	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%	2	1%
Missing data	4	3%	2	3%	0	0%	6	3%
Grand total	128	101%	58	100%	32	100%	218	100%

Table 4.5: Educational background of the head of household by resettlement project, 2011

Source: Dirkx and Alweendo 2012: 15.



The prevailing levels of education of household heads were associated with high degrees of illiteracy: in the three resettlement projects concerned, only 19% of the household heads could read and write, and another 6% could read but not write. This implies that 75% of the household heads were fully illiterate. Skoonheid had the highest percentage (86%) of illiterate household heads. In terms of gender, the proportion of female household heads who were illiterate was higher than the proportion of males (78% and 71% respectively) (Dirkx, Alweendo 2012: 16).

Of the literate household heads, 50% are literate in Afrikaans and 5% are literate in English. Two percent are literate in Damara/Nama and another 2% in a San language. Twenty-four percent did not mention what language they are literate in.

In Goreseb village, where 16 men and women in total participated in a discussion on their educational backgrounds and those of their children, the picture was not very different. What is worrying from the pattern depicted in Table 4.6 is that many San children still did not attend school: in a rural setting like Goreseb only 43% of children attended school, whereas 34% of the San children did not attend school at the time of the research, or had never attended school. In addition, nearly a quarter of San children had dropped out of school long before reaching Grade 10, let alone Grade 12, and many of the parents could not explain why this had happened. Since relatively few San children had managed to complete secondary school, the importance that San parents ascribed to education did not seem to have had repercussions, in practical terms, for their children.

	Number of adults	Number of adults who had not attended school	Number of adults who had received some education	Combined number of children	Number of children who do go to school	Number of children who do not go to school	Number of children who had dropped out
Men	6	4	2	8	1	7	0
Women	10	9	1	36	18	8	10
Total	16	13	3	44	19	15	10
Percentage	100%	81%	19%	100%	43%	34%	23%

Table 4.6: Educational attainment of San parents and their children in Goreseb, Otjinene, 2012

Box 4.2: Gqaina Primary School in Omaheke Region By Velina Ninkova

The necessity of a school for meeting the educational needs of the large population of children of Jul'hoan farmworkers in Omaheke Region was the driving force behind the establishment of Gqaina Primary School. A small site was set aside on Farm Ramba, and in 1981 the school opened its doors for its first batch of Jul'hoan learners, numbering 49. There were no classrooms, blackboards or desks, but only the sand to write in, and a few magazines to look at, all set up under a big tree. This gave the schooling project its name, Gqaina, meaning 'big tree' in Jul'hoansi. After 10 years, the farm on which the school was established withdrew from the initiative, and in November 1990 the school was closed down.

The history of the New Gqaina, as the school is sometimes referred to today, started in November 1991 with the establishment of the Gqaina Trust, which initially comprised some commercial farmers and later the government as well. Immediately after Independence, the trust managed successfully to establish contacts with donors from Germany, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. A new site was secured on Farm Du Plessis (100 km north of Gobabis), and in 1993 the school reopened for 132 learners in Grades 1-3. Since the school did not have enough children in Grade 3, Herero children were also admitted. In 1997 the school started its pre-school class and expanded to Grade 5. But then, in the same year, the farm on which the school was situated was sold to the government, which resulted in the withdrawal from the school of many Ju|'hoan children whose parents had lived on the farm. After being appropriated by the government, Farm Du Plessis was populated with Damara people whose children were also enrolled in the school, which more or less resulted in the learners' composition found today. In 2001 the school expanded to Grade 7, and as of the 2013 school year, the school has a total of 359 learners, 172 of whom are San, most of whom come from neighbouring commercial farms, Farm Du Plessis and the Skoonheid Resettlement Project.

Gqaina is the only school in Omaheke Region offering mother-tongue instruction in a San language. The language spoken by the Ju|'hoansi was introduced as a medium of instruction in 1996 when a local farmer's wife, Mrs Labuschagne, a fluent speaker of the Ju|'hoan dialect, joined the school staff. Since there were no materials developed, Ju|'hoansi was first introduced as just a language subject, and only in 2001 did the school have its first Grade 1 class taught entirely in Ju|'hoansi. Mrs Labuschagne retired in 2007 and today the school has only one teacher fluent in Ju|'hoansi, therefore mother-tongue instruction is again restricted; it is taught only as a subject, and only in Grades 2 and 3. The National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) is currently working to translate and adapt materials for Grade 4, but the lack of qualified Ju|'hoansi-speaking teachers is hindering the full implementation of the language across all grades in the school.

Mother-tongue instruction in a San language has been one of the most characteristic features of the school. Despite the fact that English has become the main language of instruction in Namibia in formal education since Independence, and despite the limited hours of Ju|'hoan classes offered in the school, most ex-learners who are in their early adolescence now can still read and write in Ju.

The school has attributed its success in retaining a large percentage of its learners (more than 95%) to a set of factors apart from its Jul'hoan classes. The two most critical periods for Gqaina learners are when they first come to school in pre-school or Grade 1, and when they graduate to Grade 8 and transition to secondary schools. The pre-school class has made a considerable difference in this respect, and since its introduction in 1997 it has successfully worked to enable a smoother transition of children from their home environment to a school setting. During their pre-school year, children familiarise themselves with the school rules, learn basic literacy and numeracy skills, learn to respond to and use their official non-San names, and get accustomed to a new daily schedule. The pre-school caregiver, who has worked at the school since its establishment, despite not being of Jul'hoan origin herself, is fluent in the language and communicates freely with the new learners.

Another characteristic feature of the school is its good infrastructure. Classrooms and hostels are well equipped, and teachers readily report that the school trust provides for their teaching needs with whatever materials they may require. Jul'hoansi-speaking hostel and kitchen personnel are also present on site, thus providing a tolerant atmosphere for the learners in their off-school hours. The school environment is very secure and children feel safe in the hostels at night.

Grade 7, however, being the last year of (upper) primary school, marks the end of the educational career of many learners, despite the school's best efforts to guide learners in their choice of secondary school as well as provide financial support for ex-Gqaina learners. Although most children enrol in secondary schools, a large number of them drop out during the first year, with data showing that girls are more vulnerable than boys, and are more likely to drop out during the first year of secondary school. Various factors contribute to this tendency, including a poor economic standing, social stigma, an insecure school environment, remoteness from home and a number of cultural differences. The fact that the majority of Ju|'hoan learners to date have not completed their secondary education can be attributed to these factors primarily.

Another major difficulty reported by the school is the lack of involvement by most Jul'hoan parents. Parents are often described as being disinterested in their children's schooling, and thus unwilling to spend the little money they may have on their children's education. Parents, for their part, report feeling uneasy when at the school site due to their socio-cultural background. They have asked for more culturally sensitive materials to be incorporated into the curriculum, with an emphasis on traditional Jul'hoan practices and values. It must also be noted here that with time, a larger number of parents have come to be involved in their children's education, mostly because of the current mass enrolment of Jul'hoan children in the primary school. In sum, this school is a good example of a successful educational practice for educationally marginalised children.



Constraints in education of the San

Discussions in the various San communities underlined that elderly San had not gone to school because their parents had not necessarily recognised the importance of getting an education. Instead, they would have been sent out to work at a relatively young age, as money was needed to survive in a society that became increasingly determined by the demands of communal and commercial farming, and offered less and less scope for a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle. Furthermore, the nomadic lifestyle and traditional dress of the San had a negative impact on school attendance, in that the wearing of traditional clothing had prevented children from fitting into a school environment that required a school uniform.

Box 4.3: The educational background of Frans Kiewiet

Frans Kiewiet (19) originally came from Drimiopsis. He had attended primary school at Hippo Farm and subsequently went to Isaac Bays Secondary School for Grades 8-10. He had just completed senior secondary school at Wennie Du Plessis High School in Gobabis, and stated that he had succeeded thanks to the support and motivation given by his parents. The farmer at Hippo Farm had assisted him with transport during his time at Isaac Bays Secondary School. When he was in Grade 10 he had wanted to be a doctor, but he needed 27 points to get into the Grade 11 trajectory that would have allowed him to study Mathematics and Biology. Since he passed Grade 10 with only 25 points, he was compelled to take Development Studies and Geography instead. Unfortunately his marks in Grade 12, i.e. a mere 13 points for his subjects, did not allow him to register at the University of Namibia or any other tertiary institution. Now he is interested in getting an opportunity for further training at a Community Skills Development Centre (COSDEC) or with !Khwa ttu (the San Cultural and Educational Centre in South Africa) in order to find work later. His schoolmates who had also failed Grade 12 had already started looking for jobs on farms around Gobabis and in town. Frans explained that he would have liked to learn hunting skills, as this was part of his tradition, but the elders did not want to teach these skills any longer and anyway there is no land on which to hunt.

Younger San attending school today are still at a high risk of dropping out before reaching Grade 10 or Grade 12 (as the previous subsection conveyed). There are several reasons for the lack of progress of San children in Namibia's education system. Firstly, among the families who participated in the research discussions, financial constraints played a major role, due to the absence of decent living wages for farmworkers, or because the families' subsistence-orientated livelihoods were not sufficiently rewarding, so they were unable to cover the costs associated with schooling (e.g. hostel fees, books and stationery, school uniforms, and the toiletries, blankets and mattresses needed in hostels). Another major constraint was the distance to school, or the absence of a school in the village where a family lived at the time that the children had to be enrolled in school. Many learners in Omaheke had to travel 30-70 km to reach their schools, and hitching a ride on the main roads required a financial contribution, or parents had to do some casual work in return for a child's ride. This led to learners returning to school late after school holidays and long weekends. To address this issue the OPM recently decided to reimburse private people for bringing San learners to their schools.

San children living with their parents on commercial farms were in a vulnerable position due to their dependency on the farm owner for transport to schools/hostels, but also due to their parents' financial dependency on their employers. Some farm owners demanded that San children leave school early in order to work on the farm.¹⁴

Box 4.4: Short-term vocational training for San youth at COSDEC in Gobabis

In 2012, 10 San youth (three boys and seven girls) were enrolled in a training programme of the MYNSSC targeting San youth at the COSDEC in Gobabis. They received training in brickmaking and carpentry. The youth stated that they appreciated the opportunity to participate in vocational courses that targeted the San specifically, because they felt better when they were (trained) among themselves. The youth were very enthusiastic because this opportunity gave them a chance to learn to make something tangible with their hands. They also expected that they would now be able to get jobs more easily.

¹⁴ Information provided by Velina Ninkova.

Jul'hoan participants in a brickmaking project run by the COSDEC in Gobabis



The cultural background and languages of the San constitute other barriers to San children's progress in education, as an interview with the school principal in Corridor 13 underscored. She explained that the high mobility that the San had to develop in order to be able to secure employment still affected the education of San learners to a certain extent as their parents moved around to look for work. They usually took the whole family along with them, including children who were enrolled in school. As a result, children suffered gaps in their education during the school year, and sometimes dropped out completely. In addition, San learners in Omaheke are often taught in other languages (e.g. Setswana and Otjiherero) due to the lack of mother-tongue teachers in various San languages. As a result, many San learners struggle with languages and with education in general.

The change from primary school to a more remote secondary school – often located more than 100 km from home – was detrimental to the educational progress of many San children, as they encountered an unknown environment with hardly any parental guidance or other relatives to support them. The hostels could constitute a strange and harsh environment, and all the more so when parents did not have the means to support their children by providing toiletries and other personal necessities. Bullying and theft of personal belongings by non-San children, especially in secondary school hostels, tended to affect San children, who appeared to experience this quite regularly. Reportedly some San children also got discouraged when their classmates performed better in school. The vulnerability of San learners was exacerbated by a lack of understanding on the part of parents and guardians regarding what exactly was involved in getting a good education. San parents seemed to recognise in principle the importance of having an education, but not having had one themselves, they found it difficult to understand what difficulties their children might experience in, for example, Mathematics or Life Science. The drinking habits of parents may have further compounded the lack of encouragement faced by San children.

There were also substantial differences in the views of educators and San parents regarding what constitutes parental support, and what was needed from learners and parents in order to realise it. As San parents did not necessarily contribute in any of the expected ways, educators often had the impression that San parents were not sufficiently involved in the education of their children, or that they were not interested in the development of both the school and their children. San, on the other hand, explained that the teachers were aware of the fact that they had very little means and could not always afford the contributions expected. As a consequence they found it difficult to understand why the teachers continued asking for money for uniforms, cutlery, mattresses and toiletries. As one participant stated, "They are crying over money that we do not have." What was apparent was that principals and teachers may be lenient with the San parents in practice when it comes to fulfilling their obligations to contribute (parents in Blouberg admitted as much), but the day-to-day verbal and written requests they nevertheless received seemingly had a negative impact on the parents and contributed to a frustrating partnership between them and the local teachers (and likely contributed to misunderstandings and school dropout).

Box 4.5: San street children in Gobabis

Authorities in Gobabis shared with the researchers their concerns about the large number of San children who lived on the streets of the town, begging for money or food. The children were forced onto the street because their parents were unemployed and were compelled to beg for money from tourists. The children might bring in N\$10 or N\$20 on average per day, so they became a source of income for their parents. Interviews with street children themselves underscored that their daily takings ranged from N\$5 to N\$50 (if they were lucky). They used the income to buy food and water, which they took home to their parents. The children stated that they themselves did not spend the money on alcohol, but their parents allegedly did. A community worker who looked after the needs of some street children said that the children sometimes bought glue to sniff. An official from the municipality explained that even though a committee had been established to deal with the plight of the street children in Gobabis, it was difficult to address their needs given that the children and their parents hoped for support in the form of money, whereas the committee's support was focused on getting and keeping the children enrolled in school.

Finally, gender factors have affected the educational progress of some female San learners who entered sexual relationships at a relatively early age and got pregnant and/or dropped out of school before finishing their secondary schooling. Adolescent girls and young women were thus prone to ending their education early and losing any prospects for the future – not necessarily because of teachers' discrimination or that of other learners but because they were more interested in having boyfriends or sugar daddies who could give them toiletries and other goods that their parents could not afford. All of this could lead to teenage pregnancies, which usually had negative implications for finishing school. Adolescent girls who dropped out effectively diminished their own prospects of a better standard of living in the future, and therefore basically inherited the same poverty faced by their parents and grandparents – as, indeed, did their male fellow dropouts.

4.4.8 Political participation and representation

Consultation with central government and national organisations

The communities studied were consulted by officials from central government to different degrees. Community members acknowledged visits by officials of the OPM's SDP, and generally appreciated

the donations of blankets or mattresses, or the support for revolving goat schemes (e.g. at Corridor 17-b). At Blouberg the San recognised that the OPM had ensured that the community hostel was upgraded, and they were also receiving government support, but they had mixed feelings about the fact that they were now being asked to contribute hostel fees. Residents of Corridor 13 and Blouberg were grateful that the OPM had discussed their problems concerning access to land, giving some San the impression that they might be resettled. Other San were appreciative that the government was looking into the matter of theft at Corridor 13.

An illustrative example of the consultations undertaken by central government with San communities was the campaign through Omaheke initiated by the OPM's SDP in May 2013 to celebrate the start of NGSIP-funded projects for San communities of, for example, Aminuis, the Corridor area, Donkerbos-Sonneblom, Epukiro Post 3, Eiseb and Otjinene. These projects include the construction of school hostels and extra classrooms, the development of water infrastructure, and donations of cattle or small stock through revolving schemes. The projects may have substantial impacts for San livelihoods and for the educational facilities in San communities, provided that: (a) there is sufficient assistance and training for the recipient communities after the projects commence; and (b) the nature, intensity and duration of support to recipient communities are set out clearly. The start of such projects is usually accompanied by a lot of publicity and public speeches to the beneficiary communities, characterised by well-meant (but often paternalistic) advice about the changes expected in the attitude and behaviour of San which would render them citizens who can fully participate in, and benefit from, Namibian society, but the question of whether such messages always reach the intended recipients or get lost in translation has yet to be answered with regard to these projects.

The San at Corridor 13 also remembered being trained by the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC – based in Windhoek) on the rights of indigenous people. Other San residents of the Corridor area thought that national (and regional) San support organisations, such as WIMSA and the OST, were no longer very beneficial as they hardly appeared to visit their area.

Consultation and representation at regional level

When evaluating their consultations with authorities at regional level, people in the communities studied mostly talked of the regional councillors, but did not generally mention officials of line ministries. At Skoonheid, for example, participants recounted that in 2009 the regional councillor had set up a livestock committee for managing the cattle donated by NGSIP. At Blouberg the San stated that the regional councillor was very active in their community, although certain meetings specifically targeted wealthier livestock farmers. In short, many communities visited considered regional councillors to be important. Discussion participants at all six research sites emphasised that government officials listened to San community members and the San representatives, but that this did not necessarily imply that their concerns were taken into consideration sufficiently. Some San felt that they were consulted merely at election time, whereafter the officials would not return for a long time, and for this reason they felt that the San were not heard.

Staff of LISUP II have recently made efforts to strengthen relations between local (San) committees and the Kalahari, Steinhausen and Otjombinde Constituency Development Committees (CDCs). In 2012 the DRFN, the MLR and the regional councillor joined forces when a farm management committee was re-elected at Skoonheid. Thenceforth the farm management committee could serve as the village development committee in the regional decentralisation structures. Similar linkages between the farm management committees of Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom and their respective CDCs (Kalahari and Otjombinde) have been realised. In principle this means that opportunities for participation of the San in decision making at constituency level have been created. The next step is to make this a reality and to overcome practical challenges such as holding CDC meetings regularly and offering transport between the farm and the constituency office.

Representation by San traditional authorities (TAs)

TA structures in Omaheke Region and their impact

In historical times, before San began working for the white farmers, the Jul'hoansi of the Omaheke area were living in small family groups in the bush and still hunting, each group having its own leader, called *||'aiha* (see subsection 4.4.13 on culture and identity). The traditional leadership structures of the San disappeared when the white farmers came and took the land. The Jul'hoansi were then under the de facto authority of the white farmers, a relationship later enshrined through national legislation. Soon after Independence, most of the San of Omaheke – especially those who were not employed by communal or commercial farmers and did not have access to communal land of their own – were resettled by the government on resettlement farms. In 1996, the resettled Jul'hoansi of Omaheke elected Frederik Langman as their chief, but it was only in 2009 that the government formally recognised him as chief. Chief Sofia Jakob of the !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha San was elected in 2003 and recognised in 2009. Relatively elaborate structures have been established for their respective TAs in northern and southern Omaheke. The !Xoon TA in southern Omaheke, for example, has 12 councillors (six senior and six junior) serving Blouberg, Tsjaka/Ben Hur, Omukara, Aminuis, and Corridors 10, 13, 15, 17-b, 18 and 21, and Chief Langman has councillors serving Rietfontein, Otjinene, Eiseb, Epukiro Post 3 and some other areas where Jul'hoansi live.

Chief Langman was of the opinion that the TAs have to play a role in keeping San traditions and languages alive: "If you can't talk in your language, if you only speak other languages, you cannot know your tradition. We make sure that other people don't come and tell us what we have to do." He explained that the responsibility of TAs and their councillors was to listen to people's problems, communicate decisions taken by the TA council, and acquire an understanding of what the San wanted to do for their own development, so that this could be brought to the attention of the relevant authorities.

Both Chief Langman and Chief Sofia (as she is popularly known) acknowledged that the government had been listening to them since their recognition. But, Chief Langman added that language barriers influenced the interaction with high-level officials, and so, inasmuch as officials listened, San concerns were not necessarily taken into consideration or addressed.¹⁵



¹⁵ Chief Langman believes that he has less leverage than Chief Sofia has with the constituency councillor and the governor. It is not clear whether the fact that he is not a SWAPO member has an effect on his perceived lack of influence. Chief Langman himself blamed it on the fact that he cannot speak Otjiherero, whereas Chief Sofia can, with the result, he claimed, that he had less access to the officials concerned. In particular he mentioned that the governor did not agree that central government officials needed to be convinced that the farmers on the outer cattle posts at Skoonheid had to be resettled so as to render the whole Skoonheid farm available for the people living on the Skoonheid Resettlement Project site.

He also felt that the OPM had paid more attention to the needs of the Ju|'hoansi at Skoonheid when Dr Libertina Amathila was the deputy prime minister, whereas few officials had come to Skoonheid since she left office. Chief Sofia was more positive; she felt that when San chiefs requested support from the government, they no longer returned to their communities empty-handed. As a result, some positive developments had come to San in the Corridor area, for example: the DWSSC assisted with repairs to the borehole at Corridor 17-b; five San persons benefited from the Build Together programme at Corridor 13; San parents at Corridor 13 no longer had to pay school fees;¹⁶ school dropouts were allowed to resume their education if they wanted to; and 21 San of the Corridor area had found employment in local school hostels and the Namibian Police. The examples shared by Chief Sofia underscored that improved access to government services (e.g. in the education, health and water sectors), shelter for San families and employment of San persons are important for the San TAs, whereas productive development projects which are implemented and sustained by San communities do not necessarily enjoy similar attention from the TAs.

San perceptions of the support received from San TAs and its impact

The formal recognition of the two chiefs as leaders of their respective TAs was welcomed by the Ju|'hoansi in northern Omaheke – who nowadays are also called $\frac{4Kao}{aesi}$ ('People from the North') – and the !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha in southern Omaheke. San at Corridor 13 reported that the OPM now listens to the TA in southern Omaheke. People in Kanaan (Epako, Gobabis) were also positive about Chief Langman, stating that he regularly visits the informal settlement.¹⁷ Notwithstanding positive feedback and impressions of the TAs and the two chiefs, the following concerns, issues and challenges were raised by San participants in the discussions at different research sites, and by some of the TA councillors interviewed:

- Some communities did not feel represented by their respective chiefs because the chiefs hardly ever visited them.
- The relationship between San community members and their TA councillors was sometimes constrained. For example, local TA councillors stated that few community members came to listen when they provided feedback about meetings and workshops, and people had stopped reporting problems to TA councillors because it took a long time to get a response from government agencies when the councillors reported issues to higher-level authorities.
- There were misgivings and allegations regarding the misappropriation of equipment (e.g. sewing machines taken from one location to another) and the privatisation of what were formerly community initiatives.
- There were allegations that only people who are closely related to the chiefs have access to information, or benefit from opportunities for training and employment or from project support.
- There were disagreements as to the succession of councillors and the division of seats between different San language groups (!Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha) since certain councillors had passed away, which appeared to have caused a division between the 'N|oha and the !Xoon.

The Omaheke San Trust

In terms of its mandate, the Omaheke San Trust is an important organisation for the Omaheke San because it is in a position to support programmes targeting San communities and is intended to strengthen the capacity of the region's San in addressing human rights issues. However, the OST's

¹⁶ In January 2013 (i.e. after the field research), the legal obligation to contribute to the School Development Fund (i.e. pay school fees) was abolished for all learners in all government primary schools. However, as widely reported in Namibian newspapers, some schools are still asking parents for monetary contributions for specific activities.

¹⁷ It should be noted that Chief Langman attended the meeting in Kanaan, and his presence may have influenced the statements of others in attendance.

capacity to render support has fluctuated considerably over the years due to financial constraints, staff turnover and possibly poor management. Discussion participants at all six research sites generally agreed that they did not know what they could expect from the OST at present, as the OST had hardly bought any crafts from the producer groups in the region; the scholarship programme did not seem to be operational; and it was not clear if the human rights focal persons were still active or received any support from this organisation. The OST operations have been suspended since mid-2012, and the organisation's future was unclear at the time of writing.

Participation in decision making at local level

Apart from national and regional agencies, TAs and rights-based organisations with a mandate to address the concerns of San people, it is important that development is driven by the people themselves so that it addresses their needs in a targeted and holistic manner. Therefore the research team evaluated the participation of San people in decision-making structures (farm management committees, water point committees, school boards etc.) at local level.

Farm management and development committees in resettlement projects

Farm management and development committees (FMDCs) have been set up with the support of LISUP I and LISUP II in Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom. Over the last few years, attempts were made to get regional authorities to acknowledge the FMDCs so that FMDC representatives could be delegated to CDC meetings. This has now taken place in the Steinhausen, Kalahari and Otjombinde Constituencies.

San residents of Skoonheid admitted that the FMDC had not functioned very well during the year before the research team visited the project, despite some suggesting that the gender balance in favour of women (nine women, four men) ought to mitigate against such inefficiency. Community members complained that the MLR sometimes overruled decisions taken by the FMDC, and that there were also internal problems:

- "We don't have a sense of responsibility. We are used to working for white farmers, never having a say or any decision-making power, so we don't have initiative."
- "We don't trust each other; we don't believe that our people can do this. And we feel that our decisions are not taken seriously in particular not by ourselves."

Both the final review of LISUP I and the mid-term review of LISUP II underscored that similar problems with the FMDCs were ongoing at Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom (Mouton 2013: 43). In summary, FMDCs do not necessarily take decisions independently, i.e. in the absence of LISUP II staff. Implementing decisions and plans also takes a lot of time, and committees share too little information with the wider community. The handling of equipment, money or seeds creates problems and thus requires adequate supervision from the implementing NGO. The limited degree of collaboration between different factions and groups in the resettlement projects also affects the functioning of the committees.

Committees in the Corridor area

At Corridor 17-b the San formed a campsite committee, a water point committee (WPC) and a kindergarten committee (the latter being closed at the time of the field research so the committee was not functional). The Sa-Ta-Koo campsite was established many years ago with support from WIMSA and OST, and was still open to the public at the time of the field research, although the facilities were dilapidated as the number of visitors and the income generated had been rather small. Over the

years there were also problems with campsite managers who had embezzled funds earned from the campsite. The committees at Corridor 17-b are small in composition and therefore easy to manage. They also exhibit an equal gender balance; men and women were nearly equally represented on all three committees. However, the committees suffered from interference from the TA which had advised, for example, that San should not pay for water, allegedly because leaders wanted the San to receive water for free. This had some negative implications as small repairs could not be financed by the community, thus the community had become dependent on support from Komeho Namibia and the DWSSC.

San residents at Corridor 13 regarded the TA, the WPC and land board as important decisionmaking bodies. The latter was important because the San did not have any title deeds for the erven on which they had constructed their informal dwellings. Applications for erven were handled by the constituency office, and the San felt that the registration fees were too high and the process was too time-consuming. Only a single San individual was represented on the land board committee, and there was no San representative on the WPC, thus discussion participants felt that the latter was not properly covering the interests of the San. They said that the fees for water were too high and the distance to the water point was too far.¹⁸

Committees in Kanaan (Epako)

San residents of Kanaan had established a local committee to bring community problems to the attention of relevant agencies. The committee was not formally recognised, thus it was difficult for this body to liaise with government agencies or councillors. Sometimes the municipality consulted residents with regard to new developments in Epako, but allegedly only at a late stage, i.e. when a project had already started.

Water point committees and the school board in Blouberg

At Blouberg, the WPC and the school board were the most important bodies for decision making at local level. Two San persons had been elected to the school board so that the interests of the San in the community could be heard and understood. There were also three Damara community members and four teachers (mostly Damara) on the school board. The San were of the opinion that the school board requested too many in-kind and financial contributions from the parents (school and hostel fees, firewood, cleaning school uniforms, buying mattresses and cutlery for the hostel, etc.). San parents in general felt understood by the school board (since their children would not be sent away from school if they could not afford the requested contributions, for example), but they also felt that the board did not always act in the best interests of the San parents and children. As a result, participants wondered if the San members of the board had been trained in respect of their responsibilities, or if only the chairperson and the vice-chair had undergone such training.

There were a few WPCs for different water points at Blouberg, but the San were represented on only the single WPC serving Posts 10 and 11, and the sole representative also operated as the caretaker of the single borehole serving these cattle posts. San wished that more San would be appointed to the WPCs so that their concerns and interests could be understood. They had the impression that other people were making decisions on their behalf in the existing situation. At some posts there were no reservoirs for the San houses, so they received water only when the pump was switched on.

¹⁸ The research team received conflicting information about the amount of money that San were requested to pay for water: some participants said that they had to pay between N\$50 and N\$100 per month, but Chief Sofia said that only N\$20 had to be paid. The water point was about 250 m from the informal houses on (so-called) San Street.

Payment for water supply services generally was a problem for the San as well as for local non-San livestock farmers and absentee or weekend farmers. The delays in payment by all these groups caused disruptions in the supply of water.

4.4.9 Health and healthcare services

San perceptions of common and severe diseases in their communities

The researchers investigated which diseases were common among San at the Omaheke research sites, and also evaluated which diseases participants considered to be severe. Table 4.7 indicates that pulmonary complaints – ranging from a simple cold or cough to chest pain, asthma and TB – affected the San population quite severely. Perhaps the prevalence of such diseases among San is not surprising, given that smoking is a common habit among them and the majority are not well nourished.

High blood pressure, arthritis and rheumatism were also considered to be common. Neck and back pains were reported to be common ailments among men at a number of research sites, given that they were involved in heavy labour on farms and at shops. Stomach ache and bacterial infections due to poor hygiene conditions were also mentioned as common ailments.

The main health problems for children, according to participants, were coughing, tonsillitis and diarrhoea. Regarding problems with babies (infants and older), participants mentioned premature babies, hydrocephalus, shivering, and again asthma and bronchitis. For babies, polio was regarded as a health risk, and was allegedly associated with a limited intake of breast milk.

Skoonheid		Corridor 13	Disubara	Kanaan	Goreseb	
Women's group	Men's group		Blouberg	Kanaan	Goreseb	
Asthma	Asthma and TB	Malaria and HIV/AIDS	Flu/colds	ТВ	ТВ	
High blood pressure	High blood pressure	Asthma	Stomach ache	HIV/AIDS High blood pressure		
Rheumatism	Arthritis	Rheumatism	ТВ	Asthma	Malaria	
ТВ	Diabetes	ТВ	Chicken pox	Gout	Coughing and chest pain	
	Flu/colds	Back pain	Pink eye		Colds	
		STIs	Malaria		Neck and back pain	
		Infections (from bacteria and dirt)	HIV/AIDS		Kidney problems	

Table 4.7: Perception of most common diseases among San by research site, Omaheke Region*

* Due to time constraints this information was not gathered at Corridor 17-b.

Surprisingly for an arid region such as Omaheke, where malaria is not endemic, this illness was perceived as one that occurred commonly at Corridor 13, Blouberg and Goreseb. The researchers wondered if the listing of malaria was possibly informed by the training and awareness-raising efforts of Health Unlimited in the past, since these focused on strengthening capacity to identify common and major diseases so that patients could be referred to clinics in a timely fashion, if necessary. During interviews with health officials, malaria was not mentioned as a common disease in the area.

Box 4.6: Main health problems in the Corridor area

An interview with the nurse at the clinic at Corridor 13 supported some of the San participants' perceptions regarding the most common diseases in their communities. The nurse had found the following diseases to be common among the San in the Corridor area, and she explained why they were common:

- **Bronchitis** (chest problems) and **TB** were common because San families lived in small dwellings and kept infecting each other by means of coughing and sharing cups and pipes.
- **Pregnancies** were a problem mainly because the period between deliveries of children was too short and children were weaned too early as a result this being a problem especially for San who had no access to cow's milk.
- **Teenage pregnancy** was a serious problem because it involved girls under the age of 16. The record showed that every year in the Corridor area, at least one teenage girl got pregnant. The girls often suffered from complications due to their bodies not being well developed.
- HIV/AIDS and STIs were a big concern in the area.

Malnutrition (among infants and children) was *not* a major health concern, according to the nurse, because many San in the Corridor area stayed with and/or worked for Herero farmers and were therefore able to access milk for their children. Also, San women tend to breastfeed their babies (a practice that the MoHSS strongly encourages through ongoing campaigns).

Apart from these health issues, the nurse highlighted the **San's caring and cooperative nature** as a positive aspect of their culture: "San people are very friendly people; they like to live together and they care for each other. Basically these people have something money can't buy."

On a few occasions HIV was mentioned in connection with TB, but the knowledge of the risk of coinfection of TB with HIV seems to be rather fragmented. San in Kanaan (Epako), for example, had not heard of multi-drug-resistant TB and thus did not necessarily understand the risks of defaulting on TB treatment. It also became clear that the stigma of HIV/AIDS is still far worse than for TB: a participant at Skoonheid alleged that health workers would inform a patient who had been tested for HIV on the initiative of medical staff that he or she – if found to be HIV positive – had contracted TB rather than HIV. Only patients who had voluntarily tested for HIV would be informed of their status. A stigma also seems to apply to other STIs. These illnesses were considered to have been uncommon among San in the past because all their sexual partners were San, but nowadays some San sell their bodies when hungry, and the individuals concerned risk contracting STIs as a result. This risk was associated with living around cuca shops and abusing alcohol, and such behaviour is frowned upon.

In connection with STIs, the San had been advised to circumcise their children (as many Herero people do). However, some of the San at Corridor 13 stated that they did not like the practice of circumcision because "God made them [boys] the way He made them." Opinions were divided and some female participants seemed to prefer circumcised men as this was held to be more hygienic and limited the risk of contracting STIs.

At most Omaheke research sites (Skoonheid, Corridor 13, Blouberg and Kanaan), TB, asthma, HIV/AIDS and other STIs were not only considered to be common, but were also categorised as severe diseases. Cancer was also mentioned as a severe disease that affected some San, but it was less frequently mentioned, suggesting that it is not a common disease. Some women did suffer from cervical or breast cancer. Women also recorded suffering from varicose veins, especially when they did not take sufficient time to rest, which resulted in swollen feet and hip pain.

Healthcare

Healthcare services are available at the Corridor 13, Epako/Gobabis, Buitepos and Otjinene clinics. At Skoonheid a private doctor runs a clinic every fortnight. San of Blouberg who need medical attention go to the Buitepos clinic (20-25 km away), and San at Corridor 17-b and Corridor 18 go to the Corridor 13 clinic (25 km away).

Access to healthcare services

Various efforts have been made in Omaheke over the years to improve access to healthcare. San at various research sites could, to varying degrees, rely on community-based resource persons (CBRPs) – locals trained by Health Unlimited to address challenges posed by the long distances that patients had to travel to access healthcare. The CBRPs were trained in some aspects of home-based care, such as recognising certain diseases, so that patients could be referred to a clinic in a timely manner. They were also trained to support patients with the treatment of specific chronic diseases such as TB, malaria and HIV/AIDS. CBRPs were available at Corridor 13, Corridor 17-b, Skoonheid and Blouberg at the time of the field research. In addition to the CBRPs, some trained to assist with deliveries if necessary, their primary purpose was to advise pregnant women to seek support at the Corridor 13 clinic. In more recent years, some of the functions originally performed by CBRPs (e.g. TB Direct Observed Treatment Support (TB-DOTS) and home-based care) were taken over by local volunteers of two NGOs, namely Advanced Community Health Care Services Namibia (CoHeNa) and Catholic Aids Action (CAA).

The extent to which San make use of the services of CBRPs and TBAs in their communities varied from site to site. At Corridor 17-b some women who had been trained as CBRPs or TBAs appeared to have useful knowledge of the subject matter, suggesting that they were quite active in assisting patients with administering drugs and with advice in the event that a patient had fallen pregnant. At Skoonheid the CBRPs reportedly did not do very much as they had not received any follow-up training, nor any medication for local patients, and they had no means of transport to take patients to the clinic. Some CBRPs had found employment or had moved out of the area.

Despite the above-mentioned efforts to improve the San's access to healthcare services in Omaheke, access to healthcare generally is challenged by the following factors: the distance to health facilities and the costs of transport; restricted opening hours of health facilities; the infrequency of the mobile clinic visits to remote areas; and the fees charged for treatment by a nurse or doctor.

The distance to clinics is a general concern for people living in Namibia's rural areas, and the San at a number of the Omaheke research sites are no different in this regard. Ju|'hoansi at Skoonheid, for example, reported that their main health problem was the distance to the clinic at Epukiro RC (20 km from Skoonheid),¹⁹ even though Dr De Kok visited Skoonheid nearly every fortnight to attend to residents' medical needs. Women at Skoonheid often have home births as the distance and lack of regular traffic constitute a problem for women who might otherwise wish to deliver in a healthcare facility. Reportedly, between January and October 2011 only two women had given birth at the clinic while 10 had had home births at Skoonheid. Similarly participants in Goreseb village indicated that women gave birth at the clinic in Otjinene (35-40 km away) only if they expected complications.

¹⁹ The clinic will be moved to Farm Du Plessis in the future to avoid the rental costs paid by the government to the Catholic mission. As a result, the distance from Skoonheid to the clinic will increase.

Box 4.7: Dr De Kok's clinic in Skoonheid Resettlement Project

Dr De Kok, a private doctor, initiated a clinic for the benefit of the Ju|'hoansi and Damara residents of Skoonheid Resettlement Project in 2003. Initially the patients complained of hunger and begged for food, whereupon a craft project called San Alive was started to afford the Ju|'hoansi a measure of food security. Other aims of this project were to foster a work ethic and provide means to cover the nominal fee charged for healthcare services at the clinic. Patients were – and still are – encouraged to participate in the craft project or other income-generating activities.

The clinic is run by Dr De Kok every fortnight, on the same day as the orders for the craft project are administered. Many male and female participants in the craft project then seek medical treatment from Dr De Kok. (Treatment at her clinic does not depend on participation in the craft project.) Anyone who is able and willing to pay the nominal fee of N\$2 for children and N\$5 for adults is welcome at the clinic. According to Dr De Kok, people who cannot afford the fee are not turned away, but she prefers patients to contribute for the services rendered, since the motive for having the fees is to nurture a culture of ownership and acceptance of responsibility for one's own wellbeing. The fee negotiated with the community 10 years ago has remained the same ever since. It does not cover the cost of medications or travel expenses; these are sponsored by Dr De Kok. Medicines for common ailments are usually available, and exceptional requests are met as soon as possible – they cannot always be met immediately. Initially only 5% of the patients paid their fees, and nowadays 95% of the patients are paying. All of the above also applies to communal farmers in the area who need medical attention, although they were not originally targeted by the clinic.

In 2007 the craft project joined up with the Omba Arts Trust and LISUP I to generate more income for the craft project beneficiaries at Skoonheid. As the craft income has increased considerably over the years, the craft producers also use the income to buy some extra food for their families every month. The project thus contributes to food security in the resettlement project.

Like many other people in remote rural areas in Omaheke and Namibia at large, the San living at Blouberg mostly relied on the mobile clinic for their healthcare needs. They sought treatment in Buitepos or Gobabis when they needed urgent medical attention. The mobile clinic is meant to visit Blouberg once a month, but community members stated that they cannot rely on the service being rendered on a regular basis. Although the clinic in Buitepos is only 20km away, seeking medical attention there is difficult for San of Blouberg because there are few cars in their community and trips to Buitepos can be expensive for them. The cost for a one-way trip from Blouberg to Buitepos by car could be N\$50, and up to N\$30 by donkey-cart. Additional costs (another N\$50 one way) would be incurred if the patient had to get treatment in Gobabis rather than Buitepos. Similar amounts are usually requested for rides in other parts of rural Omaheke.

San residents of Corridor 13 and Kanaan hardly encountered any problems with accessing healthcare services as the presence of health facilities in their own communities eliminates the barrier of distance. In the Corridor area the fees normally charged did not pose a barrier to treatment either: participants explained that they did not have to pay for medical care at the clinic at Corridor 13 as 'no payment' was written on their health passports – a fee exemption seemingly negotiated by the traditional authority. However, this did not mean that San at other research sites could count on being exempted from the fees at clinics and hospitals, and since many San have limited means, this may imply that they sometimes have to forfeit treatment. The San at Blouberg also complained about having to pay the same fee (N\$4) for the mobile clinic as for a visit to a regular clinic, even though the mobile clinic only undertook the immunisation of children and the provision of painkillers, medication for high blood pressure and means of birth control. If a patient had any other ailment or a more serious disease, he or she would have to be referred to a clinic in Buitepos or Gobabis. TB and HIV/AIDS patients, for example, had to obtain medical attention and medication in Gobabis. Referring to some cases which had allegedly resulted in death, San at Blouberg complained that an ambulance was unlikely to arrive swiftly if someone needed medical attention urgently (but whether this was due only to long distances or also to other factors was not ascertained).

Perceptions of the quality of healthcare services

Given their history of marginalisation and experiences of discrimination, some San are sensitive to the manner in which they are treated by officials who work in public institutions. Consequently some can be critical of the services rendered to them at local clinics. At some research sites it was said that medical staff sometimes gave non-San patients preferential treatment and occasionally San patients might be turned away, which forces them to return at another time.

Some San participants doubted the capacities of medical staff in rural clinics. At Skoonheid, for example, residents complained of the quality of medical care provided at the Epukiro RC clinic and wondered why they had to visit the clinic several times before the nurses were capable of diagnosing their ailment: "If they don't know what's wrong with you, you simply go back and forth until you are skin over bone." (Ultimately the likely finding in such a case is that the person has contracted TB). Whereas it seems logical that patients may need to undergo various tests to identify certain illnesses, the statement quoted above merely underscores that a lack of explanation - and other communication problems - may frustrate the relationship between medical staff and San as they do not always understand each other's language and San cannot always make themselves understood in English. When San sense that the communication challenges are compounded by indifference towards the patient, they might feel either that they are not getting the treatment that they deserve, or are being discriminated against. At Corridor 13 the quality of care rendered and the perception of support received by patients seemed to play a role in terms of an individual deciding whether or not to use local healthcare services. Participants related that pregnant women, as well as young and older people alike, were "afraid" to go to the clinic as they were not always properly assisted or looked after. At home, however, there would always be someone to care for the patient.

In Kanaan (Epako), San complained that communication between healthcare staff and relatives of patients often left a great deal to be desired, with the result that family members often did not know what was happening to a family member who had been admitted to the hospital. This was especially pertinent when someone passed away; there was little to no communication with the relatives of the deceased. Participants said that the language barrier was often a problem in that doctors and nurses in the hospital generally do not speak a San language and not all San speak English. Even if San persons did manage to speak some English, they might be assisted by a foreign doctor (e.g. from Cuba) whose English they found difficult to understand.

On a more positive note, it seems that the San appreciate the government's efforts to improve the provision of medication for chronic diseases such as TB and HIV/AIDS in rural areas. Participants at Skoonheid, for example, stated that the hospital in Gobabis dispatched the medication for TB and HIV/AIDS patients to the clinic in Epukiro RC regularly – on a monthly basis. Even though patients still had to travel to that clinic, this system had improved the treatment of patients with chronic diseases and was much appreciated.

Traditional medicines and traditional healing

Traditional medicines and healing practices are still used by some San in Omaheke, but the extent to which this happens at the various research sites proved difficult to ascertain. San were sometimes reluctant to tell outsiders about traditional healing practices – a discussion participant at Skoonheid who had attended an LAC workshop on bio-cultural protocols and indigenous rights in August 2011 even joked about this: "If we were practising any form of traditional healing we would not tell you about it, as white people might come and steal our secrets." Yet, it appeared to be fairly common practice to use *kamakul* (Devil's Claw) for the treatment of certain ailments and diseases, and discussion participants at Corridor 13 stated that they combined the regular healthcare services provided by the local clinic with traditional medicinal plants from the bush, especially when the medication from the clinic was found to be of little help. Participants at various research sites stated that they collected veldfood at certain times of the year (see section 4.4.2 on food security), thus it may be surmised that a number of San in the Corridor area and other parts of Omaheke do know which veld plants have medicinal value.

The picture is not clear-cut, however, as participants at Skoonheid also related that persons using traditional medicines risked being stigmatised or criticised for practising witchcraft. Thus San were (allegedly) reluctant to practise traditional healing, including the use of medicinal plants, or they might do so outside their own community without other people getting involved. Observations at Skoonheid underscored that the Jul'hoansi there were using traditional medicine.

4.4.10 Gender

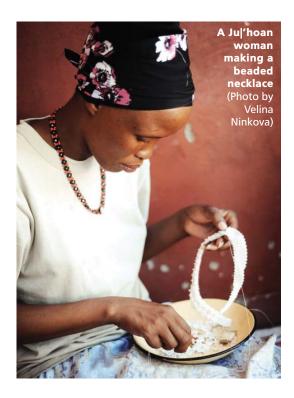
Gender roles

Gender roles were discussed with San at Skoonheid, at Corridor 13 and in Goreseb village. The general picture that emerged had the following elements:

• Elderly San were responsible for giving advice to family members and teaching them about life and matters such as how to look after gardens and livestock. They might also help with looking after the children and other small household chores.



- Middle-aged parents would carry out the bulk of the work in the garden and on the farm. They would also teach children about basic chores and supervise their work in and around the house.
- Women, and wives in particular, were responsible for cleaning the house, washing clothes, cooking, looking after the children and watering plants around the house. They might also be involved with needlework or crafts. Other duties that women undertook included fetching water and firewood. Women also kept other family members on the 'right path' (away from trouble and death), according to some participants.
- Men were generally responsible for looking after the livestock, watering the livestock, milking the cows and fixing things around the house. Men were also responsible for preparing the fields for crop cultivation at sites where crops were grown, and also tended to look for piecework and to collect wood from the forest or bush. Men considered themselves to have overall responsibility for the whole family.



Participants at Skoonheid stated that some changes in gender roles had taken place: some responsibilities were no longer confined to men or women alone. For example, women were not necessarily tasked with looking after the cattle or goats, and women could be the actual owners of livestock nowadays. Men and women alike worked in irrigated and rain-fed gardens, and increasingly shared basic tasks around the house, such as cooking, cleaning, babysitting and repairing broken items. Both men and women were involved in the upbringing of children, and both men and women were observed to be diligent in caring for children. A single mother at Corridor 13, however, was of the opinion that women generally felt more responsible for the upbringing and wellbeing of their children. Partially informed by personal experience, she stated that, "San men take too little responsibility for raising their children and for supporting their spouses and families."

In addition to the above, it is noteworthy that both men and women participated in the meetings convened for the study in nearly all of the communities visited in Omaheke. Although researchers observed that men may be given the first right of speech, and although men and women still sat in separate areas in public meetings, women tended to share their views as well. Notwithstanding these findings, on certain occasions – when more sensitive matters had to be discussed – the researchers deemed it worthwhile to organise discussions in smaller groups or gender-specific groups, to give women a better opportunity to express themselves. In the Corridor area, women appeared to have grown accustomed to expressing themselves in public, and sometimes were more assertive than the men in sharing their concerns about community matters – possibly because Chief Sofia has set an empowering example in this regard. The same goes for communities in which NGOs are active – or were active in the past – such as Skoonheid and Blouberg.

4.4.11 Engagement of the youth in agricultural and communal activities

Elderly San at Skoonheid complained that many younger people (mainly those between 18 and 25 or 30 years of age) were reluctant to assist their parents and grandparents with agricultural activities in resettlement projects, even though the majority of them were unemployed. They expected to be paid for work carried out for elderly people, and did not necessarily see it as their duty to help the family with growing food or maintaining livestock. Some elderly San therefore claimed that young people lived off the pensions of the elderly and did little to assist. In cases where these youth were lucky enough to find temporary jobs on other farms, the little money earned would be spent on items at the farmer's shop, so that when they came home they could not always contribute much to their respective households. The caretaker of the borehole in Drimiopsis stated that, "The youth share in the food that comes from the garden." He admitted that he had found it difficult to convince his own children to assist him with agricultural activities, and said that he did not have the heart to refuse them food when they asked for it – but also he provided food to motivate them to help with the cultivation of the gardens or fields.²⁰

²⁰ The youth themselves did not respond regarding the issue of how much they contributed to the work carried out by their parents and grandparents.

Moreover, the elderly carried out most of the communal duties, such as pumping and distributing water, mending fences, plastering a dam, fixing an engine and driving a tractor. Few young people tended to get involved with such activities. Middle-aged and elderly people generally were also the ones who assisted other community members – for example, if someone had died, older community members would try to assist the bereaved family with food and sugar for the funeral.

4.4.12 Changes over time

The 'time' referred to in this section means the following periods: the last few decades of colonial rule; the first few years of Independence (1990-1995); the first five years of the new millennium (2000-2005); and 'nowadays' (2011/2012). The changes that occurred in each of these periods were evaluated to identify factors that had/have a positive or negative impact on the life of the San in Omaheke Region.

Box 4.8: San nomadic life and support received from Catholic missionaries (1940s to mid-1990s)

Some San now living in the Corridor area still survived on hunting and gathering in the recent past (1940s to 1980s). This was mentioned at Corridor 17-b, where hardly any San had settled prior to 1990; many now living at Corridor 17-b had previously lived with their parents or grandparents in the Kalahari Desert or in the vicinity of settlements/villages such as Aranos and Aminuis. Discussion participants said that at that time, in all these places, game and veldfood were still available, water could be found in streams and riverbeds, and the San could practise traditional healing. In the last couple of decades of colonial rule, and in the immediate post-Independence period, these seminomadic San increasingly received support from mission posts (e.g. from the Catholic Church at Corridor 13, and seemingly from missionaries based at Aminuis and Aranos), where food aid and other in-kind support (soap, roofing sheets, clothes etc.) were provided with a view to converting the San to Christianity and introducing them to farming.

Quality of life before Independence

San at different research sites evaluated their quality of life before Independence as being better than at various times after Independence, and a combination of reasons was usually given. Generally the cost of living was much lower than it is today, the selling of alcohol was better regulated, the police were more strict and patrolled more frequently, and farmers did not allow their workers to drink on the farms. San at Blouberg mentioned that before 1990, many San were employed as farmworkers on commercial farms, and were properly paid for their work. They also received food rations, and some farmers allowed their workers to have small gardens on the premises. However, not everyone shared the positive sentiments about life as a farmworker before Independence. Participants at Skoonheid categorically stated that life was not good before Independence, chiefly because they were not



free and independent: they worked for other people (they had not yet been resettled); and they lived under apartheid rule which gave them no say – it was a case of, to quote one participant, "Yes boss, no boss, yes misses, no misses."

Box 4.9: Changes in San living conditions following settlement of people of other ethnic groups – the example of Blouberg resettlement farm

San at Blouberg felt that their living conditions had deteriorated a few years after the farm had been purchased by the Damara Traditional Authority in 1982. Initially, after the change of ownership of the farm, life was fine. The San who had worked on the commercial farm had been allowed to stay in some of the former farmworkers' houses and could use water freely. But life became more difficult a few years later when the original Damara farmers took their livestock back to Khorixas and they were replaced by new Damara people who settled at Blouberg with more permanent intentions. The quality of life of the San then deteriorated because the San were requested to vacate the former farmworkers' houses. The new Damara settlers also had less work for the San than the original Damara farmers, who had simply come to Blouberg to avoid a drought in Khorixas. The new settlers wanted to develop their own farms themselves, and as one consequence, the San had to start paying for water at Blouberg.

Quality of life after Independence

Only a few discussion participants felt that the first few years of Independence (1990-1995) were better than before Independence. Like many other Namibians, San felt free and happy about having a government of their own, and just like others, they enjoyed the human rights protections afforded by the new Constitution of Namibia. But, apart from the new political context, Independence did not necessarily bring much change for San communities. Discussion participants at Blouberg and Corridor 13 claimed that they had received little assistance from the government. They were free, but had reportedly simply continued to struggle for themselves while the cost of living had increased considerably. Many San had also been retrenched due to the introduction of minimum wages for farmworkers, and had ended up in the informal settlement of Kanaan (Epako), where their standard of living had generally deteriorated due to the loss of a regular income. Apart from drought relief – which the San had received regularly in the years 1992-1995 – many San felt that the equal rights that were supposed to benefit all after Independence had not meant much for most San.

The only exception to this view of life in the first years after Independence was found in places where beneficiaries received a fair amount of support from the government, churches or other service providers. At Skoonheid and Corridor 17-b, for example, drought relief was donated on a regular basis, and comprised a larger variety of foodstuffs than people receive nowadays. Government had also provided more than enough diesel for pumping water to these communities in the immediate post-Independence period, and initially only a few people were resettled in resettlement projects (e.g. only 12 families at Skoonheid). The garden projects organised at that time by the MLR at Skoonheid and by the church at Corridor 17-b therefore provided enough food for the relatively small number of beneficiaries.

Quality of life around the turn of the millennium

The quality of life in the late 1990s and up to 2010 was again considered to be worse than in the years 1990-1995, because the cost of living had continued to rise in the second decade after Independence, and food aid was no longer provided as consistently as before. Employment opportunities for San did not improve until more recently (e.g. around 2010), when the government started to employ San

in entry-level government positions. Positive exceptions to these perceptions were again related to the introduction of support projects by donors, NGOs and the government. Developments at Skoonheid and in the Corridor area highlight the big difference that support projects can make for San communities.

Skoonheid

In the first five years of the new millennium, the growth in the number of households and livestock at Skoonheid Resettlement Project had caused problems linked with the supply of water, because the MLR did not supply the same quantities of diesel as it had done in the years 1990-1995. There had not always been a caretaker from the MLR present, and the gardens had been less successful. The quality of life in 2000-2005 as compared to 1990-1995 had therefore deteriorated (see Table 4.8).

The implementation of LISUP I and II since 2007 by the DRFN/Habitafrica (with funding from the Government of Spain and the MLR, and with NGSIP support) was evaluated as a positive development in the Skoonheid community. Due to the introduction of drip-irrigation facilities and new solar infrastructure, the gardens were in a good condition at the time of the research team's visit (October 2011), and community members were more food secure than they used to be. Thanks to the NGSIP, nearly all households in the community had received some livestock. Although the MLR and the DRFN had some reservations about the resulting stocking rate and its implications for the quality of the rangeland, the San considered this to be a very positive development.

Table 4.8: Perception of changes in quality of life and social exclusion,	
Skoonheid Resettlement Project*	

Subject of change	1980-1985	1993	2000-2005	2007-2011
Quality of life	1	5	3	10
Social exclusion/discrimination	10	10	10	10

* The numbers in the cells reflect the number of stones (out of a maximum of 10) placed by San participants, where 1 means 'low' and 10 means 'high'.

Corridor 17-b and the Corridor area

At Corridor 17-b the quality of life in the years 2000-2012 was relatively strongly influenced by specific events, such as the introduction of certain income-generating projects and the formal recognition of Chief Sofia Jakob in 2009 (regarding the latter, see "Representation by San TAs" on page 72). The establishment of the Sa-Ta-Koo campsite by WIMSA (circa 2000) yielded some incomegenerating opportunities for youth at Corridor 17-b, but in subsequent years the campsite project encountered many management problems and the infrastructure became dilapidated. Nevertheless, the campsite still exists, and it yields small amounts of income for the community, therefore it was evaluated positively. In the years 2003-2006, the MAWF introduced a revolving goat project with support from the NPC's RPRP. After the recognition of Chief Sofia, a shop and a sewing project were started in the same community, and a solar water pump replaced a diesel engine, thereby reducing recurrent costs for the San. The Kalahari Garden Project introduced irrigated gardens in the Corridor area in the years 2006-2008, which improved food security to some extent in various communities. Although some of these projects were no longer fully operational at the time of our field research in 2012, the beneficiaries had much appreciated them; they deemed these projects to be positive contributions to their livelihoods. The problems that a number of these projects at Corridor 17-b encountered were: the TA exerting an influence over activities; a certain bias in the distribution of benefits; and a lack of local leadership/management capacity to continue projects without the assistance of an NGO.

In evaluating changes in the quality of life at Corridor 13, the discussion participants included the establishment of some government services among the other developments: a food-for-work initiative implemented by the Omaheke Regional Council in 2007; the MTC tower established in 2009 to improve cellphone communication in the area; a new clinic opened by the MoHSS in 2010; and a new office of the MAWF opened in 2012. The introduction of the Build Together programme had also had some benefits for the small number of San (e.g. some TA councillors) who qualified for a house – by virtue of their government jobs which would enable them to repay the loan.

4.4.13 Culture and identity

As in many other regions, the San of Omaheke do not identify with names like 'San' or 'Bushmen'. Individual San and San families in Omaheke generally associate their identity and traditions with their language. Chief Langman underscored this in the following statement: "If you can't talk in your language, if you only speak other languages, you cannot know your tradition." There are thus four San identities or San cultures in Omaheke, which, for geographical, administrative and linguistic reasons, are associated with the area of jurisdiction of the TAs of the Jul'hoansi and the !Xoon. The boundary between the two TAs more or less follows the road from Gobabis to Buitepos in the area east of Gobabis. West of Gobabis it follows the B1 main road to Windhoek. Nearly all of the San living in northern Omaheke - comprising the vast area from Otjinene to Epukiro, Eiseb and the Rietfontein block - speak the Jul'hoan language and consider themselves to be Jul'hoansi, while a few San in the Rietfontein area are Naro. Nowadays the Jul'hoansi are also referred to as *‡Kao||'aesi* ('People from the North'), which is a reference to the fact that the San falling under the TA of Chief Frederik Langman live north of the San falling under the !Xoon TA of Chief Sofia Jakob in southern Omaheke. The term *‡Kao||'aesi* is also the name of the TA of Chief Langman, and furthermore this term indicates the relatively close association of the cultures of the Jul'hoansi of Omaheke and the Jul'hoansi of the Tsumkwe area in Otjozondjupa Region (see Chapter 5).

Within the !Xoon TA in southern Omaheke – roughly comprising the area from Blouberg (close to Buitepos) to Gobabis, and south to Omukara, Tsjaka, Aminuis and the Corridor area (Posts 1 to 21) – one finds three San groups: the !Xoon, the 'N|oha and the Naro. The languages and identities of the three cultures are relatively closely associated, but still distinct. Most individuals of all three cultures understand the language of the !Xoon. !Xoon and 'N|oha are dialects of the same language family (Tuu), whereas Naro belongs to another language family (Khoe). Therefore !Xoon and 'N|oha can communicate easily. However, many San in the Corridor area are multilingual.

The identities and traditions of the various San cultures in Omaheke are closely linked with their heritage or traditions as nomadic hunter-gatherers. Chief Langman explained that the Jul'hoansi of northern Omaheke still lived until recently in small family clans in the bush, making a living by hunting and gathering. Each clan had its own leader/chief, called *||'aiha* – Chief Langman's father was an *||'aiha* – and each clan had its own territory, for which the *||'aiha* had primary responsibility. If a clan did not have enough food in its own territory, its *||'aiha* could seek permission from the *||'aiha* of another clan to hunt on that clan's land. The traditional lifestyles and leadership structures of these San family clans gradually disappeared when white and black farmers occupied vast areas of land in the area now known as Omaheke Region.

Similarly, San individuals in southern Omaheke spoke of their semi-nomadic lifestyles as children before Independence, when they moved around with their parents or grandparents in search of jobs, covering parts of western Botswana, the southern Omaheke areas of Aminuis and the Corridor, and the Aranos area in the northern part of what is now Namibia's Hardap Region. The narration

of these life stories underscored that Catholic missionaries and Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) representatives in these areas at that time played a relatively important role in supporting the !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha as they moved through these areas. Apart from spreading the gospel, the Catholic Church provided work opportunities for some San individuals, as well as education and health facilities. In addition, the church had some projects aimed at teaching the San how to cultivate crops and (presumably) how to farm with livestock. Some of these initiatives were cancelled after Independence, either because they had achieved little success or impact, or because the government started providing drought relief to San communities on a relatively large scale.

Discussions at all research sites in Omaheke underlined that traditional practices such as veldfood gathering were still relatively common in all four San cultures in this region. Some San across the region also used tubers, roots and other veld products to prepare traditional medicines for the treatment of specific ailments.²¹ Discussions on food security at the research sites underscored that hunting, especially of small game, is sometimes still practised in rural areas, but it was impossible to gauge the scale of this practice at any site, because hunting is illegal today, hence all discussion of hunting was 'taboo' to some degree.

4.4.14 Social exclusion and relations with other groups

The general perception among the San at all six research sites was that they face continued social exclusion, especially from service providers and staff in public institutions, but also in places such as shops. Several regional stakeholders (e.g. the Councillor of the Kalahari Constituency and the CEO of the Gobabis Municipality) reiterated the perception that the San were often 'the last in line' and confirmed that this had not changed much since Independence. In this regard, the San at Corridor 13 stated that they felt oppressed by the police, as San individuals had been kept in custody for alleged offences for up to four days without being formally charged in a court within 24 hours of their arrest as prescribed by law. Others claimed that serious cases in which they were the victims, such as violence over labour disputes and rape, were sometimes not addressed but rather covered up. Similarly, at Skoonheid a community member alleged that discrimination continued unabated at clinics and other government institutions, saying that, whereas before Independence service provision at these places had been good, nowadays no one cares about clients or patients in general, let alone those who happen to be San.

The Councillor of the Kalahari Constituency, the CEO of the Gobabis Municipality and some San community leaders shared Chief Sofia Jakob's view that in order to reduce exclusion and discrimination, San need first of all to start seeing themselves as human beings equal to any other Namibian, then take responsibility for their own plight and stand up for their rights. Otherwise the degree of social exclusion is unlikely to change much.

However, until San people claim their rights, people of other ethnic groups are likely to continue to prescribe what is best for the San in their own communities and beyond, especially when it comes to the development of San livelihoods and San farms. This merely underlines that the relationship between the San and people of other ethnic groups with whom they share a settlement/project/farm is still not equal, and is often characterised by differences in power and control over resources such as water and land. In this regard, however, there are some differences between group resettlement farms and communal areas.

²¹ Evidence of this was provided in individual discussions with Velina Ninkova and by poster material developed in the Corridor area that explores and elaborates on the use of different types of veld products for food and medicinal purposes.

In group resettlement farms, many San live together with Damara farmers, and sometimes also Herero or Tswana farmers. Most of the time, collaboration between San people and people of these other ethnic groups is hard to find; instead leaders of different factions in the community will try to control access to valuable project resources, equipment and income-generating projects. The San are often pushed aside, or they shy away from power struggles and thus lose out, even when they are members of the same management committees. In addition, the San in group resettlement farms have to deal with people's claims – often non-San outsiders' claims – to the grazing and water resources on their farms. In some instances this even includes claims of government officials employed by institutions that render services at resettlement projects.

On farms in the communal area where San share land with non-San farmers, two scenarios may be found:

- Scenario 1: San may not have the assets and means to farm with livestock themselves, or they may have so few livestock that they cannot sustain their families. In such cases they are often compelled to make a living as farmworkers for non-San farmers. Some San farmworkers receive cash payments for their work, but many live with their employers and are paid for their services in kind a situation that some discussion participants did not regard as exploitative because the farmer and the worker were "helping each other", whereas others preferred to avoid such a situation and live more autonomous lives on a farm such as Corridor 17-b.
- Scenario 2: San who do manage to farm with their own livestock on a communal farm shared with non-San farmers (e.g. Corridor 18), face considerable challenges in their relations with other farmers, as theft of cattle or goats is not uncommon when the San are absent from the farms for any length of time. They also have to struggle to raise the necessary funds in time to pay their monthly contributions for water supply services, so as to ensure that their livestock are not cut off from water for several days.

Finally, Ju|'hoansi in Goreseb village reported that some non-San individuals in the area had 'masqueraded' as San to source funds to support projects in their own (non-San) community. Allegedly this 'fraud' had gone on to the extent that the actual names of Ju|'hoan individuals had been used without these individuals ever being consulted about such initiatives. In relation to this allegation, Ju|'hoansi raised concerns about a lack of presence and visibility of the San TAs in resolving disputes with non-San individuals. According to Ju|'hoansi in Goreseb, this resulted in other TAs addressing the disputes, which was not always to the advantage of the San individuals involved, as other TAs did not necessarily pay adequate attention to the interests of San people in such cases.

4.4.15 Visions for the future

In Omaheke Region, San visions for the future mainly concerned better access to services in remote rural communities and improving access to land.

At Corridor 17-b, Kanaan (Epako) and Blouberg, participants' expectations centred on improving access to, and the quality of, education for San children. The San of Corridor 17-b specifically wanted to establish a kindergarten and a primary school in the community, and to acquire a vehicle for transporting their children to secondary school. In Kanaan, San parents wished to see more San teachers and principals in schools, and San nurses and doctors in health facilities, who could serve as role models for their children. At Blouberg, community members hoped that the school could be extended from Grade 7 to Grade 10, so that their children no longer had to leave their home environment to continue their schooling, as this was associated with a risk of dropping out. They also wished for a clinic to be opened in their community.



At Corridor 13, participants simply expected the government to continue helping the San community to address their problems in the future. In particular they requested the regional authorities to close down cuca shops in the settlement.

At Blouberg, opinions regarding San economic needs in the future were divided. Some participants were of the opinion that gardening and craft projects would go a long way to help the San to improve their standard of living. Other community members doubted the existence of a sufficiently large market for arts and crafts. They were also worried that there was insufficient water for gardening and that the San could not, in any case, afford to irrigate their gardens at the current rates charged for water. The San were judged to have little control over land and water issues in the community, therefore a number of the San at Blouberg would rather be resettled at a new resettlement project where they could farm the land themselves and thereby sustain their families.

At Skoonheid, women wanted literacy classes in order to be able to read, write and communicate better with other people. They also wished for a needlework business to be established, and for the craft project to be expanded so that they could make more money. Some men at Skoonheid wanted to become independent farmers, on a farm of their own – or even, they said, at a cattle post within one of the more remote posts of Skoonheid, were they to be given such land. They regarded the group resettlement project as a learning trajectory in this regard. Other men simply wanted to continue farming at the group resettlement farm, as they did not have the energy to be relocated again. Some extra support for the farmers in the group resettlement projects, and a vehicle for the community to use to transport children to school and sick people to the clinic, and to market agricultural produce. Finally, the participants wished that all community members would take responsibility for the development of the project, and that the youth and elderly would actively participate in meetings and project activities to that end.

4.5 Conclusions and recommendations

The San (mainly Ju|'hoansi, !Xoon and Naro, and a few 'N|oha) are among the poorest people in Omaheke Region; there are also many poor people hailing from other ethnic groups. The *Omaheke Regional Poverty Profile* based on village-level participatory poverty assessments (NPC 2006a) underlined that many people of various ethnic groups in Omaheke faced very similar livelihood constraints to those faced by the San. However, the San are more marginalised than most other poor people in the region due to a number of specific factors, among which landlessness and the loss of employment and income are prominent.

In the second half of the 20th century, when the Namibian economy was increasingly becoming characterised by commercial and communal livestock farming, many San in Omaheke found themselves employed as farmworkers. When minimum wage levels were raised after Independence, many Omaheke San were retrenched, and these former farmworkers became a proletariat underclass in the informal settlements of Gobabis and in the group resettlement projects established within a few years of Independence. San in these projects have always had access to land, but have always had to share it with many other San and often non-San people too, which, as might be expected, has created common property-management problems. Another group of San, i.e. those who were retrenched in the 1980s from commercial farms which the Damara Legislative Authority had acquired with the consent of the South African authorities, suffered a similar fate: although they were allowed to stay on the farms after losing their jobs and their income, they generally had no livestock or other assets to fall back on. Some San who lost their jobs found refuge on communal land, but they had very limited control over this land which they shared with other farmers, and also they did not necessarily have livestock or other assets. In some instances these San found shelter and food by working for other farmers in the communal area where sometimes they received payment in kind.

The loss of income was compounded by a shortage of marketable knowledge and skills among the San, since the majority of San in the productive age groups had hardly received any education at a younger age. While the majority of the elderly San remain illiterate, young San face considerable financial, social and cultural challenges in the current education system, and consequently they tend to drop out before completing primary or junior secondary school. The number of San youth who successfully complete senior secondary school is even lower.

The San were also vulnerable because many of them did not have the livestock or other assets which are needed to make a living as subsistence farmers in communal areas or on resettlement farms. Nor did they have the means to start small-scale businesses in either urban informal settings or rural settings. So, on the whole, the San have had limited opportunities to improve their living standards independently, i.e. without external support. Moreover, when hit by droughts or other shocks, they did not have the means or the social networks to cope with such adverse conditions. Although there is a culture of sharing and togetherness in some San communities in Omaheke, usually in times of crisis, individuals could not rely on remittances from wealthier family members, or on other types of support, because all of them, without exception, were poor. Instead, therefore, there was a strong reliance on pensions and other social grants to survive times of crisis, but these funds hardly ever sufficed to create a buffer against adversity as they hardly lasted a month.

Drought relief and food/cash-for-work projects also remain important sources of food for many San in Omaheke, but these are not a long-term solution to the development problems faced by the San in this region. Apart from problems with the distribution, quantity and variety of such food, these

projects pose the risk of creating higher degrees of dependency. Given this vulnerability, in many situations there was a relatively strong reliance on neighbouring (non-San) farmers with whom water, pasture or labour were exchanged so that favours or support might be asked in return in more desperate times. Although the San's safety net was thus broadened to a certain extent, the terms of trade in these reciprocal relations were often determined by differences in power and wealth, and so were not very equal. In virtually all spheres of development (education, employment, land, political representation, etc.), the San continued to experience discrimination by other groups, and consequently did not feel themselves to be integrated into the broader society. They did not believe that they had a say with regard to their own development or the control over, and distribution of, resources such as land. Outsiders did not recognise their traditional land-use practices and their current land ownership rights, and the San felt squeezed out by the influx of newcomers who also wanted a piece of the San people's pie (e.g. in resettlement projects).

In view of all the above, it is important to note that some San indicated in the research discussions that they wished to live away from other ethnic groups, and to be resettled on land of their own. These notions raised concerns among some representatives of the communities with whom the San currently share land, who hoped that the San would integrate more in order to enhance cohesion and peace. Other motives for the call for integration possibly related to securing the availability of farmhands in rural areas. Although strategies to support the San should not be promoting a new form of apartheid, it is important to recognise why some San now feel the need to be on their own. This is mainly due to the unequal power relations that they continue to experience on the land, but also in the delivery of services in the education and health sectors.

Against this background of observed vulnerabilities and inequalities, it is fortunate that the recognition of the two San chiefs, and the establishment of formal TA structures which include councillors, has strengthened the political power of the San to a certain degree in both northern and southern Omaheke. At least when the chiefs requested government support for their communities, they no longer returned empty-handed. However, there is always a downside to progress, which in this case refers to the allegations of favouritism in the distribution of project benefits and jobs; accusations of a lack of attention in respect of remote communities; and signs of infighting in some TA structures. The two chiefs were also not always able to resolve disputes between their subjects and the representatives of other ethnic groups. So, although it is positive that the San now have formally acknowledged representation, the observed obstacles raise the question of whether or not it is appropriate for the government to channel so much of its support to the Omaheke San communities by focusing on strengthening community-based organisations among the San, engaging civil society more intensively in the support of these communities, and establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

In view of their vulnerability, San communities often requested 'projects' in order to diversify their incomes. Apart from expecting donations of cattle (or goats as a secondary option), the San themselves did not always have a clear vision of what these projects should be about. (Other things requested by the San TAs, for example, included improved accommodation, water infrastructure and entry-level jobs in the civil service.) As many of these projects had been set up in remote areas, far from any market or suppliers, they were relatively costly to sustain and difficult to develop into productive income-generating projects. San community members and their leaders therefore often expected these activities to be fully subsidised, and they lacked a clear understanding of how these projects could be turned into productive or sustainable small-scale enterprises. Apart from jobs and shelter, many of these projects also had a communal focal point, such as a kindergarten, community gardening initiative, or revolving livestock scheme. This may seem to make sense

from an administrative (line ministry or NGO) perspective, or in terms of benefit-sharing among a larger group of people, but it often created management problems – especially when money for the operations or maintenance of the project had to be managed by a committee or a few elected local managers or leaders at a later stage. Many such projects initiated in San communities (e.g. campsites, shops and kindergartens) have failed or are falling into disrepair. Barriers to the success of these projects have included: remoteness and the high costs of obtaining supplies or parts; a lack of local management capacity and vision; and the absence of long-term support by service providers. In many instances there was simply no assessment of economic and environmental feasibility before the project was initiated – often the project appraisal merely involved a social needs assessment.

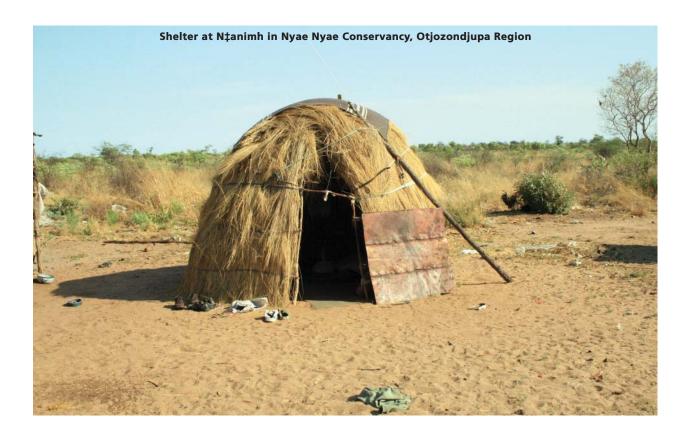
Projects usually start revealing signs of progress, for example in terms of food security, only when intensive and long-term relations – comprising capacity strengthening and an element of service provision (e.g. supplies and parts) – are created with San communities, as was done through LISUP I and II. Even then, some of the challenges mentioned here (e.g. access to markets and suppliers) can remain partially unresolved, or are simply catered for by the service providers for as long as the government or donors request them to do so. Thus the question of project sustainability will not have been resolved in reality, necessitating strategising on the part of the government, civil society and development partners regarding how project support to San communities can be organised in such a manner that it does not lead to continuous support and dependence, but rather to productive farming and productive income-generating projects.

In view of the wish of some San to live on their own, as well as the challenges faced in implementing development projects in remote areas, questions need to be posed to the government as to the direction it wants to take with resettling San. Lately, the OPM's SDP, with donor funds channelled through the NPCS, has started to move in the direction of settling San in relatively large groups (up to 300 individuals) in very remote areas. The government's idea is to give San a place to stay on their own where they could start farming for themselves after initial donations of water infrastructure and livestock have been made. It is also hoped that locating San far away from informal settlements will ensure that they are no longer affected by the negative influences associated with these neighbourhoods, such as alcoholism and drug abuse. Thus the concept of the group resettlement project, which has posed many challenges and questions for the MLR since the first such project was established in the mid-1990s, has been revisited.

While it is laudable that the government has increased its efforts to support San communities, and although some of the applicable projects may have potential – provided that sufficient efforts are put into post-settlement support (strengthening capacity, improving market access, and creating coherent and well-organised communities) – the question of why the San communities have to be resettled so remotely, in many cases on marginal lands, has yet to be answered. One forseeable problem is that distances to existing facilities such as schools, hostels and clinics will become even more of a challenge for many resettled San, and thus will increase San dependency on neighbouring communities, in that San might need assistance with transport – which generally comes at a relatively high cost when long distances are involved. Also, infringements by others on San people's land and water rights in their new but remote environments will be difficult to regulate as the government, which would ordinarily be in a position to effect some measure of control, is at a greater distance. It will be very difficult to counterbalance the prevailing unequal relations with people of other ethnic groups under such circumstances. Moreover, the people to be resettled do not necessarily constitute a homogeneous community, which creates challenges for the type of collaboration that is required to operate and manage farm livelihoods productively and successfully.

Chapter 5 Otjozondjupa Region

By Jennifer Hays, Maarit Thiem and Brian T.B. Jones



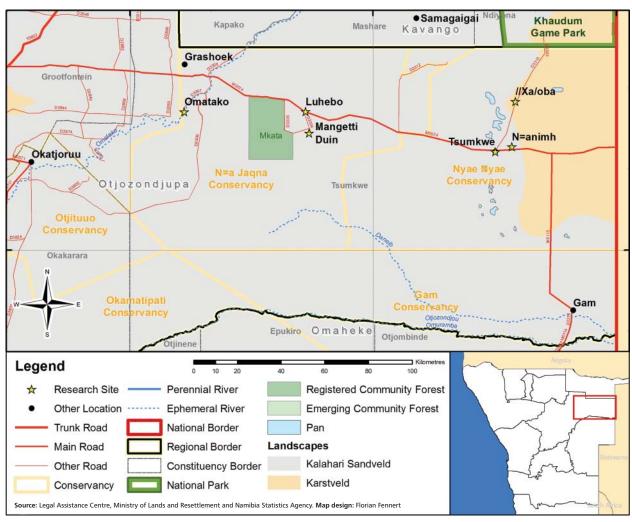
5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Tsumkwe District in eastern Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia. Known in the apartheid era as "Bushmanland", Tsumkwe District has a high concentration of San populations, and is one of the few places in Namibia where San are in the majority. Tsumkwe District is generally divided into "Tsumkwe East" and "Tsumkwe West".¹ Tsumkwe East is made up largely of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy; it also includes the town of Tsumkwe,² which is the administrative centre of the district. Much of Tsumkwe West is the N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. Parts of Tsumkwe District do not fall within either conservancy – including Tsumkwe town itself.

¹ Corresponding to the former designations "Bushmanland East" and "Bushmanland West".

² Tsumkwe is technically classified as a "township" (according to the *Government Gazette* No. 3933, 2007), but since it is generally referred to as a town, we are going to use the term "town" for Tsumkwe. The same applies to the villages which are technically defined as "settlements": to avoid confusion we will use the term "village".

Otjozondjupa Region and the research sites



In this chapter we use "Tsumkwe District" when referring to the overall administrative district; "Tsumkwe East" or "Tsumkwe West" when referring to those geographical divisions; and the names of the conservancies when referring to conservancy-related issues.

A conservancy is a community-based organisation established under the Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996. Upon registration with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), conservancies acquire use rights over game and tourism within their boundaries, potentially enabling them to derive income and other benefits - such as trophy hunting and other tourism activities. One aim of our research was to establish whether San living in conservancies were better off compared to San in non-conservancy areas. The two conservancies have very different histories, ethnic compositions and geographies, making it difficult to aggregate data and generalise across the two. It is more revealing to consider them separately initially, and then directly, as we do at the end of this chapter. Both the similarities and the differences are informative and important.



5.2 Nyae Nyae Conservancy

5.2.1 General background on Nyae Nyae Conservancy

Description of the area

The vast majority of the inhabitants of Nyae Nyae belong to the San group *Ju/'hoansi*.³ The name in Ju/'hoansi for Nyae Nyae is *N/|oaq!'ae*, meaning 'place of broken rocks'. The area is part of the Kalahari geological system, although the Aha Hills on the border with Botswana reduce the westward transportation of wind-blown Kalahari sands into the Nyae Nyae Conservancy area. One of the most important natural features in Nyae Nyae Conservancy is the system of calcrete pans that often fill with rainwater in the wet season, providing seasonal access to water for people, livestock and wildlife. The area has a high diversity and abundance of key plant resources utilised by inhabitants, such as the morama bean and the mangetti nut. The climate is semi-arid, with an average annual rainfall of around 470 mm – although there is a high degree of variability and the area is subject to periodic droughts, making the area marginal for rain-fed crop production. The mean maximum daily temperature is 33° Celsius, although overnight temperatures in winter can reach below freezing point (Botelle and Rohde 1995: 11-13).

The Nyae Nyae Conservancy area of Otjozondjupa Region corresponds largely with the Tsumkwe East Magisterial District. The town of Tsumkwe, established by the South African Government in 1959, has remained the administrative centre of the district and several government offices are located there, along with a handful of shops and churches, a community centre and numerous shebeens. Tsumkwe is located in the middle of the conservancy area, but is not technically part of the conservancy. Nonetheless the town plays a central role in the conservancy's day-to-day activities, and all of the conservancy's administrative offices are located there.

The area is relatively remote and isolated. The nearest large town is Grootfontein, 265 km to the east on road C44, and the border with Botswana lies 57 km to the east on the same road. Until 2008 the border post was closed, so there was no through-traffic in that direction, and although the post is open now, few travellers use this route. As a result of the area's remoteness, and partly due to the conservation ethic of the Ju]'hoan residents (described below), wildlife has not been eradicated as it was in communal lands to the north and south of the Nyae Nyae area. The large mammals living in Nyae Nyae Conservancy include, among others, elephant, leopard, hyena, wild dog, roan antelope, kudu, eland, gemsbok, hartebeest and giraffe.

The vast majority of the inhabitants of the Nyae Nyae area are Ju|'hoansi, and almost all of the conservancy members are Ju|'hoansi. Only conservancy members (numbering 1375 at the time of the field research) are allowed to live in the conservancy itself.⁴ As the town of Tsumkwe is not a part of the conservancy proper,⁵ residence there is not restricted by conservancy membership.

³ The term *Jul'hoansi* refers to both the people and their the language. The term *Jul'hoan* is both the singular form of Jul'hoansi (used when referring to one person) and an adjective.

⁴ Membership includes adults over 18 years who are permanent and lawful residents of the conservancy and those who were born within the boundaries of the conservancy. Those who move in from outside can apply for membership after living in the conservancy for more than 10 years or if they marry a member – if they "have shown sufficient interest in the aims and objectives of the conservancy and are not a member of another conservancy". (Nyae Nyae Conservancy Constitution: 2010).

⁵ The town is on *state land*, and the conservancy is classified as *communal land*. These classifications entail legislative differences regarding, inter alia, residency, land use, animals and business.

Nonetheless, the Ju|'hoansi are also the majority group in Tsumkwe, although people of other ethnic groups also constitute a large proportion of the town's residents: there are larger numbers of Owambo, Kavango, Herero and Afrikaner residents, and very small numbers of !Xun and Khwe San.

Most people in Nyae Nyae Conservancy live in the 38 small villages based on the Jul'hoan *n!ore*, a territorial system in which land belongs to a family group. In the past, a *n!ore* was an area of land providing enough game, veldfood and water to support a band of 30-50 people. Rights of residence in a *n!ore* were inherited from both parents, and individuals also gained rights in other *n!oresi* (plural of *n!ore*) through marriage (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 58). The Jul'hoansi have adapted the *n!ore* system to modern circumstances, and still use it as the basis for land allocation and resource use. In Nyae Nyae, *n!oresi* generally include a small village, and each village is referred to by the named of the applicable *n!ore*.

A further important aspect of the Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoan community is that they had a recognised traditional authority (TA) and a chief, Tsamkxao |Oma, also known widely as "Chief Bobo", with general legitimacy – this is discussed in the section on political participation on page 127.

Historical background

Before 1960 there were about 250 Ju|'hoansi living semi-permanently in what is now Tsumkwe District (including both the Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancy areas), but by 1993 the overall number of people had increased to around 5700. The increase was partly due to the settlement of around 4000 northern !Xun in South African Defence Force (SADF) army camps – mostly in what is now N‡a Jaqna – before Independence in 1990 (Botelle and Rohde 1995: 11-17). Between 1959 and the early 1970s, many Ju|'hoansi moved from their *n!oresi* to the newly formed administrative centre of Tsumkwe. This move was encouraged by the South West Africa Administration, which aimed to provide people with wage labour, training in agriculture and animal husbandry, and medical care (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 9-10; see also Gordon and Douglas 2000 and Biesele and Hitchcock 2011 for descriptions of the history of the Nyae Nyae area).

About 900 people moved to Tsumkwe at this time, but, despite the fact that jobs and infrastructure were provided, most of the Ju|'hoansi were unable to cope with the extensive social changes that the move brought about. Social disintegration was accompanied by dependency on a few wage earners, alcoholism and crime. The Tsumkwe *n*!ore could not sustain hunting and gathering by such a large number of people, and food resources near the administrative centre came to be severely depleted (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 10). At this time, Tsumkwe town became known by the Ju|'hoansi as 'the place of death' (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 10).

In 1969, "Bushmanland" was created as a homeland under the Odendaal Plan, South Africa's scheme for creating apartheid-style homelands in Namibia. This designation confined the Jul'hoansi to less than 10% of their original hunting territory – which had once extended to the north into the area that is now Khaudum National Park, south into G|am and across the border into Botswana – and left them access to only a few permanent water sources (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 17). Much of the Jul'hoan land was designated as part of "Kavangoland" to the north and "Hereroland" to the south.

In 1981, anthropologist and filmmaker John Marshall set up a 'cattle fund' to help Ju|'hoan people move away from Tsumkwe and back to their *n!oresi*, and to develop a mixed economy of subsistence

cattle farming and dry-land cultivation to supplement hunting and gathering in the *n!oresi*. John Marshall also established an NGO called the Ju|Wa Bushman Development Foundation (JBDF), which later became, and today remains, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN). In 1986 the JBDF assisted the Ju|'hoansi to establish a local community-based organisation (CBO), the Ju|Wa Farmers' Union, which later became the Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative (NNFC), a CBO that transitioned into the Nyae Nyae Conservancy in 1998. Through a management committee supported by the JBDF, the NNFC provided some basic services to its members, acted as a voice for the community to communicate with government and other outsiders, and allocated land according to the *n!ore* system to applicants who wanted to move back to the land, and to Ju|'hoansi who wanted to move in from other areas.

Officials of the South West Africa (SWA) Administration, including conservation officers, resisted the move back to the *nloresi*, largely due to concerns relating to hunting and the use of water points created for wildlife. In addition, the SWA Administration had planned to establish a game reserve to the east of Tsumkwe, which would have meant depriving people of their land. The Jul'hoansi and the JBDF successfully resisted the planned game reserve, and several Jul'hoan families subsequently settled at water points designated for wildlife (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 17-18).

Box 5.1: Land policies in post-Independent Namibia

The Nyae Nyae area played an important role in the development of post-Independence Namibian land policies.^a By the time of Independence in 1990, the issue of land reform was a matter of pressing concern for the new SWAPO government, which needed to transition from the apartheid homelands – including the former Bushmanland – to a more just land tenure system. In Bushmanland, the SADF's withdrawal left inhabitants extremely vulnerable economically. Despite concerns among the Ju|'hoansi about their relationship with SWAPO after their association with the SADF during the war for independence, the new government was aware of their difficult position, and in early 1991 started a resettlement and development programme, beginning in West Tsumkwe (now N‡a Jaqna Conservancy). Though well-intentioned, the land distribution planning was based on individual ownership of 5 ha plots by male heads of households, rather than on the traditional *n!oresi* patterns of the !Xun and Ju|'hoan residents of the area. In eastern Bushmanland (now Nyae Nyae Conservancy), where people were already living in their *n!oresi*, the Ju|'hoansi protested and successfully resisted the implementation of such a model.

In 1991 the Namibian Government held the Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question, in which the Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative (NNFC) played an important role. In the time leading up to the conference, the Nyae Nyae Jul'hoansi prepared to defend their traditional land tenure system against the model that the government seemed prepared to implement in all communal areas (as it was already doing in West Tsumkwe) – a system based on a riverine, not desert, environment. The conference "provided the Jul'hoansi and other minority people an unparalleled chance to have their voices heard on the specific topic of alternative land use models" (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 141), and the Nyae Nyae Jul'hoansi used this opportunity to make an impassioned and effective argument in favour of maintaining their traditional land-use system. It was agreed that the *nlore* system would be used as the land-allocation model in the area in future. Largely based on the participation of the Jul'hoansi in this conference, the Nyae Nyae area became a pilot for a national project in land-use planning based on community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), and eventually, in 1998, this area became the first registered Namibian conservancy.

^a For a detailed description of these processes, see Biesele and Hitchcock 2011, on which much of this description is based.

In 1998 the NNFC was replaced by the Nyae Nyae Conservancy – the first Namibian communal conservancy – which has become the focal point for most donor and NGO support to the Ju|'hoansi of the area. The main NGO assisting the conservancy is the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN). The residents of Nyae Nyae Conservancy have many advantages over other San in Namibia – including control over their own land, a support NGO based in Windhoek, and some access to mother-tongue education. However, they remain poor and vulnerable to exploitation by other ethnic groups, especially in the town of Tsumkwe. Those living in the conservancy villages report a higher level of wellbeing than those living in Tsumkwe, but fear the encroachment of neighbouring groups onto their land.

Throughout the past two decades, the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae have successfully defended their land and land-use strategies several times, in the face of both inappropriate government land distribution plans and incoming groups wishing to use the land as grazing for their cattle. Ju|'hoan leaders have consistently argued for the need to maintain a careful balance between livestock and wildlife, in order not to deplete the land, as has happened in adjacent areas and elsewhere in the country (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011).

In 2013, Nyae Nyae Conservancy also became a gazetted Community Forest under Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) legislation. This status gives the conservancy members rights over the forest products (plants) and grazing resources, and increases the community's control of forest resources within the community forest boundary, therefore it provides additional legal protection against external exploitation.

Land-use strategies and vulnerability to neighbouring groups

The Ju|'hoansi traditionally relied on an extremely low-impact hunting and gathering lifestyle. They did alter the landscape, for example by burning grass to promote new growth to attract game, and by their usage patterns of plant products, but the effects of their land-use activities were not immediately visible, and consequently the land could easily appear to be 'unused' – especially to cattle herders looking for grass on which to graze their animals. In Nyae Nyae, the Ju|'hoansi have therefore long been defending their territory from the invasion of Herero cattle herders, and this struggle continues at the time of writing.

On both sides of the Namibia-Botswana border, the Ju|'hoansi live in very close proximity to Herero cattle farmers. After Namibian Independence in 1990, Herero farmers who had fled the German army and settled in Botswana in the early 20th century returned to Namibia, where they were provided with land to the south of Nyae Nyae, around G|am. Several times since, the G|am farmers have tried to move their cattle to the waterholes in the eastern part of Nyae Nyae, but have been evicted by local government authorities and the Ju|'hoansi themselves.

The most recent invasion was in 2009 when a group of Herero farmers cut the Veterinary Cordon Fence – commonly referred to as the "Red Line" – that separates Nyae Nyae from G|am and invaded Nyae Nyae with over 1 000 head of cattle. The fence separates certified disease-free cattle in the south from the (potentially) infected areas to the north. Because of this, the cattle could not simply be driven back, and the government confiscated them. However, rather than simply return to G|am, the cattle-less Herero farmers settled in Tsumkwe. At the time of our field research they were reported to be amassing cattle, intimidating Jul'hoan residents, and illegally using conservancy resources such as grass for their cattle and wood for fencing.

This problem was of great concern to the Jul'hoansi at the time of our field research. In particular they were worried about the unsustainable use of resources. The land-use strategy of Nyae Nyae



Conservancy, and the livelihoods of the Ju|'hoansi, depend on maintaining a careful balance between conserving wildlife and plant resources for their own use and for tourism, and engaging in small-scale cultivation of plants and limited livestock. The Ju|'hoansi are very aware of the vulnerability of their subsistence strategy to large numbers of cattle, and they are also aware that the law does not give the Herero a right to be on their land. Their concern is clearly summarised in a statement made by |Un ('Kiewiet'), a Ju|'hoan elder and former conservancy chairperson, shortly after the invasion:

"I thought ... that we had made one law; that we had our *nlore* and they had theirs. And we, what has been sustaining us, is our wildlife. We have hunters. And we also have people who make ostricheggshell beadwork and sell it. And we have people who collect *kamaku* [Devil's Claw] roots and sell them. It's a business of ours, and as I now see it, that business is going to die soon. If the G|am farmers still stay with us here, it will die. ... You know that we are people who walk about on the land. We look for things like *ca*, *chon*, *||xaru* [veld root foods that grow in the sand] ... we live from these things. And if there are a lot of cattle here, we won't see those things again ... their stalks will be pressed down and killed [by the cattle's hooves] and there will be nothing we can do about it. ... We have nothing else we can continue to do. There will be no hunting. And foreigners who came here from other lands to hunt will stop coming" (27 June 2009, interviewed by M. Biesele)

Nyae Nyae Conservancy is the only place in southern Africa today where a San group has had the opportunity to define its own land-use strategy and retains the right to hunt traditionally. The conservancy community has chosen to maintain a low-intensity land-use plan that incorporates a diversity of livelihood strategies, traditional and modern. The importance of maintaining this opportunity cannot be overstated.

5.2.2 Research sites in Nyae Nyae Conservancy

To represent the different sets of circumstances of conservancy residents, the researchers selected three sites for the study in Nyae Nyae Conservancy: Tsumkwe, ||Xa|hoba and N‡animh. Tsumkwe was selected because it is a relatively large town and an administrative centre with government

offices and services, which makes it considerably different from the surrounding villages. Although Tsumkwe, as a municipality, is not officially part of the conservancy, many conservancy members reside there permanently or temporarily, and it is the administrative centre of the whole area including the conservancy.

||Xa|hoba was selected for the research because several people in Nyae Nyae reported it to be one of the most "successful" villages in the conservancy, and N‡animh was selected as it was reported to be one of the "poorest" villages in the conservancy. In the context of Nyae Nyae, however, it must be borne in mind that there is not a great deal of differentiation among community members wherever they live in the conservancy. In the wealth-ranking exercises, conservancy members consistently ranked almost all Ju|'hoansi within the lowest (poorest) categories (see subsection on perceptions of poverty on page 117). The main characteristics of the three research sites in Nyae Nyae are summarised in Table 5.1.

Research site	Urban/rural status	Land tenure	San language groups	Population status (numerical)	Institutional support	
					GRN	NGOs
Tsumkwe	Administrative centre for Tsumkwe District, with government offices and some services	Town land	Primarily Ju 'hoansi, with some !Xun and Khwe San	San majority with Owambo, Kavango, Herero and Afrikaner minorities. (Most paid employment positions are occupied by people of the other ethnic groups.)	Government services include: • clinic • school • magistrate's court • police station • electricity and water	 Indirect support to conservancy members through NNDFN assistance to conservancy Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS) support for education
Xa hoba	A remote rural village	Communal land (a <i>n!ore</i> under the local tenure system)	Ju 'hoansi	San-only community	Village School for Grades 1-3 (i.e. one of the schools in the Village Schools Project – see Box 5.3 on page 123); otherwise no support other than normal rural services	 Indirect support through NNDFN assistance to conservancy NAMAS support for education in general and for the Village School. Living Culture Foundation support to the Living Hunters Museum
N‡animh	A remote rural village	Communal land (a <i>n!ore</i> under the local tenure system)	Ju 'hoansi	San-only community	No support other than normal rural services	 Indirect support through NNDFN assistance to conservancy NAMAS support for education

Table 5.1: Main characteristics of the Nyae Nyae Conservancy research sites

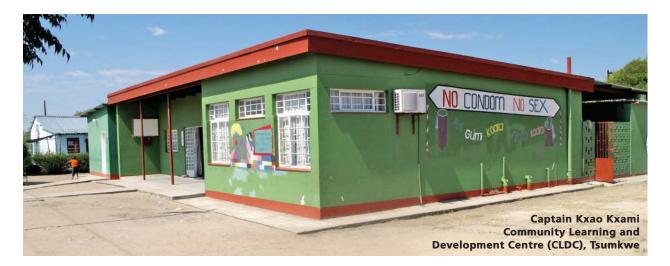
Tsumkwe

Tsumkwe, located in the middle of Nyae Nyae Conservancy, is the administrative centre for the whole of Tsumkwe District (encompassing Tsumkwe East and Tsumkwe West). Currently Tsumkwe has a population of 2 000-3 000 (Diemand 2010 et al.: 4).⁶ The Ju|'hoan name for the town is *Tjum!*|*kui*, meaning 'poison arrows'. The Ju|'hoan ancestors used this name for Tsumkwe, which was formerly a *n!ore*, long before Europeans arrived in the area. Like 'Nyae Nyae' (i.e. *N*||*oaq!'ae*, or 'place of broken rocks'), 'Tsumkwe' is a Europeanised version of the original name, and Ju|'hoan residents continue to use their own place names when speaking their language.

As noted above, the majority of Tsumkwe's residents were Ju|'hoansi at the time of our field research. There were also small numbers of !Xun and Khwe San residents, and growing numbers of Owambo, Herero, Kavango and Afrikaner residents. The only administrative position of authority occupied by a San person was that of Local Government and Housing Officer.

Tsumkwe's physical infrastructure included a primary school, a secondary school, a clinic, a magistrate's court, a community centre, an electricity generator (hybrid diesel/solar), a tourist lodge,⁷ government offices, social housing and government housing. People could purchase land from the town council or private owners on which to settle in Tsumkwe, and could build their own houses on the land acquired. In practice there were many informal settlements around Tsumkwe, most of which were occupied by Jul'hoansi. In these settlements people lived in makeshift shelters made of tree branches, plastic sheeting, blankets and other such materials. In recent years the Herero farmers from G|am also began to create their own informal settlements within the Tsumkwe municipal area (for a map, see Diemand et al. 2011: 6).

Services available in Tsumkwe included electricity (for those living in formal settlements and able to afford it), healthcare, education (primary, secondary and some adult education), agricultural extension, veterinary services, a Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) local station broadcasting in Ju|'hoansi, and a community centre, named Captain Kxao Kxami Community Learning and Development Centre (CLDC), built by the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS) and run by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The CLDC provides a meeting hall, a library, internet access, and services such as printing, although opening hours were irregular at the time of our field research.



⁶ The 2011 census did not provide specific data on Tsumkwe. Diemand et al., whose study was essentially an assessment of water supply and sanitation in Tsumkwe, derived this number through interviews with local administrators.

⁷ The Tsumkwe Country Lodge, owned by Namibia Country Lodges at the time of the research.

Water is available, but not everyone had access to it. There were only three free water taps in all of Tsumkwe; the rest were all metered and located at individual houses. To use these taps, people living in the informal settlements had to get the owners' permission, and usually had to pay. Sometimes they were able to access free water at the clinic.

In the immediate area around Tsumkwe, wildlife and veldfood have become depleted because of the impact of the large number of people living in the town and surrounding area, and the illegal livestock in the area. Participants in our focus group discussion (FGDs) reported that there had been two community gardens, but these were not very successful because of a shortage of seeds, a lack of tools and conflicts with incomers. They said that one of the gardens might end up producing some grapes, which they could sell in Tsumkwe.

||Xa|hoba

||Xa|hoba village is situated about 24 km north of Tsumkwe on the road to the Khaudum National Park. All of the villagers were Ju|'hoansi, and most were members of a single extended family. A few were incomers married to members of the village community. FGD participants said that there were 20 households in the village. One person who had married into the ||Xa|hoba community was from Grashoek, a Ju|'hoan village in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. Grashoek has a Living Museum tourism project (see photo on page 503), and this connection to Grashoek through marriage inspired ||Xa|hoba residents to begin a similar project in their own village.

The ||Xa|hoba community initiated their Living Hunters Museum in 2009, with the Living Culture Foundation providing some support in the form of training, advice, signage and some publicity for the project. With no other funds or support, the village residents were managing the project entirely by themselves at the time of our visit. When tourists arrived in the village, residents would change from their everyday clothes into traditional dress and take the visitors on a bush walk. They would also perform traditional dances and demonstrate other traditional activities in accordance with the tourists' interests. At least one resident was sufficiently proficient in English to be able to translate for the tourists. Money earned from each visit was divided among the residents who had participated in that particular visit, with a designated percentage going into a community fund that could be used to cover expenses for the benefit of the entire village. The existence of this project provided a measure of community self-sufficiency, and interest in traditional activities and in the tourism business was high in ||Xa|hoba.



As in all Nyae Nyae villages, there is very little infrastructure in ||Xa|hoba; the village has no clinic or government offices, no electricity supply and no communication infrastructure. However, one of the Village Schools (Grades 1-3 – see Box 5.3, page 123) supported by the MoE and NAMAS is located in ||Xa|hoba (described in the subsections on education and outside support, pages 121 and 131 respectively).

Water is pumped by solar power from a borehole which is protected from elephants by a stone wall. This equipment is serviced by the conservancy. The system was operational during our visit, and was reported to be generally working well, although sometimes young people allegedly used the power to charge their cellphones, causing the system to break down. Also, the borehole was about 1 km from the village (see next paragraph), making water transportation laborious. There was one small cultivated field being used by a few of the villagers. There were no cattle, but a few sheep remained from a Dutch Reformed Church project (described in the subsection on livestock farming, page 113).

||Xa|hoba is a traditional *n!ore*, but the village itself has moved a number of times. In the drought years of the early part of the new millennium, the water pump broke and ||Xa|hoba had no other source of water. Most of the residents relocated to ‡Om!o!o, a village near Tsumkwe, and the school in ||Xa|hoba was closed. In the years that followed, the borehole was repaired but then broke again, and people moved around depending on water availability, access to school, and other factors. Eventually a new borehole with a solar pump was installed, and in 2010 the school reopened. FGD participants reported that the area around the current borehole is not suitable for constructing a village – they said that there were too many stones there – so they moved the village to its current location about 1 km from both the borehole and the school. It is not uncommon for Ju|'hoansi to relocate their villages periodically, for environmental and social reasons.

N‡animh

The village of N‡animh is located 15 km east of Tsumkwe, along the C44, just off the northern side of the road. Residents said that N‡animh was also the name of the *n!ore*, but this name had no particular meaning. There was one small extended family living in the village, which has 14 registered conservancy members. The village had a borehole, with a submersible pump powered by solar panels. Nyae Nyae Conservancy provided this equipment and a mining prospecting company drilled the borehole. However, there was no water tank in which to store water, so the villagers were limited to watering their gardens when the sun was shining, with the result that the gardens failed; there was no functioning garden at the time of our visit. The nearest schools were those in Tsumkwe (one primary and one secondary) and the Village School (Grades 1-3) at Baraka.⁸ The nearest clinic was in Tsumkwe.

The people of N‡animh reported that they had been living at this site for the past two years. They had previously lived a little further away but the water level at the previous site had dropped, so they had moved to the present site where the borehole worked well. In N‡animh people were particularly concerned about the cattle of other ethnic groups coming onto their land, and they reported one incident of intimidation by a man who came onto their *n!ore*. They were aware that such 'encroachment by outsiders' was not allowed, so they considered this a violation of their rights (see also the subsection on rights issues, page 129).

⁸ The Village School at Baraka was closed at the time of writing this report.



5.2.3 Research findings in Nyae Nyae Conservancy

In this section we look at the livelihood strategies employed at the three research sites in Nyae Nyae Conservancy. After analysing the different options available to each community, we discuss the food security of the San in general in this conservancy. Finally, we present the results of the poverty and wealth-ranking exercise conducted at each of the three sites.

Livelihoods and poverty

FGD participants at all three sites identified a wide range of livelihood strategies, food sources and income-generating options available to them (see Table 5.2). The most important sources of food were government food aid,⁹ Old Age Pensions (used mainly to purchase food) and veldfood. Supplementary livelihood strategies included selling crafts, other tourism activities, small-scale cultivation, livestock farming, Devil's Claw harvesting, employment or piecework (reported mostly by Tsumkwe residents) and hunting. The conservancy cash benefit was also mentioned everywhere as an important source of additional income, and the meat from trophy hunters' kills was said to provide an important source of food. Finally, sharing of resources was an important resource-distribution strategy mentioned at all three sites.

It should be noted that in Nyae Nyae, some of these subsistence options – notably those based on the interconnected opportunities provided by wildlife, tourism and the conservancy itself –

⁹ It did not become clear during the FGDs whether the food received from the government was channelled through the San Feeding Programme of the Office of the Prime Minister or the Drought Relief Programme.

are available to an extent that is unparalleled in any other area where San are living in Namibia. The presence of wildlife attracts tourists and also enables traditional own-use hunting, and trophy hunting provides some income and makes additional meat available, in that meat from trophy kills is distributed on a rotational basis throughout the conservancy. Some villages are able to derive fairly regular income from tourism (see details in descriptions below). For example, FGD participants in N‡animh reported drawing an income from craft sales, and in ||Xa|hoba the Living Hunters Museum provided both employment and a pool of funds to cover village expenses. It was also reported that people at other villages (which were not specifically included in our research) danced for tourists and took them on bush walks on an ad hoc basis. Villages such as Djoxhoe and Makuri received fees from tourists who stayed at rudimentary campsites. In addition, with the income that the conservancy earned – largely from fees paid by holders of concessions for big-game hunting – it was able to provide an annual cash payment to all conservancy members.

Livelihood strategies	Tsumkwe	Xa Xoba	N‡animh
Food aid			
Old Age Pension money	Many	Some	2
Gathering veldfood			
Hunting – own use			
Meat from trophy hunting			
Tourism project		Living Hunters Museum	
Craft sales			
Traditional dancing			
Cultivation			Previously, not currently
Sale of garden produce			
Livestock		Sheep and chickens	Sheep
Full-time jobs	Many	3	
Part-time jobs	Many	7	1
Piecework	Many		
Devil's Claw harvesting			
Conservancy cash benefit (per member per annum)	N\$400	N\$400	N\$400
Sharing			

Table 5.2: Main livelihood strategies at the Nyae Nyae Conservancy research sites*

* The order in which the strategies are presented does not necessarily reflect their importance. The cell shading indicates that the strategy is employed at the applicable site.

The following descriptions provide more detail about each of the sources of food and/or income listed in Table 5.2. As the importance of each source varies somewhat according to site and time of year, there is no absolute order of importance. However, it should be emphasised that, as stated above, in all research sites, food aid, Old Age Pensions and wild foods were described as providing the staple foods and basic income upon which people relied.

Food aid

FGD participants at all three sites reported being dependent on food aid as a main dietary staple, but information regarding the delivery of food aid, and what was included, was inconsistent. This was probably because the amount, type and supplier of government food aid changes periodically. Therefore, at most of the San Study research sites across the country, people were unclear about what they were supposed to get on a regular basis, how often, and who was entitled to it.

In Tsumkwe, people said that food was delivered once a month (some said twice, but the scheduled delivery is once a month), and consisted of two 12.5 kg bags of maize-meal per household. People said that in the past, food aid had also included cooking oil, beans and fish in addition to maize-meal, thus there had been no need to buy any additional food. At the time of our field research, however, the food aid consisted only of maize-meal, and some participants claimed that the food aid was going to people in Tsumkwe who were not supposed to get it, including people who had their own businesses.

In ||Xa|hoba, people said that they had received food aid once a month for the past two years. The food aid was most important for them from November to January, being the period when they were most hungry because the veldfood was only just starting to germinate, and the veldfood which they had stored was finished. This is also the low season for tourism, a main source of income for the village. Some people said that they also work in the cultivated field during this period (see below).

In N‡animh, people said that they received food aid every month when the government transported it to all of the villages, and there were no problems with delivery. Although they sometimes bought maize-meal to supplement their supply, the food aid usually sufficed to fulfil their needs.

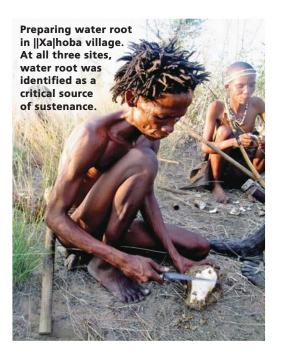
The Local Government Officer in Tsumkwe said that the food aid was provided only during some months of the year – in 2011, for example, it started in May and stopped in August – but he did not know the reason for such irregularity in the delivery schedule. According to him, the food aid consisted of two 12.5 kg bags of maize-meal, cooking oil and four tins of fish per household per month. He emphasised that the aim was to supplement what the community already had, not to provide all the food that people needed. Food was first delivered to the villages because there were no shops nearby, and then to Tsumkwe. He said that every community had received food during the August 2011 distribution.

The same officer said that food aid was intended for unemployed people who had been registered, and that although these were primarily San, recipients also included some non-San. Regarding the complaints that non-eligible people were receiving food aid, he said that it was possible that some unregistered people received food aid if they demanded it, and/or if the distributors felt sorry for them, but he reiterated that owners of businesses were not supposed to receive food aid. He said that one problem was the Ju|'hoansi not always arriving at the right time when the food was distributed, which meant that they could miss their allocation. To preclude this problem, the government was thinking of changing the distribution system so as to drop off the food at houses or central points in each community, whereupon the local leader would distribute it using a list of registered recipients.

As in other places in Namibia, there were rumours that some people were selling their food aid, which is not allowed, but the Local Government Officer emphasised that this was not a widespread practice in Nyae Nyae, and anyway, in the few cases of which he was aware, maize-meal was sold in order to purchase other kinds of food. Our research found that food aid – especially the maize-meal – is currently a critical food source for many Jul'hoansi in Nyae Nyae, and it is not being sold for cash on a large scale. Until other food sources are consistently available, food aid should be continued and ideally diversified to give recipients a more balanced diet.

Veldfood

At every research site in Nyae Nyae, veldfood – food obtained from the bush – formed an important part of the residents' diet. Although veldfood can refer both to hunted meat and gathered plant foods, in this section we focus on plant foods, as hunting is discussed below. At each site, FGD



participants provided a detailed list of veldfoods that they consumed on a regular basis – these are listed in Table 5.3 below. This food was very important to every San community of Nyae Nyae, not only because all of them needed it for sustenance, but also because both hunting and gathering are part of the San culture.

Even though veldfood had become scarce around the town of Tsumkwe, all 10 of the women present in the discussion there said that they gathered veldfood, and that they ate five particular veldfoods on a daily basis. Participants in ||Xa|hoba did not specify the veldfoods that they gathered, but they described veldfood as "the kind of food eaten most often", and they ate two kinds daily. Participants in N‡animh said that they ate veldfoods every day, and they listed many foods that are available seasonally.

It must be noted that the lists of veldfoods provided at each site (see Table 5.3) are not exhaustive, as other recent studies found that Nyae Nyae residents consume a wide variety of veldfoods (Leffers 2003; and Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 44). It should also be noted that our research was conducted in November, being the end of the dry season when veldfood is at its lowest availability. Finally, it is important to note that veldfood consumption varies from site to site in Nyae Nyae, according to availability in different parts of the conservancy. For example, Wiessner (2004) found that veldfood availability, and hence consumption, was often very low in the south-eastern part of Nyae Nyae (which was not included in our study).

In N‡animh in particular, people relied on veldfood to support their livelihoods. Although they reported that there were not enough animals to hunt because the elephants were chasing them away, they also said that there was enough food and game in the *nlore* to fulfil their needs. Furthermore, they reported that there had never been a time in the past when there was not enough to hunt or gather, except during the dry season when they had to search for foods which had become scarce. Thus in some villages, people depended greatly on veldfood in the absence of other resources. Some people also noted that hunting and gathering are activities that San much enjoy.

Frequency/importance	Tsumkwe	Xa hoba	N‡animh
Important veldfoods eaten daily/seasonally	Less veldfood is available in the dry season, but the foods listed below were still said to be eaten "daily".	Veldfood in general is described as "the food eaten most often", but specific varieties were not recorded.	Eaten daily: • Wild onions • Baobab fruits • Wild sweet potatoes • Roots
	Eaten daily: • Dja • N!ang • G uiag • G‡oq • Ca (wild sweet potato)	Eaten daily: • Water roots • Wild onions	Eaten in season: • Wild potatoes • Roots • Mangetti nuts • Berries • Mopane worms
Veldfood eaten occasionally	Hunted game meat (kudu and eland)	Hunted game meat (types not specified)	 Wild honey Hunted game meat (porcupine, springhare, kudu and other antelope)

 Table 5.3: Veldfoods consumed at the Nyae Nyae Conservancy research sites

Hunting

Nyae Nyae Conservancy is the exception among all areas in Namibia where San are living in that the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) explicitly accepts hunting in the traditional manner on conservancy land. However, hunters must comply with the 'traditional hunting' regulations which the conservancy and the MET have put in place – although some San consider the MET's definition of 'traditional' to be too narrow. The regulations permit the use of tools such as bows, spears and traps only; they forbid the use of guns, horses and dogs; and they restrict hunting of certain species. In Tsumkwe, FGD participants said that although everyone may hunt, the game was becoming scarce, and because there were few animals around Tsumkwe, they hunted only when they went back to their villages. These participants also said that the men were forgetting their hunting skills, and because the young men lacked these skills, hunting was declining. In ||Xa|hoba and N‡animh, however, young men reported hunting regularly.

Old Age Pensions

As is the case with other San communities, the Old Age Pension of N\$550 per month was an important source of cash, particularly for the poorest families.¹⁰ Tsumkwe residents said pension money was important for buying things – but that it did not go very far because goods were becoming more expensive. People in both||Xa|hoba and N‡animh also reported that Old Age Pension money was important and used for buying food.

However, there were some problems reported with accessing the pension money. People in Tsumkwe said that collecting the money could be a problem for those who lived in the villages: if they missed collecting it on the day that it was paid out, they lost that payment. Residents said the "paymasters" went only to the villages close to the main road, and people living in more distant villages had to come to Tsumkwe to collect the money. It could cost up to N\$400 to get a lift to Tsumkwe from a village to collect a pension worth N\$500. This meant that many Nyae Nyae residents who were eligible for an Old Age Pension were not in fact collecting their money.

Another problem commonly reported was that most pensioners were illiterate and did not understand the value of money, thus money was easily taken from them. The most problematic situation was at the shebeens, where pensioners or their family members would make purchases on credit and sometimes end up owing more than they could afford to pay back. It was commonly reported that shebeen owners would stand at pension distribution centres and take the whole pension amount collected by a pensioner to pay off his/her debt. The Local Government Officer emphasised that this was not allowed,¹¹ and that efforts were being made to control this practice. According to him, the problem was directly related to the fact that people from the villages had to come to Tsumkwe to collect their pension money (as well as documents such as birth and death certificates). Being dependent on lifts to get to Tsumkwe, they usually had to stay there for several days, during which they often paid for alcohol or food on credit, thus effectively spending their pension money even before receiving it.

The Local Government Officer said that many problems relating to the collection of pensions could be solved by distributing the money in the villages rather than in Tsumkwe. The conservancy

¹⁰ The Old Age Pension grant was raised in 2013 to N\$600 per month.

¹¹ We did not get information on legal regulations specifically addressing this issue, but government officials generally acknowledged that shebeens were not permitted to sell alcohol on credit, or to forcibly collect pension money as repayment.

had formally requested that payments be made in the villages to solve these problems, but at the time of writing, the payments were still made only in Tsumkwe.

Tourism-related income

Craft sales

The sale of crafts was particularly important in N‡animh, where no one had a job. Along with Old Age Pensions, the sale of crafts was the main source of income for this village community. Some of the men described selling crafts as being "like a project that sustains our livelihoods". Every family received income from craft sales, but men and women crafted different items. The men mostly carved tortoises from *Commiphora* wood, which they sold for N\$30-50, depending on the size of the finished product. They said that they could earn up to N\$200-300 a week from crafts if they worked hard, although their income also depended on buyers. They sold most items to the conservancy-run craft shop in Tsumkwe, and the professional hunter's wife also bought items from them,¹² but in some months they could not sell more than one item. A participant explained: "We want to look for a proper place to sell the craft so we can get more income. Sometimes the craft shop doesn't have money to buy, so then we sell for less money than we get from the craft shop."

Women in N‡animh said they made crafts such as necklaces from ostrich eggshells and *tambuti* wood. Sometimes, if they were lucky, they found the eggshells in the bush; otherwise they could buy them from the craft shop. They also sold glass-bead jewellery on the street or to the craft shop. Buyers paid different prices for the same items: they might receive N\$20 from the craft shop or the professional hunter's wife, N\$10 from members of other ethnic groups in Tsumkwe, or N\$50 from tourists whom they encountered on the street in Tsumkwe.



¹² Presumably to re-sell, although we did not get first-hand information about this.

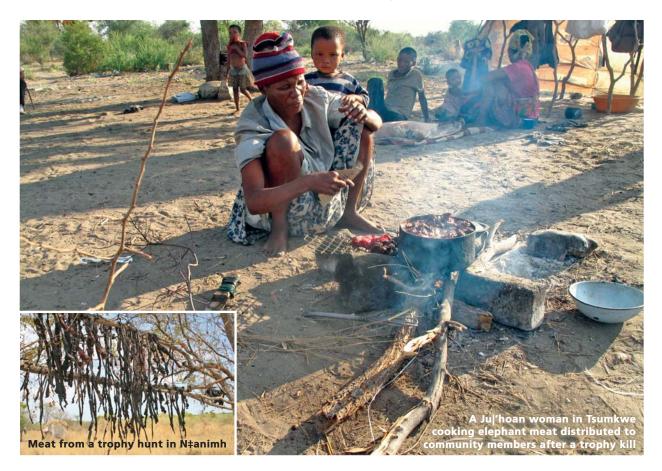
In ||Xa|hoba, both men and women made crafts, and young girls learned from their mothers, but young boys were not involved in craft production. All seven women who participated in the ||Xa|hoba FGD made crafts, which they sold to visiting tourists, not to the conservancy craft shop.

NNDFN data shows that the conservancy-run craft shop in Tsumkwe paid out a total of N\$115000 to craftmakers in Nyae Nyae as a whole in 2010.¹³ Crafts were produced throughout the year, every year, primarily by women, but the villages further away from Tsumkwe and the craft shop produced fewer items because it was more difficult for them to find buyers.

Trophy hunting

Trophy hunting is a major source of income for Nyae Nyae Conservancy. The conservancy has a quota of big game animals that it is allowed to kill each year. The MET determines this quota, taking into careful consideration the sustainable management of wildlife in the area. The MET also decides which animals are for trophy hunting and which are for own-use hunting and meat for the community. Every five years the conservancy can decide whether it wants to call for tenders for the "concession" that gives a selected trophy hunter exclusive rights to bring clients to hunt in Nyae Nyae, who pay high sums to shoot specific animals within the conservancy's quota. The conservancy can also decide to retain the incumbent trophy hunter.

This arrangement benefits the conservancy members in several ways. Firstly, the trophy hunter employs some Ju|'hoansi as trackers, whose income supports them and their extended families. Secondly, meat from trophy kills is distributed on a rotational basis, with all villages benefiting. (We witnessed meat from a buffalo and an elephant being distributed at various sites.) Finally, as



¹³ This does not include income earned for crafts old elsewhere.

the concession amounts paid by the trophy hunter are substantial, they allow for the redistribution of funds to conservancy members in the form of a cash benefit.

Tourism projects

Several villages have been able to take advantage of tourism in the conservancy by operating small tourism projects, which take different forms: the Living Hunters Museum in ||Xa|hoba, described above, is one example of a fairly successful project run virtually entirely by the community. ||Xa|hoba residents reported receiving a number of benefits from the museum: four people were employed to manage various aspects of the project; crafts were sold to tourists; and individuals had the opportunity to participate in activities for the tourists and earn money. For each payment made by tourists, 10% went to a village fund and 90% was divided among those who were directly involved in interacting with the tourists and those who managed the project.¹⁴ The 2011 accounts indicate that village income could reach N\$20000 per month during the high season for tourism (NNDFN).

Other villages have set up campsites and/or traditional villages, with various levels of input from NGOs, the lodge in Tsumkwe and youth-volunteer organisations. The conservancy has a standard camping fee of N\$20 per night, and most villages will prepare a campsite for tourists passing through. Most villagers are also willing to perform traditional dances to earn extra money.

Employment for cash

Piecework

The main opportunities for piecework (or casual work) are in Tsumkwe, where Ju|'hoansi carry out small tasks for people from other ethnic groups – usually fetching water or firewood in exchange for cash or sometimes alcohol. Sometimes temporary work is available on building-construction sites and road-maintenance sites. FGD participants generally considered such work to be exploitative, but said that people felt compelled to seek such work when they needed cash and had no other options.

Employment

The main sources of employment in Nyae Nyae Conservancy are government jobs, hunting/tourism jobs, and jobs for the conservancy itself. In Tsumkwe, FGD participants said that some local Ju|'hoansi were employed by the government as teachers in the Village Schools Project, as cleaners in the school hostels, as police officers, in various low-ranking positions in the government offices, and in the traditional authority (TA). A private mining company had employed a few people, and a few were employed by the conservancy itself. Four of the six men and two of the 10 women present in the FGD were employed (three by the conservancy, one by the mining company and two by the TA). In ||Xa|hoba, FGD participants said that three people had full-time jobs (one as a conservancy ranger and two as employees of the professional hunter) and seven had part-time jobs (one man provided adult literacy classes from April to November, and six people had occasional employment in the Living Hunters Museum). The Village School in ||Xa|hoba had two teachers at the time of our visit, neither of whom were Ju|'hoansi. In N‡animh, the only person with a job was a man who worked part-time as a tracker for the professional hunter.

¹⁴ They also said that they would give 5% to the conservancy in the future, and the conservancy would use this money for cash payouts to benefit the other villagers.

Overall, few Ju|'hoansi in Nyae Nyae had full-time employment. The main barrier was a lack of formal qualifications. Discussion participants reported that the government required a Grade 10 pass at least, even for unskilled labour. But FGD participants in Tsumkwe said that even if they had a Grade 10 pass or higher qualifications, jobs were given to people from other ethnic groups. For example, during our visit to Nyae Nyae, a group of Ju|'hoan women sent a letter to the Regional Education Office complaining that non-Ju|'hoan women had been given the two advertised positions as cleaners at the primary school hostel. The Ju|'hoan matron of the Tsumkwe Primary School hostel – one of the few Ju|'hoansi employed by the school, summarised the content of this letter as follows:



"The San people are supposed to be the first ones to get jobs, because it is their place. But when they were hiring cleaners at the primary school, a Kavango and a Herero got the job – even though there were many Jul'hoansi who applied. When the Jul'hoan ladies asked why they were not hired for the positions, the principal said to them, 'Why can you not find jobs elsewhere, in other parts of the country? Blacks also have to do that – they go out of their area to find work.' The ladies responded, "How can we get a lift? And how would we survive? We don't have relatives there. We want the posts in Tsumkwe."

Farming

Cultivation (gardening)

Only a few residents at each site were cultivating food plants. In Tsumkwe some residents had small gardens at their homes, from which they produced some food for household consumption and occasionally were able to sell a small surplus. Among our research sites in Nyae Nyae, cultivation appeared to be most successful in ||Xa|hoba village, where five households were harvesting beans, groundnuts and maize. These households had received training from the NNDFN and the MAWF, but this training was provided in a central location rather than in their home village, with the result that many households did not participate. (FGD participants said that other households would be interested in this training were it to be provided in the village.)

N‡animh had had a small village garden which produced cabbages, onions, tomatoes and carrots in the past, but cultivation ceased in 2009 (two years before our field research). FGD participants provided the following explanation: the community had a solar pump (i.e. one that worked only when the sun was out), but lacked a water tank in which to store the water, and residents were advised to water the plants in the morning or evening, but without a tank this was not possible so their cultivation efforts failed. They had last planted in 2009, but did not reap any produce that year, so they stopped cultivating. Participants said that the conservancy had provided poles and wire for the garden, and had promised to bring a tank to store the water, but had not done so. We later found out that some tanks, including the one intended for N‡animh, were with the MAWF Directorate of Rural Water Supply, and the conservancy had not been permitted to install them. This situation provides a good example of a relatively small intervention (the installation of a water tank, which was already available) that could make a big difference in people's ability to produce food, but which has not happened because of poor coordination between the stakeholders involved.

According to the NNDFN Natural Resource Management (NRM) Officer, there has been a steady, if uneven, increase in agricultural production in Nyae Nyae. In some villages the amount of land used, and the yield, increases every year, but in other villages people struggle to grow crops and

often give up – mainly due to a lack of access to water and partly due to a lack of community ownership, according to the NNDFN NRM Officer. He emphasised the need to approach the shift to gardening as a *process* that any community starting such an endeavour would have to go through:

"It is a process; it happens in stages. With gardening, it was difficult, but now some guys are doing well, they speak at workshops and explain to others. There is more ownership, they see the benefits, they are in charge. But I think it is the whole thing of experience: you have to go through these stages; there are arguments in the villages over things, but then things stabilize and they feel they have that ownership of projects."

According to the MAWF, the government subsidises *mahangu* (pearl millet) cultivation – through the provision of seeds packaged in bulk for distribution to communities – because *mahangu* is a crop that grows easily, is resistant to drought and is nutritious. However, several stages of preparation must be completed before *mahangu* can be eaten, and people in Nyae Nyae are unfamiliar with this process. According to the NNDFN NRM Officer, among Nyae Nyae residents the preferred crop is beans, followed by groundnuts and corn, because these are the easiest crops to grow and prepare. Indeed, these three crops have proved to be the most successful in Nyae Nyae, and consequently there is a strong sense of community ownership over these crops.

Livestock farming

In the past, some Ju|'hoansi received different types of livestock through NGOs and the former Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative, and they managed the livestock with mixed success: some people slaughtered cattle for meat during hard times, or a lack of water forced them to slaughter; others lacked herding skills and their cattle were lost or eaten by predators; and some individuals and communities had managed to build up small herds. The NNDFN is currently supporting a new livestock management programme based on holistic rangeland management techniques.

Although livestock farming had been a focal area of activity for the conservancy, and some villages had farmed livestock very successfully, livestock was not mentioned as an important livelihood strategy at any of the Nyae Nyae research sites. At both N‡animh and ||Xa|hoba there were a few sheep, which the Dutch Reformed Church had provided as part of a project. This project entailed:

(a) selecting people from each village to attend a training course on rearing sheep; (b) having these trainees teach others in their villages how to take care of sheep; and (c) letting each village decide how to allocate responsibility for the sheep, i.e. whether to own the sheep collectively or rather divide the flock among individuals and/or the families in the village. Different villages made different choices, but on the whole, allocating responsibility for the care of the sheep proved problematic, and many were either eaten by predators or lost (see also the subsection on the impact of external support, page 131).



Devil's Claw harvesting

Although not all villages in Nyae Nyae are involved in the harvesting Devil's Claw, this activity is an important source of income for the households that are involved. Harvesters must undergo training to ensure that the harvesting is sustainable, and then they can register with the conservancy

and receive a harvesting permit. According to the NNDFN, the Devil's Claw is organically certified and the conservancy has negotiated a three-year contract with a single buyer to ensure a consistent and fair price. In exchange for keeping the records, and as a facilitator of the process, the conservancy currently earns a commission of N\$4 per kilogram, paid annually.

According to NNDFN data for 2010, a total of N\$200000 was paid directly to the harvesters from about 20 villages. Both men and women engaged in harvesting in that year, and individual harvesters earned N\$21 per kilogram (and could receive a bonus of N\$3/kg if they harvested good-quality material). The total income earned from harvesting Devil's Claw was higher than the total earned from craft sales at the conservancy-run craft shop in 2010, which was N\$115000 (see page 110), despite the harvesting being seasonal, taking place for only four to five months of the year.

During our field research in Nyae Nyae, only residents of N‡animh reported receiving an income from Devil's Claw harvesting. They said that they normally harvested in winter. Harvesters must travel some distance from their village to find the plant, and generally spend several nights in the bush, often making a small camp.¹⁵ The N‡animh residents said that they sold the harvest to the conservancy buyer for N\$700 per bag, and it could take 4-6 weeks to collect one bag – the amount collected by each individual or family was variable. These residents said that generally the buyer purchases three times in a season, but in 2011 only twice.

Sharing

Sharing was identified as an important strategy for poor people and when times were hard. Several FGD participants said that "Jul'hoansi are sharing people", and that they were used to sharing the little they had instead of saving. The case of an assistant clerk at the aforementioned Captain Kxao Kxami Community Learning and Development Centre in Tsumkwe illustrates this characteristic. This man is one of the few salaried Jul'hoansi, earning N\$2 300 a month at the time of our visit. From this he was supporting:

- himself, his wife and their five children;
- his brother, his brother's wife and their five children;
- his wife's father and grandmother; and
- other children in his wife's family.

Almost all of his income was spent on food and clothing. He said that this did not bother him; it was not difficult for him to share because people also shared with him: "In the old days, there were no salaries, people just shared with each other, [and] it is the same today. If you have a salary you have to share. It is like sharing the meat that you get from hunting." Many people commented on the need to stay physically close to family because they would share their food with you if you were hungry.

Alcohol, food and livelihood

FGD participants and interviewees in Tsumkwe deemed alcohol to be a major problem in the town – where there were at least 17 shebeens – and this problem was linked to food security in a number of ways. People reported that it was often cheaper and easier to get a glass of *tombo* (home-brewed beer) than food, and "Shebeens mean human life destruction."

"People say that if you drink, you will not feel hungry."

- Local Government and Housing Officer, Tsumkwe

¹⁵ Wendy Viall, personal communication 2013

FGD participant, Tsumkwe

that the beer made the drinker feel full and forget his/her hunger. People thus spent their meagre resources on alcohol rather than on food. A particular problem was with the pensioners who came to Tsumkwe to collect their pension, only to spend most or all of it at the shebeens, or to find that their relatives had drunk away their pension on credit (see below, and the subsection on pensions above). Individual interviewees also reported that alcohol abuse causes many serious problems. Tsumkwe residents reported that people were weakened and became susceptible to TB if they drank a lot; that people lost their jobs because of absenteeism due to drinking; that drinking often led to violence and domestic abuse; and that young people went to the shebeens to drink and then dropped out of school. The chief and others said that they wanted the shebeens closed down because of the problems associated with drinking.

Drinking and its related issues were much less of a problem in the Nyae Nyae villages – where there are no shebeens and alcohol is not readily available – than in Tsumkwe.¹⁶ Nevertheless, people from the villages have to come to Tsumkwe for various reasons – to collect pensions, to purchase food and other items, to go to the clinic and to conduct any other official business – and once there, some find the shebeens difficult to resist:

"Sometimes you have some money and you go to do shopping in Tsumkwe, but you first go to a shebeen and then suddenly you find you have spent all the money you wanted to use for the shopping." (Resident of ||Xa|hoba village)

Some of the problems relating to shebeens are legal issues that should be addressed by local police. For example, according to the Local Government Officer in Tsumkwe, it is illegal to sell alcohol on credit or to take someone's pension to pay off his or her debt (or that of dependants). He said that the police have been instructed to take action on these issues, and that the government and other stakeholders were trying to address the problem of alcohol through various measures. One complication is that the existing government regulations cover only beer, wine and spirits; they make no mention of home-brewed alcoholic drinks such as *tombo* (the traditional beer) and *kashipembe* (a hard alcohol), which are primarily what San are consuming at the shebeens. He said that some form of regulation of traditional brews was therefore needed. Although many participants in our research proposed closing down the shebeens, the Local Government Officer said that this would require a collective decision based on the inputs of all relevant parties including shebeen owners, and that such a decision was unlikely. In the meantime they could operate freely, as long as they did so legally. He suggested that stricter hours for shebeens could be one measure taken to curb their negative influence, and another could be a shebeen owners' coalition for responsible drinking, which might be able to exert some influence over the operations of its members.

Ju|'hoan FGD participants very frequently mentioned alcohol as a problem related to livelihood and food security because people used up their Old Age Pensions or other money to pay for it. Although the Ju|'hoan participants did not specifically mention the relationship between alcohol consumption and lack of employment, it was noted in interviews that people frequently lost jobs because of incidents related to alcohol. This also fed into negative stereotyping of the Ju|'hoansi and may have made employers less willing to employ them (Diez, personal communication). In many ways, as for many impoverished peoples in Namibia and elsewhere, alcohol consumption becomes a significant part of the cycle of poverty.

¹⁶ A simple explanation for this is that there are no Ju|'hoansi involved in the business of selling or transporting alcohol. As only conservancy members – most of whom are Ju|'hoansi – are allowed to live in the villages, alcohol is not a problem there. A deeper explanation for this scenario in Nyae Nyae as opposed to other parts of the country goes beyond the scope of this report; what is relevant here is the virtually unanimous opinion that alcohol is not available, and is thus not a problem, in Nyae Nyae villages.

Research site	Eaten daily	Eaten regularly	Eaten when available	Eaten rarely
Tsumkwe	 Maize-meal Beans Cooking oil Salt Soup Veldfoods (in season)* 	 Bread (made or bought) Veldfoods (in the dry season this is less plentiful, so is eaten less)* 	 Game meat from trophy hunters (elephant) and local hunters* Produce from own gardens: carrots, spinach, cabbage, tomatoes 	 Rice Macaroni Chicken
Xa Xoba	 Maize-meal Veldfoods* 	 Store-bought foods: sugar, tea, macaroni rice, milk Produce from own gardens: groundnuts, beans, mealies (cobs) 	 Hunted game meat* Tinned meat Flour Mahango (millet) from cultivated gardens 	 Cabbage Onions <i>Motete</i> (sour leaves – bought)
N‡animh	 Maize-meal Veldfoods* 	 Meat from trophy hunters Veldfoods (seasonal)* 	 Store-bought foods: tea, sugar, soup, tinned meat/fish, biscuits, sweets, chips** Wild honey Hunted game meat* 	Vegetables (bought or cultivated)

Table 5.4: Frequency of consumption of foodstuffs at the Nyae Nyae research sites

* See Table 5.3 for specific veldfoods eaten.

** Eaten when they have the money to buy them.

What is striking in Table 5.4 is that at each site, maize-meal and veldfoods were listed as foods 'eaten on a daily basis', i.e. the most important foodstuffs. This means that people in all three of these places – and presumably in other parts of Nyae Nyae – were relying on gathered food and food aid for their daily subsistence. Maize-meal was a staple food eaten daily; it was acquired mainly through food aid, but was also bought when cash was available. Few people grew their own maize, or other food, on a large scale.

Table 5.4 also indicates the importance of veldfood, which was eaten on a daily basis at all three sites (see Table 5.3 for a breakdown of veldfoods eaten). People considered veldfood consumption important not only as a source of healthy food, but also as a central aspect of their culture. Although meat was not said to be eaten often, based on the San Study data on the whole, it appears that the Ju|'hoansi eat more meat than most San people living in other communal areas, and this is certainly due both to the presence of game and the fact that they had the rights to that game. People ate meat that they (or their family members) hunted, and also meat distributed from trophy kills. Some people were also cultivating plants or raising animals for food, and FGD participants said that they were able to access other foods such as vegetables, tea, milk and sugar when they had sufficient cash.

Although they had a diet that was more balanced than that of the San in most other parts of the country, FGD participants at all sites in Nyae Nyae said they did not always have enough to eat. In ||Xa|hoba, villagers ate twice per day on average, but sometimes went to bed hungry. They said that they were most hungry from November to January, when the veldfood was just starting to germinate and the veldfood which people had stored was finished.¹⁷ There were also fewer tourists at that time of year. Participants said that during this period they relied on the food aid most, and they also did more hunting. If residents of N‡animh did not have enough food in the village, then they would go out to gather food, but they sometimes ate only once per day and went to bed hungry.

¹⁷ Note that the fieldwork was conducted in November, at the beginning of this period of scarcity.

FGD participants also reported that there were Ju|'hoansi in Nyae Nyae who did not have enough food, and that people in Tsumkwe who did not have food would beg for food. Sometimes entire villages lacked food, especially during the dry season. The Local Government Officer in Tsumkwe agreed that there were people who did not have enough food, and who might not eat for two days or more.

Thus government food aid and veldfood were both critical to food security in Nyae Nyae. The special circumstances of Nyae Nyae (as a conservancy on traditional land) have allowed the Ju|'hoansi there to maintain a fair measure of autonomy and control over their food resources through hunting and gathering. However – as discussed in the next subsection concerning poverty – this cannot be enough. Access to other food is needed, but there are many barriers to achieving this. In view of these circumstances, the maize-meal distributed by the government provides important food stability for a people in transition.

Perceptions of poverty

In general the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae are poor in national terms, but better off than some other San groups in Namibia because they have access to land and veldfood. However, the veldfood available does not suffice to sustain the entire population of Nyae Nyae, therefore people must have access to other food sources – all of which require access to cash. Furthermore, although San learners in Nyae Nyae were exempted from paying school fees,¹⁸ without cash they could not purchase the toiletries, clothes and other items needed for school attendance, and other forms of participation in national life also require access to cash. Thus it is a lack of access to money that defines people as 'poor', and one of the main causes of poverty is a lack of full-time employment. There are few jobs available in the area, and most positions are held by non-Ju|'hoansi.

All registered members of Nyae Nyae Conservancy receive their share of the annual cash payout. Apart from this, however, as Table 5.5 (on the next page) illustrates, people identified as being in the poorest category had no other income apart from that derived from a little piecework or begging, and they had no assets. People who grew some crops, and/or had livestock and/or income from craft sales were considered to be better off. Notably, being a 'good hunter' was also included as a skill that enabled one to be better off, and people in this category also gathered food to supplement their diets.

The wealthiest people in Nyae Nyae were described as those with jobs and businesses, enabling them to earn money to buy enough food for their families, to live in a proper house, and to acquire assets such as a car and furniture. Very few Jul'hoansi were categorised as 'rich'.

Jul'hoan FGD participants said that it was harder for the Jul'hoansi than for people from other ethnic groups to move out of poverty, as the latter cultivated big fields, had businesses and sold alcohol. They attributed this lack of upward social mobility partly to the fact that Jul'hoansi shared what they had with others in their community instead of saving. Although this sharing tendency is sometimes considered to be problematic, the Jul'hoansi recognise that these sharing networks – on which all Jul'hoansi rely to some extent – are central, both culturally and economically, to the Nyae Nyae community.

¹⁸ As noted in Chapter 4 (footnote 15, page 73), in January 2013 (i.e. after the field research), the legal obligation that learners contribute to the School Development Fund was abolished in all government primary schools in Namibia, hence "school fees" per se are no longer paid in any of these schools.

Research site	Very poor	Poor	Better off	Rich	Very rich
Tsumkwe	As for poor, but also disabled, with no family to support them	 No work No income Begging Maybe a little income from craft sales or piecework (collecting firewood or carrying water for others) (Majority of Jul'hoansi and some Kavango) 	 Have a job but don't use money wisely (Ju/'hoansi and Kavango) No job Good income from crafts (Ju/'hoansi and some Kavango selling crafts made by Ju/'hoansi) 	 Job A few cattle A few household belongings Can support the family (4 Jul/'hoansi, and Herero and Kavango) 	 Job Car Goats Cattle Own a business Pensioners** (6 Jul/'hoansi, and Kavango, Owambo, Herero and white people)
Xa hoba	 No job No food No proper house No blankets to sleep in Only veldfood gathering 	 Many children and no job Pensioners** 	 Income from Living Hunters Museum Selling crafts Good hunters Crop fields 	 Permanent government job Income Nice house Plenty of food Livestock (No one in the village) 	No such category identified at this site.

* The participants created their own wealth categories, thus these varied from site to site, and the research team has standardised the category names appropriately for reporting. The wealth-ranking exercise was not conducted in N‡animh due to a lack of time.

** In theory, every Namibian over the age of 60 should receive an Old Age Pension regardless of other income, therefore this source of income may be relevant across all categories. However, pensioners were mentioned in only one category at each site, and the two applicable categories are notably different. As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, some elders did not receive a pension because they had no ID, or pensioners spent their pensions on credit, sometimes even before receiving a payout. These factors could explain why pensioners do not feature consistently in this table. Whatever the case, pension money is generally more important to those in the poorer categories than to the rich.

"I have led a nice life. One can be happy if he stays on his own land."

– An old man in ||Xa|hoba village



Access to land

The words of N!ani quoted on the left encapsulate the importance that the Jul'hoansi ascribe to having land that they can call their own. N!ani described the periods in which he was in his *n*!ore as the best times of his life. (The Jul'hoansi of Nyae Nyae are fortunate in that a number of them have been able to spend much or all of their lives in their *n*!oresi.) Currently, however, the extent to which Jul'hoansi can control their land is being challenged by the influx of neighbouring people with livestock, and by the government's apparent reluctance to resolve this issue. Nevertheless, having access to land as a group has helped to give the Jul'hoansi of Nyae Nyae more time and space to shape their own future as compared with other San groups, or other groups of Jul'hoansi living under different circumstances.

One problem for the Ju|'hoansi in their efforts to defend their land rights is that many people, including government officials, view much of Nyae Nyae as 'empty land' that is not used by local people and is therefore available for use by others. But Nyae Nyae land use and allocation are based on the traditional *n*!ore system, which gives people access to land for hunting and gathering as well as for livestock production. Although livestock numbers were low at the time of our field research, they may increase somewhat in the future. A study is currently underway to determine more clearly the numbers of livestock that are compatible with wildlife maintenance within the conservancy.

The Ju|'hoansi are very conscious of the need to balance livestock with other land uses, as the following words of Chief Bobo indicate:

"[In] every village that you go to, there are a certain amount of animals that you can have, and a certain amount of cattle that you have. You don't have a lot of cattle in a small area, because there is also wildlife. So if you have a lot of cattle you have to move to another area. We wanted it to be sustainable."

Identity, culture and heritage

Participants at all three sites in Nyae Nyae identified themselves as Jul'hoansi, which means 'true' or 'ordinary' people (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 5). In Tsumkwe, FGD participants emphasised that they wished to be called "Jul'hoansi" and not "San", and participants in the Nyae Nyae villages similarly referred to themselves as "Jul'hoansi". Identity, culture and heritage were found to be important to the Jul'hoansi for many reasons.

As indicated above, the gathering of veldfood, and to a lesser extent hunting, are important for the food security of the Jul'hoansi in Nyae Nyae, and this was especially true in the villages of ||Xa|hoba and N‡animh. In addition, the Jul'hoansi at all of the Nyae Nyae research sites regard both activities as a vital part of the Jul'hoan culture, heritage and identity; hunting and gathering are a part of what defines them.

FGD participants said that their daughters were learning to collect veldfood, and had sometimes played at gathering when they were younger. People also said that hunting was important as it was the traditional way of making a living. This was especially clear in the discussion in Tsumkwe, where participants likened veldfood (including hunted game) to a dessert after the other food – indicating that although veldfood was not always their main source of sustenance, it was something that they much enjoyed. They explained that they collected veldfood even when they had enough food of any type, because this was part of their tradition, and also because it was healthy (see also the subsection on health, page 124).

Traditional culture is thus important for Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoansi, not only for its direct economic, social and health benefits, but also as a source of income. Tourists who visit Nyae Nyae are very interested in Ju|'hoan culture, and residents portray their heritage to outsiders in different ways. For example, many crafts, which are sold and bring in a significant income for many individuals and family groups, are based on traditional knowledge and skills. Some villages perform traditional activities for visitors (traditional dances, healing ceremonies etc.), and accompany visitors on 'bush walks' to demonstrate hunting, gathering, medicinal and other traditional survival skills. ||Xa|hoba's Living Hunters Museum is an example of a more structured project based on the portrayal of Ju|'hoan culture. The community initiated this project and runs it with very little outside support. Other villages in the conservancy also have tourism projects at various levels of organisation, ranging from contracts with local lodges and tourism ventures for tourists to visit Ju|'hoan communities, to ad hoc dance demonstrations and campsite provision. These culture-based activities are important income-generating opportunities for many communities and individuals.



The Kalahari Peoples Fund is supporting a digital heritage conservation project called the Jul'hoan Transcription Group with the aim of providing the Jul'hoansi with printed curriculum and archival materials drawn from their own culture. Recorded texts gathered since 1970 cover aspects of Jul'hoan culture ranging from folklore, dreams and narratives of trance-healing to political meetings and oral history (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 239-240). This project provides valuable training in translation, transcription and documentation skills; provides employment for several individuals and improves access to employment generally; and increases community ownership of the Jul'hoan cultural heritage.

Relationships with other groups

The Ju|'hoansi in Tsumkwe dwell uneasily alongside other ethnic groups living in the town and the immediate surrounding area. They gain piecework and income from these groups, and buy food and other goods from them, but they also feel threatened by the presence of these groups. FGD participants in Tsumkwe said that their main problems stemmed from outsiders, and they listed several specific issues. Of particular concern were the shebeens which have led to alcohol abuse and other related problems among the Ju|'hoansi (as described throughout this chapter). They said that the shebeens were "brought by outsiders", and that they were increasing in number. Apparently no Ju|'hoan person owned a shebeen in Tsumkwe or anywhere else.

FGD participants also reported that people were settling in the Tsumkwe area without permission from the authorities, and some were bringing in livestock, which was problematic because the animals consumed plant resources. Jul'hoansi in Tsumkwe were particularly concerned about the influx of Herero people with cattle, and wished to see this issue resolved – this issue is discussed in more detail further on.

Participants complained that male outsiders made Jul'hoan women pregnant and then left them with babies and no support. They also expressed the view that the schools in Tsumkwe should be primarily for Jul'hoansi and not for people from other places (such as Rundu and Grootfontein – see the subsection on education below).

Although those living in the villages have far less interaction with other ethnic groups than those living in Tsumkwe, the village residents whom we interviewed also expressed frustration and feelings of being oppressed, discriminated against and looked down upon by other ethnic groups. Residents of N‡animh reported an incident of physical intimidation by people from another ethnic group, and residents of ||Xa|hoba said that the people in power in Tsumkwe were suppressing the Ju|'hoansi by giving more opportunities and benefits to people from other ethnic groups. They complained that government offices hired people from other ethnic groups before they hired Ju|'hoansi, even if these other people were not qualified for the job.

Education

The Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoansi are the only San population in all of southern Africa with an opportunity to have three years of schooling in their mother tongue, thanks to the Village Schools. Initiated by the NNDFN in 1992, the Village Schools Project began establishing schools in Nyae Nyae villages; currently there are six schools (see Box 5.3). These schools are run as government schools, with the support of the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS). They provide education in Ju|'hoansi for learners in Grades 1-3, whereafter the learners are expected to transfer to the government primary school in Tsumkwe (see also the subsection on external support, page 131). Despite the existence of this project, education remains a deeply problematic issue for the Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoansi, and few have acquired formal education certificates.

Box 5.2: Komtsa's story - an educational case study

The story of Komtsa typifies the numerous interconnected barriers that many Jul'hoan youth face when they try to access schooling – shortage of food, lack of transport, lack of financial support from the family, and generally difficult living conditions. Komtsa did not mention abuse or bullying, but many others whom we interviewed concurrently did complain about these behaviours. Komtsa's story also provides an example of the perseverance and resilience of the Jul'hoansi.

Komtsa is a young man of 23 from ||Xa|hoba. He completed Grades 1-3 at the Village School and then entered Grade 4 in Tsumkwe. Soon after, however, he left Tsumkwe with his brother ‡Oma (who was out hunting during the interview), and they went to Aasvoëlsnes^a with the intention of completing Grades 4 and 5 there. However, there was a shortage of food at the school in Aasvoëlsnes, and since the brothers did not have relatives in that village, there was no one to help them. Every day they were hungry, and they would go to the veld to gather food but it was not enough. The principal sent them away and said that they could return when there was more food, but after returning to Tsumkwe, it proved difficult to get a lift back to Aasvoëlsnes: they would go into the town to try to find a ride, but they got hungry while waiting, so they just went home to ||Xa|hoba. "When you are home, your parents will share with you; other people will not share so it is better to stay with your parents," said Komtsa.

In 2007, Komtsa and |Ui, another boy from ||Xa|hoba, went back to Tsumkwe to try to enter Grade 5. They stayed with |Ui's father in one of the (illegal) informal settlements in Tsumkwe, but the latter was not working and did not have money to support them. It was cold in winter and they had no blankets and were not living in a good place. But they struggled on, trying to remain in school. Then it rained, and their papers (school reports, medical cards and other documents) got wet and damaged.



But Komtsa said that the school reports and papers were not really the main problem; the problem was hunger. They were eating rotten maize-meal in Tsumkwe because they simply had nothing else. "That is when we said 'No, we can't live like that,' and we left and came back to ||Xa|hoba." In 2011, at the time of the interview, Komtsa was living in ||Xa|hoba and working at the Living Hunters Museum. He had also attended a health training workshop, and he hunts (with a bow and arrow). He would like to do translation work, and to work in tourism – and he also wants to help his parents.

Komtsa's story – like those of many Jul'hoan youth – is remarkable not only for the numerous obstacles he had to confront, but also for how hard he and his companions tried to keep going forward in school, despite the difficulties they encountered at every turn. In the end, however, most youth – like Komtsa, his brother ‡Oma and his friend |Ui – decide that the effort is just too much and they return to their villages, where they know they will find food and acceptance. In ||Xa|hoba, the existence of the Living Hunters Museum encourages the youth to focus on local careers, either in their village or in the conservancy.

Among elderly adults the rates of schooling and literacy were very low; most of these community members grew up living a way of life that was at least partly traditional in nature, and their families moved around from place to place, with few children attending school beyond Grade 2, if at all. Although many of the younger people whom we interviewed had started school, the vast majority dropped out well before completing primary school. The principle reasons cited for dropping out were:

- not having enough food in Tsumkwe;
- being bullied by children from other groups;
- being made fun of and being ashamed because they did not have money for soap or uniforms and their clothes were ragged; and
- teenage pregnancy.

^a A village just outside Nyae Nyae Conservancy, about 45 km from Tsumkwe, which has a primary school attended by many Ju]'hoansi.

Despite these difficulties, most participants in our FGDs agreed that education was important. People in Tsumkwe said that even though there was discrimination against the Jul'hoansi, with education and training, members of their community could still get a job. In ||Xa|hoba people expressed their desire for skills to help them better manage the Living Hunters Museum, and to take advantage of tourism activities in the area.

Adult education

Currently the greatest need for education is found among the youth and those adults who have had a few years of formal schooling but are now too old to go back and participate in that system. Many Ju|'hoansi at the Nyae Nyae research sites expressed a desire for adult education – their chief interests being literacy in English and Ju|'hoansi, and accounting skills – but only a few villages had adult education projects. One of these was ||Xa|hoba, where a local man was employed as a parttime adult literacy teacher – but he reported that class attendance was very low because people had other things that they needed to do during the day.

Box 5.3: The Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project, 1992-2013

By Melissa Heckler^a

This box explores some considerations relating to the transition of Ju|'hoan children to the formal education system, and describes how the Village Schools aimed to address them.

The initial goal of the Village Schools Project was simple: to introduce Ju|'hoan children to literacy, numeracy and the structure of a public school day, so as to better prepare them to succeed in the government school in Tsumkwe.^b However, this apparently straightforward goal belied a much more complicated cultural process that was taking place.

Jul'hoan decision-making processes epitomise direct democracy: one person, one vote and group consensus in decision making. The values underlying this system are communicated and practised from childhood, and form the basis of their educational approach – which is characterised by *child autonomy*. Individuals – including children – are granted liberty to initiate their own learning processes, and to make their own decisions and learn from the consequences. With this "problem-solving" approach to education, they have maintained their culture and existence in the Kalahari for thousands of years. This approach, however, was quite different – and in many ways contradictory to – the approach in southern African teacher training and schools at the time.

With these considerations at the forefront of the early formation of the Village Schools Project, it was generally agreed that the candidates who would be most successful with Jul'hoan students were Jul'hoan teachers. One challenge of the Village Schools Project became how to structure teacher training in a way that allowed teachers to bridge the gap between their cultural approach, and what would be expected of individuals when they integrated into the government schools [see also the section on Village Schools in the concluding chapter on education (Chapter 16).]

The Village Schools were initially called "preschools", not in the Western sense of a school for children of pre-kindergarten age, but in the sense of preparing students of any age to participate in school. The original idea was that when the Jul'hoan children and youth began attending local public schools, they would possess a working knowledge of how the formal education system was structured – for example, scheduled into discrete modules of "lessons" – which would make it easier for them to make their way in that system.

A simultaneous goal was to validate Ju|'hoan values and knowledge by incorporating them into this preparation for Western education. These values were (and continue to be):

- small multi-aged classes with access to multiple teachers (i.e. Village Elders);
- a curriculum relevant to both living in the bush *and* dealing with a job-oriented free-market Namibian economy;
- a playful approach to teaching and learning;
- child-initiated curriculum activities;
- individually paced learning;
- cooperative small-group learning;
- a lack of competition;
- an aversion to direct praise;
- problem solving through play and storytelling; and
- mother-tongue education.

At the time of writing, there are six village schools (with buildings) with Ju|'hoansi-speaking teachers and a Ju|'hoan principal. The Village Schools serve about 10% of Ju|'hoan children, but this number is projected to grow as new programmes are introduced to better nourish and accommodate boarding children.^c Many Ju|'hoan children also attend the local public schools in Tsumkwe. Still other school-age children choose to remain in their villages to receive traditional education for living in the bush.

The era from 1992 to 2013 can appropriately be labelled "a beginning" for the Village Schools – especially when this period is compared to thousands of years of a highly successful hunter-gatherer democracy and educational system. The challenges today are much the same as those faced in 1992: how to preserve the values of this ancient, family-based democracy, descended from a hunting and gathering economy, and balance them with the participation in a modern educational system descended from a free-market, capitalist system.

With so few jobs locally available, many Jul'hoansi clearly express that survival for their children (and their culture) is dependent on learning the vast storage of knowledge and highly technical skills of hunting and gathering. In conjunction, children must learn and develop the deeply relational social skills (including dialogue to create consensus) required to live cohesively as a group, while developing individual strengths and talents – an approach that would strengthen any culture. If Jul'hoansi are to participate in the Namibian formal education system, they must be convinced that it will provide not only skills and knowledge to participate in the mainstream systems, but also the substantial democratic education they have always provided for their youth.

Melissa Heckler, M.S.E.C.E., MLS, August 2013 (© Melissa Heckler)

Health

Table 5.6 provides a summary of the main health issues reported at each of the Nyae Nyae research sites. TB appears to be the most serious disease among the Jul'hoansi, and its prevalence may increase as more people settle in the urban environment of Tsumkwe. Influenza, colds, diarrhoea and vomiting were other common complaints. Residents of Tsumkwe said that children suffered mostly from stomach problems, and the researchers observed some symptoms of malnutrition. Most adults smoke tobacco whenever it is available. HIV and AIDS were not said to be very prevalent.

^a Melissa Heckler (M.S.E.C.E., MLS) is an educator who was involved in the original conceptualisation of the Village Schools Project, and has maintained her involvement as an advisor and facilitator ever since.

^b The initial discussions – under a thorn tree in |Aotcha, Nyae Nyae, in 1990 – included Dr Megan Biesele, an anthropologist; the late linguist Patrick Dickens; the late |I!ae Benjamin, a Ju|'hoan teacher; and the author, a teacher.

c Personal communication with Bruce Parcher, San Education Project Director for NAMAS.

People said that they still seek out traditional healers when they are sick, but reportedly there were not many such healers who were still able to perform the healing ceremonies, and few younger people were becoming healers in order to take over from the elders when they died.

Health category	Tsumkwe Xa hoba		N‡animh	
Main diseases (according to FGD participants)	TB, malaria, STIs	TB, flu and colds, diarrhoea and vomiting	TB, headache, chest and liver pains	
Main children's diseases	Diarrhoea and coughing	Diarrhoea	No data	
Access to health services	 Clinic in Tsumkwe (nurse) Health facility (with a doctor) at Mangetti Dune (±100km away) Grootfontein State Hospital (±260km away) 	 Clinic in Tsumkwe (nurse) (±24 km away Health facility (with a doctor) at Mangetti Dune (±124 km away) Grootfontein State Hospital (±284 km away) 	 Clinic in Tsumkwe (nurse) (15 km away) Health facility (with a doctor) at Mangetti Dune (±115 km away) Grootfontein State Hospital (±275 km away) 	
Ambulance/transport	Clinic in Tsumkwe	No ambulance; transport costs N\$300-N\$400, so people walk to Tsumkwe Clinic if necessary	No transport, have to walk	
Delivery of babies (births)	Mostly at home; perhaps at the clinic for a firstborn child	At home, but if problems they try to get a lift to Tsumkwe Clinic; sometimes police help with transport	Usually at home; for firstborns, pregnant mothers are checked at the clinic, and if okay, they return home to give birth	
Alcohol/violence	Alcohol abuse a major problem; it leads to violence and increases susceptibility to TB	Alcohol not a problem in the village; no shebeens there	Alcohol not a problem in the village; no shebeens there	
Traditional medicine/ healer	Traditional healers, but now they require payment	Traditional healers, but getting old and no younger generation	Traditional healer at a nearby village	

 Table 5.6: Main health issues reported at the Nyae Nyae research sites

"If we take care of the problem of nutrition, other problems can be tackled."

- Nurse, Tsumkwe Clinic, November 2011

The nurses at Tsumkwe Clinic identified poor nutrition as the fundamental health problem facing the Ju|'hoansi – especially in Tsumkwe itself. This problem was closely intertwined with poverty and alcohol abuse: poverty meant that people did not have enough money to purchase food, and since alcohol was cheaper, and was considered a means to assuage hunger, they were more likely to drink, but drinking on an empty stomach increases the effects of the alcohol and can have other negative consequences. Both poor nutrition and alcohol abuse increases vulnerability to infectious diseases. Furthermore, poverty sometimes led young women to exchange sex for alcohol or money, increasing the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

All of these problems were much worse in Tsumkwe than in Nyae Nyae's rural areas, and the nurses suggested that people's health was much better in the villages, for several reasons, including the increased availability of veldfood (better nutrition), decreased availability of alcohol, and separation from members of other ethnic groups who might exploit Ju|'hoansi, either sexually or by paying them for piecework with alcohol.

The nurses confirmed that TB is a major problem among the Jul'hoansi, and that its incidence is much higher among the Jul'hoansi than among other ethnic groups living in Tsumkwe, which they

attributed to the cycle of poverty, poor nutrition and alcohol abuse described above. They said that the rates of death from TB seemed to be decreasing due to people being tested and treated earlier, but it was sometimes a problem to get people to complete the full course of treatment. Another problem was that the multi-drug-resistant TB patients are supposed to be kept in isolation for treatment at Grootfontein State Hospital, but the Ju|'hoansi in particular did not want to be away from their families, so would often just leave the hospital and head for Tsumkwe on foot.

In addition to the government clinic, there are two health NGOs working in Tsumkwe, namely Health Unlimited and Advanced Community Health Care Services Namibia (CoHeNa).¹⁹ These organisations coordinate their activities and focus on empowering communities to reduce the transmission of TB and HIV and to encourage treatment.

A major constraint in accessing healthcare services for village residents is transport to Tsumkwe Clinic. There is no transport at the villages apart from some people who have donkeys or horses, and it is expensive to pay someone to get a lift to Tsumkwe in a vehicle. Most women give birth at home – often by choice even when clinic services are available, and despite the risk of infant mortality.

Gender

The high level of gender equality among the Jul'hoansi has been noted by many researchers and observers (see for example Draper 1975 and Lee 2002). Women contribute equally (or more) in the traditional economy; they have equal status with men and are free to make their own choices about how they spend their time. This high status, and the empowerment of women to say "No" to unwanted sexual advances, has been associated with the lower rate of HIV infection in the community (Lee and Susser 2002; Susser 2003).

Men usually occupy leadership positions such as that of *n!ore kxao* or 'owner of the *n!ore*' – a position that implies leadership and responsibility for the land. However, women can also be *n!ore* owners. According to Chief Bobo, if a woman was a *n!ore* owner and got married, she could give the ownership to her husband, which is what his mother did. However, this did not always happen; it depended on how the man took care of the area, and the family members of the wife also had to approve, therefore female *n!ore kxao* still exist. Women are also able to take up other leadership positions, such as conservancy chairperson, a position currently held by a woman.

"We are not used to being in meetings; this is our first meeting. That is why we are so quiet. We have to learn to attend such meetings. Next time we will say more."

- A Jul'hoan woman who participated in the Tsumkwe FGD

According to FGD participants, women representatives attended conservancy meetings, but it was not common for women to attend other official meetings. Participants said that generally in public meetings, the men engaged in discussing the issues at hand while the women tended to sit to the side in a group, sometimes listening and sometimes discussing among themselves and caring for children, but rarely participating. Some women with more confidence and strong opinions will participate, however. In most of our FGDs in Nyae Nyae, women said very little directly, but they did usually discuss the issues among themselves, and often provided important and insightful comments.

¹⁹ CoHeNa was established in January 2007.



In ||Xa|hoba women said that one barrier to their participation in meetings was their lack of knowledge of English and Afrikaans. They said that the men sometimes told them that they (the women) did not understand what was going on and thus should not participate in meetings. They also said that language was a barrier to gaining employment. Three of the seven women present in the FGD in this village said they were attending adult literacy classes, but it was difficult to go regularly because they were too busy fetching water and helping their daughters.

In the family, women shoulder the main responsibilities of caring for children, cooking for the family and gathering veldfood. All of these are generally accepted to be primarily female roles, and women specifically pass on their knowledge of veldfoods to their daughters. However, men and boys do also regularly engage in childcare, cooking and gathering veldfood.

Hunting is almost entirely a male activity (although women do hunt springhares), and men pass on this knowledge to their sons and younger male relatives. Some said that this knowledge transmission was declining, and that the youth were not as interested in learning how to hunt as they used to be. However, many young men present in our FGDs expressed a strong interest in hunting, and some claimed that they regularly went into the bush to hunt.

Political participation and representation

Among the San groups in Namibia, the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae are one of the few which have been able to advocate on their own behalf to some extent. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, they have their own recognised traditional authority, which has the support of the people it serves. Secondly, the conservancy officers often engage directly with government officials and others.

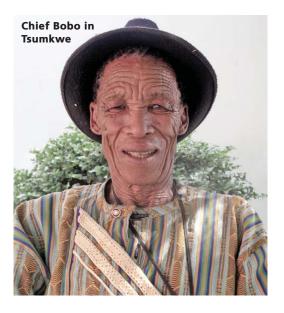
Thirdly, the only San member of parliament (2000-2010) was a Jul'hoan man based in Tsumkwe; the former regional councillor of Tsumkwe District was a well-known Jul'hoan man who had previously served as the conservancy manager; and the current regional councillor also hails from the Jul'hoan community. However, despite these advantages, the Jul'hoansi still find participation in modern political structures to be a struggle. The communication of feedback from Jul'hoan leaders to village residents remains a challenge, given the dispersal of the villages and the lack of experience with representational models of government. (Residents complained that they did not get good feedback from, for example, the then regional councillor and the former MP.) FGD participants also reported a feeling of not being heard in decision-making processes at local level, and of being passed over for employment in government positions in favour of people from other ethnic groups.

FGD participants emphasised that the TA and the conservancy were the primary supporting political institutions, especially when it came to defending Ju|'hoan land rights.

Traditional authority

In 1998 the Traditional Authority (TA) of the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae became one of the first TAs in Namibia to be recognised by the government. This recognition gives the TA a voice in various regional and national fora. The legitimacy of Chief Tsamkxao ‡Oma (popularly known as "Chief Bobo") is uncontested; at all three research sites in Nyae Nyae, residents said that they recognised Bobo as their chief and the leader of their TA, and that he was a good chief.

FGD participants in Tsumkwe identified the TA as the organisation that had the most impact on their lives, and the one that was the most important to them, because the TA had the responsibility of protecting their land rights and their culture. However, residents of Tsumkwe and the villages identified several challenges confronting the TA, including the lack of an office. According to Chief Bobo, the TA was given office space at the constituency office (the office of the regional councillor and the constituency officials in Tsumkwe), but the lack of a space dedicated specifically to the TA meant that the representatives did not come together very regularly, and also that people did not know where to find them when they had problems that they wished to raise.



Some village residents (in N‡animh, for example) complained that Chief Bobo did not call them for meetings and did not visit them, but they also said that they had never approached him. Chief Bobo said that he did make efforts to visit the villages for which he is responsible in order to communicate with his representatives and others, but he admitted that this was sometimes problematic. The TA office had a vehicle provided by the government, for which the chief was responsible, but at the time of our research, the brakes did not work and the government had not agreed to pay for the necessary repairs. Consequently there was a period during which it was difficult for Chief Bobo to provide feedback to the villages because he could not physically get to them.²⁰

²⁰ The vehicle was later fixed with financial assistance from NNDFN because the government insisted that there was no money available to carry out repairs of TA vehicles.

FGD participants in Tsumkwe suggested that the TA needed more support from other stakeholders to address the issues currently facing the community in a productive manner – in particular issues involving land rights, development and educational concerns.

The conservancy

The conservancy provides a focal point for government, development workers and others in their interactions with the community. Most information seemed to reach people through conservancy meetings, and Ju|'hoan government representatives often used this forum to exchange information. The Nyae Nyae Conservancy Annual General Meeting (AGM) is usually attended by government officials and NGO representatives who provide feedback on activities and key issues to conservancy members and listen to their inputs. Each village sends two representatives to the conservancy AGM.

Rights issues

The word for 'rights' in Ju|'hoansi is *tsosisi*. Chief Bobo defined the concept of *tsosisi* as "... rights to own land, rights to the area that you are staying in ... and the rights to hunt animals – but you have to do it in a way that you do not finish all the animals." He further indicated that the land rights of the Nyae Nyae Ju|'hoansi in respect of the conservancy area correspond with the previous *n*!ore land tenure system:

"In the past, people had to know who owns what land, and people got their own rights to land, by saying this one owns here, that one owns there. It's the same thing today; there is no conflict between them. Today, someone cannot come without permission to come into the place [the Conservancy]. The rules are the same for the *n*!oresi."

FGD participants in N‡animh said that they were aware of their rights, and defined them as "the right to conserve the environment and nature". They clearly stated that when livestock belonging to other ethnic groups grazed in the conservancy, it was a violation of their rights. These participants also expressed a strong desire to know more about their rights under the Namibian Constitution.

However, simply knowing that they have the rights to land, or even acting on this knowledge, is not always enough. N‡animh residents described finding cattle belonging to other ethnic groups grazing in their *n*!ore. They knew that this was a violation of their rights, and they had been told that if they found cattle on their land, they should catch the animals and inform the conservancy. Once they had caught some cattle belonging to Kavango people, and (as instructed) they had called the conservancy. A conservancy representative came to the site with the police, and removed the cattle. However, the N‡animh residents later found that someone had cut the wires of the solar-powered pump supplying their water, and they believed that this had been done by the people whose cattle they turned in. Consequently they were afraid to report violations of conservancy rules and their traditional *n*!ore rights as they feared that members of other ethnic groups would take action against them.

Visions for the future

Changes in quality of life over time

FGD participants at each site were asked to assess the changes in their quality of life over time from the 1980s through to 2011. At all three sites they said that life had been good in the 1980s, i.e. just before independence, but had deteriorated since Independence for various reasons. However, they

also said that things were beginning to improve again by 2011. The FGD participants' responses at the three sites, summarised below, are remarkably consistent in both chronological detail and assessment of living circumstances.

In Tsumkwe, FGD participants said that the period between 1985 and 1990 was the best for Jul'hoan farmworkers and people in Tsumkwe. There was more work, young people had jobs, and Jul'hoansi were hired based on their experience rather than formal qualifications. People from other ethnic groups also worked in Tsumkwe on a contract basis, but would leave after completing their work. Around 1985, the then JulWa Bushman Development Foundation (JBDF) started a 'back to the *nlore*' movement, helping people to move out of Tsumkwe and establish their own villages. Virtually all of the Jul'hoansi in the Tsumkwe FGD recalled this as being a very positive development (see also the subsection on external support, on the next page).

At Independence, the Jul'hoansi and other San were given the same rights as all other citizens of the new Namibia, which the Tsumkwe Jul'hoansi unanimously regarded as a good thing. However, life became more expensive after 1990 and there was greater need for cash. The Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative (NNFC – the former JBDF) assisted people with the maintenance of their villages and provided some support, such as facilitating the selling of crafts. Life was harder from 1997 to 2000 because food aid was reduced, and 2000 is known locally as "the year of hunger" because flooding made it very difficult for vehicles to reach the villages to make deliveries, which meant that people could not get their food aid unless they walked to Tsumkwe. In general, people reported that life improved again thereafter, but was not as good in 2011 as it was before Independence. On a scale of 1-10, life in 2011 was rated at 3, compared to 1 in 2000, 5 in 1990-1997 and 10 in 1985-1990.

In ||Xa|hoba, FGD participants said that the years preceding Independence, up to 1989, were the best years for them because the SADF had provided nearly every household with employment and food rations. On a scale of 1-30, they rated this period at 30,²¹ and noted that this was the best time they could remember. The next best period was 1989-1990 (rated at 15) because they had been given cattle, and the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) – which supervised the transition to Independence – provided food, and the new government also provided food. On the negative side, they were afraid of the new government and had experienced trouble finding a place to sell their crafts. Life then deteriorated and was worst for them in 2001-2002 (rated at 0) because there was a drought and people were hungrier. At that time in ||Xa|hoba they did not have access to water, and people sold their cattle because they could no longer provide enough water for them. Some people went to Tsumkwe during this period, and others depended on hunting and gathering to survive. Life improved again in 2011 (rated at 6) because the Living Hunters Museum had been established and some tourists were visiting the village. But, although life was once again improving, the FGD participants still did not find it to be as good as before Independence.

In N‡animh, FGD participants said that 1981 was the best year for them because the cattle received from the JBDF provided milk, there was as a lot of game, they sold crafts, they had pension money, there was plenty of veldfood, and mangetti trees (a source of food) had not been destroyed by elephants, as was happening at the time of our visit. On a scale of 1-10, they rated 1981 at 10. The time around Independence was almost as good (rated at 9) because they began to receive food aid and the new government promised them jobs. Their situation deteriorated in 1995 when they lost all their livestock to lions – although they still had enough to eat (rated at 5). The period 2000-

²¹ Discussion participants were asked to use a scale of 1 to 10 in ranking their quality of life at different stages, but participants in ||Xa|hoba wanted to use a scale of 1 to 30 in order to emphasise that the period when the SADF supported the community was by far the best time in terms of quality of life.



2004 was the worst for them (rated 0-1) because the food aid stopped, in one year there was frost in the winter and veldfood was very scarce, they lost sheep to poisoned plants, there was no water in the borehole, and the crop fields dried out. By 2011, food aid had been restored, and at certain times they could earn some income from Devil's Claw harvesting and craft sales. There was more game in 2011 for hunting, and they were more likely to get honey – which they considered a delicacy.

Changes in the future

Most people at the three research sites did not think that their circumstances would change much in the future. FGD participants generally said that they would like the youth to complete their education and get jobs, even if this meant going to work in other places, such as Grootfontein (although they would still expect those youth to see Nyae Nyae as their home). However, none of the participants said that they planned to leave the area and seek work in towns. When asked what kinds of jobs they would like to have, the youth mentioned jobs in their own villages (e.g. in tourism projects or the Village Schools), in the conservancy or in Tsumkwe.

Impact of external support

Nyae Nyae Conservancy has received an enormous amount of external support – probably more than any other San organisation in Namibia. The main role-players in Nyae Nyae are the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), a Namibian NGO which provides various kinds of support, and the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS), a Norwegian NGO which has supported education in Nyae Nyae in general and the Village Schools Project specifically (the latter since 2004). Both of these organisations have committed long-term support for the processes that the Jul'hoansi are going through as they adapt to new and ever-changing social and political

landscapes. In addition, several government ministries provide services in Tsumkwe, and a number of national and international NGOs include Tsumkwe in various efforts aimed at improving the living conditions of Namibia's poorest populations. Several churches are also involved in the area, offering donations of various kinds. Some examples of the different kinds of external support are described in this subsection, but the list is not exhaustive; these are simply the ones that emerged in our FGDs conducted over four days in 2011.

Nyae Nyae Conservancy / Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN)

As indicated above, the conservancy provides (or allows for) livelihood opportunities that are not available elsewhere in Namibia, and much of what Nyae Nyae Conservancy has achieved would not have been possible without the enormous support received from the NNDFN based in Windhoek. Importantly, the conservancy itself – mainly by providing for tourism based on culture and wildlife – gives residents sources of cash income that are not available in non-conservancy areas. The conservancy generated a total of 23 full-time jobs in 2009, with a wage bill of N\$302 200. However, these opportunities do not suffice to lift all local Ju|'hoansi out of poverty. Some people will escape being poor while they have a conservancy job, and some are able to use their wages to purchase vehicles and other large items, but, as noted earlier, income is often dispersed very widely among family members, thus those who receive an income are not always noticeably better off than others.

The conservancy makes an annual cash payment – N\$400 since 2010²² – to all of its 1 375 members (NNDFN data). This cash payment and the wages from the conservancy represent an important injection of money into a cash-starved society. Mosimane et al. (2007) found that conservancy members place considerable value on the cash payments even though these did not actually lift them out of poverty: most people used the income for food, but some members pooled their income and invested in livestock. "Without this support … some community members would not have had an income at all." (Mosimane et al. 2007: 11)

Conservancy benefits help to alleviate poverty, diversify livelihoods and promote rural development. One main form of conservancy support for members is the provision of boreholes and means to protect the boreholes and water-pump equipment from elephants.²³ This water provision and protection is vital for all gardening activities and for livestock. The conservancy also signs contracts with holders of concessions for big-game hunting and organises the distribution of meat from trophy kills; arranges training for sustainable harvesting of Devil's Claw and facilitates the relationship with the buyer; and organises training in craftmaking and facilitates sales of crafts. Although some people complained about a lack of consistency on the part of the conservancy in providing services to villages – e.g. delivering water tanks and pipes, or meat from trophy kills or takings from craft sales – overall, conservancy members appreciated the conservancy's services and recognised the importance of these.

As described earlier in this chapter, many Ju|'hoansi depend in large part on hunting and gathering veldfoods for sustenance and nutrition, but also value the significance of these activities as cultural practices. The conservancy's presence supports the continued existence of the plants and animals, and the conservancy's Land-use Management Plan outlines practices for ensuring sustainability of these resources, based on both traditional land-use strategies and modern research. Several FGD

From 2004 to 2009 the conservancy paid each member N\$300, and in 2010 the amount was increased to N\$400. In 2009 the conservancy spent 38% of its income of N\$1620968 (approximately US\$231500) on direct cash benefits in terms of wages and payments to members. In 2010 the total wage bill for the conservancy was N\$246186.

²³ In 2010, Nyae Nyae Conservancy spent N\$209921 on water protection, equipment and drilling.



participants also mentioned that the conservancy is important for defending land rights against incursions into the area by other people.

Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS)

NAMAS has worked on education projects in Namibia since 1980, and has initiated and supported a number of education and livelihood projects, including the Ondao Mobile Schools Project serving the Himba people. In 2003, NAMAS offered to support the Ministry of Education (MoE) in the process of taking over the Village Schools. The Village Schools Project – founded by the Kalahari Peoples Fund in 1992 (see below) and previously run as a project of the NNDFN – was taken over by the government in 2004 with the support of NAMAS (see Hays et al. 2010). Although the schools are technically government primary schools, NAMAS provides a great deal of support and coordination for the running of the six remote schools, including teacher training, transportation, technical support, support for acquiring materials, and much more. NAMAS also built the Captain Kxao Kxami Community Learning and Development Centre (CLDC) in Tsumkwe. NAMAS has therefore demonstrated long-term commitment to the Tsumkwe area, and is an important presence in Nyae Nyae Conservancy.

Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF)

The KPF has provided consistent support for various efforts in Tsumkwe over four decades. As noted above, KPF started the Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project in 1992, and today cooperates with NAMAS and supports teaching training. The KPF is currently engaged in training in computer skills and library use, and supporting community literacy generally in Nyae Nyae. The KPF also supports the Ju|'hoansi Transcription Group (JTG), a group of youth who are literate in Ju|'hoansi and English, and are trained to provide transcription and translation services for their community as well as for visiting researchers, filmmakers and others.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

The WWF's Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) Project began working with the NNDFN in 1993, providing funds for natural resource management (NRM). A central aspect of this support was to assist the Ju|'hoansi to rebuild their wildlife populations and simultaneously help to ensure that the Ju|'hoansi would benefit from living with wildlife – through trophy hunting, tourism, sustainable game-meat harvesting, and potentially farming of high-value game species such as roan antelope and buffalo. The LIFE Project was jointly funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the WWF (US), and was administered by the WWF-US on behalf of the Namibia National Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Programme. The LIFE Project played an active role in supporting the early development of the conservancy, and in land-use planning and zoning. It has provided support for game management and reintroduction, as well as community capacity building (Weaver and Skyer 2003: 11-14). Although the LIFE Project has ended, the WWF-US in Namibia continues to provide support to the conservancy in the form of technical assistance for NRM and funding to the NNDFN.

Living Culture Foundation (LCF)

The LCF provided support to the people of ||Xa|hoba (through the conservancy) to establish and run a Living Hunters Museum in their village. The LCF had previously helped people at Grashoek in neighbouring N‡a Jaqna Conservancy to establish a similar venture. The LCF provides training, signage and advertising for the Living Hunters Museum – it does not provide other financial support.

Legal Assistance Centre (LAC)

The LAC has provided legal support to Nyae Nyae Conservancy since 2005, when a paralegal was based in Tsumkwe to provide support and educate people about their legal rights. This position was discontinued in 2007, but the LAC continues to provide legal support for ongoing issues – in particular land rights cases.

Government food aid

FGD participants at all three research sites welcomed the government food aid. As indicated above, this support helped many Ju|'hoansi in the area to maintain food security. However, according to residents of the villages and Tsumkwe, delivery schedules and the type and quality of food provided are inconsistent, and the food aid does not always reach the intended recipients. Ideally, people would like to be able to produce their own food and not rely on government aid, but this process is not straightforward; much technical and social support is needed. Both governmental and non-governmental bodies have provided various types of support for raising livestock and growing food crops, as outlined in the two following subsections.

Support for keeping/farming livestock

At various times, different organisations have provided different types of livestock support to the people of Nyae Nyae. In the 1980s the JBDF helped villages to establish small cattle herds, but subsequently many of the cattle were eaten by lions, or were lost in the bush, or were slaughtered for the people's consumption. This was due partly to a lack of livestock-management skills, and partly to environmental factors. Nevertheless, over the years some villages have succeeded in building up small herds with assistance from the conservancy and the NNDFN.

Some villages had recently received sheep from the Dutch Reformed Church, as described above. Although well-intentioned, this project appears to have been conceived and carried out in isolation from other agricultural support efforts, including those of the conservancy and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF). Training was provided for the church project, but sheep farming proved difficult and most of the sheep were lost to predators. As noted above, there were also problems with ownership of the sheep and assigning responsibility for their care.

Support for growing crops

To be able to grow crops, people in Nyae Nyae require access to seeds and water, and assistance in learning gardening/cropping techniques – chiefly planting, ploughing and processing, and ways to protect plants from wildlife and pests. Such support is needed not only for the cropping process itself, but also to ensure that the people take ownership of the process, which includes being satisfied with a particular plant as a crop and as a food. Various organisations provide some of these requirements to some villages, but the delivery of tools and services is not always coordinated or consistent. Below are examples of the different types of support discussed in the FGDs.

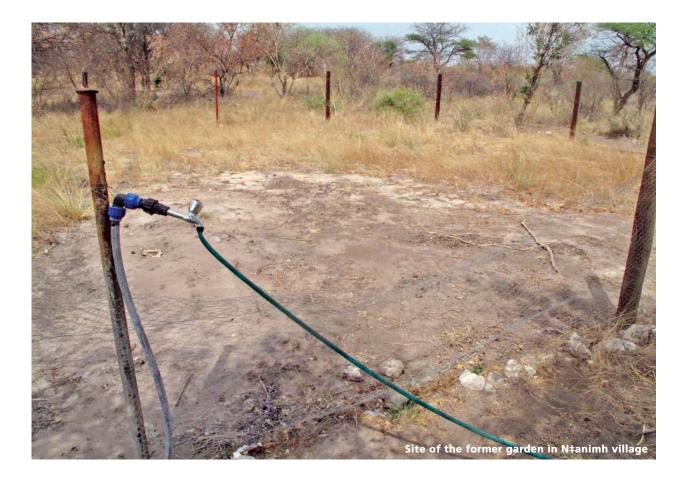
Water availability in Nyae Nyae is problematic, and villages are dependent on water pumps – which can break down for various reasons – to access this resource.²⁴ A reliable water supply and a storage tank are indispensable for any gardening/cropping activity (beyond a small garden that can be watered by hand). The development wing of the 7th Day Adventist Church²⁵ based in Tsumkwe distributed water tanks to many villages and helped to build walls around those that needed walls to protect them from elephants. The MAWF's Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC) is responsible for servicing the pumps at some (not all) boreholes in Nyae Nyae. Some of the villages (e.g. N‡animh) have requested water tanks, and NNDFN representatives interviewed for our study said that these were available, but they had not yet been distributed, for reasons which were not clear to these interviewees. The installation of water tanks in a village may be the single most important requirement for increasing food self-sufficiency through gardening/ cropping.

The MAWF provides specific support for growing crops (e.g. it has provided donkeys and tools to some villages for ploughing), and also works closely with the conservancy to coordinate approaches. Although the government subsidises the cultivation of *mahangu* (pearl millet) by means of distributing bulk consignments of seeds, this is not what people in the Nyae Nyae area prefer to grow because it is a difficult crop to process. The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD) also supports a gardening project in Tsumkwe, but residents there said that their gardening efforts had failed due to problems with water and a lack of tools.

Despite the involvement of the conservancy, the NNDFN, at least two government ministries, and various other organisations and churches in providing equipment and services, many of the villages in Nyae Nyae still lack consistent access to water and/or the necessary equipment for gardening/ cropping, and still others are struggling with the issue of ownership of gardens. Better coordination between all parties involved could help to improve the distribution of the necessary materials and other support, and could also achieve a better balance between addressing urgent problems and dealing with long-term issues threatening food security.

²⁴ As illustrated by the sudden lack of water in ‡Otcekxai during our field visit.

²⁵ Also called the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) or the Pilgrim Relief Society, they have two people based in Tsumkwe.



Other organisations

In addition to those mentioned above, there are a number of other organisations involved in health and education in Nyae Nyae. Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services, Health Unlimited and CoHeNa (described in the section on health) all support health-related efforts in the area.

Support from other San-focused efforts in Namibia

There are two primary organisations in Namibia that address issues affecting the San: the Office of the Prime Minister's San Development Programme (SDP), and the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) – both described in Chapter 3. Although many Nyae Nyae FGD participants were aware of the existence of the SDP, they said that representatives hardly ever visited the area and did not consult with them. They also said that they did not receive much support from WIMSA. Although this was sometimes interpreted as a sign of neglect, it should be noted that the Nyae Nyae Conservancy communities have the conservancy management as well as a support organisation in Windhoek, i.e. the NNDFN, focusing specifically on their district (Tsumkwe), so the SDP and WIMSA are prioritising other areas where San communities live.

Conclusions – Impact of external support

"You have all the ministries, churches, various NGOs – and they don't always coordinate, these stakeholders. This can be very confusing for the conservancy, and for the villages ... There should be a lot more consultation, on all sides."

- NNDFN Finance and Administration Manager

The San communities in the Nyae Nyae area receive a tremendous amount of support and attention in comparison with many other San communities and many other conservancies. Although this has conferred certain advantages on the Nyae Nyae communities, often the support is poorly coordinated, and the communities and longer-term support organisations are often not involved in the consultation process. Some issues that emerged in our research discussions stemmed from confusion about support or frustration due to things being promised but not delivered, or delivered without necessary support, or implemented without real consultation.

Although people are always grateful to receive animals, other donations, training etc., if such support is not part of a wider vision, it can undermine the long-term efforts and specific projects of the key support organisations, and also the communities' own efforts to attain self-sufficiency. Much better coordination is needed for all of the projects to have positive effects.

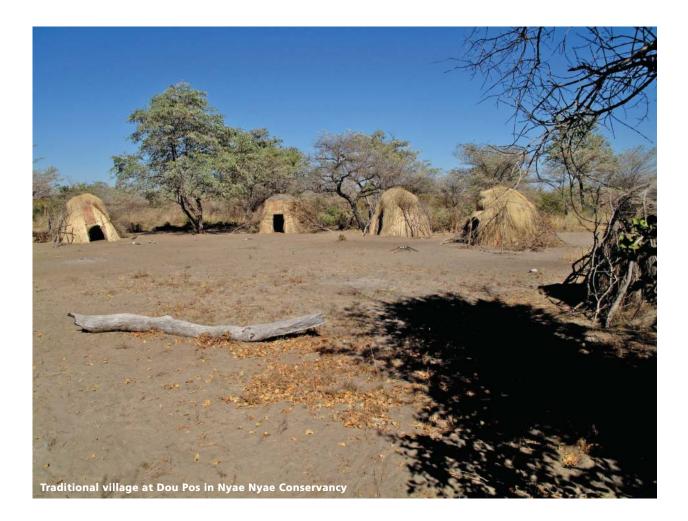
Living in villages compared to living in Tsumkwe

During our field research in Nyae Nyae, people frequently compared living conditions in Tsumkwe to those in the villages, and virtually everyone favoured living in the villages. Many development and education initiatives focus on providing skills that enable people to get jobs in the more urban areas, but many residents of Nyae Nyae were more interested in continuing to reside in their own villages. This subsection briefly describes that dynamic, as it is relevant to development strategies in the area.

The efforts of John Marshall and the former Ju|Wa Bushman Development Foundation (JBDF) – now the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN) – to move people from Tsumkwe to settle in small villages in their *n!oresi* in the early 1980s was controversial at the time, and brought the people and Marshall into conflict with the government – particularly where Marshall helped people to establish their villages at boreholes provided by the government for wildlife. The main motivation for moving people out of Tsumkwe at the time was to stop the social disintegration that people were experiencing, which was accompanied by alcoholism, disease and crime.

All participants in our FGDs agreed that life in Tsumkwe was not good, primarily because of the availability of alcohol and the problems associated with this. In addition, around the villages there are adequate wildlife resources to allow for some hunting for meat, and in most years there are still adequate veldfood resources to provide additional food. The villages are remote from government services such as clinics and the Tsumkwe schools, but the Village Schools Project, which caters for Grades 1-3, has helped with early primary education. Transport to and from villages to attend school in Tsumkwe beyond Grade 3 remains a problem, however. Although the transport problem applies to healthcare facilities as well, as mentioned previously, nurses in Tsumkwe said that health in the villages was better than in Tsumkwe due to the decreased availability of alcohol there, and due to better nutrition from veldfood and the lower likelihood of HIV transmission.

Providing support to people living in their *n!oresi* thus still appears to be an appropriate development approach. However, more emphasis should be placed on enabling people to acquire skills that they can use to be productive in their own villages, such as horticulture, crop-cultivation and livestock-management skills. Very few Ju|'hoansi move away from the Nyae Nyae area in search of work in towns, and in the villages surveyed, there seemed to be little desire to do so. Therefore, while enabling Ju|'hoansi to stay in school to acquire knowledge and skills that qualify them for jobs in towns, it is equally important to focus on knowledge and skills that they can apply in their villages.



5.2.4 Conclusions and recommendations on Nyae Nyae Conservancy

Food production

Currently, residents of Nyae Nyae are still highly dependent on both veldfood and food aid for their food security and nutrition. The NNDFN and the government have made various efforts to assist people in cultivating gardens and crop fields, but despite some successes, many people are still not able to grow their own food due to multiple challenges that they face. These include: environmental challenges, such as elephants and other herbivores destroying gardens and crops, and a lack of water; and social challenges, such as a lack of agricultural skills due to agriculture not being a part of the Ju|'hoan culture – thus they need intensive training to acquire knowledge of the relevant techniques. Also, a lack of ownership over gardens and crops can prevent people from taking responsibility for them. Increased efforts are needed to assist people to grow their own food, but these efforts must match those people's needs. Currently, therefore, the priorities should be to ensure that villages have an adequate water supply, and to work together with villages to ascertain what kind of gardening and cropping (including which plants) will be suitable for them.

The number of livestock owned by Ju|'hoansi in Nyae Nyae has fluctuated considerably since the JBDF began promoting livestock farming. The NNDFN has invested heavily in assisting community efforts to maintain livestock, and is currently supporting some villages with sustainable livestock-management practices. The NNDFN is also currently conducting a feasibility study to ascertain the appropriate numbers of livestock for the Nyae Nyae area as a whole, with a view to balancing these numbers with the conservancy's wildlife-maintenance plan.

Education

Education is a complex issue. On the one hand, the Jul'hoansi recognise the value of the skills that education can offer, and would thus like to have access to schooling. On the other hand, they face numerous barriers in accessing the options available to them once they finish Grade 3 at the Village Schools – these barriers are outlined above in the subsection on education, and "Komtsa's story" (Box 5.2) puts them all too clearly into perspective. Both Jul'hoan children and parents reported feeling intimidated by the other ethnic groups that control the schools in Tsumkwe. In addition, many non-San learners travel from Rundu, Grootfontein and other places to attend government schools in Tsumkwe. A constant refrain from the Jul'hoansi is that the schools in Tsumkwe (and especially the primary school) should cater mainly for local learners.

It is critical that education and training opportunities match actual livelihood opportunities in the area, as well as the Nyae Nyae community members' aspirations. In Tsumkwe there are many economic opportunities that are based on local environmental knowledge and traditional skills, and transmission of this knowledge and skill set should be facilitated for both schoolchildren and youth, as well as for those who have dropped out of the formal education system.

Land rights

Ju|'hoansi land rights have been recognised by government to some extent, but remain precarious. When Herero pastoralists moved into the Nyae Nyae area soon after Namibian Independence, government supported their removal, and the founding President of Namibia, Dr Sam Nujoma, acknowledged that the Ju|'hoansi had rights to their land (Biesele and Hitchcock 2011: 15-16). However, the status of Ju|'hoan land remains that of communal land held in trust by the State for the benefit of traditional communities. Like other Namibian communities, the Ju|'hoansi therefore have user rights on what they regard as their own land, rather than collective ownership rights. Again, like other communities in Namibia, the ability of the Ju|'hoansi to control access to their land by outsiders depends on their traditional authority, which can give permission to outsiders to settle on Nyae Nyae land and use grazing there. To date this system appears to be working in favour of the Ju|'hoansi, whereas our findings on the experience of neighbouring N‡a Jaqna Conservancy indicate that this might not be the case for all communities (see the relevant parts of section 5.3, starting on the next page).

Role of the conservancy

So far Nyae Nyae Conservancy is providing a range of benefits to local people without necessarily lifting large numbers of people out of poverty. Although the conservancy is sometimes criticised by residents for not focusing sufficiently on promoting agriculture (gardening, cultivating crops and livestock farming), most of the people who participated in our field research recognised that the conservancy allows them access to traditional veldfoods, which they greatly appreciate. Not only does this access improve food security, but also it provides for a diversified and much healthier diet than is found in places where people have access only to government food aid and store-bought food. Furthermore, along with the traditional authority, the conservancy plays an important role in providing a platform for the Ju|'hoansi to represent their interests to outsiders, engage with the government and defend their land rights.

This chapter now goes on to discuss N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, and closes with a brief comparison of the two conservancies.

5.3 N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

5.3.1 General background on N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

Description of the area

N‡a Jaqna Conservancy was gazetted in December 2003. "N‡a" is the local name for the Omatako *omuramba* (dry river bed) and "Jaqna" is the local name for the Nhoma *omuramba*. The conservancy area corresponds to the area administered by the !Xun Traditional Authority, and much of the area known as Tsumkwe West lies within the conservancy boundaries. N‡a Jaqna is the largest conservancy in Namibia, spanning 9120 km², neighbouring the oldest conservancy in the country, i.e. Nyae Nyae Conservancy.

The territory is characterised by *Acacia* woodland on low-nutrient soils (Kalahari sands). Surface water is scarce, with an average annual rainfall of 400-450 mm, and the groundwater is deep. Patches of *Dichaetalum cymsoum* (*'gifblaar'* in the vernacular – Afrikaans for 'poison leaf'), which is very poisonous to cattle, are widespread in the area. Typical wildlife species include elephant, eland, giraffe, oryx, kudu and blue wildebeest, and some predators such as leopard, cheetah and wild dog. However, the wildlife population is not as rich in numbers and diversity as it is in Nyae Nyae Conservancy. For example, elephants are not found in large herds as they are in Nyae, but occur only as individual bulls or herds migrating in the wet season from the Khaudum National Park (Humphrey and Wassenaar 2009: 28).

The San population of N‡a Jaqna is heterogeneous: !Xun are the majority, followed by Khwe and then Ju|'hoansi. A number of Hai||om San also settled there having left their jobs as farmworkers on commercial farms in the Grootfontein area (see Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions). An important characteristic of N‡a Jaqna's residents is that only a small percentage of them were born in the district: in 1995, Botelle and Rohde (1995: 110) reported that only 4% of the inhabitants of Tsumkwe West were born in the conservancy, as compared to 76% of the inhabitants of Tsumkwe East. The percentage has certainly grown since 1995 as the conservancy population is very young, but these comparative figures clearly illustrate one big difference between the two conservancies: Nyae Nyae, with its continuous history of Ju|'hoan settlement, has a relatively homogenous population, whereas N‡a Jaqna hosts a heterogeneous mix of people, the majority of whom settled in the area only in the 1970s. This tangled history of settlement is further complicated by the high influx of people of other ethnic groups into Tsumkwe West since Independence: in 2001, 80% of the area's population were !Xun, 10% were Ju|'hoansi and the remaining 10% comprised Khwe, Hai||om, Herero, Kwangali and Owambo people. Ten years later (i.e. in 2011), reportedly only 50% of the estimated 6 000 inhabitants of Tsumkwe West belonged to a San group (Hitchcock 2012: 94).

Most of N‡a Jaqna's inhabitants employ a mix of livelihood activities, combining agriculture and livestock production with cash income from piecework, Old Age Pensions, and sales of Devil's Claw and crafts.²⁶ According to Hitchcock (2012: 98), 25% of the households in the conservancy own small herds of cattle, goats and donkeys. Livestock production is dependent on outside factors such as water availability, grazing conditions, and the presence of predators as well as poisonous plants. Livestock owners are not permitted to sell live animals or meat products to the Meat Corporation of Namibia (Meatco) because they are located north of the Veterinary Cordon Fence – commonly referred to as the "Red Line" – that cuts across the southern part of Tsumkwe District (East and West) and marks the limit of certified disease-free livestock. The San inhabitants still

²⁶ This is mainly restricted to the inhabitants of Grashoek, who can sell their products through the Living Museum there.

practise gathering, although their neighbours in Nyae Nyae Conservancy are able to harvest more wild food due to having better access to the bush as well as a wider abundance of veldfood.

Historical background

It is generally agreed that the area now comprising N‡a Jaqna Conservancy was almost entirely uninhabited before the 1960s, largely due to the area's low water table. According to Botelle and Rohde (1995), before the 1960s there were a few Ju|'hoan families living along the Omatako *omuramba* in the eastern part of the conservancy, and Suzman (2001) reported that there was also a small indigenous population of !Xun living along the Omatako in Tsumkwe West. In 1962, the Odendaal Commission developed a plan in which the so-called "native reserves" were consolidated into ethnic homelands organised along tribal lines. In 1970, "Bushmanland" ("Boesmanland") was officially designated for the San, and the South West Africa Administration planned to resettle all San of Namibia in this homeland. However, the inhabitants of Bushmanland – in contrast to other ethnic groups in other homelands, which were administered through second-tier tribal authorities – did not have the right to oversee their own affairs. At this time, the Ju|'hoansi were living in the eastern part of the homeland, which was part of their traditional territory (known today as Nyae Nyae), and some !Xun lived in western Bushmanland (Hitchcock 2012: 80).

In 1978, the South African Defence Force (SADF) brought around 1 000 !Xun from the area now known as Kavango Region to Mangetti Dune in what is now N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, and settled them at army bases in the area. The headquarters of the 36th Bushman Battalion was established in Mangetti Dune, and SADF personnel worked on both the military training and the economic development of the recruited San in Bushmanland. Roads were built and boreholes were drilled with the aim of settling family groups with their own livestock around the boreholes so that the San would become economically self-sufficient in the long term (Hitchcock 2012: 85). The resettled population in Tsumkwe West grew quickly, and at Independence in 1990 there were nearly 3 000 men, women and children living in what is now N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. The San serving in the SADF received a far higher income than any other San group in the country – but one result of this was that they became highly dependent on this cash income. After Independence the San who had served in the SADF feared retaliation and discrimination, and over 1 000 San in Tsumkwe West accepted the South African Government's offer of resettlement in Schmidtsdrift in South Africa's Northern Cape Province (Suzman 2001b: 41-46; see also Chapter 10 on the Bwabwata National Park (West Caprivi) regarding resettlement of San who had served in the SADF).

Box 5.4: MLRR-ELCIN Resettlement and Rehabilitation Programme, 1990-1995

The Namibian Government set up a resettlement and development programme in West Caprivi and the former Bushmanland to counteract difficulties met by the inhabitants of those areas who had been economically dependent on the SADF. The then Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR) coordinated the programme, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) was the implementing agency and the Lutheran World Federation provided funding. The programme, implemented from 1990 to 1995, had four objectives: (1) to resettle ex-soldiers and their families; (2) to provide rehabilitation; (3) to provide training in agriculture and livestock production; and (4) to offer capacity-building and leadership training. The most comprehensive component of the programme was the support of agricultural activities; the programme offered information, tools and fertilisers. By the mid-1990s there were about 700 fields in existence, with grain yields of 120-400 kg per year. Hitchcock reports that the inhabitants of Tsumkwe West could meet a third of their food

needs through the programme's agricultural production (Hitchcock 2012: 97). For various reasons the project was only partly successful, but its greatest failure seemed to be the disregard for existing structures and institutions: "The lack of adequate inputs, combined with lack of participation of resettlers in appropriate management structures limited pre-project research and needs assessments, and the overall complexity of the program contributed to the resettlement and rehabilitation project's failure to meet most of its objectives." (Hitchcock 2012: 97).

Nonetheless, at all of our research sites in N‡a Jaqna, FGD participants said that the years of ELCIN support to them constituted the period in which they experienced the highest quality of life in the last 30 years: "Between 1990 and 1995 life was good because of ELCIN," said a participant in Mangetti Dune. After ELCIN's withdrawal in 1995, the MLRR managed the development programme on its own, but with fewer resources and staff. Suzman concluded that the MLRR had achieved little after 1995 "... partially because it has been hampered by a lack of financial and technical support. This clearly reflected in the declining success of agricultural projects." (Suzman 2001b: 46)

The years following Independence were characterised by high insecurity with regard to land tenure in the area. Under the MLRR-ELCIN Resettlement and Rehabilitation Programme (Box 5.4), small plots were allocated for farming (5 hectares per household), and the MLRR provided technical assistance in the form of oxen, a tractor, seeds and extension services for ploughing and planting (Suzman 2001b: 44-45). Later, however, local groups and NGOs questioned the allocation practice, and this led to the participation of representatives of Tsumkwe West in the Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question in 1991 (see Box 5.1, page 97) (Hitchcock 2012: 92).

The conservancy's formation 27

Starting in the late 1990s, the plan to establish a conservancy in Tsumkwe West took shape, with consultations supported by MET officials and NGOs, notably WIMSA. The consultative process brought to light that the inhabitants were in favour of establishing a conservancy, as they thought it would help to protect wildlife and could offer them more income opportunities through hunting concessions and the creation of new jobs. The MET officially recognised N‡a Jaqna Conservancy in July 2003 – five years after the first application had been submitted.²⁸

The number of official conservancy members could not be ascertained for this report because the conservancy membership list of 2012 does not reflect precise numbers of official members and others.²⁹ This list suggests that there were approximately 2 500 members, i.e. people aged 18 and older, and around the same number of people younger than 18, thus some 5 000 people were living in the conservancy in 2012, but a great many of them were/are not part of the official conservancy population.³⁰

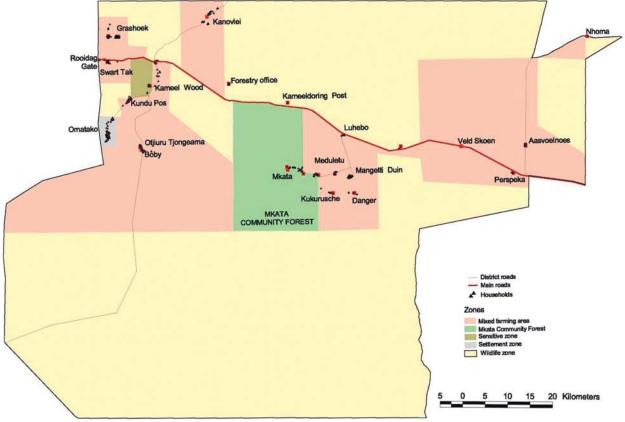
²⁷ For detailed discussions on the formation of the conservancy, see Hohmann 2003 and Hitchcock 2012.

²⁸ The consultation process for the formation of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy did not include committee members of Nyae Nyae Conservancy (established in 1998). The original N‡a Jaqna Conservancy Plan incorporated part of Nyae Nyae Conservancy, which came to be known as the 'disputed area'. WIMSA facilitated the negotiations during this consultation process, and finally both groups agreed that Nyae Nyae Conservancy should keep its original boundaries, but that the contested area (reaching 10 km into each conservancy) should be a co-management area (Hitchcock 2012: 107-198).

²⁹ Originally, people who had lived in the conservancy for five consecutive years and were over 21 years of age were eligible for conservancy membership, and anyone moving into the area had to have the traditional leaders' permission to live there. With the revision of the constitution in 2012, the precondition of five years was increased to 10 years, and the minimum age of 21 was lowered to 18.

³⁰ Information provided in personal communication with Lara Diez, Director of the NNDFN, in July 2013.

For management purposes, N‡ a Jaqna Conservancy has been divided into four districts, with zones demarcated for settlement, agriculture and wildlife. In contrast to Nyae Nyae Conservancy, where hunting with traditional weapons such as bows and arrows is allowed, N‡a Jaqna's constitution prohibits traditional hunting.





Source: Ministry of Lands and Resettlement 2012: 9

As the map above shows, the Mkata Community Forest (gazetted in 2006) is located at the core of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, although it covers only a small part of the conservancy. The management of this forest is separate from the management of the conservancy. The community forest was meant to bring benefits to the community, but there is no detailed data available on activities or income generated.³¹ There was no mention of this forest in any of our FGDs in N‡a Jaqna, which indicates that none of the FGD participants perceived it as an entity providing significant benefits.

Access to land and resources has been a difficult issue for a long time in Tsumkwe West, not least because illegal settlers started to move in to the area in the years after Independence. Scholars have noted that the San engaged in the process of forming a conservancy partly because they "... thought it could lead to greater control over their land and resources" (Hitchcock 2012: 101). However, the status of 'conservancy' did not help to secure rights over land, as rights of conservancies relate only to game-usage rights. The problematic situation regarding land tenure in this area was further exacerbated by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement's (MLR's) announcement in 2005 that the government wanted to establish small-scale farms in the area. Chief John Arnold, the late Chief of the !Xun Traditional Authority, took a highly controversial stance by agreeing to allocate land that was perceived as belonging to conservancy members.³² The San inhabitants of the conservancy felt

³¹ Personal communication with NNDFN Director Lara Diez, July 2013.

³² Chief Arnold participated in the group discussions during the field trip in February 2012. He passed away in July 2012 as a result of injuries sustained in a car accident.

highly threatened by these developments, and they were clearly aware of their vulnerable position with regard to securing access to their land and resources. These issues will be discussed in detail in the subsections on access to land (page 157) and traditional authority (page 165).

5.3.2 Research sites in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

To represent the different sets of circumstances of conservancy residents, the researchers selected three sites for the study in N‡a Jaqna: Mangetti Dune, Luhebo and Omatako. Mangetti Dune, formerly an SADF base, is now a small administrative centre for Tsumkwe West. The conservancy operates from Mangetti Dune and has its office there. Luhebo is small village consisting of a single extended family. Omatako village was home to the late Chief John Arnold. Omatako has faced a number of specific issues such as a high influx of outsiders and the erection of allegedly illegal fences in the area. The main characteristics of these sites are summarised in Table 5.7.

Research site	Urban/ rural status	Land tenure	San language groups	Population	Institutional support		
				status (numerical)	GRN	NGOs*	
Mangetti Dune	Rural remote village	Communal land within the conservancy	!Xun and Hai om	San majority among other groups including Kavango, Damara, Herero and Owambo	 Health facility School Police station Electricity and water supply 	 NAMAS (education); WIMSA/NNDFN (conservancy support); Health Unlimited San Rise Foundation (food, clothing and education); CRIAA SA-DC (Devil's Claw) 	
Luhebo	Rural remote village	Communal land within the conservancy	!Xun	San majority (only two villagers are non-San)	No government support other than normal rural services (including ploughing)	Indirect support through WIMSA/ NNDFN support to conservancy	
Omatako	Rural remote village	Communal land within the conservancy	!Xun, Hai∥om and Ju 'hoansi	San majority among Herero, Owambo and Kavango	No government support other than normal rural services (including ploughing)	 Indirect support through WIMSA/ NNDFN support to conservancy LAC 	

Table 5.7: Main characteristics of the N‡a Jaqna Conservancy research sites

* Abbreviations/acronyms:

CRIAA SA-DC = Centre for Research-Information-Action in Africa – Southern Africa Development and Consulting

LAC = Legal Assistance Centre

NAMAS = Namibia Association of Norway NNDFN = Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia

WIMSA = Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa

Mangetti Dune

Mangetti Dune is located about 10 km south of Luhebo on the D3304, and is 206 km away from the town of Grootfontein. FGD participants in Mangetti Dune said that the village had about 450 residents, most of whom were San (primarily !Xun, and a lower number of Hai||om). There were also residents from other ethnic groups, including Kavango, Damara, Herero and Owambo people – and the FGD participants reported that the number of non-San people was increasing as those who came to the conservancy for work brought their immediate families and relatives to live there too. The San residents were of mixed origin: some were born in Angola and had moved to Omega in the Bwabwata National Park, from where the SADF had relocated them to Mangetti

Dune; others had come from Mpungu Vlei in Kavango Region; several people were born in other villages in the conservancy and had moved to Mangetti Dune; and others had come from the towns of Grootfontein, Otjiwarongo and Okahandja (all in Otjozondjupa Region), and from the Ekoka area in Ohangwena Region (see Chapter 7 for details on the San of Ekoka). The majority of the younger residents were born in Mangetti Dune.

As the administrative centre for Tsumkwe West, Mangetti Dune has a health facility, a primary school (up to Grade 7) with two hostels, a police station, government offices, a cemetery and two churches. FGD participants said that although water was available there, not everyone had access to it and the supply was sometimes cut off because the village owed money to NamWater. Electricity was produced through a generator when diesel was available. Several shebeens had been opened by non-San inhabitants. The conservancy office is located in Mangetti Dune, and the Conservancy Chairperson, Sara Zunga, lived in the village with her family at the time of our field research.

Luhebo

Luhebo is a small village about 10 km north of Mangetti Dune on the C44, about 196 km away from Grootfontein. According to the FGD participants, Luhebo had around 100 residents at the time of our visit, all being members of a single extended family. Only two non-San men lived in the village, both of whom were married to San women. The San residents identified themselves as !Xun. They said that Luhebo is a !Xun word meaning 'to suffer'. FGD participants reported that the village was established by the SADF in 1977 as a resettlement site for people originally from Angola who had been living in West Caprivi (see Chapter 11 on Caprivi Region). Many men of the village had served in the SADF. Some of the people resettled at Luhebo had left for South Africa after Independence. Most of the young people were born in Luhebo village.



Luhebo had a borehole, but this was not working well at the time of our visit: it was producing polluted water because reportedly parts of the infrastructure had been damaged. There was one shop in the village, which was owned by a non-San person. Seven brick houses were built in 1997 by the then MLRR. The village had a kindergarten at the time of our visit, but no school; children attended primary school in Mangetti Dune and secondary school in Tsumkwe. The nearest health facility was in Mangetti Dune.

Omatako

Omatako village is located along the Omatako *omuramba*, about 20 km south of the C44 and about 162 km away from Grootfontein. FGD participants explained that the name Omatako is a Herero word meaning 'buttock', because "you are sitting where you are". Participants said that the village had around 2000 residents, including children. It had a mixed population of San – mostly !Xun, a few Ju|'hoansi and a few Hai||om – along with Herero, Owambo and Kavango people. FGD participants reported that the village was growing very fast because new people were moving in daily. Most of the San residents had been moved by the SADF from Omega in West Caprivi to Omatako in the 1970s, and others had come from the Grootfontein area where they had worked on commercial farms.

Omatako had a primary school (up to Grade 7) with a hostel, as well as a health facility. Water was available but the supply was erratic because there was not always enough diesel to run the pump. Omatako is the home of the !Xun Traditional Authority which has its office there, and the late Chief John Arnold lived in Omatako with his family.

5.3.3 Research findings in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

Livelihoods and poverty

This subsection looks at the various livelihood strategies employed at sites visited in N‡a Jaqna. After analysing each site's livelihood options, we explore the food-security situation of the San in this conservancy, and then discuss the results of the poverty and wealth-ranking exercise conducted at each site.

In addition to our field research (conducted in 2012), this subsection draws on the findings of an assessment conducted in 2007 by Cameron Welch from McGill University in Canada in collaboration with WIMSA. These findings are conveyed in the N‡a Jaqna Conservancy Strategic Social Assessment (SSA) Report (Welch 2007).³³ This survey covered approximately 90% of conservancy residents and addressed a range of thematic areas including social status, education and capacity levels, economic status, access to social services, food security, and natural resources. Welch's quantitative data complement the qualitative data collected in the course of our own research.

Table 5.8 shows that the participants in our FGDs at the N‡a Jaqna research sites employed a wide range of livelihood strategies, including cultivation and gathering veldfood. Their main sources of income were Old Age Pensions, Devil's Claw harvesting, odd jobs and piecework, and full-time employment. FGD participants were dependent on government food aid, but seemingly to a lesser extent than the inhabitants of Nyae Nyae Conservancy.

³³ This ICEMA-funded study used individual structured questionnaires to target 420 member and non-member households in the conservancy, and represents information on 2991 out of 3 290 people living in the area.

Livelihood strategy	Mangetti Dune	Luhebo	Omatako	
Food aid				
Old Age Pension				
Gathering veldfood				
Craft sales				
Cultivation	Most people have crop fields	Small crop fields and gardens	Only a few	
Sale of surplus crops				
Livestock/animals	About one-third	Only a few	Only a few	
Full-time jobs	24 people		Some had jobs in Windhoek	
Piecework				
Devil's Claw harvesting	8 people		Only a few people	
Traditional hunting	Illegal in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy			
Sharing				
Meat from trophy hunting				
Tourism-related income				
Conservancy cash benefit	No cash benefit distributed by N‡a Jaqna Conservancy			

Table 5.8: Main livelihood strategies at the N‡a Jaqna research sites*

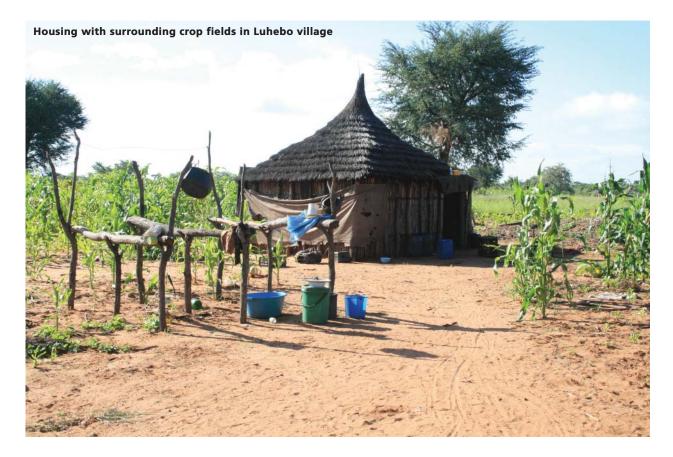
* The order in which the strategies are presented does not necessarily reflect their importance. The cell shading indicates that the strategy is employed at the applicable site.

Cultivation

According to both FGD participants and individual interviewees from support organisations, the San in N‡a Jaqna were doing relatively well with regard to cultivation. FGD participants explained that they had formerly worked in the Caprivi Strip and "Kavangoland" on farms, thereby acquiring agricultural skills. One participant in Mangetti Dune described the strategy of learning from other groups who practise agriculture: "We are following in their footsteps, and we stand up for ourselves. We found out how these people are doing and why they are doing it." As a consequence of their particular history, the San in N‡a Jaqna were more responsive to the interventions undertaken first by the SADF, then by ELCIN and later by the MLRR in Tsumkwe West with regard to agricultural activities. The residents' combined history as well as the inputs which they had received over the years presumably explained the relative success of agricultural production in the conservancy.

The crop fields observed during our visit were in good condition, and people were working in these fields (which at times made it difficult to involve the men in the discussions). Family members reportedly worked together in the fields, thus the sizes of fields that they could cultivate depended on the numbers of family members who could jointly work in the fields. Among the plants being harvested at the three sites visited were *mahangu* (pearl millet), maize, beans, sorghum, watermelon, pumpkin, *!nara* (a type of wild melon) and peanuts.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) supported the communities with ploughing services free of charge, and the MLR provided seeds for cultivation. FGD participants at all three sites reported difficulties with the timely ploughing of fields as they were dependent on the scheduling of the ploughing service. For the last three years the service had been irregular or too late, either because the tractor did not work or no diesel was available. At the time of the field research there was no working tractor in Mangetti Dune, and in Luhebo ploughing had started only in February



(on the first day of our visit). FGD participants in Luhebo reported that harvests had been good in previous years, and any extra food that a family grew was sold in Otavi (a town in Otjozondjupa), the income from which was used to buy clothes and pay school fees. FGD participants in Luhebo also reported that they had stored seeds from previous years. In Omatako, residents cultivated *mahangu*, groundnuts, maize, watermelon, pumpkin, *spanspek* (cantaloupe melon) and sorghum, but cultivation in Omatako appeared to be on a smaller scale, with fewer San involved.³⁴

The *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009* (GRN 2010) concludes that although the beneficiaries in Tsumkwe West have been responsive to engagement in crop farming, other barriers remain: "The challenges to achieving food security are inadequate farming implements (tractors, animal drawn plough, fences, seeds etc) to cover 25 villages on time." (GRN 2010: 120)

Food aid 35

Delivery of food aid was reported to be inconsistent and infrequent across all sites. As in Nyae Nyae, FGD participants at all three sites reported that the food aid consisted of maize-meal only, and each household received one 12.5 kg bag of maize-meal (rather than two bags as in Nyae Nyae), regardless of the number of household members. In Luhebo it was said that the maize-meal was

³⁴ According to Welch (2007), community gardens existed in many of the villages in the conservancy, and some individuals cultivated on land allocated by the TA. Local NGOs provided assistance for the establishment of collective gardens (Welch 2007: 11), and both the MLR and the MAWF supported the ploughing of many of the productive fields. However, none of our FGD participants mentioned these community gardens.

FGD participants were unsure of the origins of their food aid; it was not clear whether it came from the San Feeding Programme (under the OPM's San Development Programme) or the national Drought Relief Programme (coordinated by the Emergency Management Unit within the OPM).

sometimes rotten. Reportedly the last delivery of food aid to Luhebo had been in November 2011 (two months before our visit). In Omatako, FGD participants said that they received food aid in the dry season only. In Mangetti Dune, participants said that they received only food aid as drought relief.

Old Age Pensions

Old Age Pensions were an important source of income for entire households, not just the pensioners. The Old Age Pension was brought to the area by mobile paymasters, but many elderly people were not able to access this grant because they did not have a national ID card to confirm their eligibility. In Luhebo, for example, only one elder received pension money, although there were a number of others who were eligible. FGD participants at all three sites reported that many people had applied for ID cards but had not received them yet. Meanwhile, some of those who did have ID cards still did not receive their pension money because the dates on the IDs indicated that they were younger than they actually were. Finally, a high number of San living in N‡a Jaqna originate from Angola, but only Namibians are eligible for the pension, thus those with Angolan citizenship do not receive pension money:

"We moved in 1975 from Angola, but since we have not been recognised as Namibians, we do not receive pension money. We brought it forward to the councillor, he should help with Home Affairs, but nothing happens. Staff members from Home Affairs came three times to look at the birth registration, but Angolans cannot register. We do not know whom to approach for these issues." (Participant at Mangetti Dune)

Veldfood

Veldfood was important for the FGD participants at all three sites, and was used as a backup when other resources, such as produce from the crop fields or cash income, were unavailable. Participants were able to list a wide range of veldfoods gathered in the surrounding area. In Mangetti Dune, residents gathered veldfood as a strategy to address hunger if there was not sufficient other food available, but sometimes they had to walk far to find this wild food, and



consequently had to spend the night in the bush. They said that the best time to collect veldfood was the end of rainy season in March/April, and that both men and women collected veldfood. In Omatako, FGD participants reported that people of other ethnic groups fenced off their land and would not allow San to collect veldfood there, so in these areas they could collect veldfood only in the corridors between the fenced parcels of land. For this reason, they thought that they would no longer have access to veldfood in future.

"Sometimes it is very difficult to go to the bush, because you have to go around the fences, there is just a fence. Sometimes you can only collect veldfood in the corridor between the fences Now veldfood is very little."

- Discussion participant in Omatako village

Box 5.5: Veldfood in Mangetti Dune

In Mangetti Dune, FGD participants explained in detail the various veldfoods available in the area and how they use them:

- Gemsbok beans are used for soup when dried or cooked, and are eaten on their own when they are still green.^a
- Monkey oranges are eaten raw.
- Nangka (white root vegetable) is cooked and mixed with other things, usually mangetti nuts.
- *Saa* is a bush potato that tastes like a sweet potato.
- *Ziga* is a wild fruit eaten on its own after the skin has been removed.
- *Taa* is similar to a monkey orange but is yellow in colour.
- *Aau* was said to be far away in big trees, and it can also be used to make alcohol.
- *||Owe* are berries from bushes that grew nearby.
- *!Owbu* is a leaf.
- *|Guri* is a brown fruit.

Livestock

Not many San owned livestock, and those who did had only a few animals. Different organisations and institutions had provided cattle to residents at different times (e.g. through ELCIN, the San Empowerment Programme and the MAWF, MLRR and MLR), and the new owners had been trained in husbandry, but herds did not prosper and grow for a number of reasons. For example, some livestock died from consuming *Dichaetalum cymsoum* (*'gifblaar'* in the vernacular – Afrikaans for 'poison leaf'), which is widespread in the area. Cattle were also slaughtered if residents were in financial trouble and needed cash (e.g. for school fees). In Mangetti Dune, six of the 19 FGD participants had cattle, but the number per owner varied considerably: one of them owned 36 head, and the other five owned 3-7 head each. In Luhebo only one resident owned a cattle herd; he used have 17 head but this number dwindled due to the animals consuming poisonous plants.

Welch's data confirm this general picture: he reported that livestock-keeping was confined to less than a third of the households in the conservancy, and that 20 households were said to own 57% of the cattle (Welch 2007: 7).

Piecework

Some FGD participants at each site undertook piecework tasks or odd jobs such as cleaning other people's yards or working in other people's crop fields. Most of this work was done for non-San neighbours; at times they were employed by other San, but this was rare. Generally, participants agreed that piecework opportunities were rare.

Employment

Few San had permanent employment. A total of 24 San were reported to be employed in Mangetti Dune, mostly in government jobs – three were nurses at the health facility and four were teachers. In addition two members of the San community of Mangetti Dune were working elsewhere in towns/ cities. In Omatako, FGD participants said there were no formal jobs available, and in Luhebo,

^a Gemsbok bean (*Tylosema esculentum*, also called *marama* bean) is indigenous to the Kalahari Desert, and is a staple in local diets; the nuts, tubers and young pods are all consumed.

a few community members were employed by/ through different ministries, such as the MAWF and MoE.

FGD participants reported regular discriminatory practices when it came to filling positions. For example, participants in Omatako related an incident of some San being sent away when they applied for a job as a cleaner at the local primary school:

"They went to the school asking for the forms to apply. Then the answer from the people came, you are a bushman; how can you clean up your place, how can you become a cleaner of the school. You are dirty and you want to clean up the school?"

Devil's Claw harvesting

In 2012 there were 507 registered Devil's Claw harvesters in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy.³⁶ FGD participants revealed that they were paid N\$20 per kilogram of dried root, and estimated that they made N\$400-500 per month during the



harvesting season (July to October).³⁷ Three NGOs, namely CRIAA SA-DC, the NNDFN and WIMSA (the latter up to mid-2012), supported the Devil's Claw harvest in N‡a Jaqna by providing training and capacity building for harvesters (a precondition to be registered with the conservancy as a harvester) as well as supporting the negotiation process with the buyer. The conservancy coordinates negotiations with the buyer, organises training for the harvesters, pays for the organic certification of the Devil's Claw, and applies for the necessary permits.

Although FGD participants at all three sites harvested Devil's Claw and gained some income from sales of this product, they did not rate this livelihood strategy as highly important. Three factors might explain this:

- The efforts that have to be undertaken to be able to harvest outweigh the benefits to a certain extent. FGD participants reported that they have to travel long distances for the harvest, and often had to stay overnight in the bush. Participants in Omatako said they had to travel as far as 35 km to be able to harvest Devil's Claw. They then had to pay other people to bring food and water to the harvesting sites, which considerably reduced their overall net income reportedly the negotiations with the buyer in 2012 addressed this issue.
- Local shop owners (who are all non-San) took advantage of the harvesters as potential customers, by approaching them and convincing them to buy non-consumables on credit, and then forcing them on pay-day to repay the credit, with the result that the harvesters had hardly any money left.
- Devil's Claw harvesting is a seasonal activity, thus it only provides income in specific months of the year.

³⁶ This number varies slightly each year (personal communication with NNDFN Director Lara Diez, July 2013).

³⁷ N‡a Jaqna Conservancy's net income from Devil's Claw harvesting in 2012 was N\$101 208. Altogether the harvesters earned N\$636 560.

Traditional hunting

Traditional hunting is not allowed in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. The conservancy constitution prohibits this tradition because the MET was afraid that inhabitants would not restrict themselves to 'traditional practices', which, it argued, would have been difficult to define in a community composed of various San groups.³⁸ In Mangetti Dune and Omatako, FGD participants said that they did not hunt because it was not allowed, and they associated the rules prohibiting hunting with ensuring the sustainability of their wildlife resources. However, some participants admitted that some individuals were still practising traditional hunting, despite their fear of being caught by the police. One person referred to traditional hunting as the "poaching right". Therefore, although traditional hunting does not appear to be a widespread practice anymore due to being outlawed, it was clear that the San of N‡a Jaqna still regarded hunting, and land on which to hunt, as central aspects of who they are.

Tourism-related activities

Income from tourism-related activities plays a minor role in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, except for inhabitants of the Ju|'hoansi Living Museum at Grashoek.³⁹ N‡a Jaqna is not very attractive to tourists because it does not have a lot of wildlife, nor particularly attractive landscapes, and it does not offer any accommodation besides the Omatako Valley Rest Camp and campsites at the Grashoek Living Museum.⁴⁰ Very few tourists passed through the research sites during our visit.

- **Crafts:** It appears that craft production in the conservancy stopped some time ago. In Luhebo, FGD participants reported that they used to produce and sell crafts to tourists travelling through the area: "In the past we were selling to people who were coming through. In the past there were many tourists and they were interested to buy our items, but now they are not coming anymore." The women now only made necklaces for themselves, and likewise, the village men's production of baskets made of roots had come to a halt due to the lack of buyers.
- Omatako Valley Rest Camp: In the mid-1990s, five neighbouring communities (Omatako, Etamako, Kandu, Kanovlei and Grashoek) established the Omatako Valley Rest Camp on the main road (C44) between Tsumkwe and Grootfontein, with some support from WIMSA, the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) and the Integrated Community-Based Ecosystem Management Project (ICEMA). The camp management committee is composed of representatives of the five villages. FGD participants in Omatako said that, theoretically, 5% of the camp income should be given to the conservancy, but they had not received any money so far. When the research team visited the camp in November 2011, we found a dilapidated infrastructure with no water available - clearly the site had not received visitors in a long time. The late Chief John Arnold related the following in an interview: "The rest camp was my idea, and it was bringing money to the community. The conservancy wanted to develop the camp. I get tears in my eyes when I look at the camp because it looked well while under the authority of the TA, but is a mess now, with no fence and a broken water pump." Studies conducted at the turn of the century found that the camp was attracting tourists (Hohmann 2000: 35; Suzman 2001b: 46),⁴¹ whereas a more recent study revealed a sharp decline in visitors and concluded that this appeared to be caused by "... its location and poor sense of place (situated at a road junction), low quality activities and poor standard of facilities" (Humphrey and Wassenaar 2009: 43).

³⁸ Personal communication with NNDFN Director Lara Diez, July 2013.

³⁹ Grashoek was not included in our study, but it is important to mention the Living Museum as it has been very successful in providing cash-income opportunities for inhabitants of Grashoek.

⁴⁰ The Grashoek campsite was upgraded through the Millennium Challenge Account Namibia (MCA-N) in 2012.

⁴¹ Suzman describes "a relatively brisk trade with 178 tourists camping there between April 1998 and March 1999" (Suzman 2001b: 46). Hohmann reported approximately three guests per week and 144 per year (Hohmann 2000: 35).

- **Trophy hunting:** A trophy-hunting contract was held by Eden, a hunting farm neighbouring the conservancy to the south. The conservancy assisted Eden with drawing up the trophy-hunting contract and its implementation, and on occasion Eden would also donate meat for community meetings. Until 2011 Eden also introduced game into the conservancy. In 2011 the contract was reviewed, and it was agreed that instead of the animals which had yet to be introduced under the contract, Eden would give the conservancy the value of the animals in cash (about N\$120 000). However, FGD participants reported that they had not received any meat from trophy hunting in a long time, and that the relationship between Eden and the conservancy was strained due to repeated late payments and a lack of communication.
- **Grashoek Living Museum:** The Living Museum of the Ju|'hoansi in the village of Grashoek brings in considerable income for its inhabitants. Initially supported by the Living Culture Foundation Namibia, the museum has been run by Ju|'hoansi since July 2004. It offers guided tours through a traditional Ju|'hoan village, as well as guided bush walks and a campsite. Crafts produced by the village inhabitants are also sold to visiting tourists.⁴²
- Other activities: FGD participants reported that every three months the conservancy sent 10-12 people from different San groups to Farm Omandumba in Erongo Region to perform traditional dances for tourists. The money was distributed as follows: 60% to the dancers, 20% to the owner of the farm and 20% to the conservancy (the latter amounting to N\$10000-15000 per annum).

Sharing

As with the communities of Nyae Nyae Conservancy and many other San communities, the San of N‡a Jaqna deemed sharing an important strategy to avoid hunger and starvation, and described sharing as a cultural practice. FGD participants said that they could ask neighbours for help when they needed it, because it was the San tradition to share food.

Alcohol in relation to livelihoods

FGD participants at all three sites agreed that alcohol consumption was a problem in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. They stressed the disruptive influence of alcohol on their livelihoods and the functioning of their networks. It became clear during the discussions that the high rates of alcohol consumption were linked to aggressive and violent behaviour between community members and within families. Apparently incidences of such behaviour were routine on the day that the Old Age Pension was paid out: when people got money, many of them spent it immediately at the shebeens, which often led to outbursts of aggression and violence. This misuse of much-needed money, and the alcohol abuse itself, could severely compromise the functioning of the social networks that serve as their safety nets in times of need. Furthermore, and as reported in other regions, the San of N‡a Jaqna were sometimes paid alcohol in exchange for piecework.

FGD participants in Mangetti Dune revealed at the outset of the discussion that alcohol was a major problem in their community. The village has at least six shebeens, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Reportedly they also sold alcohol to children, who consequently missed school:

"Most people here are not employed so they have nothing else to do and they go to the shebeens. People fight at the shebeens. Everyone goes there including children because of poverty. Even as early as four in the morning you see couples following each other to the shebeen. It also happens that when the man goes to work, the wife picks up her child and goes to the shebeen. The veldfood is seasonal and people go to the shebeen mostly when it is not the season for veldfood." (Participant in Mangetti Dune.)

⁴² In 2010, the income generated through the guided tours amounted to N\$424266, and the income from craft sales amounted to N\$234742 (personal communication with NNDFN Director Lara Diez, July 2013).

In Luhebo there was one shebeen, owned by a non-San person from Mangetti Dune. FGD participants stated that alcohol was a serious problem in Luhebo, with both men and women drinking. They said that all the available money went to alcohol, and people forgot about food for the children. They stressed that they do not want any alcohol to be sold in their village. They had already urged the shebeen owner not to have any alcohol in stock, but the owner refused to remove the alcohol from of his range of goods, arguing that transients wanted to buy alcohol.

In Omatako, FGD participants mentioned that alcohol kept people from being productive, earning an income, and engaging in long-term planning. It also increased the risk of fights and stabbings. As at the other N‡a Jaqna research sites, none of the shebeens in this village were owned by San. It was alleged that most (if not all) of the owners did not have a leasehold:

"The shebeen owners have no leaseholds for the shebeens. The traditional leaders have to give permission for them to have shebeens, which they granted, but shebeen owners did not have the permission of the land board to be here. The land board would have to give permission. The traditional leaders have to consult the communities before giving permission to businesses on communal land, but this not happening." (Discussion participant in Omatako)

Food security

Research site	Eaten daily	Eaten regularly but seasonally	Eaten when available	Eaten rarely	
Mangetti Dune	 Mealie-pap Mangetti nuts Beans, bean leaves Maize Pumpkin Melon Mahangu Peanuts 	 Sau !Owbu Guri Owe Daa Gemsbok beans Gum 	 Chicken Cattle !Nara (wild melon) Watermelon Su Monkey orange Ziga Nangka 	 Tea and sugar Bread Milk Pasta Rice Tinned fish Game Goat Tinned meat 	
Luhebo	 Mahangu Green leaves Katolo (mutate) Nanga (veldfood) Maize 	 Store-bought foods: sugar, tea, mealie-pap Vegetables (onion, cabbage) 	 Beans Watermelon Melon Chicken Monkey orange Veldfood (<i>!gui, tshixa, dhau, tsau</i>) 	 Beef Game (distributed by the conservancy) Rice, macaroni Bread Tinned fish Milk 	

Table 5.9: Frequency of consumption of foodstuffs at two research sites in N‡a Jaqna*

* This food-ranking exercise was not undertaken in Omatako due to time constraints.

Generally, food security is better for the San living in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy than for most other San groups living in Namibia. Two factors contribute to higher food security in the conservancy area: veldfood availability or access to veldfood, and produce from crop fields.

"There are two ways to get food: gathering veldkos [wild food] and harvesting the crop fields."

"If there is not enough food, we go to gather *veldkos*. We sometimes travel long distances for the *veldkos* and sleep away from home."

(Discussion participants in Mangetti Dune)

The importance of veldfood is striking, as is clearly shown in Table 5.9: different kinds of veldfood rank very high in both Mangetti Dune and Luhebo. Although the researchers did not undertake this food-ranking exercise in Omatako, participants in various other discussions there highlighted the importance of veldfood, as illustrated by the following quote:

"I do not earn money and often have to depend on veldfood to feed my family." (Discussion participant in Omatako)

The discussions also made clear that veldfood gathering is a coping strategy to avoid starvation; in times of hunger the San go out more often to gather. However, the declining availability of veldfood will endanger this coping strategy.

Produce from the crop fields further helps to improve food security to a large extent. A participant in Mangetti Dune said, "The crop fields help to have food throughout the year." Welch reported that 77% of the people interviewed in his survey relied on produce from the crop fields or veldfood, but he also reported that hunger and malnutrition were a reality for many people (Welch 2007: 10). The unreliability of the ploughing service delivered by the MAWF resulted in uncertainty regarding crop yields, which in turn affected conservancy inhabitants' food security negatively. Food security in Tsumkwe West could be boosted considerably



if the technical equipment could be increased, and delivered more reliably: "With more than one tractor it would be possible for the community [Mangetti Dune] to sustain themselves in food production, as it has been shown that one beneficiary alone can harvest up to 203 bags of 50 kg maize in 28 hectares." (GRN 2010: 118-119)



There are variations in food security throughout the year. The rainy season was said to be the most difficult time of the year:

"There are different foods available at different times of the year. In the dry season there is *veldkos* fruits. People suffer more from hunger in the rainy season." (Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune)

Interestingly, the FGD participants in Mangetti Dune and Luhebo did not include in their rankings maize-meal received as food aid. This might be attributed to the inconsistent delivery of food aid and the fact that food aid had not been delivered for some months prior to our visit.

Perceptions of poverty

Research site	Very very poor	Very poor	Poor	Better	Much better
Mangetti Dune	 Being alone No livestock No pension Physically weak Cannot build traditional hut Cannot collect firewood Mental health issues No crop field or only a small field Dependent on help from neighbours (Only San, and most San in the village) 	 Small families No livestock No jobs Crop fields Traditional house (Only San) 	 Bigger families Livestock (cattle, chickens, goats, donkeys); Donkey-cart Small odd jobs (by only one family member) Little income earned (San and other people) 	 Own shop or shebeen More cattle Someone in family working Car Tractor (San and other people – but few San in this category) 	 Own shops Own shebeens More cattle Jobs Family members also have jobs (No San in this category)
Luhebo	 Sick or disabled No family No crop field or only a small field (Only two San in this category) 	 Crop fields More family members able to work Old Age Pension Donkeys Cattle (The whole village except for the two ranked as 'very very poor') 			

Table 5.10: Wealth ranking per site in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy*

* The participants created their own wealth categories, thus these varied from site to site, and the research team has standardised the category names appropriately for reporting. The wealth-ranking exercise was not conducted in Omatako due to a lack of time.

As Table 5.10 indicates, the N‡a Jaqna residents surveyed generally placed themselves in the three poorest categories, and did not identify any San person as being rich or much better off; only a few were deemed to be a little better off. Interestingly, in Mangetti Dune the participants came up with three different categories for the poor and two for the better off, but they were reluctant to use the term 'rich' to describe members of the San community – despite the fact that some of them were doing relatively well, having been able to accumulate assets such as cattle, a car and a tractor. (This might be an indication that these individuals did not want to be distinguished from the rest of the group in terms of relative wealth.)

Table 5.10 indicates that those categorised as 'very poor' were primarily people who were physically unable to sustain themselves by producing yields from their fields, collecting veldfood or firewood, or building a shelter for themselves (being disabled or too weak), thus people in this group were heavily dependent on support from others. In contrast to sites in other regions, where a higher number of dependants meant that the chance of falling into a 'poor' category was higher, in N‡a Jaqna a bigger family meant a higher number of people who could work in the fields, thus a larger crop area could be farmed and higher yields could be achieved.

Factors that could lift people out of the 'poor' category into the 'better' category were primarily based on assets such as livestock (cattle, chickens, goats, donkeys) or a donkey-cart, a job, or a higher number of family members who could work in the fields. The 'better'/much better' people were in turn able to accumulate more assets such as shops, shebeens and vehicles, had more livestock (especially cattle), and had a job themselves as well as other employed family members.

Access to land

In N‡a Jaqna the issues of access to land, intrusion of outsiders, and the role that the late Chief John Arnold played in allocating land to outsiders, were constantly mentioned at all three sites as highly problematic issues. In Mangetti Dune, FGD participants were concerned about the influx of outsiders who moved in for work or other purposes. Another major concern was the construction of illegal fences which barred San residents' access to resources such as wood, thatching grass and veldfood. San residents of N‡a Jaqna said that Chief Arnold had given these people permission to put up these fences. In addition, the cattle of the non-San inhabitants destroyed the fields of the San, and one young man said that when San people complained, they were physically attacked:

"[When we go] to gather veldfoods and enter the allocated plots that are illegally fenced off, we are beaten almost to death." (Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune)

Box 5.6: Small-scale commercial farms in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

One component of Namibia's land reform programme focuses on communal land, with the following key objectives, inter alia: developing under-utilised land or virgin land for agricultural purposes; and improving tenure security and granting long-term leaseholds in communal areas.

In 1997, Cabinet approved the Small Scale Commercial Farms (SSCF) Development Programme, the long-term aim being to broaden access to land and make communal land more productive, based on the identification of so-called 'virgin land' in various regions (including in Tsumkwe West).^a It was therefore proposed to develop SSCFs of approximately 2500 ha each. Leaseholds for these farms would be granted, and livestock production would be the primary focus. The development of the SSCFs started in 2003, and the first maps designating proposed plots were gazetted in 2007 in Caprivi, Kavango and Ohangwena Regions (MLR 2012b: 5). The German Government (through the KfW^b) provided funding to the MLR in the form of a basket fund.

SSC farms in N‡a Jaqna

The MLR had planned to establish about 100 SSCFs in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. These would have been located between the C44 main road and the border with Kavango Region. But these planned SSCFs in N‡a Jaqna were highly contested: "Nowhere else in Namibia has there been such a fierce debate between proponents of individual ownership and use of large exclusive, free farms and the rights of local residents to local commonage resources." (MLR and KfW 2012: 8). This division mainly concerned the late Chief John Arnold and his TA on the one side, and conservancy members and other community members on the other. Chief Arnold had taken an ambiguous role in the discussions on the establishment of SSCFs in Tsumkwe West. Usually he supported the MLR plans to create SSCFs in the area, but at times he expressed his opposition to the farms (MLR and KfW 2012: 9).

^a In 2000, consultants appointed by the MLR estimated there to be a total of 5 million ha of under- or un-utilised land in the following regions: Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango, Caprivi, Otjozondjupa and Omaheke (Ministry of Lands and Resettlement 2012b: 5).

^b Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German Development Bank).

The group opposing the SSCFs was supported by the LAC, the NNDFN and other NGOs. The main reasons given for the opposition to the farms were as follows:

- No thorough consultation process with the affected San communities had taken place.
- It was not clear whether the San would be the primary beneficiaries, and the San themselves feared that they would merely become cheap farmworkers for outsiders who settled in the community.
- The project was in conflict with the management plans of the conservancy and the community forest.
- The proposed fencing would interfere with game migration routes, and would further hinder access to veldfood and other natural resources used by the conservancy members.

We discussed the SSCFs with residents at the three research sites in N‡a Jaqna. The following words of an FGD participant in Luhebo sums up the general perception of the San in the conservancy:

"We do not agree with the small-scale farms and we will not accept them because it is in the area where we collect our veldfood. This project will limit our access to our food. It is also the area where we get thatch to build our houses. This is our own area but we were never consulted."

In 2012, the MLR decided not to go ahead with the original plan of establishing 2 500 ha SSCFs in Tsumkwe West. The decision was based on the following identified constraints (MLR and KfW 2012: 9):

- There is a scarcity of water in the region.
- The poisonous gifblaar (Dichapelatum cymosum) occurs widely.
- There are considerable numbers of predator animals in the area.
- There are potentially high political costs, as the planned SSCFs had already created significant public interest in the issue, with several high-profile NGOs opposing the farms, and additionally, privatisation of the commonage would be in conflict with the land-use concepts and institutions established through the conservancy and community forest.

The MLR has decided to undertake a local-level participatory planning process (LLPP) with the communities and other stakeholders in the area, in order to determine which measures would be supported through the Basket Fund, starting in the second half of 2013. The LLPP will also help to ascertain whether the communities would favour the implementation of collectively managed entities in the area. Accompanying measures – such as mapping of existing land uses, customary land rights, services, infrastructure and resources – will be funded through the Basket Fund (MLR 2012a: 4).



FGD participants revealed that there were problems with the process of the registration of customary rights being implemented by the MLR. As one participant explained:

"I disagree with this practice of plots or registration of land, because it allows one person to enclose or fence off bushfood, and therefore the community cannot have access to these resources."

All told, the FGD participants rejected this registration system, for two reasons: (a) they believed that the allocation of plots would limit them in the future to certain areas only; and (b) they feared that the remaining land would be allocated to outsiders.

Box 5.7: Removal of illegal fences in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy (By John Hazam^a)

In September 2011, due to the longstanding problem of illegal fences in the area, N‡a Jaqna Conservancy decided to report such illegal fences to the Otjozondjupa Communal Land Board (CLB). This institution has the authority to determine whether a fence has been properly authorised, and then to order the removal of a fence that hasn't been authorised or to put in place measures to have it removed if it is not taken down voluntarily.

In the hopes of speeding up the process of investigation by the CLB, and in order to avoid direct conflict between conservancy members and owners of illegal fences, the conservancy asked the MET to assist in mapping the GPS coordinates of alleged illegal fences. The MET, the Namibian Police (Nampol), representatives of the !Xun Traditional Authority and the conservancy mapped eight fences in February/March 2012, but then, and up to September 2012, Nampol detected a total of 103 illegal fences. In July 2012 the conservancy sent a letter to the CLB indicating the coordinates of the fences detected thus far. In October 2012 the conservancy sent another letter to the CLB indicating the areas (but without coordinates) where more new fences had been erected.

In February 2013, CLB representatives visited the conservancy and conducted onsite investigations, informing the conservancy verbally that they had found those fences investigated so far to be illegal. By April 2013, however, no fences had been removed and more fences were still being erected, so the conservancy asked the MET to help again with mapping the new allegedly illegal fences. In June, a letter was sent to the CLB requesting it to report to the conservancy what steps had been taken in respect of the eight fences reported initially. At the time of writing on 1 August 2013, there has been no reply, but the CLB has been actively involved under the coordination of Nampol (see below). The conservancy has meanwhile decided to pursue another approach: to apply for eviction orders under common law. To this end, the conservancy has supplied the names of persons suspected to be occupying the area unlawfully to the Otjozondjupa CLB.

On 4 June 2013, *The Namibian* (daily newspaper) published an interview with the conservancy chairperson, whose description of the problem of illegal fences and the recent importation of truckloads of livestock into the area seemed to get the immediate attention of a number of authorities: "The majority of the local community who legally use large areas of the conservancy to forage and harvest Devil's Claw are finding that they can no longer access vast areas which have been illegally fenced off by outsiders."^b The Nampol Inspector-General and representatives of other authorities began flying over the area and visiting certain sites to see the problems for themselves. A stakeholder group (Nampol, MLR, CLB, MET and MAWF Directorate of Veterinary Services) met to coordinate their law enforcement operations in Tsumkwe West. The Inspector-General issued a media briefing and warned illegal occupiers to leave by 6 July 2013. Subsequently the LAC contacted the Inspector-General and met with his representatives to discuss the LAC's approach to an eviction process. The motion court decided on 9 August 2013 that Nampol may serve the eviction orders.

a John Hazam is an independent consultant working with the LAC's Land, Environment and Development (LEAD) Project.

^b N‡a Jaqna Conservancy Chairperson Sara Zunga, interviewed by Theresia Tjihenuna (*The Namibian*, "Illegal fencing disrupts San conservancy", 4 June 2013).

Identity, culture and heritage

As noted at the start of the section on N‡a Jaqna Conservancy (page 140), unlike the Ju|'hoansi in Tsumkwe East who can look back on a long history of settlement on ancestral land, and who share a common identity, the San in Tsumkwe West are not a homogenous ethnic group, and most of them settled in Tsumkwe West very recent, i.e. in the 1970s when they were brought in by the SADF mainly from Kavango and West Caprivi, some having fled to the latter places from Angola. The intrusion of outsiders into Tsumkwe West poses a new threat to the community's integrity (see the next subsection, on relationships with other groups). The obvious tensions within the TA, and the changeable stance of the late Chief John Arnold, were indications of the difficulty of community building in N‡a Jaqna, due in part to the conservancy residents' diverse backgrounds and histories.

FGD participants said that their different origins did not pose a problem for them; they still felt as if they belonged to a single community. However, differences between the various groups surfaced in discussing specific topics, and it was clear that people placed importance on their origins. In Omatako, for example, FGD participants discussed the composition of the TA, and complained that none of the San language groups apart from the !Xun were represented. Tensions in N‡a Jaqna were also attributed to the people's different origins. A participant in Mangetti Dune, for example, stated that, "He [Chief John Arnold] does not like people from Angola and the Punguvlei. He only wants to be in Omatako with other !Xun people."

Interestingly, in Omatako, whose residents hail from (at least) six ethnic groups (three San and three other), FGD participants described themselves as "San" – a word not used for self-identification at any other research site in the San Study overall. In Mangetti Dune, however, participants said that they did not like to be called "San"; they preferred to be called "Bushmen", because this term is self-explanatory as opposed to the term "San" which had no meaning for them.

Elderly participants still recalled how traditional knowledge was passed on from one generation to the next:

"Tradition means that the traditional healer is making a fire, is then dancing for an ill person while the ill person walked up and down in front of the fire while others sing and dance. The oldest men had fathers who were traditional healers, but the younger generation is not participating. Most people go to church and do not practise traditional culture anymore." (Elderly participant in Omatako)

"When you are young your father will make you a bow and arrow. He will also give you an axe and a knife. He will then teach you when and how to use these tools. The parents also teach the young people how to make fire. When you grow older your father will teach you how to identify or trace footprints of different animals. This he will have to show you physically. All this was possible in the past when people where free to hunt, but now because of the conservancy we are forced to depend on crop fields." (Elderly participant in Omatako)

The same elders acknowledged that traditions are not passed down anymore as they used to be. This illustrates the transition that the traditional lifestyle of the different San groups has been undergoing – which presumably began even before they came to Tsumkwe West, but accelerated with their arrival in the area in the 1970s. Veldfood gathering was said to be getting more and more difficult due to the erection of illegal fences, and furthermore, overgrazing in the area was destroying the plants, with the result that a number of species used and eaten traditionally are on the decline. Finally, as mentioned previously, traditional hunting is prohibited in this conservancy.



Relationships with other groups

In Omatako, the older FGD participants lamented that they could no longer teach their children how to gather wild food because they could not access the bush as they used to:

"So it is very difficult to teach the children, maybe the few things that are around [sic]. In 10 years it will just have disappeared because of the fences. Because people just come and grab our land where our food is." (Discussion participant in Omatako)

"These people just squeeze themselves in just like that. These non-San people are stronger than our people. Our people can just be bought with a cup or bottle."

- Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune

This quotation illustrates the helplessness that the residents of Mangetti Dune felt in the face of the intrusion of outsiders, whom they perceive as stronger than themselves. They also felt discriminated against by other ethnic groups. The research brought to light various incidents of San not managing to get employment because the positions were filled by people of other ethnic backgrounds.

"If you are a San you have to remain that. You are supposed to be behind People like to discriminate against the San; they do not like them to grow." (Discussion participant in Omatako)

The notion that other groups did not want the San to develop further was expressed at all three sites. It was even mentioned that the other groups enriched themselves by using the resources of the San (e.g. grazing), and that the San felt that they were constantly losing control over their land and resources as a consequence.

"Living together with other people is very difficult, because the San people are just getting poorer. These people come poor in our area, but later they become rich at our expense. They get rich here because they know how to use our resources to their own advantage."

Education

"Education in our community was not valued and that's why we are backward. Education is very important and it could help our children if they are serious."

- Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune

Generally FGD participants at all sites agreed that education was crucial if the San communities wanted to develop. The sentiments expressed in the quotation above, and the expression, "Education is our future," were common refrains among FGD participants in Mangetti Dune and Omatako, where it was said that most elderly people had not gone to school or had dropped out early.

Research site	Distance to school	School fees**	Reasons for dropping out	Aspirations/ importance of education
Mangetti Dune	Grades 1-7 in Mangetti Dune; thereafter school in Tsumkwe (±100 km away)	Not applicable at Mangetti school, but have to pay in Tsumkwe schools	 No money to buy clothes, toiletries and stationery, nor to pay school fees Physical violence experienced* No accommodation in the hostel in Tsumkwe Girls cannot afford to buy toiletries Girls get a boyfriend and drop out 	Important
Luhebo	Kindergarten; Grades 1-7 in Mangetti Dune; thereafter school in Tsumkwe (also ±100 km away)	Not applicable at Mangetti school, but have to pay in Tsumkwe schools	 Children are made fun of for having old, tattered clothes Lack of support Children pass exams in the first two terms but fail at the end of the year (reportedly only San children fail) 	Important for jobs and to communicate with others
Omatako	Grades 1-7 in Omatako; thereafter school in Tsumkwe (±150 km away)	Payment of school fees required in Omatako and Tsumkwe	 Children going to school with dirty, ragged clothes Parents not paying school fees Children insulting one another Some parents are drunkards and cannot raise disciplined children Lack of transport Discrimination against San children 	"Education is the future."

* The daughter of one of the participants was allegedly beaten by the principal so forcefully for being late that she is not able to use her fingers fully anymore. She therefore dropped out of school. A national newspaper reported on this case.

** As noted earlier, school fees are no longer paid in government primary schools as of January 2013.

Mangetti Dune had a primary school catering for Grades 1-7, and two school hostels which together accommodated about 150 learners. Luhebo had a kindergarten but no primary school, therefore children of this village attended school in Mangetti Dune. FGD participants in Luhebo said that some children walked to Mangetti Dune every day (about a 30-minute walk), others lived with relatives in Mangetti Dune, and others resided in one of the hostels there. Omatako had a primary school catering for Grades 1-7, and a school hostel, but FGD participants were very unhappy about the condition of the hostel, which they described as "a chicken house" – reportedly it was dirty and dilapidated.

The majority (about 80%) of the learners at the primary school in Mangetti Dune were San, but there were no San teachers at the school and English was the medium of instruction. FGD participants at all three sites made it clear that they wanted San languages to be taught at the school. The Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA), an NGO based in Windhoek, had provided assistance to the Mangetti Dune school which was used to support 20 San girls and 5 San boys with funding of N\$800 per term to cover various costs (hostel fees, teaching materials, food etc.). FGD participants said that this programme had kept the learners in school and they had performed well.

To attend secondary school, children of all three villages had to go to the town of Tsumkwe in Tsumkwe East (Nyae Nyae Conservancy) – a distance of 100 km from Mangetti Dune and Luhebo, and 150 km from Omatako. However, both a lack of transport and discrimination against San at the Tsumkwe schools were serious problems which had resulted in many San dropping out of school before long. Welch reported that educational levels within the conservancy remained much below the national average; he found that 62% of San household heads had not received any formal education, and noted that many learners who completed Grade 7 then dropped out rather than travel outside the conservancy to further their education (Welch 2007: 4).

Health

Health category	Mangetti Dune	Luhebo	Omatako
Main diseases (according to FGD participants)	TB, HIV/AIDS, malaria	TB, diarrhoea, vomiting, malaria, flu, coughing	High blood pressure, TB, HIV/AIDS
Main children's diseases	Malnutrition, diarrhoea, respiratory infections, anaemia	No data	No data
Access to health services	 Local health facility Hospital at Grootfontein (±200 km away) 	 Local health facility Hospital at Grootfontein (±190 km away) 	 Local health facility Hospital at Grootfontein (±150 km away)
Ambulance/transport	Ambulance at Mangetti Dune	Ambulance at Mangetti Dune	Ambulance at Mangetti Dune
Delivery of babies (births)	At home, unless there were complications	At home, unless there were complications	At home
Alcohol/violence	Alcohol and drugs a problem	Alcohol a problem – leads to violence	Alcohol a serious problem (nurse)
Traditional medicine/ healer	Three traditional healers, but not used by everyone	Used for minor ailments	No data

The main health problems faced by residents of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy were reported to be TB, HIV/AIDS, and in some years of high rainfall, malaria. Children also experienced malnutrition, diarrhoea, respiratory infections and anaemia. The nurse at the Mangetti Dune health facility said that some babies had died from malnutrition in the past, hence the facility set up a feeding programme for the purpose of preventing malnutrition among babies.

The data on HIV/AIDS provided to the research team at the Mangetti Dune health facility indicates that the rates of HIV infection and AIDS-related death have dropped over the last five years:⁴³

- In 2008, 90 tested HIV-positive, and 22 died of AIDS-related complications.
- In 2009, 61 tested HIV-positive, and 5 died.
- In 2010, 47 tested HIV-positive, and 5 died.
- In 2011, 27 tested HIV-positive, and 7 died.44

FGD participants in Mangetti Dune explained that the misuse of alcohol leads to unprotected sex with multiple partners, which raises the risk of HIV infection. In addition, a young man in Mangetti Dune said that hunger caused women to sell their bodies for money, thereby raising the risk of HIV infection. Counselling and testing facilities were available locally, but the social stigma associated with HIV infection resulted in some people not using these facilities.

Unlike the HIV infection rate, the TB infection rate did not appear to be dropping – at least not in Mangetti Dune: in 2010, 142 people in this village tested positive for TB, and although only three had the multi-drug-resistant form, 148 tested positive in 2011 (no data provided on the number of multi-drug-resistant patients in 2011). The nurse said that although almost all of the TB patients were on treatment, "They decide they are not taking the medicine and run away or you have to fight with them to take the medication."

⁴³ Welch reported that while the HIV/AIDS infection rate in the conservancy remained below the national average, HIV/AIDS and other STIs remained a major national public health problem and rates were rising (Welch 2007: 9).

⁴⁴ The figures presented by the nurse at the Mangetti Dune health facility covered Tsumkwe West and East as well as G|am, but the numbers of people on ARV treatment were not known.

Reportedly the health facilities in the conservancy were often unable to deal with major health problems, thus many patients were transferred by ambulance to the nearest hospital, being the Grootfontein State Hospital. NGOs have established several health-related services and institutions in the conservancy, including a TB treatment and isolation ward at the Mangetti Dune health facility; TB and malaria infection control programmes; and mobile health facilities to serve villages which are remote from any established health facility (Welch 2007: 9).

FGD participants in Mangetti Dune reported some problems with accessing good healthcare:

- They felt that non-San nurses at the local health facility did not treat them well.
- They felt that patients' relatives should be allowed to stay overnight at the facility to help the patients because the nurses did not look after patients well, but the facility did not allow relatives to stay there.
- Communication problems often arose if a nurse did not speak a San language, thus San patients and their relatives were often obliged to use translators.
- Transport to the health facility was a problem for remote villages.

Gender

The involvement of females in the Mangetti Dune FGDs is noteworthy: in contrast to the other two research sites, the female participants there expressed their opinions often – even if these differed considerably from the opinions of their male counterparts. In addition, the Conservancy Chairperson, Sara Zunga (elected in 2011), who is also a member of the Namibian San Council (see Chapter 3), was present in the discussions and articulated her views strongly – which might partly explain the active participation of the younger females, in that they perceived her as a role model who set a good example of female participation in such discussions. Another possible explanation for the levels of self-confidence and outspokenness among the female participants is the fact that San comprised the majority of learners in the primary school in Mangetti – where reportedly they had not suffered discrimination by fellow learners: being in a strong majority in the formative years of their personal development (i.e. up to Grade 7) might have contributed to the building of strong self-esteem among the female learners.

The following subsections summarise the outcomes of the discussion of various gender issues at Mangetti Dune. (As this was a discussion with only !Xun people, these summaries do not necessarily apply to conservancy inhabitants of other ethnic backgrounds, whether San or non-San.)

Marriage

Traditionally, a man took a woman away from her family once they married. However, despite moving to her husband's premises, the woman stayed in contact with her family and sometimes visited members of her family together with her husband. According to !Xun traditional law, a man can marry more than one woman, but a woman can marry only one man.

In the past, it was said, a woman was expected to obey her husband, but in this discussion younger women emphasised their rights and claimed that they would not accept men telling them what to do. The younger men seemed to struggle with this changing attitude, but their female counterparts insisted that, for example, "there has to be a gender balance" in a marriage, and "you have to have communication" in the marriage.

Separation of couples did not seem to be unusual among Mangetti Dune's inhabitants (!Xun and other). According to the FGD participants, the main cause of separation was domestic violence.

Domestic violence

The general consensus among the FGD participants was that most men beat their wives, especially if the men had been drinking. However, the participants could not reach agreement on whether or not it was acceptable for a husband to beat his wife: seemingly most of the men thought that it was acceptable, while most of the women thought the contrary. One young man said, "It is legal to beat your wife here," and other men said that it was acceptable to beat women if they were not fulfilling their duties (e.g. neglecting household chores). Nonetheless, both male and female participants said that physical violence was an acceptable reason for divorce – considering, as women reported, that some women left their husbands because they had been beaten almost to death.

Control over cash

Decisions about the use of money seemed to be handled differently in every household. Some FGD participants said that the women decided how the money ought to be used, whereas others said that decisions about who controlled the use of money varied from family to family. A young woman stated that "Those men that want to keep the money just want to waste it on alcohol," and a young man replied that "If you give that money to the lady, it will be wasted somewhere else."

Inheritance

In the past, when a woman's husband died, the husband's brother could marry her, but if she was deemed to be a bad wife, the husband's family would send her back to her own family. Nowadays, it seems, the practice of a widow marrying a brother-in-law is not common, and there does not seem to be any general practice with regard to a widow's position. However, it was said that in the past, elders from both families came together to decide who would get what belongings when the husband died, whereas nowadays the husband's family can destroy or just take things, leaving the widow (and her children) with nothing.

Political representation and participation

Political representation: the !Xun Traditional Authority in Tsumkwe West

"We the community have given wings to the chief so that he can fly high on top of us. But now it seems that he thinks, 1 am flying, I am on top of them and there is no one who can take me off from this position.' Even now, the communities have the rights to take off those wings so that he can come down to the ground and lose his position. It seems like if you are giving someone the position to lead you, he is mis-leading; he feels like he is the boss, he can do whatever he wants, no one will remove him. We are discussing these things. We have to come together and be united to take actions against it."

- Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune

The general consensus among FGD participants was that Chief John Arnold (who was still alive at the time of our field research) did not act in the best interests of the community he represented (see Box 5.8, next page). His role and position in the community was often the focus of heated debates in which participants accused him of various alleged transgressions and general misconduct. FGD participants cited the following examples of the allegations: he gave land to outsiders who did not respect the conservancy zoning; he supported the establishment of the SSCFs (see Box 5.6), which most conservancy members opposed; he did not consult properly or give any feedback on key issues; and he was corrupt and often supported the interests of members of other ethnic groups.

In Omatako, in particular, the majority of the San were extremely unhappy about the situation, and had requested a change in leadership. The Conservancy Chairperson, who simultaneously served as a senior councillor in the TA, complained in the FGD that the TA had not met as a whole group since 1992 to discuss problems and issues.

Box 5.8: The !Xun Traditional Authority

In November 1995, WIMSA, ELCIN and CASS undertook a survey in Tsumkwe West to examine existing customary laws and leadership structures with the aim of establishing a TA.^a John Arnold (who was subsequently elected as Chief of the !Xun) was a member of the survey team, and visited three communities together with the other team members. The survey outlined the heterogeneity and diverging concepts of leadership structures and positions present in Tsumkwe West. At that time, John Arnold was already receiving criticism for having let Herero people into the area: "... other community members declared that John Arnold had given permission to Herero families to reside in Grashoek" (Thoma and Piek 1997: 21). The discussions about customary law raised the communities' awareness of the necessity of establishing a leadership structure in order to develop control over the invasion of pastoralists into their environment, and to develop mechanisms to unite relatively fast-growing communities (Thoma and Piek 1997: 60).

In March 1996, the parties involved in the survey organised a workshop to provide an opportunity to share concepts about a traditional authority and customary law. Different options for the leadership structure were discussed during the workshop, in which 63 representatives of the 17 villages and three representatives of Nyae Nyae Conservancy participated. The conclusion was to appoint one main leader for Tsumkwe West, in accordance with the stipulations of the Traditional Authorities Act 17 of 1995 (Thoma and Piek 1997: 66). The workshop concluded with an election, and John Arnold was elected by 'majority vote' (Thoma and Piek 1997: 70).

In July 2012, Chief John Arnold passed away from injuries sustained in a car accident. The TA then split into two opposing factions, and there was insufficient cohesion to organise elections for a successor. (The Traditional Authorities Act does not stipulate what a traditional community should do if its TA is split and/or dysfunctional). After unsuccessful attempts by different factions to gain control, TA councillors asked the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development and the Governor of Otjozondjupa Region to help with overseeing fair elections. At the time of writing this report on the San Study, it is not yet clear whether the succession to the chieftainship will be implemented by way of a democratic election.

Political participation

The !Xun TA was conceptualised as an instrument to facilitate interaction between the San and the government, and ideally to act as a liaison between the government and the San communities. For example, FGD participants said that when the government development plans for the area, it consulted with both the TA and the community to gauge whether people were interested in the plans. However, they also said that the government often seemed to ignore the community's concerns, and cited the example of government seemingly moving forward with the plans for SSCFs despite most San not wanting these farms. FGD participants stressed that they did not know who to approach or what procedures to follow if they faced problems, and if they raised concerns with the Chief or the Regional Governor, nothing happened by their account:

^a The survey findings were presented in the report by Thoma and Piek titled *Customary Law and Traditional Authority of the San*, published by WIMSA and CASS in 1997.

"Communities give project proposals to the governor, like having a bakery or producing *mahangu*, but nothing is coming back. So there is silence and the community does not know where to raise their points." (Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune)

In general it would seem that the San did not know who to approach, and felt that their concerns were ignored.

FGD participants at all sites complained that the late Regional Councillor, Kxao Moses ‡Oma, also did not take any interest in the affairs of the communities he represented, even though he was a San person. They said that he seemed to visit the conservancy only prior to elections, in order to secure votes:

"He always brought something nice in words. But after the elections he disappeared and was never coming back." (Discussion participant in Omatako)

"The main problem is after we elect the regional councillor, we do not see him anymore. He does not come back to familiarise himself with problems." (Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune)

The FGD participants nevertheless voted for him as a SWAPO representative in the past as he was the only San representative in any of the political parties.

Asked in the FGD whether a village development committee (VDC) existed in Omatako village, participants replied that there was such a body, but none of its members were San representatives; it was composed of "only black people", who made decisions that did not necessarily reflect the interests of the San communities:

"If there would be San people in this [VDC], there would be maybe a better chance." (Discussion participant in Omatako)



In Mangetti Dune, FGD participants described a VDC composed of TA members, other San persons and business representatives. The discussion did not reveal any further details about the Mangetti Dune VDC, but it did make clear that the San are represented in the body that oversees the development of this village.

Box 5.9: Communication issues in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

Communication with – and among – the conservancy inhabitants is extremely difficult due to the lack of the relevant infrastructure in the area. Tsumkwe West does not have cellphone reception, and land-line connections are either very poor or do not function at all, making it difficult even to send and receive faxes, let alone communicate by phone. Tsumkwe West also does not have a radio station nor radio reception – unlike in Nyae Nyae where important messages for the conservancy are transmitted by radio and all villages have solar radios provided through the conservancy so that they are able to receive information. For receiving information in N‡a Jaqna, the villagers depend on either face-to-face contact or letters, but both of these means of communication are extremely difficult due to the vastness of the conservancy area and the difficulty of accessing transportation. The consequence of all this is that N‡a Jaqna's villagers have exceptionally poor access to information. FGD participants at all three sites cited poor communication in the conservancy as a major problem.

Changes in quality of life over time and vision for the future

The findings regarding changes in the quality of life over time were similar at all three sites: FGD participants stressed that the years in which the SADF and ELCIN supported them were the best for them in terms of quality of life, as they had employment and thus enough to eat: In Luhebo, ELCIN had helped with ploughing services, livestock and brick houses; in Omatako the villagers' welfare reportedly began to decline after ELCIN stopped supporting them; and for the residents of Mangetti Dune, 1990-1997 were the best years because ELCIN provided a lot of support, in the form of food, ploughing services and storerooms. An elderly man in Mangetti Dune said that 1992 was an important year because that was when the new Government of Namibia "approved" the rights of the San people, which meant that thenceforth they had a right to express their thoughts and feelings, go to school and work in any sector.

The year 2012 (though still 'young' at the time of our visit in January/February) was generally rated as a 'low' year as people felt that they were not faring well. FGD participants in Mangetti Dune and Luhebo were decidedly pessimistic about the rest of 2012 and the future in general:

"We will become just poorer and poorer and our life will become more and more difficult. This is the year of hunger. Our life is getting weaker." (Discussion participant in Luhebo)

In Mangetti Dune it was said that the period 2007-2012 had been the most difficult because they had started to face difficulties with the ploughing services and they had not received food aid.

Only in Omatako were FGD participants more positive, chiefly because they expected changes in the coming year with regard to their political representation. The participants were divided between supporters and critics of the then Chief John Arnold.⁴⁵ The critics in the Omatako FGD explained

⁴⁵ Although Chief Arnold attended a few FGDs, he was not present in most of them, therefore participants could be openly critical of him. He was strongly criticised at all three sites, but the division between people supporting him and those opposing him was strongest in the discussions in Omatako.

that they wanted to expel the current TA and elect new members. The atmosphere was very tense during this discussion, and our interpreter explained:

"People are getting very aggressive as you can see. They are saying they want to have a quick feedback on this [San Study] because they want to have change now, this year."⁴⁶ (Interpreter in Omatako)

In the discussions about visions for the future, the emphasis was on the importance of education for the development of the three village communities: "San communities must get empowerment with education; there must be development in the San communities," said one participant. Adults who had not received any form of education placed especially strong emphasis on education for their offspring, so that the children could improve their lives in the future and have a better existence than their parents. It was repeated several times that the children themselves would have to take education seriously in order to change the status quo.

FGD participants further stressed the need to be educated about their rights:

"People don't know their rights. I do not see things improving because people do not know their rights, or how to get on the national soccer team, or how to start projects and NGOs." (Discussion participant in Mangetti Dune)

The participant quoted above expressed the need for education and training in many areas to enable people to take control of their own lives and participate in the national dialogue. This person also said that in the past, when the LAC had a paralegal working in the area, people would approach him for support, but since this post was discontinued, they have felt helpless.

Impact of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

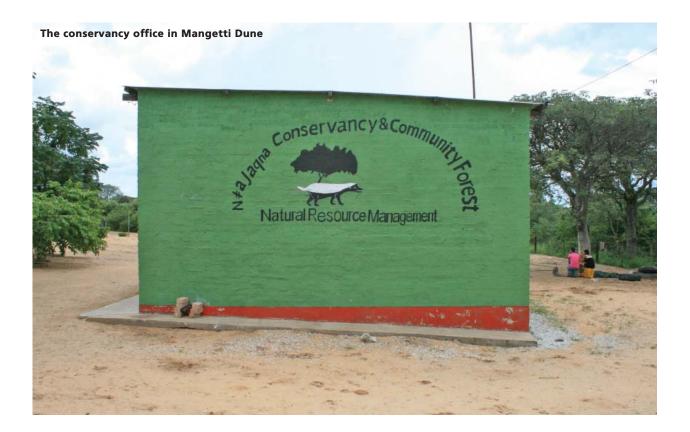
The conservancy's main activities revolved around managing trophy hunting, managing the Devil's Claw harvest, creating water points to pump water for wildlife, employing game guards and holding management committee meetings. These activities provided several benefits for the community:

- The conservancy employed seven game guards.
- The conservancy provided harvesting equipment for Devil's Claw, and had managed to get the Devil's Claw organically certified so that a higher price could be obtained.
- The conservancy helped with the distribution of diesel for pumping water, providing 25 litres per month per village.
- The conservancy defended its residents in opposing the plans for the SSCFs.
- The conservancy applied to the High Court to evict illegal occupiers (i.e. to remove them and all of their property), and the conservancy applied to the Otjozondjupa Communal Land Board to remove the illegal fences within the conservancy area.

The conservancy does not currently earn a large amount of income (around N\$300000 per annum at the time of the field research), and in the past there were cases of mismanagement of conservancy funds.⁴⁷ For these reasons, the conservancy had thus far been unable to pay out a cash benefit to its members (as Nyae Nyae did), and this situation resulted in negative attitudes from some residents. In Omatako, for example, the consensus among FGD participants was that the conservancy was not giving residents any benefits, although they reported having once received some meat as a result of the trophy hunting contract. Participants at the other two villages, however, did seem to see value in

⁴⁶ These discussions were overshadowed by the events following Chief Arnold's death in July 2012.

⁴⁷ Sara Zunga is widely acknowledged to have stopped the mismanagement of funds after her election as Conservancy Chairperson in 2011 (personal communication with NNDFN Director Lara Diez, July 2013).



the conservancy: in Mangetti Dune participants said that since the conservancy had been gazetted, people had refrained from hunting in the area and they viewed this as a positive thing because it ensured sustainability of the wildlife and therefore benefited the conservancy.

External support provided to the conservancy

WIMSA had supported the conservancy in the past in various ways; for example, it was involved in the process of negotiating the formation of the conservancy, was instrumental in establishing the TA, and it supported one Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) volunteer. WIMSA's support ceased in 2012, however, because in 2011 the NNDFN expanded its area of operation to support N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. The NNDFN has helped to organise the conservancy meetings, carried out a revision of the constitution, set up a new membership list, and improved financial management. CRIAA SA-DC got involved in N‡a Jaqna through the Millennium Challenge Account Namibia (MCA-N) fund that is supported by the MCA-N Indigenous Natural Products Project. CRIAA supports negotiations between Devil's Claw harvesters and buyers, and helps to organise the harvest and its recording.

5.3.4 Conclusions and recommendations on N‡a Jaqna Conservancy

The San inhabitants of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy look back on a difficult history in respect of the formation of their community. Different cultural and historical backgrounds, and the ambivalent position held by the late Chief John Arnold in discussions over land, have created fractures within conservancy and these divisions have rendered the whole community vulnerable to infringements from the outside, such as the intrusion of illegal settlers and the proposed plans of the government to use part of their communal lands for commercial production. It will be crucial to agree on a democratic process as soon as possible to elect the next chief, who, it is hoped, will be able to represent the entire San community and defend them against external threats.

Food security for the San of N‡a Jaqna is better than it is for many other San groups in Namibia, because they have access to land and can therefore rely on both the produce of their crop fields and harvesting veldfood. Nevertheless, these two main food-procurement strategies are difficult to exploit fully in the N‡a Jaqna environment and are increasingly under threat.

Ever since San were brought to Tsumkwe West in 1978, the villagers in the conservancy have been dependent on outside assistance for agricultural production. This was provided by the SADF, ELCIN, MLRR and MLR over the years. ELCIN's failure was partly attributed to the fact that there was no focus on developing strategies for self-sufficiency, with the result that beneficiaries became dependent on outside technical support – a problem that still affects their situation today. Dependence on the unreliable ploughing service provided by the MAWF has further reduced their food security to a large extent over the past few years. Either the MAWF support has to be revisited, with means found to deliver the ploughing service reliably and at the right times, and/or power has to be given to the communities to control this technical equipment themselves through the conservancy, the TA or another local representative community structure.

The central position that veldfood takes in enhancing food security must be protected, largely by supporting the continuation of customary land use so that communities have unhindered access to this valuable resource. This requirement naturally links to questions regarding access to land and, ultimately, resources: the land of the San in N‡a Jaqna has been faced with encroachment from outsiders since Independence, but authorities and administrative bodies have shown themselves to be unable – and possibly unwilling – to deal with these land invasions. The !Xun TA has felt powerless to deal with the situation because formal complaints and requests for support addressed to the authorities have largely been ignored.

In mid-2013, the Inspector-General of the Namibian Police publicly condemned the illegal fencing and ordered its removal, giving government attention and support to the issue. In addition, the MLR's decision to stop pursuing the establishment of small-scale farms in the conservancy is an encouraging sign that the government is listening to the community's voice. These developments are recent, however, and it remains to be seen whether the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 is powerful enough to safeguard the threatened customary land rights of the San by providing for the removal of the illegal fences and settlers.

N‡a Jaqna Conservancy has not yet brought large economic benefits to its members. However, despite the difficulties experienced in the past, there is potential for economic development – provided that the conservancy receives continuous strong support for the next few years to enable it to implement its development plans.

In evaluating the role of the conservancy, it is essential to consider the political and ideological benefits as well as the more tangible economic benefits. It was a long struggle to get the conservancy gazetted, and today N‡a Jaqna Conservancy is creating and strengthening conservancy members' sense of a collective identity, and is providing the San with the common purpose they need to counteract threats from the outside more successfully. For example, the conservancy has played a vital and active role in ensuring that illegal settling will be discontinued and illegal settlers sued. Through the N‡a Jaqna Conservancy Committee (the managing body), the San have been able to secure support from various organisations (including the LAC, MCA-N, NNDFN and CRIAA SA-DC) over the years. The Conservancy Committee (with the support of the LAC) has requested the High Court to issue an eviction order against farmers accused of illegally occupying communal land in the conservancy – something that would have been difficult, if not impossible, for residents to do without conservancy status and the support that this status entails.

5.4 Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies compared

Of the two conservancies, Nyae Nyae is by far the stronger institution for a number of reasons, which can be summarised as follows:

- Nyae Nyae was founded on ancestral land where the forebears of current residents already shared a common identity, and was supported by organisations that started developing in the 1980s, thus it has 'deeper roots' than N‡a Jaqna in many ways.
- Nyae Nyae has a wider variety of natural resources (particularly wildlife) and habitats, including the seasonal wetlands of the Nyae Nyae pans, and these resources and habitats make the area attractive for trophy hunting and other tourism activities. As a result, Nyae Nyae earns more income (around N\$2 million annually) than N‡a Jaqna (around N\$300 000 annually), and this in turn enables Nyae Nyae to provide a wider range of benefits to its members, including more employment opportunities and an annual cash payment. Nyae Nyae also has more potential to increase its income due its tourist attractions, which are not yet fully developed.

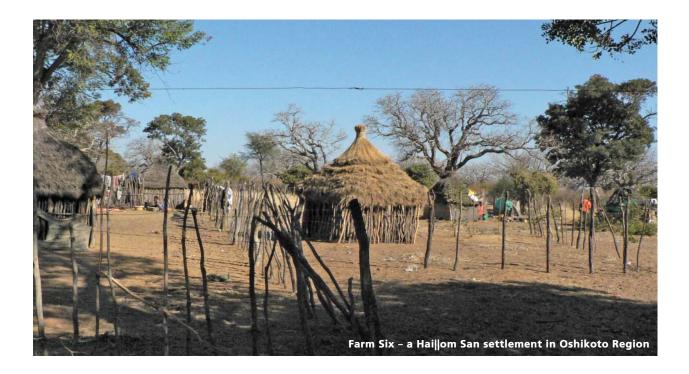
In terms of livelihoods, there are some clear differences between the two conservancies: cultivation seems to provide greater food security for N‡a Jaqna residents, who did not appear to be as reliant on government food aid as the Nyae Nyae residents. This is an important point because although villages in Nyae Nyae have also received a great deal of support for agricultural production, fewer people are cultivating crop fields. This can be attributed partly (or largely) to the differences in community history: N‡a Jaqna residents lived among agriculturalists before moving to Tsumkwe West, and it seems that this sensitised them to agricultural production and made them more receptive to training and support in that sector, with the result that they are doing relatively well with regard to agricultural activities.

It is clear that in both conservancies, when people have the opportunity to gather veldfood, they do so eagerly, as veldfoods constitute a significant part of their diet, and gathering is considered to be an important cultural activity. Wherever possible, sustainable access to this vital food source should be encouraged and protected. At the same time, given the density of the populations in both areas and the variability of veldfood resources, support should be provided to communities who wish to grow their own food or expand their existing food production capabilities and capacity. Most importantly, such support should be consistent and timely – providing tractors to prepare the soil long after the seeds should have been planted (as reported in N‡a Jaqna) is not only ineffectual but also undermines the people's planning and know-how. Support for food security in Tsumkwe West must take into account the difficult environment, the need for a wide diversity of livelihood strategies, the cultural background and preferences of the community, and the fact that residents of both conservancies are still in a major transition process.



Chapter 6 Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions

By Ute Dieckmann

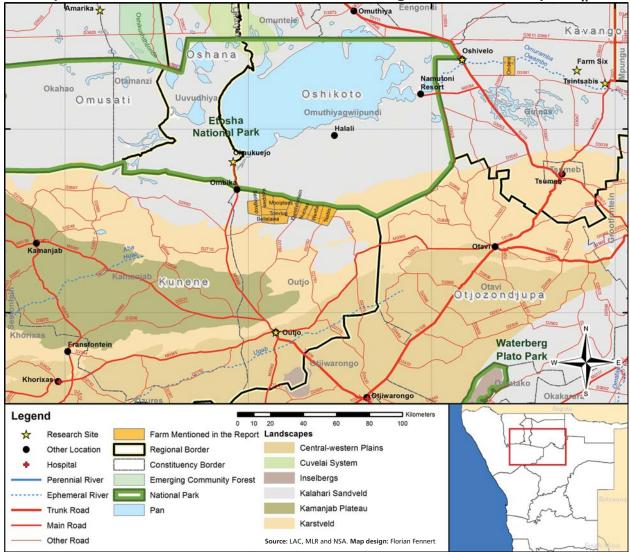


6.1 General background

In the 19th century and early 20th century, the Hai||om San as an ethnic group lived in the region stretching from the area then known as Owamboland to present-day Etosha, Grootfontein, Tsumeb, Otavi, Outjo and Otjiwarongo (Dieckmann 2007b: 35-36) (see map next page). Today the Hai||om are concentrated in parts of Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions, constituting the majority San population of these regions, therefore these three regions are dealt with in a single chapter.

Estimations of the number of Hai||om in Namibia vary. Budack's estimate in 1980 was 11000 (see Widlok 1999: 23), and the census of 1991 (the latest available data on Hai||om) found 7 506 Hai||om speakers (see Widlok 1999: 19). However, the Hai||om language is closely related to Nama/Damara (also of the Khoekhoegowab language family), and our study found that many Hai||om, in response to the census question of "main language spoken at home", had stated that it was "Nama/Damara".

The parts of Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions inhabited by Haillom





6.1.1 Kunene Region

Kunene Region is situated in the north-west corner of Namibia. In terms of size it is the country's second-largest region (approximately 13.9% of Namibia's total land area), covering an area of about 115 260 km² (National Planning Commission (NPC) 2012b: 43). The population density is very low (0.8 persons/km² compared with the national average of 2.5). Kunene comprises six political constituencies: (from north to south and then east) Epupa, Opuwo, Sesfontein, Khorixas, Kamanjab and Outjo. The region has one municipality (Outjo), two towns (Khorixas and Opuwo) and one village (Kamanjab). Much of western and north-western Kunene is very remote (reflected, for example, in some of the *National Household Income and Expenditure Survey* (NHIES) figures, e.g. access to services (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2012: 83-96). The coastal belt is formed by the Namib Desert, with its sand dunes in the Skeleton Coast National Park. The most northern parts of Kunene are largely mountainous, without easy road access. East of the mountainous central escarpment is the Etosha Plain (consisting of the Etosha Pan, grasslands and mopane woodlands), and south of Etosha is commercial farmland.

For Kunene, the census of 2011 recorded a population of 86856 (4.2% of Namibia's population), compared with 68735 in 2001 (NSA 2013: 15). The region has 18495 households, with an average household size of 4.6 persons, and 40% of the households are headed by a female (NSA 2013: 15). Only 65% of people over 15 years of age are literate, while the Namibian average is 89%. Compared with other regions, Kunene has the highest percentage of inhabitants older than 15 who have never attended school (37%) (NSA 2013: 15).

The Herero are the largest ethnic group in Kunene (47.4%), followed by the Nama/Damara (32.4%)¹ and Owambo (9.4%) (NSA 2013: 171).

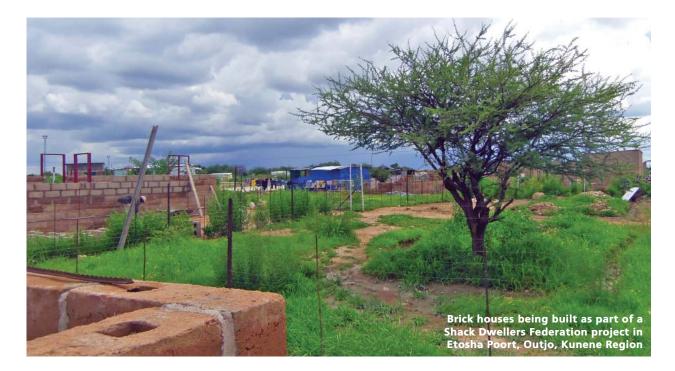
The main sources of income in Kunene are salaries and wages (49.4%), followed by subsistence farming (15.8%) and pensions (13.1%) (NSA 2012: 56).

Kunene ranks below the Namibian average in respect of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) (Levine 2007: 8). In addition, according to the Human Poverty Index (HPI) of Namibia's 13 regions, people in Kunene had a 33% probability at birth of not surviving to age 40 (Levine 2007: 10), which is relatively low compared to the Namibian average of 42%, and 39% of the population lived in households that spent more than 60% of their total income on food. Thus Kunene's HPI ranking (38) is above the Namibian average (33) (Levine 2007: 10-11).

The San in Kunene Region

The vast majority of the San in Kunene are Hai||om. The south-eastern part of the region was originally occupied by Hai||om (Dieckmann 2007b: 35-36). Since pre-colonial times, they have had intensive interactions with neighbouring groups (Widlok 1999: 30-32). With the increasing settlement of the area by white farmers during colonial times, their livelihood activities changed and farmwork became the predominant livelihood strategy of many Hai||om. After Independence, more and more Hai||om who had been living on farms moved to towns (mainly Outjo). This was due to the shift taking place in commercial agriculture (above all, the passing of Labour Act 6 of 1992, later replaced by Labour Act 11 of 2007 – see Chapter 12 on San farmworkers) as well as rapid population growth, resulting in increased competition in the farm labour market (Suzman 2001b: 16-17).

¹ Note that many Hai||om are included in this category.



According to the 2001 census data, only 448 people (or 0.7% of the region's population) spoke a San language at home in 2001 (author's calculations based on NPC 2003a). However, as already mentioned, this figure is highly misleading as the Nama/Damara and Hai||om languages are closely related: many Hai||om, according to our study, said in the census questionnaire that they spoke 'Nama/Damara'.

6.1.2 Oshana Region

Oshana Region is situated in north-central Namibia, and includes the area west of the Etosha Pan within the Etosha National Park. Covering an area of about 8647 km² (NSA 2012: 45), Oshana is Namibia's smallest region (NPC 2007a: 17). The Etosha land surface area (including Okaukuejo) within Oshana represents almost one-third of the region (NSA 2012: 17). Oshana comprises 10 political constituencies: Okaku, Okatana, Okatjali, Ompundja, Ondangwa, Ongwediva, Oshakati East, Oshakati West, Uukwiyu and Uuvudhiya (NSA 2012: 45). The region has one municipality (Oshakati) and two towns (Ondangwa and Ongwediva), and Oshakati is the regional capital (GRN 2007a: 18).

The 2011 census recorded a population of 176674 for Oshana, compared with 161916 in 2001, and a comparatively high population density of 20.4 persons/km² (NSA 2013: 19).

Oshana Region has 37284 households, with an average household size of 4.5 persons, and 54% of the households are headed by females. Ninety-six per cent of the region's inhabitants over 15 years of age are literate, and 7% of these inhabitants have never attended school (NSA 2013: 19).

Oshiwambo speakers constitute the largest language group in Oshana, comprising 93.7% of the region's population (NSA 2013: 171).

Households rely on a mix of on-farm subsistence agriculture and off-farm livelihood strategies, as reflected in the NHIES data: the main sources of income in Oshana are salaries and wages (42.8%) followed by subsistence farming (23.5%) (NSA 2012: 52-56).

Oshana Region ranks far below the Namibian average in respect of the HDI (0.548 compared to the Namibian average of 0.557). In addition, according to the HPI of Namibia's 13 regions, people in Oshana had a high probability (49%; Namibian average = 42%) at birth of not surviving to age 40. Thirty-three per cent of the region's inhabitants lived in households that spent more than 60% of their total income on food. Therefore, Oshana's HPI ranking (37) is above the Namibian average (33) (Levine 2007: 8, 10-11).

The San in Oshana Region

Hailom have lived in what today is Oshana Region for a long time, mainly in the area which became the Etosha National Park. Data on San living in Oshana but outside the park is very scarce. The 2011 census recorded only 0.1% of the region's inhabitants speaking a San language at home (NSA 2013: 171). The Oshana Regional Poverty Profile (RPP) undertaken in 2006 reported as follows: "While communities in Oshana Region are ethnically, relatively homogeneous, with stratification within those who speak the various Oshiwambo dialects, the Heillom [sic] San, who were the first inhabitants, are generally the poorest and most marginalised group. Their limited livelihood strategies rely predominantly on charity and the harvesting of resources only." (NPC 2007a: 21). Takada identified major San camps and settlements in Oshana but outside the Etosha National Park as Eheke, Okatyali, Onamutai, Ondangwa and Oshakati (Takada 2007: 76). The RPP also mentioned a few San in Ongenda (20 km south of Ondangwa) and Onaushe village (74 km southwest of Oshakati) (NPC 2007a: 37, 40). For Onaushe the RPP stated: "It is said that Onaushe was originally a San village. Oshiwambo-speaking people began settling in the village in 1972 and they are now the majority. There are also Ovahimba people living in the community. ... The San were originally hunter-gatherers but today they, as well as some Ovatjimba work in fields that belong to Oshiwambo people in order to gain income. Other main livelihood activities include the harvesting of thatching grass, manufacturing crafts, making mortar and pestles for pounding grain, manufacturing granaries and collecting mopane worms." (NPC 2007a: 38, 40). According to the RPP, the San in Ongenda were considered to be the most vulnerable group in the community. Most San households were "very small, in disrepair and dilapidated with very small, infertile omahangu fields" (NPC 2007a: 47).² It can be concluded that the situation of the San in Oshana (apart from those within Etosha), living among a large majority of Owambo neighbours, is comparable to the situation of the San in Ohangwena Region (see Chapter 7).



² It should be noted that the Oshana Regional Poverty Profile – and certain other regional poverty profiles, e.g. Caprivi (Chapter 11) – mirrors common stereotypes in respect of San, e.g. being "unable to adapt from being a specialised hunter/gatherer culture to a livestock and crop farming culture" and "not accustomed to saving for a rainy day as they have always lived for today". It clearly presents outdated evolutionistic ideas in noting that the San "have been hunted and persecuted for more than a century and a half by *more advanced* [author's emphasis] cultures whose members are of larger stature and inclined to 'bully' the smaller San" (NPC 2007a: 47) (see also Chapter 15 on culture).

The situation of the Hai||om living within the Etosha National Park differs to the situation of Hai||om in the rest of the region because Etosha's status as a national park has meant that it has not been increasingly populated by other ethnic groups. The Hai||om living within the park (see more detail below) rely on a mixed set of livelihood strategies including employment, pensions and casual work, and are better off in terms of poverty than those in communal areas.

6.1.3 Oshikoto Region

Oshikoto Region is situated in the central-north of Namibia, south of Ohangwena Region and west of Kavango Region. It covers an area of about 38 685 km². Oshikoto has 10 political constituencies: Eengodi, Guinas, Okankolo, Olukonda, Omuntele, Omuthiya Gwiipundi, Onayena, Oniipa, Onyaanya and Tsumeb (NSA 2012: 45). The region has one municipality (Tsumeb) and is divided into two parts with different land tenure systems: in the southern portion, large-scale farming units held under freehold title; and in the remaining portion, communal land governed by customary land tenure systems. However, private enclosure of land in the eastern and southern parts of the communal area has taken place for decades, and is increasingly limiting access to land and natural resources for poor rural communities (e.g. the San). The 2011 census recorded a regional population of 181973 (8.6% of Namibia's population) compared with 161 007 in 2001, and a population density of 4.7 persons per km² (NSA 2013: 20). The census found 37 400 households in Oshikoto, with an average household size of 4.8, and 49% of the households were headed by females. The Owambo constitute the largest ethnic group in the region (86.2%), followed by Nama/Damara (5.7%). The main sources of income in Oshikoto are subsistence farming (41.3%) followed by salaries and wages (27.9%) (NSA 2012: 52, 56).

Oshikoto Region ranks as the fifth poorest region in Namibia in terms of the HDI, and 50% or more people in the region are considered as poor (NPC 2007b: 1). In addition, according to the HPI of Namibia's 13 regions, people in Oshikoto, like those in Oshana, had a 49% probability at birth of not surviving to age 40; the third highest illiteracy rate; and the highest share of the population living in households (53%) that spent more than 60% of their total income on food (Levine 2007: 10). Therefore, Oshikoto Region, along with Omusati and Kavango Regions, had the highest HPI ranking (all 45) of the 13 regions.

The San in Oshikoto Region

Oshikoto Region has traditionally been occupied by San groups – mainly Hai||om, with a smaller proportion of !Xun – living mostly in the freehold areas, with just a few groups living in the communal areas. But, as in Kunene Region, with the increasing settlement of the area in colonial times, most of the Hai||om became commercial farmworkers. As in Kunene, after Independence many Hai||om farmworkers were dismissed and moved to towns (e.g. Tsumeb) or newly established resettlement farms (e.g. Tsintsabis – see below). Mangetti West, situated on the border between the commercial farming district in the south and the communal area in the north, was an area where the Hai||om could continue to practise their traditional lifestyle as the area was not developed into commercial farms (Widlok 1999). The few notes in the *Oshikoto Regional Poverty Profile* suggest that the situation of the San living among Owambo communities in the communal area of Oshikoto is similar to the situation of those in Oshana and Ohangwena (NPC 2007b: 38, 72, 118).

According to the 2011 census (NSA 2013: 171), 1.6% of the population spoke a San language at home (again, the data does not reflect the actual number of Hai||om speakers because of the similarity of the Hai||om language and Nama/Damara).

6.2 Research sites in the three regions

This section introduces the five research sites in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions:

- Kunene: Etosha Poort (in Outjo);
- Oshana: Okaukuejo (in Etosha National Park);
- Oshikoto: Tsintsabis, Farm Six and Oshivelo.

We had planned to include more sites in Kunene Region, but at the workshop in Outjo in February 2012, the Chief of the Hai||om Traditional Authority, David ||Khamuxab, residing in Outjo and on the Seringkop resettlement farm south of Etosha, made it clear that he did not want this research taking place (see subsection on the Hai||om Traditional Authority, page 223). It should be mentioned that other community members supported this research and indicated that we should go ahead as planned. To avoid further conflict in this regard, we abstained from visiting the resettlement farms south of Etosha, where approximately 620 Hai||om were living in 2012 (Lawry et al. 2012: 8). In this chapter we include some data collected on the resettlement farms in 2011 and 2012 for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) in Namibia (Lawry et al. 2012), as well as other available information, in order to address the gap in data caused by the opposition of the Hai||om chief (see subsection on Hai||om resettlement farms around Etosha, page 202).

This section provides a brief summary of the locations, populations, histories and livelihood strategies of the research sites. These sites were purposefully selected to provide a representative picture of the socio-economic situation of Hai||om as they constitute the vast majority of the San in the three regions.

Research sites	Urban/rural status	Land tenure	Language groups	Population status (numerical)	Institutional support	
					GRN	NGOs
Etosha Poort (in Outjo)	Urban	Residential area in town	Hai om	Minority	Resettlement farms	WIMSA support for kindergarten
Okaukuejo (in Etosha)	Rural	National park restcamp (residential zone for staff)	Hai om	Mixed	Bread baking, carpentry, hair salon (all failed)	None
Tsintsabis	Rural	Resettlement project	Hai∥om and a few !Xun	Mixed	Many	Many
Farm Six	Rural (remote)	Settlement on state land	Hai om	Majority	None	None
Oshivelo	Rural	Settlement	Hai om	Mixed	Bread baking, coffin making (both failed)	WIMSA support for Kindergarten

Table 6.1: Main characteristics of the Kunene Oshana and Oshikoto research sites

Note: In this report, MLR group resettlement projects are called "resettlement projects" and San resettlement farms resorting under the San Development Programme (SDP) run by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) are called "resettlement farms". Although these farms are also group resettlement projects, they are commonly referred to as "resettlement farms".

6.2.1 Etosha Poort in Outjo

Location

Outjo, a town with 8445 inhabitants (NSA 2013: 39), is situated in the south-east of Kunene Region, 70 km north-east of Otjiwarongo and 100 km south of the Etosha National Park. Outjo became a municipality in 1944, and is the commercial centre for the surrounding farms (Dieckmann 2007b: 18).

Population

Most people of Outjo hail from the following ethnic groups: Nama/Damara, Herero, Afrikaner, Owambo, Hai||om and German. The main economic activities in the town and Outjo District as a whole are livestock (i.e. cattle) farming, charcoal production and tourism. In addition, some industries have been established in town, e.g. a stone crusher, a milling plant, a charcoal factory and a steel construction company (Dieckmann 2007b: 18).

Most of the Hai||om residents, if not all, were living in the 'location' named Etosha Poort, which accommodated around 70% of the total population of Outjo (Dieckmann 2007b: 19). Etosha Poort is comprised of different 'quarters' which came into existence gradually and often informally with increasing urbanisation. Subsequently, the quarters were developed and declared as a residential area. With regard to the ethnic composition, Herero and Kavango tended to live in separate quarters, with some living in quarters occupied predominantly by Hai||om. The Owambo mostly lived together in one place because they were allocated an area where the old compound for contract workers used to be. Most of the Hai||om were living in various quarters: Camp 4, Camp 5, Soweto, 7de Laan (7th Avenue) and Sixty. A few Hai||om had houses in a quarter named ‡Oabatere (which had been built as a project where women could get a loan to build their own house). The names of the quarters reflect the informal process by which they had come into existence. Most of the Hai||om in Outjo had not received any help from the municipality, but had to build their own houses. Since 2008, the Shack Dwellers Federation had provided members, mostly Hai||om, with a loan to build brick houses. Also active was the Build Together programme, through which people bought land from the local authority.

The vast majority of the Hai||om were living in corrugated-iron shacks; very few were living in brick houses – it was estimated that only 25-30 Hai||om households in Outjo were living in brick houses. In the quarters with brick houses, some people had bought land and had built their own houses (some were still repaying their debt). Water and electricity, where available, were provided by the municipality and charged monthly. Electricity was provided in Sixty and Soweto (mostly by way of pre-paid metres, except in the case of brick houses), and had recently also become available in Camp 4. The municipality was in the process of making electricity available in the other quarters. In Soweto, Camp 4 and Camp 5, there was a pre-paid system for water, with standpipes (taps on the streets), whereas all residents of 7de Laan had to collect water in containers from standpipes in other quarters. In Sixty and ‡Oabatere, both brick and corrugated-iron houses had water and flushing toilets, whereas in the other quarters there were no sanitation facilities. In Soweto, compost toilets had been built at the houses, but because it could take up to six months for the tanks to be emptied, people were using the bush instead.

Etosha Poort had two kindergartens (one run by the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) and the other by the Pentecostal Church) and a primary school. Outjo had four schools: a primary school; Etosha Junior Secondary School (up to Grade 10); Outjo Secondary High School (up to Grade 12); and Privaatskool Moria (a private school attended mostly by Afrikaans children). Outjo also had a hospital (with an extension for TB patients) and various supermarkets. Etosha Poort had several small shops, many shebeens and an office of the Hai||om Traditional Authority. WIMSA had an office in Outjo, but apart from running the kindergarten, this NGO did not play a very active role for Hai||om in Outjo.

Originally (since time immemorial), the area around Outjo was inhabited by the ancestors of the Hai||om; Damara people moved into the area much later. The Hai||om name for Outjo was $Ts\bar{o}|aus$ – $ts\bar{o}$ means to 'pull' or 'draw in' (i.e. swamp/quicksand), and |aus means 'waterhole' or 'fountain'



(there had been a waterhole there where people would get stuck in the mud). The Hai||om had used the whole area from Outjo to the Etosha Pan to sustain their hunter-gatherer way of life. There had been headmen at each waterhole, and visitors to the site who wanted to use the water and other resources had to seek their permission to do so. With the increasing white settlement and the subsequent enclosure of commercial farms, Hai||om ended up living and working on commercial farms on their own ancestral land. Generally they did not live in the town of Outjo itself: according to workshop participants, before Independence there were only Herero and Damara locations in the town and a compound for the Owambo contract workers. After Independence, gradually, many Hai||om moved to Outjo on being dismissed as workers on the commercial farms in the surrounding area – due to farmers not being able to afford as many farmworkers as they could before the introduction of Labour Act 6 of 1992 (see Chapter 12 on San farmworkers).

6.2.2 Okaukuejo (Etosha)

Okaukuejo, one of the restcamps in the Etosha National Park, is situated about 120 km north of Outjo. At each of the park's restcamps there is a residential zone with junior staff quarters and senior staff quarters for housing the park employees and their families.³

Hai∥om	Okaukuejo	Ombika	Halali	Namutoni	Von Lindequist	Total
Senior staff quarters	24	8	-	1	-	33
Junior staff quarters	156	101	30	6	47	340
Total	180	109	30	7	47	373

Table 6.2: Number of Hai||om living in Etosha National Park

Source: MCA-N 2010: 11

According to survey data collected in 2010 by Aurecon's Namibia office on behalf of the Millennium Challenge Account Namibia (MCA-N), there was a total of 446 households in the park, with about 1 500 individuals. In terms of ethnic composition, Owambo households formed the majority, followed by Hai||om and Damara/Nama (each accounting for 13% of households), Herero (7%) and Kavango (6%) (MCA-N 2010: ii).

Most adult residents (60%) were employed in Etosha either by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) or Namibia Wildlife Resorts (Pty) Ltd (NWR – a company owned 100% by the government). Okaukuejo functions as the administrative hub of the park, and this restcamp also houses the Etosha Ecological Institute (for research and conservation management). Almost 20%

³ There were plans to relocate some of the MET employees to the area close to the Anderson Gate, but these plans had not yet been realised by the time of writing.

of adult individuals reported being unemployed but looking for work. The occupations of those employed varied widely, from labourer and housekeeper to safety/security officer and maintenance officer. Retired people accounted for only about 2% of the park's adult residents (MCA-N 2010: iii).

According to the MCA-N survey, the majority of households (95%) were dependent on the salaries or wages of household members as either a primary or secondary source of livelihood. The average household income from salaries or wages was generally low (a little over N\$2000 per month). Migrant remittances (money sent home by family members working elsewhere) and social grants were also important sources of income: respectively, 26% and 10% of households reported that they relied on these livelihood strategies as primary or secondary sources of income – although many obtained such income on an irregular basis (MCA-N 2010: iii).

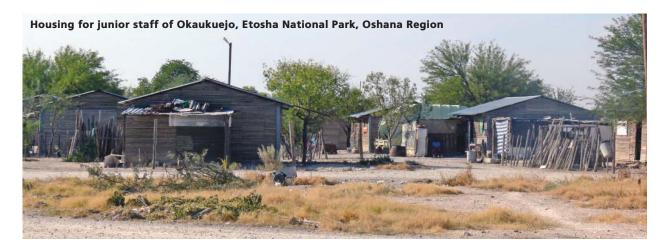
"A comparison between the various ethnic groups living in the Park generally points to the conclusion that the Hai||om population faces more numerous and severe socioeconomic challenges than any other group. For instance, Hai||om have the lowest school attendance (7% of 5-18 year-olds are in school, vs. overall total of 88%), the highest unemployment (39% among females and 28% among males over 16, vs. an overall average of 21% among females and 17% among males), high dependence on migrant remittances and social grants and frequent food shortages (73% of Hai||om households in junior staff villages reported food shortages in the past year)."

– MCA-N 2010: v

There was a clinic and a kindergarten at Okaukuejo. The closest hospital was in Outjo, 120 km to the south, and the closest primary school, to which a school bus provided transport, was 17 km away at Ombika, close to the park's Anderson Gate. A tourist shop (generally regarded as very expensive) and a staff shop provided a limited range of foodstuffs. Transport to Outjo was provided for MET and NWR employees at the end of each month to enable them to do their major monthly shopping. The majority of Okaukuejo households had water in their homes, and most households had flush toilets. The vast majority of the households used electricity for lighting, and a slightly smaller proportion used electricity for cooking as well.

The area south of the Etosha Pan, where tourist roads and lodges are situated, was once occupied by the Hai||om. All the permanent waterholes have Hai||om names (for example, the name of the Okaukuejo waterhole is #Huiop).⁴ The German colonial administration established the park in 1907, but tolerated – and indeed welcomed – the presence of the Hai||om, many of whose traditional territory outside the park had been colonised by white settlers. The Hai||om remained in the park for almost another half century, until in 1954 most of them were finally forced from their ancestral territory. As a result they joined the legions of landless farmworkers eking out a living on the farms on Etosha's borders, and their labour sustained an uneconomic and heavily subsidised white-owned commercial agricultural sector before Independence. Some of the Hai||om were allowed to return to the park from the late 1950s onwards in order to work for the Nature Conservation Department.

⁴ The Xoms |Omis (Etosha Heritage) Project, currently run by the Legal Assistance Centre, was established in 2001 in order to document the cultural heritage of the Hai||om in Etosha. Its main objectives are: to research, maintain, protect and promote the cultural, historical and environmental heritage of the Etosha National Park and its surrounding area; to provide capacity-building programmes based on this heritage for Hai||om individuals with a genuine interest in the cultural, historical and environmental heritage of the Park; and to design, create, support and implement sustainable livelihood projects for Hai||om communities indigenous to, or with strong historical associations with, the park – based on the Hai||om cultural heritage of the Etosha area. Within the project, maps with Hai||om place names and seasonal mobility patterns, posters about hunting and veldfood, a tour guide book and a children's book have been produced to preserve the cultural heritage of the Hai||om and to raise some income for the project. (For more information on the project, see www.xoms-omis.org.)



The Hai||om at Okaukuejo clearly consider Etosha as their ancestral land: according to the survey of 2010, 58% of the Hai||om living in Etosha were born in the park, while the percentage of people from other ethnic groups who were born there is far less (MCA-N 2010: 17).

6.2.3 Tsintsabis⁵

Tsintsabis is a 3000 ha resettlement farm situated approximately 65 km north of Tsumeb. Before Independence it was first a commercial farm, and then, during the war, the South African Police used it as a 'rehabilitation' station where captured People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) fighters were detained. In 1993 (i.e. after Independence) it became a resettlement project, accommodating mainly San families (initially approximately 841 people) (GRN 2010: 31). To the north of Tsintsabis is the veterinary fence, also called the "Red Line". Bordering the fence is 80 000 ha of land used as a livestock quarantine camp under the control of the Namibia Development Corporation (NDC). Also bordering Tsintsabis to the north, and to the north-east, are semi-commercial farms owned by Owambo and Kavango farmers.

According to the *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/ Farms 1991-2009*, around 1 500 people lived at Tsintsabis in 2010 (GRN 2010: 31). However, Tsintsabis residents consulted in this San Study said that there were already around 3 000 people living there before the Roads Contractor Company (RCC) moved in during 2009 to build the road from Tsumeb to the Katwitwi border post on the Namibia-Angola border. Reportedly around half were San (mostly Hai||om and some !Xun) and the rest were Kavango, Owambo, Damara and Caprivian. Since then, according to study participants' rough estimates, the number of Tsintsabis inhabitants has increased to about 4000. It is likely that the number has recently begun dropping again because the RCC has completed its work in the area.

Around 80 brick houses were built at Tsintsabis by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR), and 80 plots (10 ha each) were allocated to the initial beneficiaries. Apart from the brick houses in the centre of Tsintsabis, there are at least two 'locations' (each with its own Hai||om name)

⁵ Much of the data on Tsintsabis (and Farm Six, covered in the next subsection) was gathered in another context, i.e. a study on indigenous peoples and climate change, which LEAD conducted in 2012 as the local partner of Charapa Consultants, focusing on Namibia's Topnaar and Hai||om communities. This formed part of a World Bank global study on "Impacts of Climate Change on Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Knowledge". The methodology applied in LEAD's climate change study and this San Study was similar. The climate study report, titled *Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Africa: Report on Case Studies of Namibia's Topnaar and Hai||om Communities* (LAC 2013), can be accessed at www.lac.org.na.

with corrugated-iron houses. Most brick houses had pre-paid electricity, sold at the shebeens.⁶ The remaining few had been completed very recently and an electricity supply had yet to be installed. Some houses had TV sets, fridges and washing machines.

There was a clinic at Tsintsabis, and the nearest hospital was in Tsumeb. At least seven churches were active at Tsintsabis, and there were many shebeens. Small shops offered basic goods such as sugar and tea, and there was a pension payout point. A junior secondary school (up to Grade 10) was established on the farm in 1993. According to the *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009* (GRN 2010: 31), the MLR, the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) and NamWater had installed 18 boreholes with water tanks, of which 12 were functioning and six were not because the solar panels had been stolen. In 2006 or thereabout, a charity organisation (a church in America) installed 30 hand pumps for extracting groundwater – on the basis that "before you give the bible to the people, you need to give water".⁷ The hand pumps improved the water situation dramatically – it was said that in former times, people could be without water for three days.

Although Tsintsabis is more like a typical settlement than a resettlement farm, it is still a resettlement project, thus it receives various types of support from different government institutions, NGOs and donors. According to the *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009* (GRN 2010: 32-33), the following support had been provided to the Tsintsabis project:

- MLR/Komeho Namibia provided goats.
- Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) under the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry (MAWF) provided cattle.
- The MAWF provided donkeys.
- MLR/Rural People's Institute for Social Empowerment (Rise Namibia) provided solar panels as well as a tractor, seed and tools for vegetable gardening.
- The MLR, MoE, MGECW and NamWater provided boreholes with water tanks.
- USAID/MLR (or an American church-based charity organisation see footnote 7 below) provided hand pumps.
- The MGECW established a craft centre, including a kindergarten.
- The Village Development Committee (VDC), a foundation from the Netherlands, the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), the MET and the MLR helped to set up a tourist camp (see Box 6.3, page 230).
- USAID/NNF provided water-point management, livestock management, financial management and off-farm skills development see also section 6.3.10 on the impact of external support.
- Finally, the MLR has purchased more farms in the vicinity (e.g. Oerwood) to provide grazing for cattle owners however it was alleged that mostly outsiders had moved onto those farms.

Regarding employment, government provided a few formal jobs (e.g. at the clinic, school and MLR office), but formal employment in the private sector was very scarce. The RCC provided casual work for many people as from 2009 until the end of 2011 when it completed its road construction work in the area and started withdrawing. Some people had livestock and some had gardens.

As already mentioned, the Hai||om lived in northern-central Namibia before the colonial period, and most of the Hai||om at Tsintsabis in 2012 were farmworkers who had worked on white-owned

⁶ Participants raised concerns that the prices for electricity were not transparent.

⁷ Study participants provided this information. The 2010 report (GRN 2010) stated that USAID/MLR provided the hand pumps, and our attempts to ascertain which organisation/s provided them proved unsuccessful.



farms established on the ancestral land of the Hai||om in the surrounding area before Independence. (The Hai||om still knew the original Hai||om names of the waterholes and other cultural sites in the commercial farming area.) Most of the Hai||om at Tsintsabis settled there gradually after Independence when they were dismissed as farmworkers on the commercial farms.

6.2.4 Farm Six

Farm Six is situated 50 km north-west of Tsintsabis in the Mangetti Block, also known as Mangetti West – an area of about 80 000 ha that was originally acquired by the South African Administration as a quarantine camp for livestock moving from the northern communal areas to the commercial farmlands to the south. Farm Six is one of eight cattle posts in the Mangetti Block, and is reached by way of a graded road. Today the NDC leases the Mangetti Block from the government.⁸

The Hai||om at Farm Six were living in traditional dwellings to which they added corrugated-iron sheets and plastic materials. The participants there did not know the number of households in the settlement because "we cannot read or count". According to our own observations, there must have been at least 200 Hai||om at Farm Six.⁹ The *Oshikoto Regional Poverty Profile* (RPP) estimate was 105 households (NPC 2007b: 39). The settlement was occupied only by Hai||om people, and they lived in close proximity to the NDC farm manager's house and the administrative buildings.

The community had two water points, which consisted of two taps linked by a pipeline to the farm manager's homestead. Community members did not have to pay for water (NPC 2007b: 39). Participants in the NPC study reported that the farm manager had complained that they wasted the water, and had occasionally threatened them with closing the pipeline link.

⁸ The NDC was established by the Namibia Development Corporation Act 18 of 1993. The Government of Namibia has a 100% shareholding in the NDC. The NDC's main business objective is the provision of financial and related services on the basis of sustainable operations (see www.ndc.org.na – although the website does not provide detailed information about the NDC's activities).

⁹ For more ethnographic details on the Hai||om at Farm Six, see Widlok 1999.

In the past, a mobile clinic had visited Farm Six on an irregular basis, but it stopped its service in mid-2005, for reasons unknown to the community. The closest clinic was at Tsintsabis (50 km away), and sick people wishing to go there had to try to catch a ride with the farm manager. In cases of serious illness, the farm manager made himself available to transport the patient to Tsintsabis. The closest hospital was at Tsumeb, around 110 km away. A primary school was established at Farm Six in 2003, and the closest secondary school was at Tsintsabis. A mobile pension payout service visited Farm Six.

The only shop on the farm was run by and from the premises of the NDC farm manager. It was said to stock maize-meal, sugar, soap, matches, tobacco, Vaseline and a few other goods. While the shop was established to serve farmworkers primarily, its doors were open to other community members as well.

In respect of Farm Six, the RPP concluded the following (NPC 2007b: 39): "Although the Namibia Development Corporation is running a fully fledged cattle farm and has an office and farm manager on site, members of the San community do not benefit from NDC other than that the two water points are fed from a pipeline that is connected to the water source of the farm manager's house."

There were two Hai||om names for the place: (a) *Gom Ais* ('place of many mangetti trees') and (b) *Nai* \ddagger *gab* (*Nai* is an insect which bores holes in mangetti trees, and \ddagger *gab* is an open plain, i.e. an area where these insects are common). The area has been occupied by Hai||om for at least as long as oral history records. The first permanent settlements were established only in the 1970s after boreholes had been drilled to replace shallow pans and hollow trees as the main water source for the Hai||om living in the area. Long before the boreholes were established, the area was a regular seasonal dwelling place for Hai||om, with only occasional visits by neighbouring groups or Europeans (Widlok 1999: 3-4). The participants could recall that white farmers occasionally came in search of emergency grazing, during which time the Hai||om would try to hide. This must have been in the 1950s or 1960s, when the Mangetti Block was used as emergency grazing for white farmers in times of drought in other regions (Dieckmann 2007a: 167).



6.2.5 Oshivelo



Oshivelo is a settlement in Oshikoto. At the time of our fieldwork, most of Oshivelo's inhabitants were Hai||om, and there were also Khwe, Caprivians, Kavango, Owambo and Zimbabweans living there. The discussion participants estimated the total number of Hai||om living at Oshivelo to be 2700 in about 300 households. They recalled these numbers from the national census in 2001.

Most of the Hai||om were living in the southern part of the settlement – an area known as the 'cemetery location' due to its close proximity to the cemetery. Their houses were made of corrugatediron and plastic sheeting, and there was no water or electricity in the 'cemetery location' houses. There were three water points in the 'cemetery location', and the Hai||om did not have to pay for using this water as the councillor's office paid the NamWater bill. The water points were located about 100 m away from the houses. As there was no electricity supply to the Hai||om houses in the 'cemetery location', the location was also referred to as *Donkerhoek* ('dark corner').

Hai||om owned a few of the mainly brick houses in the northern location. These brick houses, built with support from the Build Together programme, had running water (which the inhabitants had to pay for) and electricity. However, the water supply in a few of the Hai||om houses had been cut off due to the households' inability to pay the bills.

There was a clinic at Oshivelo, and a combined school (Grades 0-10) located 3 km from the 'cemetery location'. There was also a police post and a veterinary office. At least four churches were active at Oshivelo, and discussion participants said there were around 50 shebeens in the settlement. There were small shops, a fuel station and a kindergarten, and AGRA opened a branch there in July 2012 (after our fieldwork). The government institutions (e.g. school, clinic, police and veterinary office) provided some employment in the settlement. Other employment opportunities were scarce.

Various projects for Hai||om at Oshivelo had been initiated and supported by both government and NGOs. The Oshikoto Regional Council initiated and supported two projects: a coffin-making project and a bread-baking project (both of which had apparently stopped operations by the time of our fieldwork). The Hai||om at Oshivelo had also received support from WIMSA (see Table 6.1).

When the Hai||om were still living in Etosha, the place where Oshivelo is located was known as *|Hūtō*, meaning 'thick bush'. Reportedly, |Hūtō was a place of such thick bush that no one could see the animals in it. The participants said that Hai||om first came to live at Oshivelo circa 1990, and at that time there were only 28 Hai||om living there.

6.3 Research findings

6.3.1 Livelihoods and poverty

In this section we first analyse the findings on livelihood strategies and issues around food security, and then present the findings on perceptions of poverty and social mobility.

Strategies	Etosha Poort	Okaukuejo	Tsintsabis	Farm Six	Oshivelo
Old Age Pension					
Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF)					
Food aid					
Casual work					
Piecework					
Veldfood	Little	Little	Little	Important	Little
Employment	Few unskilled jobs	Formal employment with NWR or MET	Few unskilled jobs	Few unskilled jobs	Few unskilled jobs
Gardens	Not important	Not important	Not important	Not important	
Chickens			Not very important	Not very important	Not very important
Livestock	Few on resettlement farms	Few on resettlement farms	Few	Very few	None, as no place to keep them
Small business	Not profitable		Not profitable		Not profitable
Crafts	Few	Few			Few
Prostitution	Only mentioned				Only mentioned

Table 6.3: Main livelihood strategies at the research sites in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana

* The cell shading indicates that the livelihood strategy is employed at the applicable site.

Old Age Pensions

As in many other regions, Old Age Pensions were an important source of income at all sites. The importance of pensions is easily understood considering the low salaries linked to most of the employment opportunities open to Hai||om (see further on). Pensions often provided more money for a household than piecework and casual work. In Outjo, the elderly participants did not attend the first day of the workshop because it was "pension day" and they had to collect their money in town. According to the other participants, "they would eat nicely the rest of the day". At Tsintsabis the research team could observe the 'pension day' situation, whereby creditors were gathering to wait for the pensioners to pay their credits. The same applied at Oshivelo, whereas at Farm Six (in particular), many people over the age of 60 did not receive their pension, due to lacking an ID document, the farm's remoteness (a lack of transport to Tsumeb), a lack of translators at the office where the pension was paid out, or an incorrect (younger) age documented on the ID.¹⁰

¹⁰ Due to the lack of birth certificates, the age of an applicant was often only estimated by the officials responsible for the issuing of IDs in former times. It needs to be mentioned that Hai||om at Farm Six came to the researchers with their IDs in order to find out when they would be entitled to register for their Old Age Pensions. This is a clear indication of the problems that people were facing there due to remoteness, illiteracy etc.

Food aid

Food aid played an important role for the Hai||om at Oshivelo, Tsintsabis and Farm Six, but, as in other regions, the quality and frequency/regularity of food aid varied. The translator at Farm Six related that the food aid "mealie-meal" (maize-meal) made up half of the diet of the inhabitants (the other half being mainly veldfood), and the discussion participants complained that the food aid consisted solely of mealie-meal (without even cooking oil). The Tsintsabis supply sometimes included cooking oil, and the Oshivelo supply sometimes included cooking oil and fish. Irregularity was deemed a problem at all the sites, but particularly at Farm Six: food aid came monthly at times, but at times the residents had to wait a couple of months for it.¹¹ Considering the Farm Six residents' high dependency on food aid – due to the scarcity of employment or piecework opportunities at this remote site, the limitations on gathering veldfood and the lack of livestock – the irregularity of food aid was a major issue in terms of food security for the residents. The Hai||om of Outjo and Okaukuejo were generally not provided with food aid; only those who had plots at the resettlement farms (Seringkop, Bellalaika, Mooiplaas, Koppies and Toevlug) were entitled to food aid, but transport to the farms to collect it was a major problem.

Formal employment

The importance of formal employment as a livelihood strategy varied at the sites. At Okaukuejo in Etosha, formal employment played an exceptionally important role, especially in comparison to most of the sites in other regions. This is due to the fact that, in theory, only employees of NWR and the MET are allowed to reside in the park (although in practice, pensioners who had worked for the MET were allowed to remain there).¹² This specific setup meant that compared to other Haillom socio-economic setups, households in Etosha were (on average) much more dependent on at least one formal employee in the household. This was reflected in the data collected by Aurecon, according to which 95% of the park households were dependent on salaries or wages of household members as either a primary or secondary source of livelihood, and their average household income was slightly more than N\$2 000 per month. For the Hailom in the park, migrant remittances and social grants represented important secondary sources of income (MCA-N 2010: iii). Haillom were very concerned that more and more jobs in the park had been going to 'outsiders' (mostly Owambos) since Independence. There were cases reported of Haillom with similar qualifications having applied for jobs which were given to people from other ethnic groups instead. On 14 December 2010, the Etosha Hailom youth organised a demonstration at Okaukuejo and also went to the Office of the Ombudsman in Windhoek to report these cases, but apparently nothing changed as a result. Many of the young Haillom living in Etosha were not employed – essentially because Etosha's status as a national park means that few livelihood activities can be undertaken in the area. For these Haillom, Etosha meant 'home', and living and working there was the most important issue that they hoped would be addressed. It was stressed repeatedly that before Independence, Haillom had no problem getting regular employment in the park (e.g. when a parent retired, an adult child would fill his/ her position). In summary, the participants shared the perception that the government had tried to push the Haillom out of their ancestral land in Etosha by not employing them in the park. No employment meant that there were no livelihood strategies for them to utilise in the park.

¹¹ Indeed, the participants at Farm Six asked the researcher to call the regional councillor to find out when the food aid was coming because they were waiting for it. The regional councillor said that he was working on the problem, but it is not known if they received it afterwards.

¹² The purchase of the resettlement farms (see section 6.3.2 on access to land) was supposed to solve the problem of pensioners staying in the park. However, the government was aware that the Hai||om can only move out of the park voluntarily.

In **Outjo**, where the level of education among San was generally higher than at the other sites and in other regions (four out of 13 participants had been educated up to Grade 12), half of the participants reported that they had been formally employed for a certain period of time (not extending beyond a couple of years) within the last five years. The relocation of the employer, or employee dismissal or bad health were given as reasons for job loss. Most of the other jobs available to the Outjo Hai||om (i.e. those not requiring a complete school education) were domestic work, gardening at private households and cleaning at the local shops. These jobs gave some Hai||om a regular income, albeit a small one – participants reckoned N\$300-N\$500 was the average monthly salary for these jobs. The participants stressed the importance of educational qualifications for getting jobs. It was also mentioned that there were some job opportunities available through the San Development Programme (SDP) of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), but participants complained that the supporters of the Hai||om Traditional Authority were the only people who could get these jobs (see section 6.3.8 on political participation and representation).

At Tsintsabis, of the estimated 2 000 Hai||om residents, only about 28 were reported to have formal employment, i.e. with the RCC, and at the clinic, the school, the craft centre and the Treesleeper Camp (see section 6.3.10 on the impact of external support). Reportedly there were a few more Hai||om employed in towns or on farms who were not living at Tsintsabis but who might contribute to the livelihoods of certain Tsintsabis residents – although only to a small extent. At Tsintsabis it was mentioned that family members sometimes worked at crop farms in the vicinity, which was considered important not only because of the financial income, but also because they could bring overripe fruit and vegetables back home to supplement the household diet. Participants stressed the fact that today's employment situation was much worse than the situation before Independence, when most of the Hai||om were farmworkers and a considerable number of Hai||om worked for the South African Defence Force (SADF).

At Oshivelo the employment rate among Hai||om was even worse, in that only five people were reported to have permanent employment: two were labourers at the school (N\$300/month), one was working as a teacher and two women were cleaners at the public toilets. Another two would be employed by AGRA which was due to open a branch in the settlement.¹³ At Farm Six, nine people were employed at the NDC farm.

In general the Hai||om – as is the case with most of the other San groups in Namibia – perceived the high unemployment rate among the Hai||om to be linked to ethnicity: the majority of Hai||om believed that they would have far fewer problems getting jobs if they were Owambo, due to the social and/or political networks of the latter ethnic group.

Casual work and piecework

Casual work and piecework were important livelihood strategies at all the study sites. The surrounding commercial farms sometimes provided casual work for Hai||om at Tsintsabis, Oshivelo and Outjo. Casual work (fencing or other temporary work within the Etosha National Park and at surrounding lodges) created income-generating activities for young men at Oshivelo and Okaukuejo, and supplemented the households' income for a few months until such time as the work was completed. At Okaukuejo, other piecework opportunities were scarce due to the status and nature of the restcamp within a national park area.

¹³ Even if these numbers for employed Hai||om have omitted some Hai||om employees, the fact that people can actually count the Hai||om with employment among 2 000-3 000 residents, as in the case of Tsintsabis and Oshivelo, is an indication of the minimal rate of employment.

At Farm Six, some Hai||om would work for a month or two for the Owambo farmers and this would also give them access to veldfood in the area occupied by these farmers. There were temporary work opportunities available (e.g. cutting fence posts) for the NDC farm on which they were living.

At Tsintsabis it was stressed that casual work and piecework were very important for younger people but not for the elderly. During the time of the road construction (2009-2011), casual work for the RCC was abundant, for both women and men; some people had contracts and the salaries were reportedly about N\$800 per month. It was said that the people who had lost their jobs once the RCC had completed its work would now become more dependent on pensioners or others. Apart from the jobs provided by the RCC, some people (fewer than 20) had casual work at the Treesleeper Camp (see Box 6.3, page 230) and some worked seasonally on an orange farm near Tsumeb. The collection and sale of firewood seemed to be common as an income-generating activity. Remarkably, one female respondent compared piecework with hunting, saying that it was the modern way to hunt. One goes out in the morning in order to 'get' something, and if not successful, one might try tomorrow and rely on others today.

In Outjo and Oshivelo it was mentioned that some Hai||om women would engage in prostitution or have sugar daddies in order to get food, money or alcohol.¹⁴

Small business

The potential of engaging in small business activities was mentioned by Hai||om of Outjo, Oshivelo, Farm Six and Tsintsabis. At all four sites, however, it was stressed that it was not profitable and not sustainable. 'Small business' in this context means the activity of buying items such as sugar and tea in larger quantities and then packaging and selling them in smaller quantities.

At Farm Six the sale of alcohol produced from the makalani palm tree was also mentioned as an income-generating activity.

It transpired that despite the alleged unprofitability of small businesses, many of the participants in Outjo were indeed involved in them: selling tea, sugar, milk powder and other items in small quantities, and producing and selling *vetkoek* (deep-fried dough/pastry) and home-made ice.¹⁵

At Tsintsabis the participants reported that many people had tried to generate income with small businesses, but most had given up after a month or so. Trying to run a small business is "like a habit", but is difficult to do in a business-like manner – this was said to be due to the importance of sharing and also empathy: "You cannot say no if someone is hungry." So the customers would buy on credit and might never repay the business owner.

At Oshivelo some Hai||om had tried to invest in some small businesses to boost their income. However, they faced the challenge of costly school fees and covering other school-related costs and other living costs, to the extent that they ended up spending most of their money on these essentials, with the result that their businesses collapsed. In addition (as at Tsintsabis), many Hai||om bought

¹⁴ The participants would not use the word 'prostitution' explicitly, but reported that women would engage in services for men in order to get food, alcohol or money.

¹⁵ One male respondent explained that he made perhaps N\$7 profit from selling a 2.5kg pack of sugar divided into smaller quantities and altogether about N\$30 profit per week by selling sugar, coffee and powdered milk. He said that he was regarded as well-off in his area in Etosha Poort because even though he was unemployed, he did not have to ask people for free sugar, tea, milk etc.

goods on credit from small businesses of other Hai||om and then failed to repay the debt. Participants noted, however, that when a Hai||om person obtained credit from an Owambo, he/she would be compelled to pay back the loan.

In summary, running a small business was not considered to be an important income-generating or livelihood strategy. Nevertheless, it seemed that for some Hai||om, small businesses could provide a steady small income throughout the month, enabling them to buy small items needed over that period.

At Tsintsabis it was mentioned that capacity-building would be needed to make small businesses profitable. However, given the moral obligation to share among the Hai||om (see page 196), it is questionable whether capacity-building would indeed increase their income from small businesses.

Sale of crafts

In Outjo, Okaukuejo and Oshivelo, the sale of crafts was mentioned as a livelihood strategy. In Outjo, some Hai||om tried to earn a bit of additional income by selling crafts (e.g. bracelets and carved makalani nuts) to tourists passing through town. One problem in this regard was that they were often chased away from the supermarket car park where tourists stop to buy groceries. Apparently Hai||om had also tried to sell their crafts to the owners of tourist shops, but the prices offered were too low. As there were no specific buyers, prices and sites at which to sell crafts, craft-making was not an activity in which many Hai||om of Outjo engaged. The same was true for Oshivelo. There the sale of *omajovas* (mushrooms that grow on termite hills) was also mentioned as a livelihood strategy, but the harvest is highly seasonal – *omajovas* only grow for a short period after the first rains. The situation at Okaukuejo was slightly different in that there was at least a central place to sell the crafts (wooden mobiles with animal carvings), i.e. outside the Anderson Gate (close to Ombika). However, Hai||om were not allowed to sell any items within the national park itself. At Tsintsabis, which has a craft centre, it appeared that no Hai||om were making crafts for sale there, but some Hai||om produced crafts sold at the Treesleeper Camp (see Box 6.3, page 230).



Gardens

Overall, gardens did not play an important role in sustaining livelihoods at the study sites, even though Hai||om at all sites except Oshivelo had gardens next to their homesteads. (At Oshivelo the lack of land, the lack of water and the poor soil were given as reasons for people not engaging in gardening.)

At Tsintsabis, although many Hai||om had been allocated 10 ha plots, these were not extensively used for gardening due to the lack of fences and infrastructure, and the roaming livestock. Koot noted in 2000 that many plots in Tsintsabis were not cultivated. According to him, there was a clear lack of agricultural knowledge and motivation because the residents continuously received food aid and preferred gathering veldfood to crop production at that time (Koot 2000: 64). Participants in our study felt insecure about the 10 ha plots in terms of land ownership, because the RCC had taken some of the plots away, reportedly without compensation. When asked if the 10 ha plot project should be considered a failed project, our translator explained that it was based on Owambo cultural values, and he believed that as an alternative, a certain area should be defined as commonage which Hai||om could use to collect medicinal plants and veldfood, since the participants already had irrigated gardens at their houses in which to plant tomatoes, beans, potatoes, cabbages, onions, watermelon and maize.

At Farm Six, some households had small gardens next to their huts, in which they grew pumpkins, maize and beans, but the harvest was small. In Outjo, gardens did not play a substantial role in sustaining livelihoods.

At Okaukuejo, many Hai||om had small gardens at their houses and grew tomatoes, *mielies* (corn) or pumpkins, but the harvest was finished within a couple of days. The soil at Okaukuejo was said to be very salty and very hard. Some years ago a Peace Corps volunteer had started a community gardening project next to the clinic, where the quality of soil was better because it had been brought in from elsewhere. The idea was to sell the vegetables and use the profit to pay clinic and school fees on behalf of those who could not afford to pay them. The project was a success for a short time, while someone was paid to water the garden and to look after it, but later on the garden plot was used only by individuals.¹⁶

Livestock

In general, livestock played only a very limited role in sustaining livelihoods. Livestock played the biggest role at Tsintsabis, as compared with the other sites, due to its status as a resettlement farm and the outside support it received. MLR/Komeho Namibia and RISE Namibia¹⁷ had initiated a project in which goats had been allocated to a few Hai||om households: from 460 goats provided by MLR/Komeho in 2004, only 160 were left in 2009, and from 100 goats donated by RISE, only 43 goats were left in 2009. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and Development Aid from People to People (MAWF/DAPP) provided 51 head of cattle in 2006, and by 2009 the number had increased to 62 (GRN 2010: 31). Thus both goat initiatives were unsuccessful, and one might also question the success of the cattle initiative if the number increased by only 11 animals in three years. Apparently the projects were not satisfactorily thought through: the participants believed that it

¹⁶ This reflects the problems associated with starting communal garden projects, as the experiences of the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia's (DRFN's) Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP) and Livelihood Programme for San (LIPROSAN) have shown – see Omaheke and Ohangwena chapters respectively.

¹⁷ Komeho Namibia and RISE (Rural Peoples Institute of Social Empowerment) are Namibian NGOs supporting rural development.

was not feasible to keep cattle or goats on 10 ha without fences or water points, but the beneficiaries reportedly did not have sufficient income to fence off the land, and as a consequence the animals were roaming around the farm. Cattle belonging to Owambo people were also wandering freely, and all the livestock (i.e. that of Hai||om and Owambo) was to be found consuming other people's crops, which caused conflict. Stock theft was mentioned as a further major concern. A third of the participants at Tsintsabis had goats and/or cattle, but not in large numbers. The livestock owners did not sell or slaughter any livestock because the numbers were so few. Occasionally the milk was either used for consumption or (very seldom) sold. Therefore, even at Tsintsabis resettlement farm, livestock was not regarded as an important livelihood strategy. Chickens were more common than goats, and three quarters of the participants at Tsintsabis had chickens. These were kept for consumption, but they were also exchanged for maize-meal or other food items.

The only Hai||om of Outjo, Oshivelo and Okaukuejo who could own livestock were those who had a plot on a resettlement farm, or relatives living on such a farm, or relatives working on a commercial farm where the owner allowed farmworkers to keep a certain number of livestock. At Okaukuejo, for example, the participants said that only six of the Hai||om living at Okaukuejo had livestock – mainly goats at the resettlement farms (see section 6.3.2 on access to land).

At Farm Six, only those employed at the NDC farm were allowed to keep a few head of livestock, but most of the households kept chickens for their own consumption.

Veldfood

Participants at all sites had a vast knowledge of the veldfoods consumed by Hai||om in the past and today. In Outjo, participants listed at least 22 different types of veldfood that had been available to them at some time, and at Oshivelo the participants listed around 13 different kinds of veldfood that they were still eating today. At Tsintsabis the participants listed even more kinds of veldfood eaten in the past, and they developed a seasonal calendar reflecting the veldfood still collected and consumed according to season (around 12 species).



Okaukuejo, being part of the Etosha National Park, is an area where veldfood consumption is very restricted nowadays. The elderly people in Okaukuejo still remembered where Haillom collected specific types of veldfood in the past, and in which season. Nowadays they still collect berries – e.g. different *Grewia* (raisin bush) species and Berchemia discolor (bird plum) when travelling, or if someone is working in the veld in the park. This activity is risky, however, due to the presence of lions and elephants. In seasons when the fruits of *‡huin* (Berchemia discolor) are ripe, Haillom at Okaukuejo visit relatives on commercial farms where the trees are abundant, collect the *‡huin* and store the harvest for some time. Until recently, park residents (including the Haillom) were allowed to collect mopane worms, but the head of the park stopped this practice because Owambo

were coming from outside to harvest and sell the worms in large quantities. Nowadays the Hai||om need permission from the park staff to harvest these worms, so that the practice can be controlled. If permission is granted, staff have to transport the people to the harvesting sites.

At Farm Six, veldfood still played a very important role in the diet of the Hai||om. One participant had spent the day before the workshop in the bush collecting mangetti nuts, and he showed us his harvest. Mangetti nuts were still central in terms of food security: they were said to be very nutritious, and infants could survive on them even if the mother had died while still breastfeeding. Participants reported that there had been a variety of veldfood available in former times, but 2011 saw the worst frost ever, and most of the sweet berries etc. died thereafter.¹⁸ When asked if there had been initiatives to sell the veldfood commercially (as there had been with the *!nara* nuts sold by the Topnaar living along the Kuiseb River), the participants said that there had been no such initiative at their farm.

Access to veldfood was a problem at all of the sites due to the lack of access to land, and it was reported that the Hai||om no longer teach their children the skills required to gather veldfood because of the lack of access to land.

"Today, you can only see the veldfood from a distance." – Female participant at Tsintsabis

Tsintsabis, Outjo and Oshivelo are surrounded by commercial farms, and the Hai||om need the farm owners' permission to look for veldfood on their land. Participants said that their access to veldfood was better before Independence when they lived as workers on commercial farms and had access to the veldfood (and sometimes to game) on those farms. At Tsintsabis it was mentioned that one woman, on entering a commercial farm in search of firewood, was beaten on her legs with a sjambok by the owner of the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farm. Today, an additional hindrance to the consumption of veldfood is the widespread use of herbicides on commercial farms.

At Farm Six, by contrast, the situation of access to veldfood changed drastically only two years prior to our fieldwork, when Owambo farmers moved into the farm area, and the area allocated to these farmers was fenced off (see section 6.3.2 on access to land).¹⁹ Thus, the Oshikoto Region RPP findings in 2006 differed to our findings six year later: although community members said in 2006 that, for example, "poor people tie their stomachs in order not to feel the hunger", the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) team involved did not have the impression that community members were starving – which may be explained by the fact that there had been good rains and veldfood was abundant: "Admittedly, the 2005-2006 rainy season was exceptionally good. But participants repeatedly stated that veldkos had been abundant, albeit some distance away (during the dry season) and a little less abundantly during drought years." The PPA team concluded that "Households at Farm 6 are probably very poor in terms of coarse grains harvested from their own fields and processed foods delivered from time to time by government. But natural foods seemed to have been available in sufficient quantities to sustain the community." (NPC 2007b: 46) In conclusion, since veldfood constituted such an important part of the Hai||om diet at Farm Six, the influx of Owambo farmers had dramatic consequences for their food security.

At all sites it was noted that Hai||om still like to eat veldfood because it is part of their culture and is healthy and medicinal.

¹⁸ For a list of veldfood gathered by the Hai||om around Farm Six in the 1990s, see Widlok 1999: 88-90.

¹⁹ Ironically, the Hai||om of Farm Six were paid to fence off the land for the Owambo farmers.



As was the case at most of the research sites in all regions covered in this study, participants at all sites in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto were hesitant to respond when asked about hunting. At Farm Six, hunting still seemed to be practised – at least more than at the other sites in these regions. After a lot of probing from our translator, it emerged that, although illegal, Hai||om at Farm Six still hunted (albeit secretly) smaller animals such as warthogs, birds, Damara dik-dik, duiker, leguan (monitor lizards), springhares and tortoises, to a greater extent than Hai||om at the other sites did.

Sharing

Sharing was mentioned in various contexts as important as it is related to other livelihood strategies, such as pensions, food aid and employment. Interpreting the concept of 'sharing' as it applies to the Hai||om is crucial to gaining an understanding of the way in which they (and other San groups in Namibia) survive. (Chapter 15 on culture provides detailed information about the San practice of sharing.)

As one participant put it, "Sharing is part of our lives; it is in our blood." Also, sharing was cited as a reason for Hai||om people not being 'rich'. The translator at Tsintsabis and Farm Six interpreted sharing not so much as a strategy of the poor generally, but above all as a specific aspect of Hai||om culture. There are various terms for different methods of sharing – this finding being consistent with anthropological literature on (former) hunter-gatherer societies, which always point out the importance of sharing (e.g. Barnard 1992: 54-55; Guenther 1999: 45-48).²⁰

A male participant at Tsintsabis pointed out that a surname would indicate to a Hai||om person the relationship between the person with that surname and oneself, and any relationship would require one to share with that person. This would make certain exchanges, such as those necessary for the running of small businesses, unprofitable, in that one could never earn but had always to give – unlike Owambos, for example, whose culture does not oblige them in this fashion. Participants contended that for Hai||om to succeed in running small businesses, they would have to establish the businesses far away from their own community.²¹

²⁰ The Khoekhoegowab dictionary provides at least 14 words related to sharing.

²¹ A closer look at the questionnaire data collected from 45 interviewees at Tsintsabis and 76 interviewees at Farm Six for the LEAD study in 2012 on indigenous peoples and climate change confirms the importance of sharing. When asked about other sources of income (apart from livestock, pensions and salaries from formal employment), 35.5% of the Hai||om interviewees said that they had another source of income, and the sources cited make clear that sharing between extended family members – not necessarily household members – was very important: more than half of the items listed under "other income" referred to the income of other people. (The study report, titled *Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Africa: Report on Case Studies of Namibia's Topnaar and Hai||om Communities* (LAC 2013), can be accessed at www.lac.org.na.)

Food security

In general, due to a higher proportion of formal employment, the Hai||om at Okaukuejo seemed to be better off than the Hai||om at the other sites, although there were considerable differences between households (see Table 6.4). At all of the other sites, more Hai||om community members experienced hunger on a regular basis.

The number of meals eaten per day varied between sites, within sites, and within households, according to the availability of food. It was mentioned that – depending on the availability of food – some Hai||om people ate twice or (at times) three times per day, and some ate only once per day. There were also people who did not eat at all on certain days.

Site	Most frequent (eaten daily)							Least frequent (rarely eaten)
Etosha Poort (Outjo)	• Mealie-meal • Coffee • Sugar • Tea	Mageu*	 Tobacco Vetkoek Cooking oil Sweet potatoes Leaves 	 Soup Onions Powdered drink Milk Afval* Kudu bones 	Meat	• <i>Omajova*</i> • Bush spinach	Tree gum	 Variety of veldfoods Rice Macaroni
Okaukuejo	• Mealie-meal • Coffee • Sugar • Tea	• Meat • Relish		• Macaroni • Rice	Vegetables			Veldfood
Oshivelo	• Porridge • <i>Mageu</i>	• Porridge • Salt		Veldfood	 Tinned fish Dried beans Meat Vegetables Porridge Sweet-Aid 			• Rice • Macaroni
Tsintsabis	• Mealie-meal • Sugar • Tea • Milk		• Meat • Oil • Cabbage • Chicken		• Rice • Macaroni			Veldfood
Farm Six	• Mealie-meal • Sugar • Tea	Veldfood		• Meat • Chicken • Cabbage				Garden produce

Table 6.4: Main foodstuffs available to the Hai||om at the five study sites

* *Mageu* is a non-alcoholic drink made from fermented mealie-meal *Afval* is the Afrikaans term for offal (internal organs)

Omajova are mushrooms that grow on termite hills

Mealie-meal (maize-meal) was a staple food for the Hai||om at all five sites. They used it to make soft porridge (commonly referred to as *pap*) which they ate almost daily.

"If you do not have enough mealie-meal your house is empty; if you have some you feel you are at least a human being. A day without mealie-meal is a black day. The best meal you could have was mealiemeal with meat."

– Participant in Outjo

Participants in Outjo and Oshivelo mentioned that they also fermented mealie-meal in water to make a drink known as *mageu*. Hai||om at Oshivelo sometimes added a drink called Sweet-Aid to the mealie-meal, and also used Sweet-Aid to make another type of drink.

At Okaukuejo people could afford to buy macaroni or rice, which was said to be consumed only occasionally at the other sites (e.g. Oshivelo and Outjo, where this was deemed 'Christmas food'). At Farm Six, veldfood was said to be only slightly less important than mealie-meal; it would have been just as important as mealie-meal, or even more important, if it was always easy to access.

Meat was consumed most often at Okaukuejo. An employed female respondent said, "Sometimes there is no meat, but you have macaroni, rice, *pap*, sugar and tea etc., but it feels like there is no food at home if there is no meat around. Then it is not nice; no one will cook then." Meat was mostly purchased at Okaukuejo or Outjo shops, but at times, outsiders had come in and sold poached meat illegally. A male participant at Okaukuejo provided further detail in this regard: "… we bought from them [AALS farmers] as well. Those were Herero, but we don't see them here anymore. Different Herero [from different AALS farms] came to sell meat. But now I see some who come to sell game meat, like warthog, but not every day. In former times they sold goats which they had stolen. But maybe they are now in prison. At least you could negotiate with them about the price, because it wasn't their own, which they sold here."

At Oshivelo participants said that the women had control over the food as they were the ones who would cook it. It was also said that women and children ate before the men, and the food was shared equally if there was enough of it. (During meals at other sites we observed a different arrangement: usually elders and men were the first to be served, and children would share a portion if there was not enough to go around.) At Oshivelo it was also claimed that pregnant women got more food if there was enough for all members of the household. Some men at Oshivelo contended that the men often shared the portion given to them with children who needed more food to grow. Reportedly, people would eat on an equal (or almost equal) basis when "manna fell from heaven", i.e. on pension payout day.

At all five sites, most of the female participants said that they breastfeed their children for two years, but it was also reported that some mothers could only breastfeed for as short a period as one year because their food intake did not suffice to sustain breastfeeding. In the past, when there was more food available, mothers breastfed their children for up to four years. This long breastfeeding period among the Hai||om in former times is also documented in other sources (Friedrich 2009: 97).

Perceptions of poverty and vulnerability

As in other regions, the San (in this case Hai||om) in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto considered themselves to be on the bottom rung of the social ladder. However, when the participants developed their wealth categories, it became evident that there was a certain degree of internal variation on what the criteria should be. It must be noted that the wealth-ranking activity could not be conducted at Farm Six due to time constraints. Overall, the participants at the other four sites assessed their wealth based on the following criteria:

- employment;
- livestock;
- household assets;
- Old Age Pension;
- using money wisely;
- alcohol abuse;
- how many people had to be taken care of (including unemployed children);
- education (indirectly), this being one prerequisite for children getting jobs; and
- how long an individual had worked for the government, i.e. the value of the pension received from the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF) a criterion valid only at Okaukuejo.

Table 6.5: Wealth ranking per site

ETOSHA POORT (OUTJO)					
Very poor	Not so poor	Middle class	Better off	Rich	
 Living in plastic or mealie-meal bag shelters with no furniture, and sleeping on empty bags. People with corrugated-iron houses but nothing inside. Have no fire, because no food to cook. Might get food from the rubbish dump and dustbins. Pension, but supporting other people and paying for municipal services. 	 A small business, a corrugated-iron house, but nowhere to farm with poultry or goats, and nowhere to make a garden. No children to support. Some might have goats, but no bed, house or job An account for buying clothes. A pensioner without many dependants, but paying for municipal services. 	 A brick house but unfinished (without ceilings) or a stone house with nothing inside and overcrowded. One person employed in a household. 	 Corrugated-iron house with TV, satellite TV decoder, electricity (generator) and a toilet. Working in big retail shops. Some received monthly housing allowances of around N\$3 000 from their employers (big companies). Might have an old car. Married with an employed spouse. 	 Had assets in the house (even in a corrugated-iron house). Could slaughter a cow for a funeral. Had a car, cattle, a big house and a satellite TV decoder. Many in the family with employment. Could afford better education for children. Could go to the bank at any time to draw money when needed. Good job; no resident relatives to support. 	
	OKAUKU	EJO (ETOSHA NATIONA	AL PARK)*		
Very poor	Not so poor	Middle class	Better off	Rich	
 No work. No pension. No equipment (freezer, TV etc.). No house. No children who can look after you. Never cared about children so children don't support you. Don't use money wisely. Drinking. 	 Employed but drinking. Piecework (but not a lot available at Okaukuejo). Drinking. Not too many people to take care of. Working but must take care of many people. Pension. GIPF, but payment small. 	 Example 1 N\$500 Old Age Pension p/m. N\$950 GIPF p/m. Has to look after many people. One son without work. Wife doesn't work. Freezer, car (no money for maintenance), TV. Two daughters have work at lodge. One daughter had plot at resettlement farm. Example 2: 2 pensions (but GIPF payment small). Has to take care of many people. Wife without work. 	 Example 1 Good GIPF (increases every year) because he worked all his life for the MET. N\$500 Old Age Pension p/m. Lots of people to take care of. One daughter works. Wife works. Example 2 Good work and income (senior staff), worked for a long time (±40 years). Not using his money wisely. Wastes the money. Wife doesn't work. Children without work. 	 Example 1 Good work. No drinking. Children have work. Few people to support. Goats (but not a lot). Knows how to use money wisely. Lives in senior-staff quarters. 	

 \ast The participants at Okaukuejo gave specific examples for the three upper wealth categories.

OSHIVELO					
Very poor	Not so poor	Middle class	Better off	Rich	
 Drinking alcohol Unhygienic "Not normal" No belongings No house No job Getting food from others No documents (ID and birth certificate) Only own clothes they are wearing No hope and low self-esteem 	 Does odd jobs Retrenched (maybe a little money from retrenchment package) Pensioners Once-off payments Newcomer from farm One blanket Shack Cellphone Some pots and utensils Not drinking Not producing food 	 Pensioners Corrugated-iron house Supports children Blankets Few belongings 	 Fruit trees Some chickens Some furniture Brick house Don't produce own food Some permanent formal jobs 	 Money Livestock TV Working car Furniture Brick house Cellphone Living a good life 	
TSINTSABIS**					
Very poor	Not so poor	Middle class	Better off	Rich	
 No hope Hungry Abuses alcohol Very few clothes 		 More clothes Sometimes go to church Pension Other small income 	 Regular income Livestock No hunger 		

** The participants at Tsintsabis developed only three categories.

Table 6.5 makes clear that the participants had different ways of approaching the wealth-ranking exercise. Hai||om in Outjo mostly reflected on individual examples, which they categorised. They also included more tangible signs of wealth (e.g. satellite TV decoder) than factors which might promote or prevent wealth. The Tsintsabis and Oshivelo participants focused more on general criteria (e.g. food and basic assets), and those at Okaukuejo had a mixed approach. At all sites, however, long-term employment was considered the most important wealth-related factor.

The 'very poor' category mostly comprised people who were highly dependent on other people – although in Outjo even people receiving pensions could be categorised as 'very poor' if they had many people to support. In general, many of the 'very poor' were people who had no hope and often abused alcohol. At Tsintsabis it was pointed out that some of the people in the 'very poor' category went to the shebeens early in the morning, carried out small jobs for which they received *otombo* (home-brewed beer) or a very small amount of money, and then just returned home in the evening. It was also said that one could get out of the 'very poor' category when one stopped drinking – and this had proved true for many of the participants who had abused alcohol for some time in the past.

In Outjo it was explained that even with short-term employment, Hai||om would be able to buy household assets such as a TV or furniture on credit. However, if the person then lost his/her job and could not pay off the debts, the shop would take away the items and the person would be back to 'square one'. Employed people who owned household assets or cattle were less vulnerable than those without, because if the former lost their jobs they could gradually sell off these assets (i.e. one by one) when in dire need of cash.

According to the Oshivelo participants, many Hai||om people had moved from being 'rich' to 'not so poor' or 'very poor' in the recent past. They narrated that when they first came to Oshivelo they had livestock (including cattle, goats and donkeys), and some people had money. However, since they did not have enough land and space to keep their livestock, they sold them one after the other and used the money to buy food and other necessities. Additionally, the authorities at Oshivelo often shot their donkeys, claiming that they were causing accidents on the roads and were therefore a danger in the community. As a result of this process, most of them moved from being 'rich' to 'not so poor' or 'very poor'. Their zinc houses would also need repairs, but they could not afford to repair them, and this had also contributed to their moving from being 'rich' or 'better off' to 'not so poor' or 'very poor'.

Regarding the wealth-ranking distribution at Tsintsabis, only one of the 12 participants said that he was in the 'better-off' category. Five participants placed themselves in the 'middle-class' category - the main reason being that they were receiving pensions - and one of them hoped to become 'better off' soon because he had been allocated one of the 10 ha plots and had started cultivating there, so he hoped to be able to sell surplus produce soon. Half of the participants said that they would categorise themselves as 'very poor' due to their lack of ownership of land and livestock, and their inability to pay school fees for their children. Although we did not ask about the entire farm, it was evident from the discussions that only a few Haillom at Tsintsabis could be categorised as 'better off'. By contrast, at Okaukuejo the same numbers of Haillom were classified as 'very poor' and 'better off' (eight households per category), while the majority of the households were in the 'middle-class' category and one Haillom family was regarded as 'rich'²² At Oshivelo the majority of Haillom were considered 'very poor' – but few of those classified as very poor attended the research workshop. This was attributed to the fact that people categorised as such usually excluded themselves from activities and preferred to engage in alcohol abuse. Only two Haillom living at Oshivelo were identified as 'rich', on the grounds that one of them had a car, cattle and goats, and the other's husband was working in Windhoek and provided income for the household.

Regarding the perception of wealth of other ethnic groups, the Oshivelo participants considered the majority of people of other ethnic groups to be 'rich', and only two or three such people were considered to be 'very poor'. The participants attributed the fact that the Hai||om were poorer than people of other ethnic groups to their lack of land – a constraint which prevented their keeping livestock or cultivating crops like people of other ethnic groups did.

The Oshivelo participants also gave examples of San groups whom they believed lived in worse conditions than them. For example, they mentioned San living in Gobabis whom they said were living in houses made of plastic sheets and cardboard, and San in Okongo and Eenhana who lived in similar dwellings and worked for Owambo people. They also mentioned Hai||om in Tsumeb, Grootfontein and Outjo whom they deemed to be living in deplorable conditions.

Comparing the different sites, the research team concluded that the Hai||om at Okaukuejo were certainly far better off than those at the other sites because of their higher rate of long-term and reasonably paid employment. The Hai||om community of Farm Six was the poorest by far, due to remoteness, restricted access to land and veldfood, and the scarcity of employment or even piecework opportunities.

²² The Okaukuejo participants also described a 'very rich' category, but it did not include any Hai||om. These 'very rich' people had high salaries (e.g. N\$5 000 per month) and other employed family members. They also had livestock outside the park, but the participants could not confirm their numbers.

6.3.2 Access to land

As with the lack of employment opportunities, the lack of access to land was a serious problem for all of the Hai||om communities visited in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions. Since the circumstances differed considerably across the sites, it is worth describing the site-specific circumstances in some detail.

Hai||om resettlement farms around Etosha National Park



We integrated data on the resettlement farms close to Etosha that were recently bought for the Hai||om and handed over to the Hai||om Traditional Authority (TA). This background information is necessary for understanding Hai||om land issues, particularly in respect of Outjo, Okaukuejo and Oshivelo. It also provides some additional data on other sites where Hai||om were living. Most of the data presented is from the document titled *Hai||om Resettlement Farms – Strategy and Action Plan*, produced by Steven Lawry, Ben Begbie-Clench and Robert K. Hitchcock for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the MET in September 2012 (Lawry et al. 2012), and from Dieckmann (2011).

Since 2008 the government has purchased seven farms close to the southern border of the Etosha National Park, specifically for the Hai||om. These farms are Seringkop, Bellalaika, Mooiplaas, Werda, Nuchas, Toevlug and Koppies (see the map on page 174). An eighth farm, Ondera, 30 km east of Oshivelo, was purchased in early 2013. The plan to resettle Hai||om had emerged some years beforehand, and was related to the planning for the Etosha National Park centenary celebrations in 2007. The government could not ignore the fact that the establishment of the game reserve (which later became a national park) was no cause for celebration for the Hai||om, who had lost their land due to these developments (*The Namibian*, Brigitte Weidlich, 17 November 2008). The Hai||om still residing within the national park comprised the primary target group for resettlement. A minority of them were employed by the MET and NWR while the rest were retired or unemployed and living with their employed relatives. The Hai||om residing at Oshivelo comprised another target group for resettlement (*The Namibian*, A. Shigwedha, 26 March 2007).

The government plans envisaged that the MLR would purchase farms (or blocks of farms) for resettlement on the eastern side of the park (close to Oshivelo) and at the southern border of the park (close to the Anderson Gate and Ombika), and Cabinet had given its approval for this purchase as well as for the creation of conservancies for the affected Hai||om (MET 2007: 2). The resettled Hai||om would then be assisted in developing sustainable livelihoods on the redistributed land through a variety of strategies and land uses, involving wildlife, tourism and – as in communal areas – the creation of conservancies. There were also discussions about the Hai||om getting access to specific sites in Etosha that were of particular cultural importance to them.

The MLR had previously carried out preliminary work to identify potential farms for purchase (based on the "willing buyer, willing seller" principle) and had also carried out individual farm assessments. Then, in 2007, a professional consultant was contracted to carry out research on behalf of the MET. This resulted in a more detailed project implementation plan for the resettlement of the Hai||om and the establishment of conservancy-like institutions. The consultancy report (MET 2007) stressed the following:

- There was a considerable need for proper planning at different stages of the project, including a need to gather sufficient information and to carry out certain feasibility studies before some of the proposed activities could be initiated.
- If the project moved too quickly, simply to get results on the ground, then the target group the Hai||om community would not properly benefit from the project.
- Sound capacity-building programmes had to be provided for the project to succeed.

It was anticipated that the project would require commitment from government and donors over a period of at least 10 years so as to provide the Hai||om with sustainable livelihoods based on sound land management, the development of productive businesses and partnerships, and good governance (MET 2007: 10). The project development was to be guided by the Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on the Hai||om, a sub-committee of the SDP of the OPM (Ouseb 2008: 1). From the outset it was agreed that there was a need to develop appropriate structures for the coordination and facilitation of implementation on the ground: the proposed approach was for the MET to chair an Implementation Steering Committee made up of all relevant stakeholders, which would report to the Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on the Hai||om.

The majority of the original main target group, i.e. the Hai||om residents of Etosha, resisted their relocation from the beginning. At the handing-over ceremony, the Deputy Prime Minister remarked: "They say they will wait until Etosha becomes their own, but that will never be; Etosha is there for all to benefit [through tourism]." (*The Namibian*, Brigitte Weidlich, 17 November 2008) However, this represents a simplified version of the Hai||om community's priorities and concerns, since they were concerned that they would lose all access to Etosha once they agreed to be resettled on the farms, their priority being to get employment in the park and live there instead.

With regard to the Hai||om at Oshivelo, the second main target group, initially the MET envisaged opportunities on the eastern side of the park for an innovative public-private partnership between current landowners, government and the Hai||om. A Hai||om community trust (called Namutoni Hai||om Trust) focusing on the Hai||om around Oshivelo, had been developed as an initiative of the private landowners, and there was an agreement to create a conservancy-like institution with the Namutoni Hai||om Trust and the private landowners as partners. This initiative was thought to have potential for creating opportunities for employment and generating income from existing and planned tourism businesses in this area, as well as from hunting and other enterprises. There were indications that, apart from the resettlement farms to be purchased by the government for the Oshivelo Hai||om community, an additional farm might be donated to them by current landowners, and some shares in a further farm might be donated to the trust with the option of buying the remainder at a later stage (MET 2007: 10-11). However, it would appear that the negotiations between the government and the private landowners did not work out as anticipated, and for many years no development took place for the Hai||om of Oshivelo. Only in 2013 was the farm Ondera handed over to the Hai||om TA.

(The following information refers to the resettlement farms south of Etosha, since Ondera was only recently bought and no detailed data on the plans for development there was available.)

In September 2012, around 690 Hai||om were living on the resettlement farms (see Table 6.6 on the next page). However, during the four years of resettlement there had been little coordinated planning beyond land purchases in terms of strategic land-use planning; understanding the carrying capacity of the resettlement farms for people and livestock; ensuring viability of the areas; and developing sustainable livelihoods. The fact that a land-use plan and livelihood support strategies document

was only completed in early 2012 (Lawry et al. 2012) is a clear indication of this. That document was commissioned by the MCC as a response to a request from the MET for planning assistance.

Access to the resettlement farms was managed by the Hai||om TA: the chief received resettlement requests from local Hai||om people and then provided them with places on the resettlement farms once the farms were purchased and handed over to the TA. Some Hai||om felt that many of those people first resettled were family of the chief, or people close to him. The accuracy of this claim is difficult to assess, but without doubt this perception helped to promote division between those who supported the chief and those who did not (see section 6.3.8 on political participation and representation).

Farm name	Farm size	Farm population	Number of registered persons	
Mooiplaas No. 462	6 500 ha	Farm in process of being abandoned; unknown	162	
Bellalaika No. 458	3 700 ha	10 households (287 plots allocated; MET houses under construction)	Outjo and surroundings: 184 Etosha: 103 Total: 287	
Werda No. 469	6414ha	19 households plus people from Mooiplaas and Outjo	None	
Seringkop No. 454	6361 ha	80 households, with plans for more from Etosha and Khorixas	241	
Nuchas No. 461	6217 ha	9 persons and 1 resident employee	None	
Toevlug No. 457	6217 ha	12 households plus more from Mooiplaas and Etosha	None	
Koppies No. 457	1 436 ha	None	None	
Total		Approximately 121 households with 621 persons (690 persons registered)		

Source: Adapted from Lawry et al. 2012: 8.

Our own data (from research in Outjo and visits to the resettlement farms in other contexts) indicates that pension money and food aid were the main livelihood strategies on the resettlement farms for the majority of farm residents. Transport to Outjo (around 90km away by gravel road) to get pension money was a problem, however. According to the Haillom Resettlement Farms - Strategy and Action *Plan*, for a minority of the Haillom, livestock was an important source of subsistence and income.²³ The ownership of livestock was highly skewed, however: only 14.73% of the Haillom on the farms actually owned livestock. Livestock production was constrained by the lack of access to water in some parts of the farms, uneven grazing conditions, and disease and predation. Income-generating activities included the exploitation of natural resources (e.g. firewood, mopane worms and medicinal plants) and the production of crafts. It was concluded that "the income generation potential of natural resources on the farms is relatively undeveloped" (Lawry et al. 2012: 11). Communal gardens were found on two farms (Seringkop and Nuchas), but evidence from both the report and discussions in Outjo during our fieldwork suggested that the communal gardening was not very successful and Haillom would prefer individual gardens (Lawry et al. 2012: 12). Few of the Haillom had backyard gardens that were irrigated, and water was a major constraint in this regard. Most of the households cultivated maize, beans, melons and some other vegetables. A few Haillom on the farms had obtained hunting licences from the TA (for kudu, springbok, wildebeest or warthog), but hunting was not a common livelihood strategy. The resettlement farms received support through several government agencies: the OPM, MLR, MET, MAWF, the Ministry of Health and Social

²³ The total number of cattle on the farms was 497 and the number of small stock was 534. Some Hai||om kept poultry as well, and there were some donkeys used for transport and draught power in ploughing fields.

Services (MoHSS), the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Hai||om Regional Technical Committee and the Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme (Lawry et al. 2012: 14-16).

Furthermore, since the early stages of planning it had been envisaged that the Hai||om on the resettlement farms should be enabled to gain additional income through the granting of a tourism concession to the specific area around the !Gobaub waterhole in the park. A feasibility study was conducted in 2011 (Collinson 2011). Long debates between the MET and MCA-N took place in 2011 and 2012 about the type of legal entity to which such a concession should be granted, with MCA-N supporting the project in that period and emphasising the need to have a democratic institution in place. Eventually, in September 2012, the !Gobaub Community Association was established to oversee the wildlife tourism concession in the !Gobaub area. Unfortunately the association's constitution was prepared by lawyers in Windhoek without the potential members participating or being properly consulted, and without taking into account the realities on the ground.²⁴ Our field discussions also established that many residents did not fully understand the association's constitution.

Contrary to the recommendations in another consultancy report which suggested a broader approach (Jones and Diez 2011), in 2012 the MET decided that benefits from the concession should be available only to Hai||om residents of the resettlement farms, as documented in the constitution. This meant that the people who decided to stay in Etosha (and other Hai||om who lost land in the process of colonisation) were excluded from any benefits arising from the !Gobaub waterhole concession in Etosha. Notably, the *Hai||om Resettlement Farms – Strategy and Action Plan* compiled in September 2011 concluded (Lawry et al. 2012: 17): "We believe that there is considerable merit in including Etosha Hai||om in the membership of the !Gobaub Community Association." Shortly after the association was established, the Head Concession Contract for the Etosha South Activity Concession Etosha National Park (MET 2012) was signed between the MET (The Concessor) and "the Hai||om Community herein represented by the Chairperson of the !Gobaub Hai-||om Association (The Concessionaire)". Therefore, although the contract stated that the Hai||om community would be the concessionaire, in fact only people from the resettlement farms (as members of the association) could be beneficiaries of the concession. This was also a misrepresentation of the following facts:

- There are around 11000 Hai||om in Namibia, but the farm residents number only an estimated 600-700 in total, thus the concessionaire includes only a minimal percentage of the Hai||om community.
- There was never in-depth consultation with, or participation of, the members of the association, let alone the rest of the Hai||om.
- No economic feasibility study, business plans or simple estimations of the financial benefits from the concession had been developed.²⁵
- The rights of the concessionaire are very limited and it is debatable whether the Hai||om will receive any kind of sustainable benefit based on the contract.
- The access that the Hai||om would have to Etosha ("cultural and symbolic rights") is very limited (MET 2012: Annexure 3).²⁶
- The idea to build a lodge at !Gobaub exclusively for the benefit of the Hai||om was originally developed by the Hai||om residents of Etosha, not Hai||om on resettlement farms.

²⁴ For example, written notices to each of the registered members are required to inform all members about an Annual General Meeting at least 30 days before the date fixed, etc. Given the high rate of illiteracy, the lack of access to fax machines or computers, and the lack of registered addresses, this seems to be an impractical condition.

²⁵ Noticeably, the farm on which the lodge is supposed to be built had not yet been bought by the government during the planning stages.

²⁶ In addition, the concession fee to be paid to the Concessor (25% of all concession fees received by the Concessionaire from the Operator of the concession right) is high, taking into account that there is not yet a business plan in place (MET 2012: 50).

With regard to the development of the resettlement farms, it became evident from the above that land acquisition and resettlement planning and strategising were of a piecemeal nature, and the resettlement of the Hai||om was not a well-planned and coordinated process. Moreover, the question of livelihood sustainability had not been sufficiently addressed. Although the resettlement began in 2008, five years on the Hai||om were still far from being self-sustainable. Due to the remoteness of the farms, piecework options and options for engaging in small businesses were far fewer than, for example, in Outjo or Otavi. Very few Hai||om actually kept livestock on the resettlement farms, thus to date the Hai||om have in fact become even more dependent on state aid than they were when they lived in towns. Furthermore, participation and consultation were undertaken mainly through the Hai||om TA, which, as it turned out, complicated issues further and led to more divisions among the community members (see section 6.3.8 on political participation and representation).

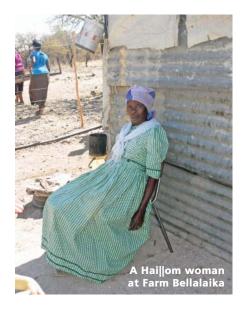
Okaukuejo

The situation of the Haillom in Etosha with regard to access to land is linked to the resettlement farms, as it was originally envisaged that the Haillom of Etosha would be the first target group. The residents of Okaukuejo had mixed feelings about the resettlement farms. At one stage (late 2011) it seemed that some people would be willing to move to the resettlement farms on condition that they would be resettled together at one farm away from the influence of the TA, and that they would be provided with housing. Reportedly there had been prior promises made by MET representatives that Farm Toevlug would be made exclusively available to the Haillom from Etosha. However, the piecemeal nature of the purchase of land, and the lack of a proper resettlement strategy, have ruined this possibility. In September 2012, according to the records of the TA (Lawry et al. 2012: 9), 47 persons at Okaukuejo and Anderson Gate had registered for a plot on the resettlement farms, yet only a minimal number of people had actually moved out of the park onto the resettlement farms; most were still living in Etosha. Thus the MET's aim of removing unemployed or retired Haillom from the park has not yet been achieved. In our field discussions it became evident that many Haillom would prefer to reside and work in Etosha, which they regard as their home, instead of moving to resettlement farms. It should be borne in mind that the Haillom who grew up in Etosha were not familiar with keeping livestock (or the skills required for other agricultural activities) because livestock has not been allowed within the park since the late 1940s (Dieckmann 2007b: 186-188). In April 2013, the MET, with MCA-N support, started to build new staff quarters close to Ombika for MET employees who are supposed to move from Okaukuejo to these new quarters (Allgemeine Zeitung, Dirk Heinrich, 4 April 2013). The consequences of the relocation for the Haillom at Okaukuejo have yet to come to light.



Etosha Poort (Outjo)

The majority of the Hai||om who moved to the resettlement farms (mostly Seringkop and Bellalaika) were Hai||om from Outjo. This was partly due to the fact that the registration was conducted by the Hai||om TA, which has its office in Outjo. It might also be due to the fact that many of the Hai||om in Outjo had grown up as children of farmworkers in the area where the resettlement farms are located. Three of the 12 discussion participants in Outjo had a plot on one of the resettlement farms – their main motivation being that this entitled them to benefit from the San Feeding Programme under the OPM. The participants expressed strong disagreement with the way that Hai||om Chief David ||Khamuxab handled issues on the farms, in that they felt that he was acting like a dictator (see more about this in



section 6.3.8 on political participation and representation). Compared with places like Tsintsabis, Farm Six or Oshivelo, the Hai||om in Outjo were more concerned about their lack of employment and the lack of good governance on the part of the Hai||om TA than about the lack of land, although the latter was mentioned in the context of the problems of keeping livestock.

A very small number of Hai||om in Outjo also had plots on other group resettlement farms in the vicinity of Outjo. Overgrazing seemed to be a problem there. In short, moving to a farm and trying to sustain oneself by subsistence farming there was not regarded as a viable livelihood option.

Oshivelo

"When Namibia got independence, it was mentioned that every Namibian would get part of their motherland/ancestral land. We also thought we would get our land. If you watch TV, you see people enjoying the fruits of our motherland. It is the people who represent us who don't bring the fruits to us. When we made our first demonstration, at Namutoni Gate, we got locked up and beaten up. There is a woman here who was affected by teargas and since then she has skin cancer. After the demonstration, they agreed to resettle the Haillom people in Oshivelo. We were planning to make a second peaceful demonstration and when the governor heard of it they came here and told me that they would look into the issue and there was no need for a demonstration. Nothing has happened since then. Our first demonstration was in 1997 and we wanted to do a second one in 2010. Many farms have been bought in our name but we don't get them. Geluksanker was bought for us but the government gave it to an Owambo person. They tell us that the land was bought by the Owambo person. Onguma could not be bought because the government could not afford it. The government is using our [Haillom] name to buy land for themselves."

- Male participant at Oshivelo

At Oshivelo the lack of land was regarded as a major issue, and the issue came up continuously in our discussions there, in various contexts.

There was a general feeling of loss of access to ancestral land (in Etosha), the result of which was a loss of livelihoods. One of the respondents put it very clearly: "No land, no life." Participants were distressed by the fact that in post-Independent Namibia many other ethnic groups had been given their ancestral land but the Hai||om people had not. In 1997, seeking to address the lack of land, Hai||om from all over the area held a peaceful demonstration at the park's eastern and southern entrance gates. Some were beaten up by police and some were locked up in police cells.

Discussion participants contended that it was the lack of land that reduced them to what they termed "begging for food from the government". Participants also articulated their thoughts on what they called the "inhumane process of evicting [the Hai||om] from Etosha in 1954". Although many of the participants were young and had not yet been born at the time of eviction, they narrated stories which they had heard their elders tell with bitterness, relating how some of the Hai||om got lost in



the process of eviction and may have been eaten by wild animals. They also remembered how their once-large families were scattered as relatives were transported to different and distant places.

As mentioned above, in 2013 (about six months after our research for this study), the 7 000 ha farm Ondera, close to the Ombili Foundation, was handed over to the Hai||om TA. During the handing-over ceremony, government representatives mentioned that Hai||om could engage in crop production, livestock husbandry and income-generating activities there (*Allgemeine Zeitung*, E. Hoffmann, 20 February 2013; *The Namibian*, O. Shivute, 26 February 2013). Undoubtedly, the Hai||om resettled at Ondera will need lots of post-resettlement support to eventually develop sustainable livelihoods. Again, a question arising is whether proper planning and coordination of support activities was undertaken before the beneficiaries were actually resettled.

Tsintsabis

The resettlement at Tsintsabis took place long before the SDP of the OPM came into being (2005). The approach adopted at Tsintsabis was similar to the approach at other group resettlement schemes under the MLR, and differed from the OPM approach to San resettlement projects (i.e. the seven south of Etosha, the Ondera project east of Etosha, and the Uitkoms project in Otjozondjupa Region), where the MLR acted only as a buyer for the OPM. As with other group resettlement projects, the influx of people to Tsintsabis had not been controlled (GRN 2010: 31).²⁷ It was mentioned that some Owambo people occupied land without the MLR allocating it to them, and had illegally fenced off bigger plots for livestock and omahangu (pearl millet). Government officials were also said to be part of the incoming population, e.g. a magistrate living in Tsumeb, nurses, teachers, doctors, etc. Apparently there was also confusion about who had the authority to allocate land – whether the MLR or the local headman - and there were complaints that the headman had allocated land to outsiders. In summary, the Hailor felt that they had poor land rights: land was just taken away by others and no compensation was paid for lost land, e.g. the RCC "took" a plot from one person, and Mobile Telecommunications Limited (MTC) erected a cellphone tower without compensating the plot owner who lost land as a result. Additionally, the 10 ha plots allocated to individuals were not fenced off and did not provide any infrastructure for sustainable gardening or animal husbandry projects. The lack of access to land was a major issue for the participants at Tsintsabis.

"The reason why we are piled up here is that we had our ancestral land and waterholes but they are taken over by others now."

Male participant at Tsintsabis

As mentioned, the resettlement area of Tsintsabis is 3000 ha, and originally 80 households were supposed to be resettled there. Currently there are 3000-4000 people living there.

Although they were now living on a resettlement farm, the level of poverty was perceived to be higher than before, basically because Hai||om livelihood options had diminished: employment on farms was scarce; other employment opportunities were almost non-existent; the access to natural resources (game, veldfood and medicinal plants) was far more limited; and new livelihood options (e.g. keeping livestock and gardening) were not viable. The result was a high dependency on state aid (pensions and food aid).



Farm Six

The Hai||om community at Farm Six faced even worse problems with access to land than did Hai||om at the other sites. The NDC had made four farms in the Mangetti Block temporarily available for relocation of Owambo cattle owners who had been accused of illegal grazing in Kavango Region. The government had spent N\$3.5 million on erecting a high fence to prevent cattle mixing (with those of other people and with game) and spreading diseases. The area covered by the four farms has the capacity to carry 4000 cattle, while the 57 registered Owambo cattle owners had 7630 cattle (Namibia Press Agency 2008). Although this relocation was supposed to be a temporarily solution, in 2010 their stay was extended by one more year, so even though not all of the 57 cattle owners moved to this area, the number of cattle there increased, putting a heavy strain on the water resources (*The Namibian*, O. Shivute, 2 August 2010). The Hai||om at Farm Six were not informed – let alone consulted – about this relocation beforehand, and once the Owambo were in the area the Hai||om were told that they would only stay for nine months. The Owambo farmers' cattle grazed in the area where Hai||om went to that area to collect veldfood, the Owambo farmers acted as though felt threatened: "They all have guns and are powerful."



"If government cannot help us with accessing land, then they should take a gun and shoot all Haillom here so that they can take the land!"

– Male participant at Farm Six

Another participant said that the fact that Owambo farmers were allowed to settle at Farm Six was an indication that the Hai||om were not regarded as human beings. The participants complained that they mentioned the land issue to everyone who visited them but without any result. For instance, a representative from the OPM had been there in December 2011 and they had informed him of the issue but nothing had happened afterwards. The participants mentioned that the community should get a specific cattle post (*pos*) in the Mangetti Block (i.e. part of the land that was allocated to the Owambo). The post they had in mind consisted of four camps and was not too far away from the school. The Hai||om wanted the Owambo cattle removed from that area so that the Hai||om could engage in crop cultivation. It was also stressed that it would give pride back to the people if they had land. Remarkably, they felt that asking for more than one post was too ambitious and would put discourage the government from acting in their favour.

"We are disappointed by government. We feel like prisoners between the commercial farms and the Owambo farmers. We want to get a *pos*, Klein 6, to stay there. It is disappointing that people from far are coming here and settle on our ancestral land."

- Male participant at Farm Six

6.3.3 Identity, culture and heritage

The participants generally identified themselves as Haillom rather than as San.

Traditionally the Hai||om were divided into several subgroups, according to the geographical area in which they lived. This was specifically mentioned by participants at Oshivelo – but this process of subdivision and the respective names of the various groups are common knowledge among the Hai||om. It was mentioned by members of other Hai||om communities too (e.g. Outjo and Okaukuejo), and is well recorded elsewhere (Dieckmann 2007b: 112-113; Friedrich 2009: 49; Widlok 1999: 82).

Regarding cultural differences between the Hai||om and other ethnic groups, participants in Outjo deemed their language to be the chief difference in their area, followed by their physical appearance, certain traditions (e.g. playing the traditional guitar, and hunting with a bow and arrow) and their clothing (loincloths). At all sites the participants felt that Hai||om were discriminated against. It was mentioned that many Hai||om had lost their Hai||om dialect. According to linguists, the *‡Akhoe* dialect, spoken in the north of Oshikoto Region as well as in Ohangwena Region, preserves old Khoekhoe forms in terms of lexicon/syntax, and is clearly distinguishable from 'mainstream Hai||om'.²⁸ This variant was spoken at Farm Six and Tsintsabis. This linguistic detail is also an indication of cultural contact with other Khoekhoegowab speakers (for the language families, see Table 3.2 on page 23). In Outjo, Kunene Region, the contact between Hai||om and Damara people was very close because there were many Damara living there, whereas in Oshikoto Region, where fewer Damara lived, it was more limited. Linguists have pointed out the following: "Many speakers of ‡Akhoe Hai||om have maintained an unusual cultural profile as hunter-gatherers. Striking

²⁸ See http://dobes.mpi.nl/projects/akhoe/languages.

features include healing trance dances, hunting magic and intensive usage of wild plant and insect food, a unique kinship and naming system, frequent storytelling, and the use of a landscape-term system for spatial orientation."²⁹ Our research confirmed this. The traditional knowledge among the Hai||om in Oshikoto Region and Etosha seemed to be much more detailed than, for example, in Outjo. For instance, while even elderly people in Outjo no longer had knowledge about former headmen at specific waterholes, the elders at Okaukuejo, Tsintsabis and Farm Six still had that knowledge. These differences in traditional knowledge were without doubt influenced by the fact that some groups still had access to their ancestral land, albeit to a limited extent.

6.3.4 Relationships with other groups

Hai||om at all five sites were living in close proximity with most of the other regional ethnic groups, though to varying degrees. As already mentioned, they felt that others discriminated against them, and they felt disadvantaged compared to others. Although Hai||om-Damara sexual relationships which produced offspring were quite common in Outjo, participants claimed that the Damara there still discriminated against Hai||om. Damara people would say, for example, "You stupid San; you are not educated and get food from government." However, if Damara wanted labourers on their resettlement farms, they would often use Hai||om as they knew that Hai||om were good herders – but they would not pay them a decent salary. Due to the amount of discrimination they experienced, many Hai||om (especially in former times) reportedly pretended to be Damara when they attended school – which would have been possible due to the similarity of the Hai||om and Damara languages. The Hai||om in Outjo also stated that in the last census (2011), most Hai||om said that their mother tongue was "Nama/Damara" – see first page of this chapter (p. 173).

At Okaukuejo and Oshivelo, the issue of jobs being given to others (mostly Owambo) was raised repeatedly. At Oshivelo the Hai||om mentioned that they often saw job opportunities meant for San people with at least a Grade 10 qualification go to non-San people instead. They attributed such practices to the stereotypes that people from other ethnic groups had formed of San people, i.e. 'San people are lazy' and 'San people cannot work'. It was difficult to determine whether or not this claim was true, although the participants cited some examples.³⁰ At Oshivelo, and also at Farm Six and Tsintsabis, participants stressed that it was not only jobs that had been given to other people, but also land. Furthermore, Hai||om former farmworkers of Outjo and Tsintsabis reported that experiences they had had with previously disadvantaged farmers (i.e. black farmers) were as bad as their experiences with previously advantaged farmers (i.e. white farmers), if not worse.

"Black commercial farmers treat us worse than white farmers. They catch you, beat you up and take you to police. Once a black farmer buys a farm he dismisses all the Hai||om employees and brings in his own people. Whites dumped us after Independence at Tsintsabis. Nowadays Owambo farmers dump Hai||om at Tsintsabis and employ members of their own family instead."

- Male participant at Tsintsabis

²⁹ See http://dobes.mpi.nl/projects/akhoe/languages.

³⁰ Their claims were inconsistent with the responses of the chief control officer at the Guinas Constituency Office, who maintained that Hai||om people could not compete fairly for jobs with people from other ethnic groups because Hai||om people, on average, had lower levels of education. Furthermore he said that this situation could be attributed to the government policy of employing casual workers in government offices: the government has a policy of employing liberation war veterans as a priority in casual positions, and Hai||om people are not considered to fall into this category. Indeed, the participants at Oshivelo mentioned the fact that the Hai||om (as other San) had fought for the South African Defence Force as a reason for current discrimination.

6.3.5 Education

Many elderly people at all sites have either never been to school or dropped out of school at a very early stage. At Oshivelo, for instance, 14 of the 20 participants had never been to school, mainly because they lived in Etosha or grew up on farms. Eight of the 11 women had never been to school, and three women who went to school did not go beyond Grade 6. At Okaukuejo, none of the older participants had been to school.

The situation of the younger generation was different. Compared with other San groups, school attendance of Hai||om in higher grades was generally good, although dropout remained a problem.

Distance to schools, and having no place to stay when attending, were major factors impeding school attendance. In Outjo there are both primary and secondary schools, and four of the 13 participants had been schooled up to Grade 12 (but had not necessarily completed Grade 12). The primary school attended by children of Okaukuejo is 17 km away, but transport was provided. Secondary schools for children at Okaukuejo are found in Khorixas or Outjo, both of which are over 100 km away, and only two Hai||om in the whole community (both from the same family) had finished Grade 12, while another six went up to Grade 12 but failed to matriculate. Oshivelo and Tsintsabis had combined schools (up to Grade 10), and the senior secondary school serving both sites was at Tsumeb. At Oshivelo only one participant had finished Grade 12. Farm Six had a primary school up to Grade 6, and reportedly no child there attended secondary school. Failing Grade 10 was a factor mentioned at Okaukuejo, Outjo and Tsintsabis: at Tsintsabis it was reported that between 2006 and 2009 at least one or two Hai||om children passed Grade 10 every year. Since 2010, however, no Hai||om child had passed Grade 10.

'When our children pass Grade 10 and go to Tsumeb, there is also a challenge there because they need money. We also do not know how our children are treated there at the homes in Tsumeb at our relatives' homes. My young brother has suffered because he wanted to stay with my aunt in Tsumeb. He was not eating enough food after school. He was always told that there is no food when he came back from school, but they were eating while he is at school. Even the children in the hostel feel like foreigners sometimes, because they do not have toiletries, no clothes, they can't buy food when they go into town. My brother eventually dropped out in Grade 11."

- Male participant at Oshivelo

However, according to the school principal at Oshivelo, Hai||om children tended to drop out of school, especially in Grade 7, i.e. long before distance to school becomes an issue (i.e. after Grade 10, when they needed to go to Tsumeb). At the time of our fieldwork, only four Hai||om children were in Grade 10 (three boys and one girl) at Oshivelo. This trend, according to the principal, was attributed to:

- Hai||om people tending to withdraw their girl children from school once they reach puberty;
- early marriages (from the ages of 12 and 13);
- Hai||om children tending to drop out of school whenever the feeding programme is delayed;
- some Hailor children dropping out of school to look for piecework in lodges; and
- a lack of interest in schooling.

By contrast, Hai||om of Oshivelo, Tsintsabis and Outjo deemed the lack of financial resources to be the primary reason for dropping out. According to the participants, poor people at Tsintsabis were not really exempted from school fees (in contravention of government policy) since parents were asked to work (e.g. clearing bushes) instead of paying school fees. Furthermore, some children were ashamed to go to school because their parents could not afford soap. At Oshivelo, although



the Hai||om were aware that they were exempted from paying school fees, they were usually still served with letters demanding that they pay them, whereupon they would have to go to the school to make an arrangement with the school principal for an exemption.

Teenage pregnancy was another reason for incomplete schooling, and was mentioned at most sites. In Outjo, the reason given for this was that talking about sex was taboo: "We were told that children are coming from airplanes." Teenage pregnancy was also identified as a common occurrence among Hai||om girls at Oshivelo. Participants explained that all Hai||om girls who fell pregnant dropped out of school, whereas Owambo girls went back to school after giving birth. The senior nurse at the Oshivelo clinic concurred with the reported high rate of teenage pregnancy among Hai||om girls.

The Oshivelo school principal also stated that there were reported cases of schoolgirls being raped. He argued that such occurrences could be reduced if a hostel was built at the school so that the children could spend more time in school in a safe environment. He also reiterated that the Hai||om settlement in the southern part of Oshivelo had no electricity, which rendered young girls walking about after dark more vulnerable to sexual assault.

Participants at Oshivelo and in Outjo also reported that girls tended to drop out of school earlier and more often than boys. They attributed this situation to the differing personal needs of boys and girls. The latter reportedly required more toiletries than boys, and if the items required were not supplied, then they felt uncomfortable being at school with their peers.

The lack of mother-tongue education was specifically mentioned at Tsintsabis and Oshivelo. At Tsintsabis, the Hai||om said that their children were losing their mother tongue because they were taught in Damara and English, while they spoke ‡Akhoe at home. At Oshivelo the participants said that Hai||om children are at a disadvantage compared with Oshiwambo-speaking children as the latter can learn their language in school as well.

Box 6.1: The education situation at Farm Six

In 2003, a primary school, /Khomxa Khoeda (Vulnerable People's) Primary School, was established at Farm Six with the Damara language as the medium of instruction. It started with around 75 learners, but by 2005 it provided education to only 55 learners in Grades 1-5 – a decrease of 20 learners. In February 2006, various problems were reported at the school (*New Era*, E. Nawatiseb, 2 February 2006). The school had been without sufficient water since its inception in 2003, and could not operate a feeding scheme for poor learners. This resulted in absenteeism, as children were roaming the bushes in search of wild fruits. In the interview with the journalist, the acting principal of the school stated the following: "Families without any pensioner among them are suffering because there is no income at the end of the day. ... the children lose concentration and what can we as teachers do when your command for attention in the classroom is ignored due to pressing hunger?" Very early pregnancy was mentioned as another reason for dropout from school (*New Era*, E. Nawatiseb, 2 February 2006). Regarding further education, a study participant at Farm Six mentioned that all the learners who attended the school at Tsintsabis dropped out quickly. In short, the educational situation at Farm Six seemed hopeless without further intervention.

The importance of school feeding programmes (see Box 6.1) was also mentioned at Oshivelo. Hunger was mentioned as an obstacle in respect of school attendance: according to the principal, a school feeding programme for children in Grades 0-7 was introduced in 1994, whereafter the enrolment rate rose, although participants mentioned that the children were given only porridge. Noticeably, most children dropped out in Grade 7, according to the principal.

At Oshivelo, participants said that vocational training centres would be useful. In their opinion, children who are considered to be low achievers in school should not be denied opportunities to progress, and should be trained in skilled labour (e.g. repairing electronic equipment).

Participants at all sites mentioned that they understood the importance of education – this was contrary to the assessment of the principal at Oshivelo. Various reasons were given for this, but the necessity of formal education as a prerequisite for employment was one of them. However, at most sites the participants also believed that often only people from other ethnic groups could get jobs.

"There was a mobile toilet tender and it was said that it would include the Hai||om youth here at Oshivelo, but they brought in youth from other areas. The requirement was that people should have transport [a vehicle], but they gave the work to Oshiwambo people who did not even have cars, while there are Hai||om people with cars who could have qualified. I complained to the councillor about this, but he said they were not involved, but this is discrimination."

- Male participant at Oshivelo

In addition to the importance of education in the job market, elderly people stressed the importance of children attending school because there they learnt to understand, read and write English.

"English is important to get help. Owambo cannot speak Afrikaans. Young people can help you because they can read and speak English. Owambo people don't help if you speak only Afrikaans and Khoekhoegowab."

"If you can't read and write (or speak English) you don't know for example if you are allowed to enter a certain place, you cannot read what is written there, you cannot read your contracts!"

- Participants at Okaukuejo

Education was regarded as an entry point to "modern times". In today's world, an elderly Hai||omspeaking person needs the assistance of young school children who understand English and can read and write it, otherwise he/she is "outside", whereas in the old days, even without English and literacy, Hai||om were part of the system as most of them could speak Afrikaans. This is a clear indication of the obstacle that language can pose for full participation in public life. At Okaukuejo it was also said that the fact that the elders did not go to school had led to their being disrespected by their children and grandchildren: "Grandchildren would come home and say, 'Read, Oupa!' And you cannot read English, and they say then: 'Oh, Oupa, are you stupid?'" This is an indication of the complexity of the education issue. On the one hand, the elders were aware that they needed to help their children to continue schooling, and they also felt that it helped them (because the children could translate and read for them). On the other hand, education led to disrespect and to a reversal of roles: while adults were the ones to teach the children in former times, nowadays the children needed to 'teach' and translate for their parents.

This situation calls for an integration of Hai||om traditional knowledge into their formal education system in order to valorise the knowledge of the elders.



Above: A Hai||om elder explaining the former way of life to Hai||om children. (This excursion with children in Etosha was possible only because of the presence of the researcher with a valid research permit.)

Below: The cover of the book for children produced by the Xoms |Omis (Etosha Heritage) Project currently run by the Legal Assistance Centre (see footnote 4 in this chapter, p. 182), and three images from the book – which has 300 images – depicting traditional knowledge of the Hai||om elders.



6.3.6 Health

Table 6.7 summarises the health situation at Outjo, Oshivelo and Okaukuejo.³¹

Health category	Etosha Poort (Outjo)	Okaukuejo	Oshivelo
Main diseases according to participants	 High blood pressure TB Heart diseases HIV and AIDS, and other STIs Mental disturbances 	 High or low blood pressure Diabetes HIV and AIDS Malaria (not very frequent – only people working in the bush, e.g. at the northern border) Asthma TB (rare) 	 TB HIV and AIDS Malaria Diabetes High blood pressure Asthma Women's diseases
HIV and AIDS	HIV was said to be the most serious and most frequent disease. (ARVs are available.)	 Participants maintained that it did not occur there in former times but that they got infected by the Owambo after Independence. Some people go for tests. Participants were not aware of people getting ARVs at Okaukuejo. Condoms were available for free at several places (e.g. the post office). 	 Both the participants and the nurse identified HIV as a health problem at Oshivelo. However, the nurse observed that there are fewer cases of HIV/AIDS among the Haillom people than in other ethnic groups at Oshivelo. HIV testing and counselling services were offered at the Oshivelo clinic. Condoms were available for free at the clinic. People got ARVs at the clinic.
Access to health services	Hospital	Clinic at Okaukuejo, and hospital in Outjo	Clinic at Oshivelo, and hospital in Tsumeb
Ambulance/ transport	People had to take public transport to the hospital.	Ambulance at times, otherwise transport to Outjo provided by MET/NWR at month end for employees. For others, transport was a problem.	Ambulance to Tsumeb, but only if more than three patients requested it.
Traditional medicine	Yes	Hardly used	Hardly used
Where do women deliver their babies?	Mostly at home	Mostly at home	Mostly at home

Most important diseases

As Table 6.7 shows, HIV and AIDs and TB were mentioned at all three sites, although participants at Okaukuejo said that there was not much TB occurring there, whereas at Oshivelo TB was said to occur frequently.³² According to the senior nurse at the Oshivelo clinic, Hai||om people comprised the majority of people suffering from TB at Oshivelo. Both the nurse and the discussion participants contended that Hai||om people smoked and drank too much, and had very poor nutrition (which compromised their immune system and made them more vulnerable to TB). It was also stressed that some people who were on medication were meant to eat at the times that they took their medication but most of the time this was not possible.

Malaria was not a problem in Outjo (which is out of the malaria zone), and was not very common at Okaukuejo either, but it was common at Oshivelo. High blood pressure was also mentioned at

³¹ At Tsintsabis and Farm Six we did not apply all tools regarding health.

³² This might be related to the fact that the Hai||om at Okaukuejo were generally less poor than those at the other four sites, and therefore their nutritional status was better.

all three sites. At Oshivelo, women's diseases (i.e. problems related to the womb and breasts) were identified as being common among women and adolescent girls. In Outjo, participants mentioned that there were quite a few Hai||om with mental health issues, and they linked such issues to the use of cannabis (mixed with bones). It was explained that the government has put programmes in place to support those with mental health issues, but that trained local support staff were rare. This meant that the family was left to take care of such people unsupported, although the government provided a grant for those with mental health issues and the family was responsible for its use. It was also said that sometimes those suffering from mental illness did not want to take their medication.

At Oshivelo the participants stated that Hai||om would go for HIV testing, whereas in Outjo it was reported that many people hesitated to do so. When asked if people in Outjo took anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs, participants said that due to stigmatisation, people did not easily discuss their HIV status, so it was difficult to know the true picture, but generally only when people with HIV became really weak were they likely to go and get the medication they needed. It was said that some people paid a nominal amount for their ARVs,³³ whereas others didn't pay anything, and the participants did not know why some paid and others didn't. One female participant was acting as counsellor for a couple of HIV-positive people, and she collected the pills on their behalf.

Alcohol abuse

Alcohol consumption was identified as a major problem among the Hai||om people.

Box 6.2: Alcohol abuse and the lack of alternative activities

Three examples from Tsintsabis, Oshivelo and Outjo shed light on the problem of alcohol abuse and its consequences, and the concomitant need to create alternative leisure activities for residents.

During an LAC meeting held in another context at Oshivelo, the coach of the youth soccer team (Ghetto United) asked if we had any idea who could provide financial and material support to them. He stressed the fact that from the time that the soccer team was established, it had kept the youth out of the shebeens. He pointed out that they would need financial support (e.g. for transport to league competitions and for paying registration fees) and material support (e.g. shirts and balls) in order to participate in national competitions.

Some time after our research in Tsintsabis, a resident there asked the LAC for support. His email read as follows: "I am living in Tsintsabis, most of people in village are San people. Our village is very small but has got lot of shebeens and drinking outlets and this is causing violence in our village. We want to start a program that will fight against violence and giving people a bit of counselling about violence and their rights. We need assistance in how to start and work with the idea that we have."

In Outjo the participants asked for the provision of more leisure facilities, such as a library, which could give the youth alternatives to drinking.

The participants at Oshivelo linked alcohol abuse and smoking to the higher rates of TB among the Hai||om there. Additionally, alcohol abuse was linked to HIV infection and domestic violence there. Apparently the village headman at Oshivelo acted as a counsellor to many young Hai||om, and two of the young participants said that they had moved out of poverty because of this counselling. At Okaukuejo the participants unequivocally requested the closure of the shebeens there.

³³ This amount was said to be N\$2, but it was not known whether this was for a supply for a day, a week or a month, and the researchers did not consider it crucial to ascertain the costs of ARVs for the purposes of this study.

Access to, and payment for, health facilities

All sites except Farm Six had health facilities. A mobile clinic used to visit Farm Six irregularly, and in mid-2005 this service stopped altogether.

At Oshivelo, according to the senior nurse at the clinic, San people were not obliged to pay for medical services there. However, participants said that they would be insulted and ridiculed by the nurses if they could not afford the clinic fees, therefore some Hai||om would not go to the clinic when sick. Participants also mentioned that there had been instances of Hai||om people not being treated or given medicine at Tsumeb State Hospital because they could not pay the hospital fee. At Okaukuejo the participants said that they were not discriminated against at the clinic. In Outjo, some people would ask their relatives for the money for treatment at the hospital if they had no money themselves. One participant noted that the treatment fee was not enforceable by law, but that hospital staff would just ignore this because there might be "free riders". Some Hai||om would not go to a healthcare facility because of their "inferiority feeling", as one respondent put it.

Transport to hospitals was a problem for Hai||om of Okaukuejo and Oshivelo. At Okaukuejo it was reported that the ambulance might be sent if someone was seriously sick; otherwise employed people got a lift to Outjo at month end to access healthcare facilities. Occasionally old people could also get a lift at month end, but then, it was said, the lorry was often overcrowded and "full of drunken people". NWR provided transport for its Etosha employees only. If relatives of employees (e.g. sick children) needed a lift, NWR charged N\$2/km and subtracted the full amount from the employee's salary. Reportedly there had been cases of people dying because they could not get a lift to Outjo hospital from Okaukuejo.

Giving birth

Most women at all five sites chose to deliver at home, if there were no complications. At Oshivelo the senior nurse confirmed the participants' view that home delivery is a choice of Hai||om women themselves. However, the participants claimed that Hai||om are often discriminated against when it came to giving birth at the clinic. They said that many times the nurses had told them that the clinic was not equipped to handle births, yet they knew that pregnant women of other ethnic groups gave birth there. The participants also mentioned that Hai||om women wanted to avoid being attended to by male nurses during birth or when experiencing gynaecological problems. Notwithstanding this, both the participants and the senior nurse said that Hai||om women would not hesitate to go to the clinic for pre- and post-natal care, and only when it came to actually giving birth did they prefer to be at home, or at Tsumeb State Hospital if complications arose.

Traditional medicine and healers

Participants in Outjo gave examples of traditional medicine used there for specific problems. They also mentioned that there were traditional healers and 'witchdoctors' in the town, but they added that witchdoctors could only heal illnesses caused by humans: if someone had had a curse placed on them, witchdoctors could assist in removing it. Nevertheless, if conventional medicine didn't help, and the patient had consulted one doctor after another without any improvement, then he/ she would go to a witchdoctor. In cases of high blood pressure, HIV or TB, however, witchdoctors have no healing power. Traditional healers used natural remedies to heal certain diseases, and most people (including young people) would still go to traditional healers. The numbers of witchdoctors and traditional healers were said to be declining, although instances of people pretending to be a traditional healer or witchdoctor were on the rise. At Okaukuejo, Tsintsabis and Farm Six, the

use of natural remedies for less serious health problems (e.g. coughing and flu) was also common. Participants at Oshivelo, however, said that the Hai||om did not rely much on traditional medicine and healers nowadays, for three reasons:

- Many people have lost the knowledge of traditional medicine (i.e. this knowledge had not been handed down).
- Medicine from the veld is not easy to get anymore.
- People have lost trust in traditional healers. (It was claimed that most traditional healers have become dishonest and might even give a patient poisonous herbs instead of medicine.)

Caring for the sick

Women were said to be responsible for caring for the sick in the Hai||om households at Oshivelo, but men were said to be responsible for the provision of food for the sick.

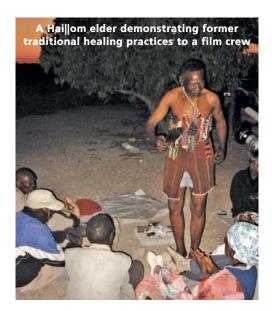
In Outjo, usually the women took care of sick people. Men would go to female relatives or female neighbours to get help for their female partners/girlfriends. It was said that the Lutheran Church provided little support to sick people, whereas Pentecostal Church members would come to visit the sick and would also help with paying medical costs. The Red Cross provided home-based care for AIDS patients, but it was necessary to register for this, which implied that one had to be open about one's HIV status.

Death and related services

When a person died, the financial implications for the family were, in some instances, considerable – depending on whether or not the deceased was formally employed or registered to receive a pension (in which case he/she would be eligible for certain death benefits). Transporting the deceased and mourners to the mortuary/cemetery and providing food for mourners for a few days contributed considerably to the costs.



At Okaukuejo, transport to the mortuary was free: either the police (if investigating the cause of death) or an employee in the maintenance section of the MET provided the transport. However, the mortuary had to be paid for its services, and the food for the evening before the incineration and on the day of the funeral service had to be paid for as well. Sharing was a common strategy with regard to funeral costs: according to FGD participants at Oshivelo, when a Hai||om person died, the family members or friends contributed money for the funeral (i.e. they would not borrow money to cover funeral costs). If the deceased was a pensioner, then the government subsidised the costs of the funeral service. In the case of a burial, the coffin could cost about N\$1000, and sometimes the Hai||om got support in the form of a coffin from the councillor's office. This was consistent with the sentiments expressed by the chief control officer at the Guinas Constituency Office who mentioned that when a Hai||om person died at Oshivelo, the OPM provided the coffin and the councillor's office provide transport and sometimes food for the mourners.

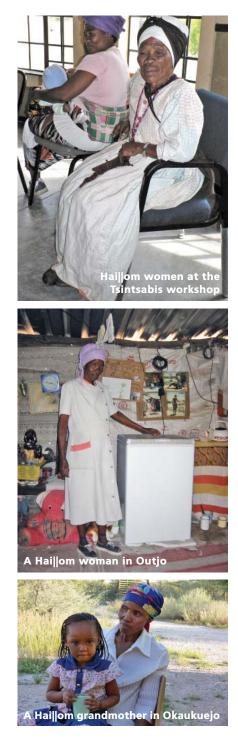


6.3.7 Gender

Some of the gender differences exhibited by the Hai||om have already been mentioned in other contexts in this chapter. Additional information was gathered in an interview with a Hai||om woman who had grown up on farms in the vicinity of Outjo, completed her Grade 12 education, lived in Outjo later and was employed at WIMSA in Windhoek during the time of the research. Information from research literature has been included as well.

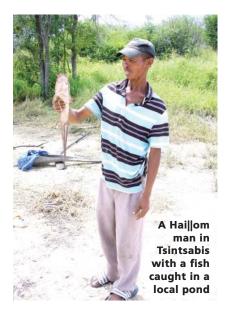
Gender roles, even in urban setups like Outjo and Oshivelo, were influenced by the past history of Hai||om as farmworker families on commercial farms, where the men were mostly employed as farmworkers and the women were responsible for most of the household duties and for looking after the small number of livestock as well as the individual gardens (if there were any). It is noteworthy that livestock was owned individually: men, women, grandparents and children all had their own small stock, and the individual owners would make decisions about their particular animals.

Although such employment opportunities decreased for men after Independence, most of the household duties were still the responsibility of women: preparing food (which men also did sometimes), collecting water, doing the laundry, washing the dishes and taking care of the children. Most of the time women also collected the firewood. As the interviewee put it, "Our head is apparently made for carrying." If men collected firewood, they would only do so using a donkey-cart. Men also repaired the house if there was material to do so. Asked about other tasks undertaken by men, the interviewee said, "Hunting, gathering (to certain extent) and protecting the family." Of course, the current circumstances of the Hai||om communities (notably the lack of land and access to game, and the lack of employment opportunities) make it virtually impossible for most men to undertake these tasks.



Although formal employment opportunities were almost as scarce for men as they were for women, men in the urban environments had more opportunities than women did to undertake piecework or casual work. Much of the farm and construction work was available only to men, and the work carried out by women was mainly domestic work (and these jobs were rare). However, both men and women could run small businesses. Commercial sex work or involvement with a 'sugar daddy' were livelihood strategies for some Hai||om girls and women at Oshivelo and in Outjo, but the participants were reluctant to speak in detail about this strategy. In the focus group discussions conducted in Oshikoto (i.e. Oshivelo) and Kunene Regions (i.e. Outjo) for a recent International Labour Organization study on "Child Labour and San Peoples in Namibia", it was similarly indicated that San (Hai||om) girls in these regions were sometimes involved in commercial sex activities as a survival strategy (ILO 2012: 36-37).

The roles of men and women regarding the control of the household's cash income varied according to circumstances and individual arrangements, therefore the findings on this issue cannot be generalised. Control depended on who contributed to the household income; whether or not the household had members with formal employment; and individual household arrangements. At Oshivelo it was said that women controlled the food and its distribution, and the money in the household. Some men would spend their money on alcohol, or would not contribute to the household's needs if they were working somewhere else, and other men would contribute their income (from jobs or a pension) to their household's income. The interviewee also mentioned that household income was jointly controlled by spouses or partners in households which were active members of Christian churches (e.g. the Pentecostal Church), because the churches teach their members to manage



household resources jointly.³⁴ Both elderly men and women were pension recipients, and usually the recipient could decide how to spend the pension money – taking into account the social pressure to share it and their household's needs.

It appeared that most of the time women formed the core of the household and provided the safety net for members of the extended family: in Outjo, where we conducted individual interviews on household composition and livelihood strategies, five out of nine households were clearly centred around women. There were indications that women usually contributed more than men to meeting household needs. In situations of a person having no income and nothing to eat, he/she might stay for a while with his/her sister or mother and live off the latter's income or pension. Only three households reflected the composition of a 'conventional' nuclear family: husband, wife (or partner) and their children. Household composition in Outjo was otherwise rather flexible and depended on income. (This flexible household composition was observed at other sites as well: at Okaukuejo, for example, none of the participants' households consisted of a nuclear family and the biggest household comprised 15 people.)

In Outjo, all of the female participants stated that they would prefer to work rather than be a housewife, mainly because women could not rely on male partners to support them. This points to the possibility that they had found themselves in unstable relationships.

According to the interviewee, despite these social realities (i.e. the fact that women formed the household safety net in many cases) and the instability created by reliance on a male partner for a livelihood, women were (or felt themselves to be) still dependent on men – or even inferior to them – and did not easily leave them (even when they were in abusive relationships). This was mentioned in the context of domestic violence, which was said to be frequent, as the following words of the interviewee indicate: "Within households, there is a lot of beating, a lot of physical abuse. And the women often stay in such relationships and don't go away. ... I don't know what the problem is that they don't leave the abusive relationships. Men think women are their property."

She also mentioned that it would be easier for men than for women to escape poverty (e.g. by finding casual work).

³⁴ The interviewee also reported cases where the husband would not share the money with his wife, but would do all the shopping himself (including purchasing the wife's toiletries and underwear).

"Men might be coping somehow with life; women much more depend on men to get something. For men, if they really want to do something about it, they would get it, for example look for employment elsewhere to change the situation. But for women, they would still be depending. Thus, they are much more affected [by poverty]."

– Female Haillom interviewee

One possibility for women looking to get out of poverty (at least for a certain period of time) would be engagement/marriage to a working man – a strategy often supported by the woman's family: "Get yourself a person who works, who could feed us," some parents advise.

Hoping to be supported by partners or husbands, Haillom women were increasingly becoming involved in relationships with male members of other ethnic groups. This strategy might bring short-term benefits (e.g. cash income for the household on a regular basis for a period of time, or occasional material support), but long-term security was rarely achieved in this way, as Widlok confirms in stating that the family of a wife in such a situation did not receive formal bride wealth (lobola), but only a varying degree of support from the man. Frequently, however, fathers from other ethnic groups did not support the Haillom mother and their children at all, as Widlok points out: "Legally prescribed support is rarely enforced in these communities where the women and their children belong to the ethnic group that is disadvantaged and have no means to file their claims with the authorities and to defend these claims against men from other ethnic groups who are comparatively speaking rich and powerful. Even if claims are filed with the relevant state offices they seem to be rarely enforced. While mothers who have separated from the fathers of their children may be able to claim support through the kinship system when the father belongs to their group and is himself included in the kin network, there is hardly any chance to claim support from men from other ethnic groups who have fathered children." (Widlok 2005: 31) Thus, involvement in 'romantic' relationships as a livelihood strategy was based on hopes and speculation rather than social realities.

Regarding inheritance practices, participants at Oshivelo stated that the following rule pertained there: when a married Hailom man died, the wife and children inherited his property. Likewise, when a married Haillom woman died, her husband and children inherited her property. The interviewee confirmed this general pattern, but mentioned that when the husband owned a car, it would go to the husband's brother or another male relative, and certain other assets might be shared between the widow and children and the husband's family.³⁵ Widlok pointed out the flexibility of the system of inheritance among the Haillom in Oshikoto Region: in theory, when a man died, his belongings went to the widow and the *||nurin* (a large group of relatives, mainly grandchildren but also the children and grandchildren of (classificatory) brothers and sisters) (Widlok 2005: 27). However, the reality sometimes differed from the rule: "When comparing the ‡Akhoe Haillom inheritance rules with those of other groups in Namibia, especially with traditional livestock owners, it becomes apparent that the Haillom like many other groups classified as 'San' or 'Bushmen' are very concerned about the transfer of items between living people, including pre-mortal inheritance, but not so much concerned about 'corporate property' in the form of accumulation of property in a corporate kinship group based on descent instead of marriage." (Widlok 2005: 29) From this, one can conclude that inheritance practices would not leave a wife and children without anything, as long as the deceased husband was a Haillom as well. When the father was Owambo, it was unlikely that the child or the mother would inherit anything. In fact, "I have not heard of a single case in which a ‡Akhoe Hai||om person with an Owambo father received an inheritance." (Widlok 2005: 32).

³⁵ Presumably cars are associated with men, and more men are in possession of a driver's licence. Furthermore, cars are high-value assets.

Regarding gender roles in the realm of political participation and representation, the interviewee stressed the fact that women must be strong and have self-confidence in order to make their voices heard: "If you are not outspoken and you don't really stand up for yourself, then definitely, it is just finished – men will still dominate." We found that Hai||om women participated actively in the discussions and made their voices heard – more so than those in some San groups in other regions. One explanation might be the relatively high level of education among Hai||om of both genders.



There were a number of women in the current TA structure, but apparently they were appointed by the chief and many were closely related to him.

6.3.8 Political participation and representation

Hai||om Traditional Authority

On 29 July 2004, the then Deputy Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing, Gerhard Tötemeyer, issued a group of Hai||om from Outjo under the leadership of Chief David ||Khamuxab a letter recognising them as the Traditional Authority (TA) of the Hai||om. Other local Hai||om groups immediately rejected this recognition, claiming that "the so-called traditional authority was nothing but a SWAPO structure" (*The Namibian*, T. Amupadhi, 29 July 2004), and that this TA had not been elected by the Hai||om community.

In the following years, most of the development support for the Hai||om was channelled through the Hai||om TA. For example, as mentioned above, the resettlement farms south of Etosha were handed over to Chief ||Khamuxab (*The Namibian*, Brigitte Weidlich, 17 November 2008), and according to participants in Outjo, job and scholarship opportunities for San were also handled through him.

Chief ||Khamuxab then appointed senior councillors – mainly in Outjo, but also in other Hai||om communities (e.g. Oshivelo and Tsintsabis).

Dissatisfaction with Chief ||Khamuxab was clearly expressed at all five sites. It became evident that the community as a whole was split into supporters (reportedly fewer and fewer over time) and opponents of the chief, and that this split is a major problem for development. It is noteworthy that Chief ||Khamuxab did not attend the workshop in Outjo.³⁶

Major concerns were the lack of proper elections for a chief, favouritism and a lack of representation of Hai||om community interests.

³⁶ In Outjo we had organised an interview with Chief ||Khamuxab for the day before our workshop, but the interview was cancelled at short notice, apparently because his councillors had not informed him of the interview. Another interview date was set for the next morning, but only some of his senior councillors attended this interview. We managed to get an interview with the chief on the last day of the workshop, where he complained that only Hai||om opposing him were present at the workshop. Had he been available for an interview before the workshop, he could have attended the workshop, or he could have ensured that people supporting him would attend. As mentioned at the start of section 6.2 on the research sites, he indicated that he did not want this research in "his" area.

Hai||om at all five sites claimed not to know how David ||Khamuxab became their chief, since they claimed that they had not been part of any elections.³⁷ Some were of the opinion that it was a political appointment because he was a member of the ruling party and was always in agreement with the government. The participants at all sites maintained that the majority of Hai||om did not recognise him as their chief, thus he did not represent the interests of the Hai||om as a group.

Another concern mentioned at Okaukuejo, Oshivelo, Tsintsabis and Farm Six was that the chief did not represent all the Hai||om communities in Namibia, but only the people from around Outjo and on the resettlement farms. At Okaukuejo, Tsintsabis and Farm Six, Hai||om mentioned that the chief never held community meetings in their communities. At Tsintsabis, one participant said that he had never even seen the chief, and another had last seen him in 2004. At Oshivelo, participants said that the chief had hardly ever visited the settlement; they claimed that he had visited only on the few occasions when senior government officials were visiting, and only to avoid direct criticism from them. Even the participants in Outjo did not feel represented by Chief ||Khamuxab, and accused him of acting mostly in the interests of his own family and his close friends. Apparently his close family was also overrepresented in his traditional council, and participants gave many examples of what they had perceived as favouritism taking place.

Oshivelo and Tsintsabis had senior councillors within the TA structure, and at both places these councillors were also facing complaints from their communities. At Oshivelo there were complaints that the senior councillor did not take his own councillors with him when he visited the chief. The senior councillor in Tsintsabis had been facing serious criticism from the community, one major issue being that he allegedly gave land away to outsiders. All issues concerning the TA were difficult to discuss at the workshop at Tsintsabis, however, because of the presence of one of the advisors of a TA senior councillor. It appears that the community had lost trust in this individual over the years.³⁸

The situation at Farm Six was even worse. The Hai||om there had no elected representative or official headman. They did not know the chief based in Outjo, and did not feel represented by him. Apparently they had never made an effort to communicate their problems directly to the TA, firstly because they did not have any faith in the chief, and secondly because the effort they would have to make to reach the TA (e.g. finding money to cover the high transport costs) posed too big an obstacle for them.

Despite the conflicts with the current chief, which were evident at all sites, the participants asserted that the TA is an important institution because it represents their interests in consultations with the government. They stressed that the chief must be elected by the people and not handpicked. It was also stressed that a chief must be trustworthy, should carry the problems of the community on his shoulders, and that he and his councillor should represent all the areas where the Hai||om live. Participants at several sites suggested that headmen of the various (traditional) subgroups of the Hai||om should be elected by the communities before appointing an overall Hai||om chief.

³⁷ In Outjo, when asked about how the chief had been elected, some participants were of the opinion that he had been appointed by Pentecostal Church members at a church meeting on a farm near Outjo. One female participant had a different opinion: she said that a certain secretary of the chief had been circulating and writing down names of community members to get help (food and clothing) from "uproad". That list had later been sent to the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development as the list of people who had voted for the chief.

³⁸ In early 2013, this local headman resigned his position as senior councillor. Apparently there had been increasing pressure from the community for him to do so, and the community subsequently elected another man as senior councillor and informed the chief accordingly through his Outjo office. It was not yet clear how the chief would react to this community action.

Involvement in decision making at local level

Participation in committees and on other platforms through which the Hai||om could make their voices heard varied from site to site. As mentioned previously, there were local headmen of the TA at Tsintsabis and Oshivelo, and Hai||om had tried to approach them with their problems.

At Tsintsabis, the office of the MLR was not perceived to offer much help to the community generally. Apparently this local MLR office did not want to offer assistance when confronted with their issues, and rather referred them to the regional councillor. When the community took their complaints to the regional councillor, they were referred back to the MLR.

At Farm Six, the decision-making situation is fatally compromised by the area's remoteness. There was a single individual who acted as spokesperson for the community (but who could not speak English), and if there was a problem with the NDC, he would approach the farm manager for help. The people at Farm Six found it almost impossible to reach government offices because of the considerable transport costs and efforts involved. Moreover, they argued that the government turns a blind eye to the Haillom community at Farm Six because they did not have a strong leader who supported their cause. Reportedly, Dr Libertina Amathila (former Deputy Prime Minister) had visited the community once, and had provided mattresses, and another representative of the OPM was there in 2011 (however nothing concrete had happened after this visit). One participant said that the community was informed at Independence that Namibia was now a democratic country so everything would be fine, however the only thing brought to Farm Six was poverty. The community felt that government and the regional council representatives (as well as representatives of other political parties) only visited the community and listened to their problems at election time and then only made empty promises. It seemed that the Haillom at Farm Six were intimidated by the ruling party, as they said that the SWAPO regional councillor had told them before the last election that they would die of poverty if they did not vote for the ruling party. Based on this discussion it can be concluded that the Haillom community at Farm Six did not have faith in the political system and felt that elections would not change anything, thus voting meant nothing to them. The Oshikoto Regional Poverty Profile drew a similar conclusion: "The San community at Farm 6 has an acute sense of social exclusion. They feel abandoned by the government and left to their own devices. ... The sense of exclusion produces a very cynical attitude among the San of Farm 6 when it comes to interventions to relieve their poverty."(NPC 2007b: 51)

Although access to decision-making institutions was easier at Oshivelo, the discussion participants felt that the Hai||om people in the settlement were not actively involved in many decision-making bodies. In their eyes, Hai||om people attended meetings called for by government officials and contributed, but their opinions were not listened to.

"We are not involved. Even if we voice out our concerns, who will listen to us? My house was next to the tree where the kindergarten is. I was told to move and I was not compensated."

- Female participant at Oshivelo

A Constituency Development Committee (CDC) was established at Oshivelo in 2006, but according to the chief control officer of the Guinas Constituency and the SWAPO district coordinator, the first CDC meeting was held only in early 2012. Many participants in the Oshivelo discussion were not aware of the existence of the CDC – which was surprising because two Hai||om people at Oshivelo were CDC members and attended the 2012 meeting. There was also a drought relief

food committee at Oshivelo, with a Hai||om member, but his participation, according to discussion participants, was limited and his presence served a public relations purpose only. At the time of our fieldwork, there were five churches at Oshivelo and more than 10 Hai||om were members of the church committees. No formal associations for women or youth existed, but there were women from churches who got together informally to talk about domestic violence issues and also taught young women how to live peacefully with their husbands/partners.

According to discussion participants, the former Prime Minister, the former Minister of Education and the regional councillor had visited Oshivelo. The Prime Minister came to see the community hall and the Minister of Education came to hand over a computer to the school. Allegedly the regional councillor only convened meetings with them on political issues or when other senior government officials visited. The participants overwhelmingly agreed that they would like the government to consult with them on "policy issues", and they wanted consultation with specific government ministries on specific issues, namely:

- the Ministry of Education they would like clarification about paying school fees and would like to discuss other educational needs;
- the Ministry of Defence they would like to consult on Namibia Defence Force recruitment;
- the Ministry of Health and Social Services they would like to consult on services in the clinic and clinic fees; and
- the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement they would like to consult on the land problems that they have.

Haillom at Okaukuejo similarly complained about a lack of consultation by both the MET and NWR, and said that they had not been properly consulted about resettlement plans. When the first resettlement farms were bought for the Haillom in 2008, an OPM representative had reportedly come to inform them that the Haillom at Okaukuejo should pack their belongings as the lorry would fetch them during the following week to take them to the resettlement farms. (The Haillom did not follow that instruction.) Over the years, although members of the Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee on the Haillom had held several meetings at Okaukuejo, most of the time only very few Haillom could attend these meetings and they were simply informed about plans (e.g. the concession discussed in section 6.3.2 on access to land) rather than being part of a consultative process. In 2010 they had established the Etosha Haillom Association in order to have a proper organisation to make their voices heard. The members of the association committee came to Windhoek at least three times in 2009-2010 to raise their concerns with the Prime Minister and the MET regarding the resettlement farms, the lack of Haillom employment in the park and related issues. They also demanded the government's formal acknowledgement of the fact that Etosha was their ancestral land, and the government's recognition of the fact that they did not regard Chief David ||Khamuxab as their leader. Ultimately, none of the meetings brought about any change or results in respect of proper consultation and participation of the Etosha Haillom regarding development plans.

At Okaukuejo, all employees were members of workers' unions, and one of the Hai||om was also a member of the SWAPO Committee at Okaukuejo. In the discussion there it became evident that it was held to be a good thing that a Hai||om was on this SWAPO Committee because he represented Hai||om issues (e.g. regarding jobs) and could negotiate on their behalf about their concerns. However, because he was not an elected representative of the Hai||om, his involvement in the committee was only an informal way to get the Hai||om position heard, and it did not bring tangible results for the community as a whole. The same man was also a member of the school committee. The community members had the feeling that NWR had brought a lot of negative changes since it had taken over the tourism sector in the park. It was said that when NWR came in, the Hai||om people were unhappy because beforehand it had always been stipulated that the park was not to be run as a business and therefore no private business was allowed. Then NWR started to make money in the park and the Hai||om were excluded from benefits derived from their ancestral land. The Hai||om at Okaukuejo felt that NWR was "stealing our land". It was also mentioned that NWR had been invited to the meetings with the MET in Windhoek, but that NWR never sent a representative to listen to the concerns of the Hai||om.

6.3.9 Changes over time and visions for the future

The Haillom at Oshivelo perceived the period before the 1950s - when the Haillom were still allowed to live freely in the Etosha National Park - as "a good time". Life got worse subsequently because they "lost their homeland". However, work on commercial farms was available and thus Haillom could still sustain livelihoods for a while. At Tsintsabis, life before Independence was also perceived as better than now because commercial farmwork was abundant and Haillom had better livelihood options than today - most importantly, they could combine employment on commercial farms with hunting and gathering there - and there were also other employment opportunities before Independence (e.g. road construction, construction of telephone lines, work at the Tsumeb abattoir, mining and the SADF), and no qualifications were needed for these jobs. One participant said that hunger became a problem for the Haillom only after Independence: nowadays, land was fenced and the veldfood was on private land, so Hailom did not have access to it anymore. For the Haillom community at Farm Six, life was also worse today due to the limitations on access to land and natural resources. An elderly man at Farm Six noted that before Independence, and dating back to his grandparents' time, every family had its own "territory" with waterholes and natural resources, and families also shared specific gathering areas. Hunger and poverty did not exist to the extent it does today. There were also mobile services (e.g. the mobile clinic) before Independence.

The participants in Outjo also recognised advantages of living in the times before Independence – chiefly the availability of commercial farmwork, however they acknowledged that Hai||om had very low salaries at that time. One participant mentioned that the workers and their family members would get wood, milk, tea, sugar and meat for free, and would have shared these. Nowadays the farmworkers had to purchase everything from their small salaries, even milk and meat.

For the community at Okaukuejo, life also became more difficult after Independence. In their case, the reason for this evaluation was the fact that Hai||om were able to enjoy employment in Etosha before Independence, but nowadays people from other ethnic groups got the jobs and the young Hai||om in Etosha needed to live off the pension money of their parents and grandparents instead of their own earnings. The resettlement farms bought by government specifically for the Hai||om were not what they really wanted for their future: they preferred to live and work in Etosha.

For people at Tsintsabis, Oshivelo and Farm Six, the lack of land was the biggest problem with regard to their future, and several participants mentioned that the food provided by government would not be a solution to their issues. Government should buy farms and then support them in order for the Hai||om to become sustainable farmers. As mentioned previously, the participants at Farm Six had identified one specific post on the NDC farm (now occupied by Owambo farmers and their cattle) which should be given to them. Participants at Oshivelo maintained that they would have a bright future only if they were given enough land of their own. They would like to cultivate land and produce their own food. They also mentioned that they wanted to be allocated land closer

to Oshivelo. It remains to be seen if the resettlement of the Hai||om of Oshivelo on Farm Ondera will have a positive impact on their livelihoods.

The Hai||om at Oshivelo and Okaukuejo expressed their wish for the government to formally acknowledge that Etosha is their ancestral land. The Hai||om at Oshivelo would also like to derive some benefit from their ancestral land (the Etosha National Park and surrounding areas), in order to develop and implement sustainable livelihood projects and capacity-building programmes. The participants at Okaukuejo said that they would like to have a Hai||om-owned lodge in Etosha where they could teach their children traditional skills and could benefit from tourism in the park. In the above-mentioned MCA-N/Aurecon survey of Etosha, Hai||om had conveyed, inter alia, the following aspirations to the research team: a project that would enable Hai||om to benefit from tourism in the park; permission to make their own products available for sale to tourists; and the construction of lodges that would be owned/managed by Hai||om (MCA-N 2010: 46).

Improved education and better jobs were raised as visions for the future: the Oshivelo participants would like to see their children rise to top positions in government so that the community could be understood by top government officials in their own language, and so that their concerns could be relayed to other ethnic groups without the need for translators (which is preferable because information can be misconstrued or omitted altogether in translations). To secure such government posts (and other jobs), they needed their children to score higher marks in school. The importance of education for giving children better prospects for the future was mentioned at other sites as well. The topic of language was also mentioned at Farm Six, where it was felt that a major obstacle for development was that government officials did not understand Hai||om.

The participants in Outjo, who had had a chance to be resettled on one of the resettlement farms south of Etosha, acknowledged government's initiative in buying these farms for the Hai||om. Their major concern was the way that the chief was managing these farms: they felt that he acted as "an autocrat" instead of representing the community's interests. Another reason for the participants having decided not to move to the farms was that there were more livelihood options in town.

6.3.10 Impact of external support

Although the impact of external support varied according to the site, a lot of support – especially from the OPM – was channelled via the Hai||om Chief David ||Khamuxab. This arrangement had met with major criticism from participants at all sites because they felt that they did not benefit from the support initiatives, but that only the chief, his close family and his supporters were given the opportunities arising (e.g. scholarships and jobs). Without going into detail as to the validity of the accusations levelled against the chief by Hai||om participants in the study, there is evidently a lack of communication between the chief and the community members.

A closer look at the different sites reveals the site-specific variations in support initiatives.

A major support initiative for the Hai||om in Outjo (and at Okaukuejo) was the purchase of the resettlement farms and the subsequent resettlement of Hai||om on these farms. (The process and problems are outlined in section 6.3.2 on access to land.) Five years after the first farm was bought, most of the resettled Hai||om were living chiefly on food aid and pension money. The initiative had failed to meet the aspirations of the Hai||om at Okaukuejo to stay and live in Etosha, and had been planned without proper consultation and without considering their hopes for the future. Also the initial goal of moving the Hai||om community of Etosha to the resettlement farms had yet to be achieved.

Smaller income-generating projects had been initiated at Okaukuejo as well – and apparently the community members were asked beforehand what projects they would like to see set up. There had been a bread-baking project, a carpentry project and a hair salon project. The participants did not evaluate the bread-baking project as a success; they mentioned that it was meant for Hai||om but that Owambos got involved as well. (We could not find any further information about this bread-baking project.) Tools had been purchased for the carpentry project, but no wood – and people in Etosha are only permitted to collect firewood within the park with a permit from the MET office there. Some of the tools then got stolen. The hair salon was also meant to benefit Hai||om but was taken over by members of other ethnic groups.

The detailed reasons for the failure of these projects were not clear, but it was evident that such initiatives require thorough prior consultation of the community, and the community's involvement, and long-term support. Asking people what projects they want and then providing materials and equipment are not sufficient actions for making projects sustainable. Furthermore, training on financial issues and bookkeeping training are needed.

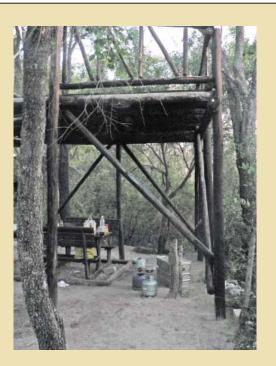
It is notable that the participants at Okaukuejo did not blame others for the failure of their projects: it was said that Hai||om were not good at running businesses and that they were also insufficiently extroverted to promote products that they were attempting to sell (e.g. *vetkoek*). The sale of crafts produced by Hai||om at Etosha's Anderson Gate seemed to work sustainably: over the years an increase in craft products sold and an improvement in quality have been observed. Remarkably, this initiative was initiated without any outside support, and to our knowledge it has never received outside support. It is likely that there is a potential market for a broader spectrum of products, and that outside support could help the producers to professionalise their business. However, there are three major problems: Hai||om have only an informal arrangement under which they may sell their products at Anderson Gate; they are not permitted to sell inside the park; and the various NWR shops within the park sell only crafts and other products produced by Namibians of other ethnic groups, or produced in other countries.

At Tsintsabis – a conventional resettlement project resorting under the MLR (not the OPM) – lots of support has been provided since the farm's inception in 1993, but most of the support projects implemented there had failed (GRN 2010: 31-33).³⁹ The Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009 concluded as follows (GRN 2010: 33): "Most of the income generating projects that were established after training have been abandoned, e.g. carpentry, welding, vegetable gardening, etc. A huge amount was invested in solar panels by MLR and RISE but a lot of them have been stolen. This is a result of negligence, vandalism and theft as nobody takes ownership of assets, especially the donated ones." This points to a lack of monitoring of the projects, as well as to a failure to instil an ethos of ownership and responsibility. As at Okaukuejo, the participants in Tsintsabis stressed that the community should be consulted prior to the implementation of projects, and should participate in the planning and implementation of projects. The top-down approach applied by government in most cases would not lead to community ownership of projects and the desired results. Internal community conflicts and issues with leadership had also proved to hamper project success. Further, participants stressed that the 10 ha plot policy (for either gardening or livestock) was not operating successfully, because, among other problems, it did not take into account the Haillom cultural practice of sharing resources on a collective basis. Furthermore, incomers placed additional pressure on the land and its natural resources. As analysed above, after 19 years of resettlement, the Haillom at Tsintsabis were still far from being self-reliant.

³⁹ See Koot 2000 for more detail on Tsintsabis and the developments and problems encountered there circa 1999.

Box 6.3: The Treesleeper Camp

The Treesleeper Camp, 1.5 km away from Tsintsabis, is a campsite run by the Treesleeper Trust, offering different activities for tourists (bushwalks, traditional dancing and a village tour). The Treesleeper Trust was established in 2004 to act as a legal body when a community-based tourism site was built on the initiative of a Dutch anthropologist who had conducted research there for his thesis (Koot 2000). Meanwhile, the Dutch Foundation for Sustainable Tourism in Namibia in the Netherlands was established to get funds from Europe to support the project jointly with other organisations. The project aims were to contribute extra income to the Tsintsabis community through tourism, employment and improving the position of women, and to increase Haillom self-esteem through the acknowledgement of their rich culture, and to raise the ecological awareness of both tourists to and inhabitants of Tsintsabis.



In 2006 the camp had 815 guests, 655 of whom stayed overnight. Around 17 people, all hailing from the Hai||om community of Tsintsabis, were employed by the camp in the 2007 high season (excluding the dancing groups). Outside high season, three people were employed full-time: the camp manager and assistant managers – all of whom received a full-time salary throughout the year. In 2007, an assessment of the project was undertaken (Troost 2007), which detected some shortcomings of the project but nonetheless concluded that this type of community-based tourism "does lead to economic, social, psychological and political empowerment, but these changes do not happen overnight" (Troost 2007: 82). The assessment resulted in some recommendations for the project which included the need for proper information dissemination to all community members, including illiterate people, so as to ensure their full participation. Recommendations also referred to cooperation with other institutions, in this case the school and the Village Development Committee.

In 2012, eight people were employed at the camp. One reason for the relative success of the project might be that although the initial idea was developed by an outsider, community members developed ownership of the project. Today the project is driven by a strong and ambitious young Hai||om man who has managed to get funding from the MET to build a lodge. The buildings should have been completed in mid-2012, but construction was still in progress at the time of our fieldwork. Apparently the MET had paid the builder in advance, and all the money was spent while the lodge was still under construction. Moreover, the number of tourists to the camp had decreased considerably due to the construction activities. It remains to be seen what will happen next: the camp manager was negotiating with the MET for the construction to continue. Despite these difficulties, this project could be regarded as a promising approach, in that it is community-based and uses the cultural assets of the Hai||om.

At Oshivelo there had been some projects for Hai||om initiated and supported by both government and NGOs. The regional council's office initiated and supported two projects, namely the coffinmaking project (producing cheap coffins) and the bakery project, but both projects stopped in 2012. The participants attributed the failure of these projects to mismanagement by the regional council's office, whereas the chief control officer at the Guinas Constituency Office stated that the bakery project was halted due to a disagreement between the councillor's office and the Hai||om over the management of the project. He maintained that while the constituency office provided the incentives for the project, those working on the project continuously gave free bread to their children, hence the profit-making objective of the project was compromised, not to mention its sustainability. Again, this points to a lack of prior community consultation: it seems understandable that the bakers provided bread for their hungry children, and prior consultation would have brought this issue to the fore as a potential problem for addressing prior to implementation. This illustrates the fact that in many cases the failure of a project is blamed on another party, and in this instance the failure appeared to be due largely to a lack of cooperation between the regional council and the community.

The aim of the coffin-making project was to make and supply cheap coffins to the Hai||om people. Narratives from the discussion participants and the Guinas Constituency chief control officer indicated that this project ran for some time, but there were discrepancies in these narratives around the reasons for the project stopping. As with the bakery project, the discussion participants maintained that the project stalled because of poor management of funds by the councillor's office. The chief control officer, however, argued that the project was still ongoing. Again this points to a lack of coordination and communication.

Apart from the government support, the Hai||om at Oshivelo had received support from WIMSA. According to the participants, WIMSA ran a school feeding programme at the kindergarten in the settlement, and had trained two Hai||om women as kindergarten teachers, and both were teaching there at the time of our fieldwork, their wages paid by WIMSA. Additionally, WIMSA had provided chairs for the kindergarten. This kindergarten project is still ongoing. (WIMSA had a satellite office in Outjo, and had provided support to a kindergarten there, but the participants in Outjo did not deem the WIMSA office there to be of importance, thus this external support is not covered in more detail here.)

The resettlement of the Oshivelo Hai||om to Farm Ondera will need evaluating after some period of time. However, in view of the experiences of the Hai||om at the resettlement farms south of Etosha, there appears to be a significant risk that their problems will simply be relocated to a different site, rather than the resettlement process at Ondera resulting in a success story.

At Farm Six there was no external support whatsoever.

6.4 Regional conclusions and recommendations

The level of poverty of the San in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto Regions varied to a considerable degree. The Hai||om living in Okaukuejo were noticeably better off than those at the other sites visited in these regions. This was mainly due to the fact that Okaukuejo is part of the Etosha National Park. Hai||om had been acknowledged as the original inhabitants of Etosha during colonial times, albeit some of them were evicted in 1954. The remaining Hai||om had always had a guarantee of employment within the park in former times, but nowadays new employment opportunities are increasingly given to outsiders from other ethnic groups, and the younger generation of Hai||om face, by and large, the same destiny as Hai||om and other San communities in other regions: unemployment, piecework, and dependency on the pensions of their parents and grandparents. The government should apply affirmative action for the Hai||om living in Etosha in respect of employment and capacity-building in the park. Furthermore, there is a need for proper consultation and participation of the Hai||om community in Etosha with regard to development both within the park and on the resettlement farms. Planning so far without the input of the Hai||om has not led to the desired results.

The Hai||om living at Farm Six were significantly worse off than the Hai||om at the other sites in terms of poverty. Farm Six was the most remote of the settlements visited. Additionally, the influx of Owambo farmers with their cattle to the area had drastically limited the Hai||om's access to land. This has had especially severe repercussions since the community at Farm Six was by far the most reliant on natural resources compared with the other four sites. The Hai||om at Farm Six will need special attention:

- First of all, they need land in order to survive.
- Secondly, their access to education needs be improved, and transport to secondary schools will need to be provided.
- Thirdly, they must all receive their national documents as well as the social grants to which they are entitled.
- Fourthly, there is an urgent need to revitalise the mobile clinic service, which ceased in mid-2005.
- Lastly, they need to be represented within the Hai||om TA structures in order to be included in decision-making processes.

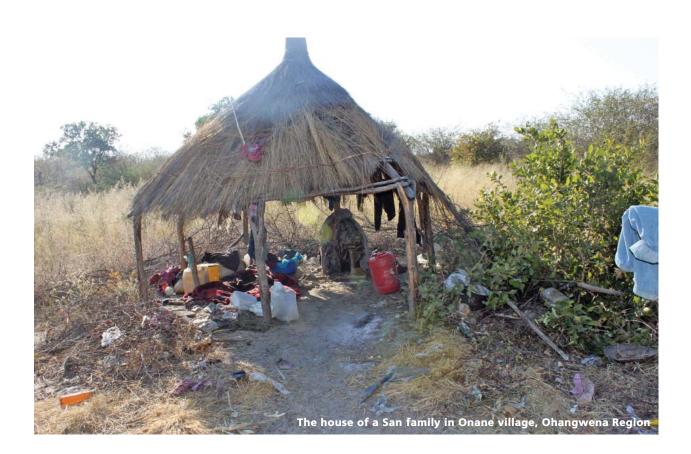
Although some resettlement farms were bought for Hai||om people, these have not yet produced sustainable livelihood options, and most Hai||om at four of the five sites were highly dependent on food aid and pension money. Werner and Odendaal noted in their assessment report titled *Livelihoods after land reform: Namibia country report* that "the group resettlement approach as implemented thus far is fundamentally a welfare intervention" (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 169). The *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009* stated clearly that the objectives of post-resettlement support (which was originally intended to be provided for five years only) – namely to build the capacity of the resettled farmers to enable them to manage the farms; to improve their living standards; and to assist them in becoming self-reliant – have not yet been achieved, and some farms are still supported 19 years after their establishment (GRN 2010: 3-5).

This raises the question of why the government, despite all identified shortcomings of the group resettlement model, continues to promote it, and does so in the face of the serious concerns raised by in-depth research reports and also articulated by the very same people whom the model is supposed to serve, namely the resettlement beneficiaries. This is not to say that group resettlement should be abandoned in principle, but just that the way in which it has been implemented so far might benefit from re-evaluation and adjustment. Land-use plans need to be developed prior to resettlement and in consultation with the community, and post-resettlement support needs to be implemented for as long as it is necessary. Furthermore, it might be worth investigating whether the conservancy model would not be more feasible for San communities. (For further details on these issues, see Chapter 15 on access to land.)

The conflicts around the Hai||om Traditional Authority seem to be a major stumbling block with regard to development initiatives. Hai||om at all sites expressed unhappiness with the performance of the chief. Support and opportunities provided by government were channelled through the chief, and most community members had the feeling that they were not benefiting at all. Consequently they did not feel represented by the chief. If the Hai||om wish to do so, they should elect a new chief through proper, monitored elections.

Chapter 7 Ohangwena Region

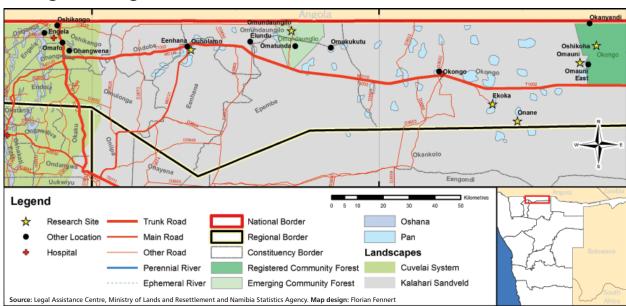
By Randolph Mouton and Erik Dirkx



7.1 General background

Ohangwena Region is situated in the northern part of Namibia, bordered by Angola to the north, Oshana Region to the west, Kavango Region to the east and Oshikoto Region to the south. It is located on flat plains 1 100 m above sea level, spanning approximately 10 703 km² (1.3% of the country's total land area) (National Planning Commission (NPC) 2003b: 4). The climate is similar across the four north-central regions of Namibia, of which Ohangwena is one, with very hot summers and cool-to-warm winters. The climate is suitable for dry-land cropping and livestock grazing.

Ohangwena Region comprises 11 constituencies: Ongenga, Engela, Endola, Ohangwena, Oshikango, Omulonga, Ondobe, Eenhana, Omundaungilo, Epembe and Okongo. The region's administrative and political capital is Eenhana, which was proclaimed as a town in the early 2000s.



Ohangwena Region and the six research sites

Ohangwena Region had a population of 245 446 in 2011 (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 16). Almost the whole region (99%) consists of communal areas, and Eenhana and Helao Nafidi are the only towns. In addition there are three proclaimed settlements: Omungwelume and Ongenga in the western part of the region, and Okongo in the eastern part. The Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy is the only conservation area in this region.¹ There are also four San resettlement projects in the vicinity of Okongo: Onamatadiva, Eendobe, Oshanashiwa and Ekoka.² Ohangwena's population density of 23 persons per km² is very high compared to the national density of 2.6 persons per km². The average household size in 2011 was 5.6 persons, which is also much higher than the national average of 4.4 persons. In 2011, 67% of the region's households were headed by females (compared to 56% in 1991 and 60% in 2001) (NSA 2013: 16).

Ohangwena's residents engage mainly in communal agricultural production for subsistence purposes. Communal land is divided into small plots of a few hectares, where rural households mostly cultivate *omahangu* (pearl millet) and keep small numbers of goats, cattle, donkeys, chickens and pigs. The number of households for which farming was a main source of income decreased from 52% in 2001 to 26% in 2011. The other main sources were public pension payments (29%, up from 20% in 2001), wages and salaries (22%, up from 13% in 2001), non-farming businesses (12%, up from 8% in 2001) and cash remittances (6%, up from 5% in 2001) (NSA 2013: 16). Formal employment opportunities are limited to Eenhana and, to a lesser extent, Helao Nafidi. Informal employment opportunities are available in rural areas for, inter alia, cultivating fields, herding livestock, cleaning houses, washing clothes, and collecting water, firewood, fencing materials and thatching grass.

¹ This entity started out as the Okongo Community Forest Project, initiated in 1998. It was gazetted as the Okongo Community Forest in 2002, and as the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy in 2009.

² In general in this chapter, the authors have referred to resettlement farms in Ohangwena Region as "resettlement projects", firstly because this is the terminology used by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, and secondly because we want to avoid giving the impression that the government purchased commercial farms and handed them over to beneficiaries of the National Resettlement Policy, as this is not the case with the resettlement initiatives in Ohangwena. All of the resettlement projects referred to in this chapter are situated on communal land, and all were projects of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) until the government took them over in 1996, i.e. including the San beneficiaries. All of these projects consist of agricultural land that is used for crop farming (with varying degrees of success), and nowadays one also usually finds houses, office space, storage facilities and water infrastructure within such projects.

Ohangwena is one of the poorest regions in Namibia. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI), of Namibia's 13 regions,³ Ohangwena had the fifth worst life expectancy at birth, the ninth worse literacy rate, and the lowest annual average per capita income – but the third highest gross school enrolment ratio. As a result, Ohangwena had the nation's lowest HDI (0.403) (Levine 2007: 8). In addition, according to the UNDP Human Poverty Index (HPI), of the 13 regions, people in Ohangwena had the highest probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, the seventh highest illiteracy rate, and the eighth highest share of the population in households that spent more than 60% of their total income on food. As a result, Ohangwena had the third highest HPI rating (45) of the 13 regions (Levine 2007: 10).

7.2 The San in Ohangwena Region

The National Planning Commission specifically refers to the San as the first inhabitants of Ohangwena Region (NPC 2003b: 17). The Land, Environment and Development (LEAD) Project of the Legal Assistance Centre reported in 2006 that the displacement of the San commenced before the 16th century with the southward movement of Bantu cattle herders to the southern regions of Africa (LEAD 2006: 1). As far as more recent displacement is concerned, Ayisa et al. (2002) quote an elderly San person from Ekoka who explained that the "Mandume War" (presumably meaning the German-Kwanyama war, dated by the authors to around 1915) was one of the key events that disturbed the social fabric of the San who used to live on the Epembe-Okankolo axis:

"Their parents fled to Angola or dispersed into the remotest forest in disorder, because they were told that a group of evil men, all albinos, were killing whoever they found on their way. The news spread quickly. People panicked and fled in all directions, leaving weaker family members behind. The parents eventually came back to the Namibian side of the border, because their children – some of the currently elderly generation at Ekoka – remembered growing up on the Onakalunga Okongo axis, or between Epembe and Okankolo." (Ayisa et al. 2002: 7)

More recently, the arrival of the Finnish missionaries in the 1960s changed the lifestyle of the San in (eastern) Ohangwena to an even greater extent, because the missionaries imposed their way of life in pursuit of ways to 'improve' the lives of the perceived 'poor' and 'uncivilised' San. So, from the early 1960s onwards, a Finnish missionary, Erkki Hynonen, started placing the San in small reserves north and east of Okongo (Raiskio (no date): 3). Besides wanting to christen the San, the missionaries wanted to form a Christian San homeland around Okongo, where the San could be baptised and integrated into the lifestyle of the then Kavango-Ovambo Lutheran Church (Ayisa et al. 2002: 8).⁴ The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) was of the opinion that farming would be the only means by which the San could survive in the future. This viewpoint was informed, to a degree, by Western and Christian perceptions of the nomadic San. Possibly it was also informed by the knowledge that the eastward movement of Kwanyama farmers (from the relatively densely populated western part of Ohangwena to areas which, until then, had mostly been used as cattle posts) might hamper the nomadic lifestyle that many San in the eastern part of Ohangwena had enjoyed up to the 1960s. According to oral histories related by local headmen in the Okongo area, the Finnish missionaries were the first to place the San in a specific geographic area, and the first to organise support in the form of food rations, clothing, blankets, tobacco, basic healthcare and some degree of education, as well as evangelism. Church leaders also organised farming activities, but in this regard, Ayisa, Berger and Hailundu reported as follows:

³ Fourteen as of August 2013 when Kavango Region was split into two: Kavango East and Kavango West.

⁴ Affiliated to the ELCIN church.

"Unfortunately the granaries and the resettlement fields were properties of the church. The work was done under specific orders from the evangelist in charge and the harvest placed under the church leadership. A fixed ration was handed out regularly to each family. Even if the intentions were good at the time, the resettlement was not voluntary and the San did not learn to manage their new livelihoods. They did not learn to work independently or manage their own reserves and, consequently, the switch from nomadic hunter/gatherer life to sedentary subsistence life did not effectively take place. And worst, said Hon. B. Mwaningange (then Governor of the Ohangwena Region), the war disrupted and halted the efforts of the missionaries to provide the San with proper education and a better life." (Ayisa et al. 2002: 8)

The support of the Finnish Church was not very consistent, especially when the struggle for Namibian independence intensified during the 1980s. At that time, for security reasons, the missionaries withdrew from the area around Okongo, and the San who had been resettled in the missionary projects at Onamatadiva, Eendobe and Ekoka relied heavily on the support of neighbouring farmers subsequently. The missionaries returned briefly after Independence to resume their church activities in the region and to support the San in the projects which they had established earlier. However, a few years after Independence the missionaries left the Okongo area completely, and the projects that they had established for the San "became the responsibility of the Government of Namibia, national and international development partners, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)" (Mouton 2011: 2). Furthermore, it is important to note that the South African Defence Force (SADF) used the San as trackers and soldiers during the war for independence, one consequence being that other Namibians perceived the San as traitors.

Determining the size of the San population in Ohangwena Region is difficult because, firstly, some San are semi-nomadic, and secondly, during the last census some San indicated that they speak an Oshiwambo dialect rather than a San language. Various sources give different accounts of the size of the San population: the *2001 Population and Housing Census* found a total of 289 households including 1 535 individuals (own calculations based on census data (NPC, 2003a)) speaking a San language at home (0.8% of the regional population). In 2003, the *Ohangwena Regional Poverty Profile* reported 518 households across four constituencies, totalling 1 841 people reportedly speaking a San language (see Table 7.1 below), but also indicated that other, smaller groups of San could be found in other constituencies (NPC 2003b: 17). The latest census finding was that 0.2% of all Ohangwena households spoke a San language (NSA 2013: 171). It has to be borne in mind that the census captured data only for San who speak a San language at home; it can be assumed that there are many more San living in the region. One recent study provided an estimate of around 3 000 San in Ohangwena Region (Pakleppa 2005: 35), which is consistent with the 2001 finding of 0.8% of the total regional population, and another recent study reported that most of the San in Ohangwena are !Xun and Hai||om (Takada 2007: 76-77).

Table 7.1: Sar	population	of Ohangwena	Region
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Constituency	Number of San families	Total San population	
Okongo	287	1052	
Omundaungilo	96	320	
Epembe	74	302	
Eenhana	61	167	
Total	518	1841	

Source: NPC 2003b: 17

7.3 Research sites in Ohangwena Region

This section introduces the six research sites in Ohangwena Region: Ouholamo (a neighbourhood in Eenhana), Ekoka Resettlement Project, Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy), Onane village, Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo village) and Omukukutu village. The sites were selected using the criteria detailed in Table 7.2.

Research	Rural/ urban	Land	Land San	Population status	Institutional support**	
site	status	tenure	language groups	(numerical)	GRN	NGOs
Ouholamo (Eenhana)	Urban	Suburb / neighbourhood on town land	!Xun	Minority in Eenhana; majority in Ouholamo	 Food aid Water Clothes ODPM and Regional Council: ECD 	 UNESCO: ECD housing*** MDG-F (FAO and UNESCO): gardening
Ekoka Resettlement Project	Rural (remote)	Resettlement project on communal land	 !Xun ‡Akhoe and Hai om* 	Equal numbers of San and Kwanyama people	 Food aid ODPM and Regional Council: ECD Primary school Clinic 	 DRFN: livelihood support Omba Arts Trust: crafts UNESCO: ECD
Oshikoha (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	Rural	Village in Community Forest and Conservancy on communal land	!Xun	Minority	 Food aid MAWF and MET: IGAs Community Forest and Conservancy Mobile clinic 	 FMC NRCS: IGAs capacity building health
Onane	Rural (remote)	Village on communal land	!Xun	Minority	Food aid	None
Omiishi (Omundaungilo)	Rural	Neighbourhood in a settlement which is not proclaimed – hence on communal land	!Xun	Minority	Food aid	None
Omukukutu	Rural (somewhat remote)	Village on communal land	!Xun	Minority	Food aid	NRCS: • Agriculture • Livestock (cattle and goats)

Table 7.2: Main characteristics of the Ohangwena research sites

* According to Widlok, "‡Akhwe is a way in which some Hai||om speak their language" (cited in Vossen 2013: 10) – see Table 3.2 (page 23) and Chapter 6, section 6.3.3 (page 210).

** Abbreviations/acronyms:

- DRFN Desert Research Foundation of Namibia
- ECD early childhood development
- FAO Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
- FMC Forest Management Committee
- IGA income-generating activity
- MAWF Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
- MDG-F Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund
- MET Ministry of Environment and Tourism
- NRCS Namibia Red Cross Society
- ODPM Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
- UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- *** UNESCO and Help Educate At-Risk Orphans and Vulnerable Children (HERO) supported the construction of houses for the San in Ouholamo, through Acacia Grassroots Development Network, an NGO that no longer exists.

7.3.1 Ouholamo, Eenhana

Ouholamo is a neighbourhood of the town of Eenhana. Located on the eastern outskirts of the town, Ouholamo is reached via a small sandy track through the bush. It is said that the San were the original inhabitants of the town area and the surrounding area. San participants in our discussions said that they did not refer to this place as a village because the government located them here after their land was "taken away" from them. One participant said, "We used to live in the bush, in the *omapundo*, but these were destroyed during war".⁵

The San in Ouholamo, constituting approximately 20 households, moved there around 2007/08, once the construction of about 20 brick houses had been completed with the support of the Acacia Grassroots Development Network (AGDN), UNESCO and Help Educate At-Risk Orphans and Vulnerable Children (HERO – an initiative of the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA), funded by USAID). The actual numbers of people living in these structures varies as people continuously move in and out of Ouholamo. Our rough calculations, based on the perceived size of households, the average number of residents per house at the time of our visit and our discussions with San at this site, rendered an estimated total of 80 San living in Ouholamo.

The Eenhana Town Council provided water for human consumption via water pipes and community taps. In addition, each house had a 5000 litre water tank for harvesting rainwater from the rooftop, and the water in the tanks was used for human consumption and other purposes. How long the water in the tanks lasted depended on household size and the way that an individual household utilised the water. The houses did not have internal toilets; instead there were seven external pit latrines, but, due to the unhygienic condition of these facilities, most residents preferred to use the bush. There were also three boreholes near the centre of the neighbourhood. At the time of our visit, one of the boreholes provided water to the community garden and the other two were out of order.



An *omapundo* (see photo on page 241) is the Oshikwanyama term for a small dwelling made of sticks and other materials (cloths, plastic, nets etc.). Most San in Ohangwena live in *omapundos*.

The community garden, consisting of separate plots for each San resident who was interested in gardening, had been established with funding from the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) and technical support from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) was supposed to render extension services to ensure successful cultivation, but the garden, though well designed, had failed due to insufficient engagement with the San. The kindergarten, consisting of a brick building with an outside kitchen, a playground enclosed by a high wire fence and a garden catering for the learners' needs (to the extent that it could do so), had been established by the AGDN in 2004/05 with financial support from UNESCO. Primary and secondary schools in Eenhana were within walking distance, as were the Eenhana Clinic and Eenhana Hospital. Ouholamo's residents had cellphone reception, but no access to electricity.

7.3.2 Ekoka

Ekoka Resettlement Project is located 30 km south-east of the village of Okongo (±120 km east of Eenhana). The San live on the project site proper, and are surrounded by homesteads of Kwanyama farmers. The project and the homesteads together are known as Ekoka village. The San discussion participants indicated that 500-600 ha of land surrounding two major crop fields and a street with brick houses originally belonged to the resettlement project beneficiaries. The original settlers at Ekoka were said to be !Xun and Hai||om (i.e. they occupied the land before the Kwanyama came to the area). Before 1964 the Ekoka San lived in Okongo with the Finnish missionaries, and prior to moving to Okongo and Ekoka, this San community lived in the Eenhana area.

In 2012 there were approximately 54 San households at Ekoka, 12 headed by females and 42 by males, with a total population of 213 San.⁶ The project houses, built by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR), are brick structures with corrugated-iron roofs, and each house has a small front porch and a small yard. There is no fencing around the houses.

The first set of houses for the San were built next to each (as in an urban neighbourhood), but the San were not happy with this setup because it precluded the rural Ohangwena convention of crop fields surrounding homes/homesteads. The second phase of house construction – financed by the government through the MLR Directorate of Resettlement – took care of this problem to some extent, in that the houses were built within the boundary of a large fenced-off field, portions of which were available to each household for cultivation.⁷ However, the San who occupied these houses were still not happy because the land in question was not regarded as belonging specifically to them; rather it belonged to the whole community, and was not split up into areas for individual families. Moreover, all of these houses were built one side of the field, which made the singular use of the land by the San difficult, as it enabled other farmers to use the field, especially the portion that was more distant from the established houses.

Each house at Ekoka Resettlement Project had been connected to the power grid and had a prepaid meter. A diesel-driven borehole supplied water to the houses, the school, the clinic and the church. Two houses had been set aside to serve as project offices, and the 'office compound' also included a small shop, storage rooms, a cooking area, two water tanks with taps, and a large thatched roof covering an area of approximately 160 m² serving as a community centre. The project also had a

⁶ Takada reported in 1998 that the Ekoka San population was 281 (including the people who relocated to other places for a short while during the dry season), of whom 143 (51%) were !Xun, 87 (31%) were Hai||om, 40 (14%) were of mixed !Xun and Hai||om descent, and 11 (4%) were from other San groups (Takada 2007: 81).

⁷ There are two crop fields in Ekoka Resettlement Project: a large field of 89 ha and a small field of 69 ha.

combined school catering for Grades 1-10, a school hostel, a health centre with two nurses, several shebeens, a church and kraal for cattle owned by the San community. (The San did not own cattle on an individual basis, and women were not involved in cattle farming as this was regarded a man's responsibility.) The Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS) had constructed a few ventilated pit latrines on the project site, but the beneficiaries still use the bush instead.

The Livelihood Support Programme for the Ohangwena San Resettlement Projects (LIPROSAN) implemented by the DRFN with funding from the MLR provided several services, such as capacity building for livelihood activities, agricultural equipment supplies, facilitation of income-generating activities (IGAs) and strengthening of local institutional structures.

7.3.3 Oshikoha, Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy

The Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy (known locally as the "Omauni Community Forest" because the Omauni village boundary encompasses the main forestry office, hall and campsite) is located about 70 km east of Okongo village in Okongo Constituency.⁸ Oshikoha village is located about 10 km north of Omauni village within the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy.

San people lived in this area "a long time ago", but they moved around a lot in pursuit of food and water. They moved to Mpungu in Kavango Region at Independence, and back to Omauni village after 1998. Many of these San did not remain in the area when the Okongo Community Forest was gazetted in 2002, but most participants in our discussions indicated that they moved back to this area once the project had been up and running for a while.

In 2002 there were 20 villages in the Okongo Community Forest, with a total population of 1 300 and a San population of approximately 150. The San, mostly !Xun, lived primarily in five villages, i.e. Omauni East, Omandi, Okanyandi 1, Oshikoha and Ohiki, and most of them lived in *omapundos* which they constructed themselves (SIAPAC 2008: 77).

A mobile clinic served the residents of Oshikoha village and the surrounding villages, but it visited only once a month, and the nearest alternative was the clinic in Okongo village. There was a shop where people could buy some food and other items, such as soap. The pension payout point that operated on a monthly basis also served as a trading place where people from Oshikoha and the surrounding area could sell their second-hand clothes, food, sweets, arts and crafts, pots, etc. to those who had just received their pensions.

There was no church, school or kindergarten in Oshikoha. The closest primary school was in Omauni village, but none of the San children in Oshikoha went to school there because their parents did not have trusted friends in Omauni with whom their children could reside while attending school. The closest secondary school was in Okongo and this had hostel facilities.

Water was supplied to the community in Oshikoha via an engine-driven pump belonging to the government and serviced by the MAWF Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC), but the community was responsible for the management, operation and maintenance of the pump. The Kwanyama there paid for their water, whereas the San were exempted from paying. It took approximately an hour to get to the water point and back, which the participants did not

⁸ The main motivation for selecting Oshikoha as a study site was that it was located within the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy and was thus assumed to represent a different living standard compared with resettlement projects or villages on communal land which were not receiving any specific institutional support.

regard as a long distance. Sometimes they used their Kwanyama neighbours' donkeys to collect water. No village in the Community Forest and Conservancy had an electricity supply.

7.3.4 Onane

Onane, a village in Okongo Constituency, is located about 12 km from the main tar road from Okongo to the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy and on to Rundu. Onane is reached via a two-track gravel/sand road (primarily gravel, with relatively thick sand in parts). The distance along the tar road from Okongo to the turnoff to Onane village is approximately 30 km.

Reportedly there were 18 !Xun living in Onane village – excluding the children who were living with Kwanyamas.⁹ The Onane !Xun were actually one big family as all of them were related to each other in one way or another.

According to discussion participants, the San were the first inhabitants of this area. Most of the San in Onane village had lived there all their lives; only a few had moved recently to Onane from other villages. There were also some who moved seasonally to another village, mostly when there were food shortages in the area.

For water, the Onane village community had only a diesel-driven borehole, and the water was used for both human and livestock consumption. The only other infrastructure and services were a room used by the mobile clinic, a church and a cemetery; there was no kindergarten, primary or secondary school in the village, nor any community projects (e.g. gardens), and the San lived in *omapundos* which they constructed themselves.



⁹ The 14 San participants in our discussion were not able to confirm the exact number of San residents of Onane, but four !Xun were said to be out looking for food, thus they reasoned that they numbered 18 in total.

7.3.5 Omiishi, Omundaungilo

Omundaungilo is a settlement area, not officially proclaimed, but regarded as the de facto capital of Omundaungilo Constituency. Omundaungilo is located about 15 km north of the main tar road from Eenhana to Okongo; the turnoff is about 40 km east of Eenhana. The San community lived on the outskirts of the settlement in an area called Omiishi in Oshikwanyama and N!u¹⁰ in the local !Xun dialect.

Only San live in Omiishi; most of the Kwanyama people in the area live in Omundaungilo proper. At the time of our visit there were 26 San households in Omiishi, with an estimated total population of 192. Most of the San in Omiishi were from two San communities who had moved there due to the availability of water and food aid, and proximity to the clinic in Omundaungilo. Of the 26 San households, 18 belonged to the Omatunda San group and eight belonged to the Etunda San group. The Omatunda San had moved there about a year prior to our visit from Omatunda village about 5 km south of Omundaungilo. The Etunda group had come from Etunda village, located close to Omundaungilo on the north-western side, before Independence. It seems that Kwanyama farmers had fenced off the land on which the San lived in Etunda, which forced them to move away.

All San in Omiishi lived in *omapundos*. Infrastructure in Omundaungilo included a primary school, a clinic, open wells, a borehole with a hand pump, a borehole with a diesel engine, an earth dam (resulting from a sand pit used for road construction), a police station, the councillor's office, an agricultural extension office, a church, a cemetery, the main gravel feeder road, shops and shebeens. Neither Omiishi or Omundaungilo had electricity, nor sanitation facilities, hence all community members used the bush.

7.3.6 Omukukutu

Omukukutu is a village in Epembe Constituency, located some 12 km from the main tar road from Eenhana to Okongo along a two-track gravel road with relatively thick sand. The distance from Eenhana to the turnoff from the main tar road is just under 40 km.

Most of the village residents were Kwanyama, and the San community consisted of approximately 16 households with a total of about 118 individuals. According to older San participants in our discussion, the !Xun were the first inhabitants of this area, and Kwanyama people moved into the area shortly before Namibia's war for independence commenced.

The houses of the San looked like those of the Kwanyama structurally. A borehole with a dieselpowered pump and three 10 m³ water tanks were available to all village residents, but the San opted not to use the water point, mainly due to the access cost of N\$30 per month per household. Instead, the San used a cost-free borehole with a hand pump, and open wells. The village primary school catered for Grades 1-7. The closest health facility was in Oshikunde, and the closest hospital was in Eenhana. Omukukutu had no access to electricity. The church was attended mainly by Kwanyama. Community gardens for both ethnic groups were available, but it seemed that the Kwanyama had taken over ownership of the gardens, as the San were not allowed to actively participate in decision making about the gardens (see later in this chapter). The community was involved in an NRCS project providing agricultural implements and livestock, but the Kwanyama were said to have taken over this project too, with the result that the San had little involvement in decision making.

¹⁰ This spelling may be incorrect as neither the participants nor the researchers could spell in this San language.

7.4 Research findings

7.4.1 Livelihood and poverty

Livelihood strategies

Most San households in Ohangwena Region depend for their livelihoods on food aid, piecework, veldfood gathering, pensions, subsistence agriculture, some limited IGAs, child labour and begging or asking Kwanyama neighbours for food.

Subsistence agriculture

Subsistence agriculture was the main livelihood strategy of the Kwanyama people in Ohangwena. None of the San in Ouholamo, Omiishi (Omundaungilo), Oshikoha (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy) and Onane cultivated crop fields.¹¹ Only four of the ±16 San households in Omukukutu village and several San households at Ekoka Resettlement Project had productive crop fields. It should be noted that the Ekoka, Onamatadiva, Oshanashiwa and Eendobe Resettlement Projects in Okongo Constituency differed from all the other sites where San people resided in Ohangwena in that they received extensive agricultural, food, educational and infrastructural support from the MLR, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), UNESCO, the Ohangwena Regional Council (ORC) and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), via technical support from the DRFN, AGDN and NRCS. San at these projects were better off than San at other sites in this region, primarily due to this external support. San participants in our



¹¹ One Onane household did cultivate a large crop field, but we must exclude this household on the grounds that it was headed by a Kwanyama headman whose wife was San: although in theory they had a mixed household, in practice it was considered to be a Kwanyama household due to the household head being Kwanyama. discussions at the other research sites claimed that they did have access to land for agricultural purposes, but that this meant very little without agricultural implements. Land available to them was also said to be infertile, as all fertile land had already been allocated to others, mostly Kwanyama households.¹² In addition, some San households that did have access to land and agricultural equipment preferred to do piecework instead of cultivating their own fields, because piecework provided an immediate return on labour investment, whether in the form of money, food, clothes or *otombo* (home-brewed beer). Therefore, at most research sites in Ohangwena, San did not depend on subsistence agriculture as a primary food source, but rather they relied on:

- food aid (mostly maize-meal);
- food in return for piecework;
- food bought with money earned by means of piecework;
- food bought with money earned by selling arts and crafts;
- food bought with pension money (Old Age Pension, War Veteran Pension, OVC grants);
- begging, or asking Kwanyama neighbours for food when in dire need;¹³ and
- veldfood.

Food aid

Food aid – food from the OPM's San Development Programme (SDP), drought relief food and food for work – was provided by the OPM via the Ohangwena Regional Council and distributed by the respective constituency offices. Food aid normally targeted vulnerable and/or marginalised communities such as the San and the Ovatue, and usually consisted of maize-meal (one 12.5 kg sack), tinned fish and cooking oil. Food aid was distributed differently depending on whether or not a community received livelihood support from the MLR and the DRFN. Generally at our research sites in Ohangwena, food aid was distributed to San households only, on an irregular basis, via local village-level distribution committees that determined the amount of food to be given to a household based on the household's size. The San in Oshikoha said that they received food aid on a monthly or bi-monthly basis,¹⁴ whereas the San in the other villages claimed to have received food aid only once during 2012. Thus for most San in Ohangwena, the food aid distribution tended to be irregular and unpredictable, and appeared to depend on availability as opposed to need.

The MLR and the DRFN (as an implementing partner of the MLR) provided food aid at the Onamatadiva, Oshanashiwa, Eendobe and Ekoka Resettlement Projects in the years 2007-2010, at the onset of the rainy season, as an incentive for San to work in their crop fields. Sometimes it was also provided during the dry season as an incentive for other casual work in these projects (e.g. fencing). However, due to a concern that this food aid was fostering dependency and a perceived reluctance on the part of the San to work for themselves, the MLR and DRFN stopped it. Another concern was that the San exchanged some of their food aid provisions for *otombo* and tobacco – rather than for other types of food (e.g. meat and *omahangu*), the latter being a relatively common practice among San and other recipients of food aid. However, since then, food aid from the SDP has been distributed via the constituency office on a monthly basis.

The OPM also provided drought relief food via the Ohangwena Regional Council which in turn distributed it via the constituency offices. Drought relief food was distributed to all people in need

¹² The eastern part of Ohangwena Region consists of tree savannah with sandy soils, and was originally used as an area for cattle posts (which would be located in the vicinity of shallow pans). The few areas with more fertile soils were occupied by crop farmers a long time ago.

¹³ San households would normally ask Kwanyama households for food only when in dire need. Borrowing or begging food from other San was not feasible as all San in these villages were in the same situation.

¹⁴ Frequency of distribution depends on availability.

(not only San) during the dry season. Food-for-work opportunities are provided by particular line ministries (depending on the type of work) when capital projects (e.g. road construction) are implemented close by, but this had not happened often in Ohangwena Region in recent years.

Piecework¹⁵

Most food (*omahangu*) and other commodities received by the San were reportedly obtained by carrying out piecework jobs in the crop fields belonging to Kwanyama farmers and by herding cattle belonging to the Kwanyama. Informal piecework seemed to be the main source of income for most San households. Piecework was not always paid for in cash; sometimes it was paid for in kind, in the form of food, second-hand clothes, and/or a jug of *otomobo* or *oshikundu*.¹⁶ The practice of working for the Kwanyama in exchange for food was called *okunyanga* in Oshikwanyama. The types of work commonly carried out in exchange for food included assisting with crop cultivation, herding livestock, collecting firewood, fetching water, cutting poles and thatching grass, and doing domestic chores. Piecework was more readily available during the cultivation period, meaning that the San had less access to food during the dry season.

San discussion participants raised their common concern that many San were paid with *otombo*; they said that some San would spend entire days carrying water to cuca shops simply to get paid in *otombo* only. Such labour did not bring in any money, food, soap, clothes or other necessities, and increased alcohol abuse among the San, with detrimental effects.

The types of piecework usually undertaken by females included ploughing, domestic chores, fetching water and collecting firewood. Men were more likely to herd livestock, but also worked in the fields, fetched water and collected firewood. Small bundles of firewood, usually collected and sold by women, could fetch N\$10, and men would collect a load of firewood which they could sell for N\$150 to N\$300. It usually took a full day to collect and transport such a load, and discussion participants indicated that men usually collected a load only once a year due to a belief that this task made men old. Assisting in the cultivation of the Kwanyama crop fields could bring in N\$20 to N\$50 per day. The income for piecework done by women tended to be lower than the income that men earned for their piecework.

Pensions

The Old Age Pension was regarded as an important source of income for some households – the government paid pensioners N\$550 per month at the time of the field research.¹⁷ Most of this money was spent on household food, but reportedly the money was usually all accounted for before it had even been received. Paying off debts at cuca shops (for food and *otombo*), and the large numbers of household members who often depended on the Old Age Pension as the only source of household income, meant that the money was often too limited for a family's needs. Nevertheless, households that received a pension were normally regarded as better off than other San households, unless such a household had many members. Discussion participants raised the concern that many elderly San were not registered for their pension, despite being entitled to it by virtue of their age. The main reason for not receiving this pension was a lack of vital documents such as an ID or birth certificate, or incorrect information on existing documents. The same was true for many orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) who did not receive an OVC grant despite being entitled to it.

¹⁵ The authors of this chapter did not distinguish between 'piecework' and 'casual work' (see Chapter 14, pages 468-469).

¹⁶ A traditional Owambo non-alcoholic drink made from *omahangu* and water.

¹⁷ In April 2013 it was increased to N\$600 per month.

A total of three people in Omukukutu and Ouholamo received a War Veteran Pension, consisting of a N\$50000 once-off payout and N\$2500 per month thereafter. This was extremely important for them as it enabled their households to improve their standard of living. According to other participants, the families concerned had progressed from being poor or very poor to being better off or even rich.

Veldfood



"In the rainy season we have a lot of food. We even have the leaves of *omambibo*."

– Male discussion participant in Oshikoha village

Another male participant in the discussion in Oshikoha indicated that he survived mostly on veldfood, and agreed that there was plenty of veldfood during the rainy season, but not during the dry season.

San in Ohangwena depend extensively on the daily consumption of veldfood, especially when food from crop fields, or food aid provisions or purchased food, runs out (see the subsection on food security and main food items further

on). However, discussion participants noted that they would gather less veldfood if other foods such as *omahangu* and maize-meal were more readily available and could be obtained by working in the crop fields of the Kwanyama farmers. Most veldfoods could be easily gathered in and around the villages, and were eaten on a daily basis when in season. Places such as Oshikoha village in the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy were said to have more veldfood available nowadays than was previously the case as a result of the forest management rules and regulations, however it was also said that other San residents of the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy had complained that the regulations were inhibiting them from accessing veldfood and other natural resources.

Arts and crafts

Some !Xun and Hai||om women in Ohangwena generated income by making baskets, necklaces, bracelets and clothes, and San men usually made traditional knives, bows, arrows and wooden cups – whether for generating income or for own use. However, not many !Xun and Hai||om across the region engaged in craftmaking. The DRFN, with technical support from the Omba Arts Trust, provided support to communities in the Oshanashiwa and Ekoka Resettlement Projects with regard to the design, production and marketing of arts and craft products, and some of the products were sold at the Ongwediva and Eenhana trade fairs. Discussion participants indicated that these experiences had increased the confidence of those who participated, and contributed to increasing their income to some extent, albeit irregularly. Eleven artists at Ekoka Resettlement Project, for example, collectively earned N\$8750 in 2012. Similarly, six craft producers at Oshanashiwa and Ekoka Resettlement Projects collectively accumulated N\$14265 from sales of their crafts in the period August 2012 to July 2013, of which some N\$5100 was distributed among them as income (see Box 14.1 on page 476). There is potential for further growth of this craftmaking initiative if the support can be continued for the next few years.



Formal employment

Few San across the six Ohangwena research sites were formally employed at the time of our field research. One person was a teacher at Ekoka Resettlement Project, and another was a police officer, originally from Omukukutu village but stationed elsewhere. Another four San worked for the DRFN in the San resettlement projects around Okongo, but only one of them originated in Ohangwena (i.e. the one working at Oshanashiwa Resettlement Project). Three other San in formal employment came from the Tsumkwe area, but only one of them was employed at one of the six research sites. In addition, one San man in Ouholamo had worked for the AGDN for a couple of years in a formal capacity, but was retrenched when funding came to an end. Four more San at the same site were employed as domestic workers in Eenhana. (More San might be formally employed in other parts of the region, but this is unlikely.) Apart from the fact that formal employment opportunities were generally rare in this region, additional factors that impacted on the ability of the !Xun and Hai||om to obtain such employment included limited education, a lack of formal work experience, unequal power relations, discrimination and low self-esteem.

A few San men earned an income from herding livestock on a full-time basis, but their employment was based on informal arrangements. They were paid approximately N\$300 per month, and were also allowed to use the cows or oxen belonging to their employer for ploughing small fields in their own area.

Remittances

None of the San householders who participated in the field research reported receiving remittances. Some older San children worked as domestic workers elsewhere in the country, but none sent remittances back home. This is usually because payments for domestic work are too low for sharing.

Livestock

Very few San households owned cattle, donkeys or goats, but many owned small numbers of chickens, and one man in Ouholamo owned pigs. The !Xun in Omukukutu village were part of an NRCS initiative that donated cattle and goats to the whole village community, and the cattle were meant to be used as draught animals for cultivating crops. However, due to the power dynamics between the !Xun and the Kwanyama, most of the cattle and goats were under the supervision of the Kwanyama at the time of our field research, constraining !Xun people's access to project livestock for cultivation purposes.

Hunting

All discussion participants across the six sites indicated that the !Xun and Hai||om did not hunt because hunting was no longer allowed. The researchers saw some San carrying bows and arrows, but reportedly these were made for sale, not for hunting. During an informal meeting in one of the villages, a participant noted that hunting was still taking place in and around the village. Discussion participants across Ohangwena Region noted that !Xun and Hai||om people were unhappy with the regulations that prevented them from hunting and living as they had in the past.

Child labour

!Xun and Hai||om participants across all six sites considered child labour to be an acceptable source of income. Kwanyama households used San children to look after cattle or do other types of piecework, and either paid the children directly or paid their parents. None of the San parents who participated in the research discussions expressed any concern about their children doing such work; in fact all of them welcomed the option of child labour as it contributed to their families' wellbeing.

Food security and main food items

Omahangu was the staple food across four of the six research sites. In Ouholamo and Omiishi neighbourhoods, the San ate maize-meal primarily, either obtained as food aid or purchased instead of *omahangu*. Ouholamo is close to the urban centre of Eenhana, and Omiishi is close to the non-proclaimed settlement of Omundaungilo, and both the town and the settlement provided the San with more opportunities for piecework with cash payment than were available in the rural areas, hence they were able to purchase maize-meal. The other four sites were far from urban centres and main settlements, thus the San at these sites depended largely on doing piecework in the crop fields of the Kwanyama farmers, or otherwise begging for *omahangu* – although some of the !Xun and Hai||om at Ekoka Resettlement Project and in Omukukutu village cultivated their own fields. *Omahangu* and maize-meal porridge were usually mixed with beans or veldfood such as *makatan* (traditional cabbage) and *ombidi* (spinach).

Table 7.3 shows the different types of food eaten by the San at the six sites, and the frequency of eating each type. This table clearly reflects the importance of veldfood for the San in Ohangwena – especially *oshe* (berries), *omheke* (berries), *embibo* (roots), *etanga* (melon), *makatan* (traditional cabbage), *enghete* (nuts) and *ombidi* (spinach). Table 7.4 details the types of veldfoods available across the region by season. (The person who assisted with translating the Oshikwanyama names of the veldfoods into English was unable to identify a few of them, thus translations are missing for these few.)

Frequency	Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	Ekoka Resettlement Project	Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	Onane village	Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)	Omukukutu village
Most frequent	 Maize Oshe (berries) Omheke (berries) Embibo (roots) 	 Omahangu (millet) Etanga (melon) Makatan (cabbage) Oshikundu (non-alcoholic drink made from fermented millet) 	 Omahangu Embibo Enghete (nuts) Honey 	 Omahangu Maize-meal Beans Enghete 	 Maize-meal Veldfood 	 Omahangu Beans Ombidi (spinach) Oshe Groundnuts
	Beans	Cooking oil	Cooking oil	<i>Otombo</i> (home- brewed beer)	Fish	Oshikundu
	 Fish Oshikundu 	Maize		 Pumpkin Euni (fruit) Omapaka (fruit) Ekokofi (berries) Eshonywa (melon) Sugar cane Mopane worms 	Cooking oil	
		Beans	Meat		Beans	Maize-meal
	 Macaroni Rice 	 Enghete Oshe Embibo Enyowa* Wild berries 	 Omapaka Oshe Okawakole (Mopane worms) Ewila* 	 Oshe Efimbo* 	Meat	
	Meat	MeatSweets	Maize-meal	• Meat • Tea	Omahangu	
Least frequent	Dried meat	 Rice Macaroni Tea/coffee 	Tea/coffee	 Rice Macaroni Ombu* Embibo Oshe 	 Bread Rice Macaroni 	 Fish Cooking oil Meat Rice Macaroni

* The assistant who checked the Oshiwambo terms for the veldfoods could not identify those which are not specified in brackets.

Table 7.4: Veldfoods in Ohangwena Region by season¹⁸

Rainy season	Dry season	Throughout the year
 Omapaka (fruit) Ekokofi (berries) Okadongodongo* Makatan (traditional cabbage) Ombidi (spinach) 	 Oshe (berries) Omauni 	 Owishi (honey) Elonga (honey) Omaadi eniiki (honey) Ewila* Oshipuo* Embibo (root) Evanda (spinach relish) Enghete (nuts) Enyowa*

* Note as above.

¹⁸ The following veldfoods were also discussed, but without any elaboration on seasonal availability: *enyanga* (tubers), *omunthimba* (not identified), *okawakole* (Mopane worms), *efimbo* (not identified) and *eshonywa* (melon).



Meat was regarded as a highly desirable food but was rarely eaten; usually it was eaten less than once a month, and generally only when a cow had died in the area and San were given small pieces of the meat. At times the !Xun and Hai||om could exchange some of their maize-meal (food aid) for meat, and occasionally they purchased meat with earnings from piecework or when the Old Age Pensions were paid out. In our discussion in Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo settlement), in response to our question as to when they had last eaten meat, one man said a year ago, another man said two months ago and a woman said last week. Meat included beef, donkey meat and dog meat (the latter was mentioned only in Omukukutu village). Discussion participants at all six sites insisted that game meat was no longer eaten as hunting was no longer permitted.

Most San households did not have sufficient food – neither in quantity nor quality. The number of meals eaten per day varied within and across the sites. Most San households reported that they ate two meals a day: one in the morning and one in the evening, mostly consisting of the same types of food (mainly *omahangu* or maize-meal porridge). A few households ate three meals a day – for example households in Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy), mainly because they received food aid on a monthly/bi-monthly basis and had an abundance of veldfood. Other households – such as very poor households with older people who could not do any piecework and did not receive a pension – reportedly ate only one meal a day. In Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo settlement), most San households reportedly ate only breakfast. Most San households across the six sites would get up in the morning, cook and eat, and then leave home to spend the rest of the day at local cuca shops, although sometimes they would engage in other activities such as piecework and making arts and crafts (mainly baskets and traditional tools).

Children ate three meals a day when they attended a school with a school feeding programme. Those who did not go to school and accompanied their parents to cuca shops during the day were given *otombo* when they were hungry, as food was unavailable at cuca shops. When meals were eaten, children were usually given larger helpings than adults. In Omiishi, boys tended to get larger helpings than girls, whereas at the other sites girls and boys reportedly received equal helpings. In the discussion at Ekoka Resettlement Project, female participants said that men usually ate more than women because they have bigger hands and could therefore take more food per handful. Some participants at Ekoka said that pregnant women would get more food than other women if they required it, but one woman there said that pregnant women did not get sufficient food, and consequently delivered their babies prematurely.

Drinking *otombo* was regarded as a substitute for eating, as the following quotes from participants at different sites indicate:

- "It is our coffee; we need to have it in the morning and throughout the day."
- "It is like engine oil; the body cannot operate without its oil."
- "It gives us energy to work in the fields. We take it with us to have during the day for more energy."

In Omiishi, a woman said, "Sometimes when we do not have food to eat, we drink *otombo* so that we do not feel hungry any longer," and this statement triggered a discussion with men disagreeing with women that *otombo* could be regarded as a food. The men argued that *otombo* was similar to water in that it could not alleviate hunger pangs, and they insisted that they did not drink *otombo* when they felt hungry. Conversely, the women argued that they could indeed be satiated by drinking *otombo*, because, although it could not be regarded as food per se, it fills the stomach sufficiently to preclude feeling hungry.

San discussion participants at all six sites – and at other Ohangwena sites studied previously, such as Onamatadiva, Oshanashiwa and Eendobe Resettlement Projects – indicated that everybody, including children (except those breastfeeding), drank *otombo*. All participants admitted that it was not right for children to drink *otombo*, but a woman in Omiishi explained that children usually had nothing to eat during the day when they joined their parents at the cuca shops, because the parents did not cook any lunch when they were there, so their children would usually go hungry. Hence they ended up drinking *otombo* with their parents instead of having a meal prepared for them at lunch time at home. Some village headmen imposed by-laws to restrict the opening hours of cuca shops to the afternoons, in the hope that this would deter people (both San and non-San) from spending most of their time at cuca shops. Although increasing numbers of Kwanyama people also frequent the local cuca shops, the vicious circle of poverty and *otombo* consumption seems to be worse among San people than among other ethnic groups in Ohangwena.

This practice of alcohol consumption could be interpreted as one of the San's strategies for coping with food shortages. Another coping strategy was to ask village headmen for food. The headmen would then usually ask constituency councillors for support, but the support available from the councillors depended largely on resources and supplies, which were said to be lacking in most cases. It was noted that government officials often perceived the San as people who 'do not want to take care of themselves', and therefore, in some instances, their requests for food were not taken seriously enough.

Begging or asking Kwanyama households for food was a strategy sometimes employed as a last resort – usually when all food supplies had run out and veldfood was scarce. It was difficult to determine how often San households resorted to this strategy because the food security situation differed from household to household, but all San participants in our discussions regarded this as purely a survival strategy; none said that they preferred it a 'lifestyle option'.

Perceptions of poverty and vulnerability

San people's perceptions of wealth and poverty were evaluated by ranking San families at each research site according to their perceived standard of living. The results of this exercise at each site are summarised in Table 7.5. Participants at each site in Ohangwena identified up to five socioeconomic classes, ranging from 'very poor' to 'very rich'. The rankings were quite strongly informed by participants' perceptions of the more tangible evidence people's standard of living, such as access to employment or piecework; engagement in crop cultivation and other income-generating activities such as craftmaking; access to pensions and other social grants; and finally, ownership of livestock, clothes, blankets, pots and other household items. Housing conditions and food security also featured as criteria, but less tangible aspects – such as the strength of social support networks – were not evaluated and not even discussed.

Criteria	Very poor	Poor	Middle	Rich	Very rich
Employment	No formal employment	No formal employment	No formal employment	Domestic work	Formal employment
Piecework / casual work	Do piecework / cannot do piecework	Do piecework	Work full time for Kwanyama		
Crop fields	No crop fields	No crop fields	Crop fields	Crop fields	Large crop fields
Old Age Pension	No pension	Old Age Pension	Old Age Pension	Old Age Pension and War Veteran Pension	
Savings				Can save money	Can save money
Arts and crafts (excluding basketry)	Produce arts and crafts and sell them	No arts and crafts			
Basketry	Do not weave baskets	Do not weave baskets	Weave baskets and sell them		
Livestock ownership			No livestock (some may have)	Livestock	Lots of livestock
Chicken ownership	No chickens	hickens No chickens Chickens		Chickens	Many chickens
Clothing	Clothing No good clothes Not er clothe		More clothes	Much better clothes	Best clothes
Blankets	No blankets	Blankets	Blankets	Good blankets	Best blankets
Pots	No pots	Pots	Pots	Enough pots	Enough pots
Housing	Housing No huts Huts		Huts	Well-structured houses	Well-structured houses
Footwear	No shoes	Shoes	Shoes	Good shoes	Best shoes
Food security	No food	Not enough food	More food	Enough food	Enough food
Shop ownership	No shops	No shops	No shops	Own cuca shops	Own cuca shops

Table 7.5: Wealth attributes of San	households in Ohangwena	Region
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Table 7.6 presents the distribution of San households by socio-economic category. It underlines that one-tenth of the households across the six sites regarded themselves as 'very poor'. Attributes of 'very poor' households included not having many employment opportunities, nor access to the Old Age Pension, as well as limited or no access to resources such as land, food, livestock, shelter, clothing, blankets and other household commodities. Most of the households (62%) regarded themselves as 'poor', mainly because they did not have any land or agricultural tools to cultivate crop fields, no livestock, nor any employment and consequently not enough food. The common

denominator among all households from 'very poor' to 'rich' was the lack of formal employment opportunities – only the 'very rich' had access to these. A common denominator between the 'rich' and 'very rich' categories was the ability to save money. The San regarded less than onetenth (7%) of their households as 'rich', and one quarter as 'middle' (neither 'rich' nor 'poor'). The San regarded most of the Kwanyama households as 'very rich', many as 'rich' and a few as 'poor'.

Research site	Very poor	Poor	Middle	Rich	Very rich
Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	5	1	10	4 (working)	0
Ekoka Resettlement Project	0	16	10	0	0
Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	0	3	3	0	0
Onane village	0	8	0	1 (Kwanyama headman)	0
Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)	0	26	0	0	0
Omukukutu village	5	8	1	2 (war veterans)	0
Total	10	62	24	7	0

Table 7.6: Numbers of San households per wealth category in Ohangwena Region*

* Total = 103 households

No San household at any site was regarded as 'very rich'. On the other hand, at four sites no San household was regarded as 'very poor'. At four of the six sites, most San were categorised as 'poor', the exceptions being Ouholamo where most were placed in the 'middle' category, and Oshikoha where the numbers of 'middle' and 'poor' households were the same.

The wealth-ranking exercises alone made evident the fact that the !Xun and Hai||om were the most marginalised groups at these sites in Ohangwena – a finding reinforced by other literature (e.g. NPC 2003b: 17).

Most of these San communities could mention other San communities who were either better off or worse off than themselves – although their perceptions were not necessarily valid as to some extent they were influenced by assumptions. Following are examples:

- The !Xun and Hai||om at Ekoka Resettlement Project classified themselves as 'poor' relative to those at the four resettlement projects around Okongo, because the latter were provided with houses, crop fields, agricultural equipment (e.g. tractors), water points, diesel, community centres, kindergartens and training in various income-generating activities. The San at the other four sites also regarded the Okongo San as better off than themselves for the same reason.
- The !Xun in Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo) regarded themselves as worse off than the San at the other five sites and San in other communities in their vicinity because they had very little, and they lived in *omapundos* and none of their children went to school.
- Little was know of the !Xun in Onane village, but it was generally assumed that they were worse off than San at the other five sites because their children did not go to school and Onane was situated deep in the bush.



As far as social mobility is concerned, very few San in Ohangwena had managed to improve their standard of living – meaning very few had managed to climb the social ladder from being 'poor' to 'middle', let alone 'rich' or 'very rich'. Those who had managed to improve their standard of living to some degree had done so primarily because they had reached the age of eligibility for the Old Age Pension, or were eligible for the War Veteran Pension. The San in Ouholamo, Ekoka, Onane, Omiishi and Omukukutu believed that many of the !Xun and Hai||om in Oshikoha and the other resettlement projects around Okongo had improved their standard of living – moved from being 'very poor' or 'poor' to being 'middle class' – because of the external support that they had received. In Onane village, participants stated that San women could achieve upward social mobility if they married a Kwanyama man, but many !Xun, including those in Onane, could not envisage moving up the social ladder at all without external support. Some San in Omukukutu village could imagine some improvement in their living standards if their children could complete secondary school or even tertiary education and then find employment.

7.4.2 Access to land

The San at all six sites claimed that they were the first inhabitants of the land on which they currently live, although now this land 'belongs to the Kwanyama people', and the !Xun and Hai||om merely live on it – i.e. at the four resettlement projects around Okongo, or on a piece of communal land where they had put up informal housing structures and could access veldfood when needed. Land tenure for San in Ohangwena Region therefore takes different forms:

1) A **settlement or neighbourhood** specifically established to provide housing or shelter for the !Xun. Ouholamo is an example of such a settlement/neighbourhood; this is where the !Xun from Eenhana were provided with shelter with assistance from the AGDN and the regional and municipal authorities, and with financial support from donors such as UNESCO and HERO.

- 2) **Group resettlement projects**, in which a group of !Xun and/or Hai||om were originally resettled by ELCIN in the 1960s, were taken over by the Namibian Government in 1996. One additional resettlement project was established between 2000 and 2004, i.e. Oshanashiwa, located 7 km from Okongo, for resettling marginalised !Xun who spent their time in shebeens in Okongo, to give them an opportunity to engage in productive farming activities. The !Xun and Hai||om at these projects jointly share access to a piece of fenced-off land which was communal land before ELCIN's arrival in the area. The project land areas currently vary from 26 ha (Eendobe) to 36 ha (Onamatadiva) and 55 ha (Oshanashiwa). The area allocated to Ekoka Resettlement Project is much larger at 500-600 ha, but at the time of our research it was not fenced off or otherwise demarcated, and encroachment by other farmers was underway.¹⁹ !Xun and Hai||om farmers at these projects received agricultural support from the DRFN (with financial support from the MLR) for cultivating crop fields. The MLR had also constructed houses for the project beneficiaries at Ekoka, Oshanashiwa and Eendobe. At the time of our visit only six houses had been built at Onamatadiva, but there were plans for building more houses there in the 2013/14 financial year.²⁰
- 3) Land comprising a **community forest or a conservancy** (or both), which is subject to relevant regulations. Oshikoha village has this form of land tenure.
- 4) **Communal land** allocated to San by village headmen to either build homesteads as a group of families or construct individual homesteads. Examples are Onane and Omukukutu villages, and Omiishi neighbourhood near Omundaungilo settlement.

At all six sites in Ohangwena, the San were neighbours of Kwanyama families. The San provided labour for the cultivation of Kwanyama farmers' crop fields, built or thatched Kwanyama houses, and carried out domestic chores for Kwanyama households in return for some money – but more often *omahangu* and occasionally some meat. In recent years, payment for work undertaken by the San for the neighbouring farmers has increasingly taken the form of in-kind payments, e.g. the payment is made at the local cuca shop in the form of jugs of *otombo*. Under such circumstances it might be said that we found the San living in servitude to their neighbours.

The San at Ekoka Resettlement Project, and the San at the resettlement projects around Okongo, were confident that the land on which they now lived was theirs, and that they had full ownership. However, none of them could provide any written documentation to such effect, thus they did not appear to have the title deeds required for claiming authority over the land and for prohibiting others from moving onto the land – which had happened in some of the larger projects such as Ekoka, and to a lesser extent Oshanashiwa. Concerns about encroachment by neighbouring farmers were specifically raised at Ekoka, and !Xun and Hai||om at the Eendobe and Onamatadiva projects also claimed that their land rights were not respected by some neighbouring farmers, as they walked through the San's fields without asking, and allowed their cattle to roam on the San land, and took water from the solar pumps established within the boundaries of the projects without contributing anything in return. The MLR mapped the Ekoka Resettlement Project in 2004, and demarcated

¹⁹ According to MLR staff, beacons were placed at the four corner posts in 2004, but they disappeared over time. Some time after our visit to this project, the MLR placed new beacons to mark the corners of the project area, but there is still no boundary fence; only the crop fields have been fenced off. In the absence of a boundary fence, and with the small number of beacons (on the ground in the forest), it is difficult to gauge where the project area begins or ends.

²⁰ In addition, the !Xun and Hai||om at these resettlement projects received training in craft production; support for agricultural activities (equipment and other inputs); training in community organisation and local leadership; support for water infrastructure development; and food aid from the OPM's SDP.

the corner posts of the project area with four beacons. Nevertheless, the local headman continued to allocate fields within the project area to local (Kwanyama) farmers. Over the years the local !Xun and Hai||om have raised concerns about Kwanyama people gradually encroaching onto the land designated for the resettlement project, with little effect so far. (During our discussions at Ekoka, an example was cited of a Kwanyama family who did not want to vacate the land until the then Minister of Lands and Resettlement, Hifikepunye Pohamba, visited the area and instructed the family to move.)²¹ As the encroachment of non-San farmers onto San resettlement projects such as Ekoka has not been halted, this poses a serious challenge to the sustainability of these projects (Mouton 2011: 57).

San living in the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy – such as those in Oshikoha, Omauni, Okanyandi 1, Okanyandi 2 and Omandi villages – had occupation rights as they were registered members of the Community Forest and Conservancy and thus had identical rights to those held by other ethnic groups in the area. Due to the prevailing lack of agricultural equipment, San had not requested farmland for crop-farming purposes, but they did have access to other resources, such as firewood and veldfood, by virtue of the project by-laws.

All headmen noted (and San participants agreed) that San people could get access to farmland if they requested it. Most San had not requested such land from any village headmen because either they did not have the agricultural tools and cattle necessary to cultivate the land, or they lacked the motivation to cultivate. In addition, concerns were raised by the San that the "leftover" land in many villages was infertile, as all fertile land had already been allocated to Kwanyama farmers.

The chief or traditional authority (TA) of a traditional community has the primary power to allocate up to 20 ha of land under customary land rights, and this power can be delegated to village headmen in terms of customary law – although the local land board has to ratify such allocations. New occupants are often asked for a once-off payment for customary land rights, as well as a small amount every year, but requests for such payments are actually illegal under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 (LEAD (LAC) Advocacy Unit and Namibian National Farmers Union (NNFU) 2009: 20-23; 52-53).

Many San acknowledged and accepted that much of the land on which they had lived autonomously in the distant past is occupied by Kwanyama people today, thus this land appears to belong to the latter. For this reason, the San had lost all hope that the land would ever be theirs again.

7.4.3 Identity, culture and heritage

The majority of people in Ohangwena Region speak Oshikwanyama (followed by Oshindonga), and the San have adapted, with many speaking fluent Oshikwanyama today. Different authors refer to the different San languages spoken in Ohangwena in different ways:

- The National Planning Commission (NPC 2003b: 15) noted that the San languages in use there are !Xulu (also known as Oongongolo) and !Xun (commonly known as Kwagga).
- According to Ayisa et al. (2002: 9), the San around Okongo belong to !Xun-speaking San groups, namely the !Xulu (or Oongongolo in Oshikwanyama) and the Kum' (read Kunm) (or Kwagga in Oshikwanyama), the !Xulu being the larger of these two sub-groups. However, whether the Kum' (Kwagga) are speakers of !Xun rather than Hai||om is debatable.

²¹ The site to which this family was moved, though not close to the centre of the resettlement project where the family wanted to establish a new homestead and crop field, is still within the designated boundaries of the project.

- Gordon and Douglas (2000: 7) refer to the Hai||om in the north-central part of Ohangwena as Xwaga (which is probably the same as Kwagga). This categorisation was confirmed in small group discussions at Onamatadiva and Oshanashiwa, with participants referring to residents of the four resettlement projects as Hai||om (commonly referred to as Kwagga) and !Xun (commonly referred to as Oshingongolo) (Mouton 2011: 3).
- Pakleppa (2005: 8) noted that most San in the area are either !Xun or Hai||om speakers, the majority being !Xun.
- Nakale (2007: 7) backed up the latter findings. According to her, the Kwanyama around Okongo refer to San and to other people who speak 'a click language' as Ovakwanghala generally, and they refer to the Hai||om specifically as Ovaxwaga (Xwaga) and to the !Xun as Ovangongolo.

Except for the !Xun in Ouholamo, all discussion participants at the Ohangwena research sites spoke !Xun, and also referred to themselves as !Xun, which means 'human being'. The !Xun in Ouholamo confirmed that they were !Xun, but said that they spoke Nh!u Ntali.²² At Ekoka Resettlement Project, participants reported that some San residents spoke ‡Akhoe Hai||om. Apart from those in Ouholamo, most participants considered it important to teach their children !Xun for the sake of preserving the language. Older !Xun-speaking participants in the discussions mentioned that they sometimes found it difficult to follow the Kwanyama language.

Asked how they would like to be referred to as a people, participants at all six sites mentioned '!Xun', 'Kwangara' and 'Oongongolo' as appropriate terms. However, it was noted that although the term 'Kwangara' can mean 'people who speak a click language' (this was said in Ouholamo), it is normally interpreted as 'people who cannot save anything' (this was said at all six sites). Due to this derogatory interpretation, most participants at all six sites did not like the term 'Kwangara'.²³ However, Nakale (2007: 13) explains that originally this term did not necessarily have negative connotations.²⁴

Summary of the discussion on San identity at Ekoka Resettlement Project

The participants were divided with regard to what they would like to be called as a people. Some wanted to be called !Xun, and others did not mind being called 'Kwangara' – a term with possibly negative connotations – firstly because they knew that they were 'Kwangara', and secondly because the terms 'Kwanyama' and 'Oshilumbu' are used when referring to an Owambo and white person respectively, so referring to a San person as a 'Kwangara' should not be a problem. Those who did not like being called 'Kwangara' explained that this word can be interpreted as meaning 'those who cannot work or save' or 'lazy people'.

Most participants at the six sites did not like the term 'Bushman' either, because they no longer lived in the bush. They also did not use the word 'San' in referring to themselves, but the discussions did not clarify whether the latter term was liked, disliked or 'acceptable'.

²² Spelling possibly incorrect.

²³ Other translations of this term (mentioned in Chapter 8 on Omusati Region) include 'feckless', 'adrift', 'those who do not think of tomorrow', 'those who neither have nor own anything' and 'people who live in the bush'.

²⁴ Nakale (2007: 13) explains that the term 'Kwangara' (or 'Kwankala') stemmed from the word Ovakwangala, which in turn stemmed from the name of an animal that the San used to hunt: because the animal's name included a 'click', the Owambo people could not pronounce it correctly and thus changed it to 'Nghala', with the result that Owambo people initially referred to the San as 'Ovakwa-nghala' or 'Kwankala', which simply means 'those of Nghala' or 'those who hunt Nghala'. Further, Nakale explains that in other people's opinion, 'onghala' was a colour, i.e. light brown, thus to some people the term 'Ovakwangala' meant 'the light brown ones'.

Many of the cultural practices that are commonly regarded as part of San tradition were no longer practised in Ohangwena due to the San there becoming more and more accustomed to Kwanyama culture. A group of Jul'hoansi from Tsumkwe had visited some resettlement projects in Okongo Constituency in 2011, where they performed traditional dances and other cultural practices which were totally unfamiliar to the Ohangwena San.²⁵ One cultural tradition that the Ohangwena San still practised and taught to their children was the gathering of veldfood. They no longer hunted because hunting is now illegal, but they did still teach the younger generations how to make hunting weapons (e.g. bows, arrows and knives).

All of the !Xun and Hai||om have Oshikwanyama names and surnames, or what is commonly referred to as 'baptised names'. These are the names written on their identification documents, and they do not use !Xun or Hai||om names and surnames any longer. We found a similar situation in Omusati Region where the San have been integrated into the Owambo culture to a large extent.

Table 7.7 shows that the main cultural characteristics of the San were similar across the six sites. The exception in this regard was housing: the San houses in Omukukutu village resembled those of the Kwanyama – including cultural seating places (e.g. *olupale*²⁶) within homesteads; and the San in Ouholamo neighbourhood and at Ekoka Resettlement Project had brick houses.

Cultural characteristic	Knowledge	Practised	Taught to children
Main language (except Ouholamo)	!Xun and Hai om	Yes	Yes
Hunting	Yes Only some San in one village		No
Gathering veldfood	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dancing	No	No	No
Traditional house construction	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 7.7: Cultural characteristics of the San at the Ohangwena research sites

7.4.4 Relations with other groups

The types of relationships between the Kwanyama (Ohangwena's majority population) and the San (!Xun and Hai||om) are wide-ranging: employer-employee, sexual and 'romantic' partners, spouses, fellow villagers, fellow *otombo* drinkers, fellow committee members, etc.

In the region's socio-political setup, relationships with Kwanyama people were essential for !Xun and Hai||om people; a matter of survival. This is because Kwanyama people provided piecework, food, transportation, communication, leadership, support for funerals and weddings, and assistance in times of crises. However, the !Xun and Hai||om were undoubtedly in a subordinate position at all levels. Many Kwanyama people treated !Xun and Hai||om people as one would treat children; as people who did not know much and/or could not take care of themselves. According to the !Xun and Hai||om themselves, they were looked upon as drunks, in constant need and dependent on the Kwanyama for their survival: they were usually talked *to*, not *with*. Discussion participants even indicated that they were sometimes treated like dogs: San participants in an informal discussion mentioned that Kwanyama people sometimes said to San people, "Voetsek you Kwangara!" (*voetsek* being an Afrikaans term meaning 'go away', or more crudely, 'get lost' – usually yelled at dogs).

²⁵ Personal communication from Mr Aromo and Ms Estella Levi, interviewed in their capacities as Oshanashiwa community mobilisers in October 2011.

²⁶ A traditional seating arrangement when visitors enter an Owambo homestead.

Unequal power relations were exacerbated by the fact that !Xun and Hai||om were living under the Kwanyama Traditional Authority (TA), with no TA of their own. They did not have political and traditional structures which they might have utilised to facilitate their development, thus they had to adhere to the structures of the Kwanyama communities in which they found themselves living. Even in cases where the San had a leader, a representative of the Kwanyama TA was normally selected to oversee the decisions made by the San leader. A situation that arose in Omiishi neighbourhood illustrates this: the !Xun headman and !Xun people were hesitant to meet with the research team until a representative of the Kwanyama TA gave them the go-ahead.

As mentioned in the section on livelihoods in this chapter, !Xun and Hai||om participants raised their concern that they were discriminated against in relation to job applications. Their chances of being employed when competing for a job against a Kwanyama person with the same skills were said to be zero, because in this region the Kwanyama tended to be the ones in charge of employing others. It was said that !Xun and Hai||om people had lost hope of finding full-time jobs. Some discussion participants indicated that the only way to escape this situation was for their children to complete secondary school successfully and to then study further.

'Romantic' and sexual relations between San and Kwanyama people were complicated. It was said that Kwanyama women would not have 'romantic' or sexual relations with !Xun and Hai||om men because the latter did not have "much to offer". Kwanyama men, on the other hand, seemed to engage in sexual relations with !Xun and Hai||om women, but tended not to marry them or form 'romantic' partnerships with them, mainly because in their view the women were "not equal to" the Kwanyama. Generally, Kwanyama men who impregnated a San woman would not accept the same paternal responsibilities as they did when they impregnated a Kwanyama woman: traditionally, a Kwanyama man who impregnated a Kwanyama woman out of wedlock had to make a financial contribution and take care of the child, but this did not happen when the pregnant woman was San, and in most cases continued financial support was out of the question. In nearly all cases of sexual encounters between Kwanyama men and !Xun or Hai||om women resulting in pregnancy, the child was left with the mother and her family, and the Kwanyama father would seldom contribute, if at all, to raising the child. Children born from such inter-ethnic sexual relationships were referred to as "San children" or "mixed children", but not as "Kwanyama children".

It was rare to hear of a marriage between a Kwanyama man and a San woman – the research team heard of only one, being the marriage of the Kwanyama headman of Onane village to a San woman – and a marriage between a Kwanyama woman and a San man was said to be 'unheard of'. Another San woman in Ohangwena was married to a Caprivian man, and this was the only other example of such a marriage cited in this region.

Another example of the unequal power relations and the level of poverty of the San in Ohangwena was the practice of fostering children: reportedly it was common practice across this region for !Xun and Hai||om children (with both parents being !Xun or Hai||om) to be taken away by Kwanyama families to be educated or to work for these families. Some !Xun families had given away one child, and others had given away as many as four children. The San parents hoped that the foster families would be able to provide better care for the children than they could provide. Examples were cited of children living with Kwanyama families who were well care for and doing well in school, and who regularly visited their biological parents. However, many children who were given away had never been seen again. Parents who had not seen their children in a long time were uncertain of what procedures they could follow to find their children. None of these parents had reported their case to the police, because they had consented to their children being taken away in the first place, and/or they did not have resources to search for the children subsequently, and/or some of the

children had already reached adulthood. In connection with this fostering practice, Dirkx and Ayisa (2007: 22) noted that some of the affected !Xun and Hai||om parents suspected that families who took a !Xun or Hai||om child into foster care would purposefully register the child as an orphan or as a person whose father/mother was unknown so that the foster family could receive the state foster care or maintenance grant. (MLR officials whom we interviewed in Ohangwena also suspected this.)²⁷

7.4.5 Education

Of all the San adults who attended the discussions in five of the six sites, and their children, 43% had never attended school and 57% had attended school at some stage. This reflects a much worse situation than the regional statistics reflect, i.e 11% of all adults in Ohangwena had never attended any school but 70% had completed some form of education. What is also worrying is that the !Xun and Hai||om who attended school had dropped out prematurely. Of the discussion participants who had attended school, the majority (81%) had dropped out before completing primary school, and the remaining 19% had dropped out in Grade 8. It appears that most members of the younger generation of !Xun and Hai||om (those aged 28 years or younger) completed primary school and commenced with secondary school, but dropped out in Grade 8, whereas the older people had dropped out before reaching Grade 7. Table 7.8 summarises the school-attendance situation at each of the six research sites.

Level/ institution	Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	Ekoka Resettlement Project	Omukukutu village	Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy	Onane village	Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)
ECD centre	Most children	Most children	Not available	Not available	Not available	Some children
Primary or combined school	Most children attend but completion is rare	Most children attend but completion is rare	Most children attend but completion of primary school is rare	None	None except the children living with Kwanyama families	None
Secondary school	Very few children	Very few	Very few	None	None except the children living with Kwanyama families	None
Tertiary education	None	None	None	None	None	None

Table 7.8: School attendance by site	Table	7.8:	School	attendance	by site
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There are Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres at the Onamatadiva, Ekoka and Eendobe Resettlement Projects, and in the settlement of Omundaungilo and other main villages. Most ECD centres are community-driven, but those at the three San resettlement projects around Okongo and in Ouholamo were overseen by the AGDN with support from UNESCO – the latter initiated this support in 2004/05, with the Ohangwena Regional Council coordinating the support and the AGDN overseeing the day-to-day running of the centres. In 2007, AECID provided a grant through the DRFN for the installation of solar equipment, television sets and computers at the three ECD centres in villages around Okongo, and in 2009 and 2010 a temporary partnership was formed between UNESCO, the Ohangwena Regional Council, the OPM and the DRFN's LIPROSAN

²⁷ There is an urgent need for a study on the prevalence and consequences of this practice of fostering San children.



project to jointly render support to these centres and the centre in Ouholamo. This support covered allowances for caretakers, the costs of cleaning and basic maintenance, and a feeding scheme. In recent years, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) and the OPM (through an OPM staff member attached to the regional council) have formally taken over from UNESCO in supporting the ECD centres. These institutions pay the salaries of support staff, but there is an infrastructure-maintenance backlog at the centres in Ouholamo and the three San resettlement projects around Okongo, and the feeding scheme relies on food aid from the OPM's SDP. To address the maintenance backlog, in June 2013 UNESCO asked the DRFN to subcontract a builder to renovate the three ECD centres in the San resettlement projects.

As Table 7.8 indicates, apart from a few San children from Onane who were living with Kwanyama families, none of the San children at three of the research sites enrolled in primary school, whereas most children at the other three sites did enrol in primary school. Two of the sites where most !Xun and Hai||om children enrolled in primary school had an ECD centre, but on the other hand, many children had enrolled in primary school in Omukukutu which did not have an ECD centre, and no children had enrolled in primary school at Omiishi which did have an ECD centre. Very few San children at these sites completed their primary schooling, and even fewer proceeded to secondary school. Of the six sites, only Ouholamo (Eenhana) had a secondary school nearby, and even this school was a few kilometres away from the village. All San children attending secondary school (including those in Ouholamo) lived in hostels or with Kwanyama families – and reportedly none of them were required to pay school fees for secondary schooling, nor hostel fees. However, most of those who progressed to secondary school dropped out in the first or second year, and no San child had completed secondary school in the past few years.

Apart from a !Xun man who became a teacher at Ekoka, a female student at UNAM and a young man from Oshanashiwa Resettlement Project who obtained an administrative qualification at Valombola Vocational Training Centre in Ondangwa, none of the !Xun or Hai||om at the Ohangwena research sites had attended any tertiary education/training institution – the main reason being that none of them had successfully completed secondary school.

It appears that serious challenges will have to be addressed to keep San children in school, three of these being distances to schools, accommodation for learners and the costs of schooling. Most children of Ouholamo, Ekoka and Omukukutu went to primary school, and most of those who

progressed to secondary school lived with non-San families or in hostels rather than with their San parents. Several key respondents in our study deemed this a good 'catch-all' strategy for keeping children in secondary school, for three main reasons: (a) many San parents do not play an active role in their children's education; (2) long distances to secondary schools would otherwise preclude San children's attendance; and (3) since payment for secondary school was unaffordable for San parents, it was opportune that Kwanyama families with whom the San children resided paid the school fees for them. Those residing in hostels were either not required to pay hostel fees, or their fees were covered by the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA) or the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Table 7.9 summarises key factors that influenced the education of San children at the six sites at the time of the field research.

Research site	Distance to primary school	School fees (de facto)	Reasons for dropping out	Importance of education to parents
Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	Less than 3 km	None	 Late school entry Teenage pregnancy and/or early marriage Parents' drinking habits Bullying by some learners and teachers Children or parents do not see the importance of education Livestock herding and other work Do not know 	Not important
Ekoka Resettlement Project	Less than 400 m	None	 Bullying by some learners and teachers Medium of instruction Parents' drinking habits Lack of school materials 	Partially important
Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	Around 7 km	None	 Falling ill and not returning to school Needing to support family with food collection, herding etc. Teenage pregnancy Distance to school Children or parents do not see the importance of education Do not know 	 Not important because none of the children attended school. Important because it enables one to get a job (e.g. as a nurse or teacher)
Onane village	Around 7 km	None	 Distance Not knowing people close to the school who can care for the child 	Only important because Kwanyama said so
Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)	Within 200 m	None	 None of the children have started school 	Not important
Omukukutu village	Within 200 m	None	 Teenage pregnancy and/or getting married at young age Herding cattle Late entry into Grade 1; age difference (older than classmates) No money for school fees Do not want to attend any longer Lack a school uniform and/or shoes 	Important to some, but others disagreed

"It is important to know how to read and write so that when one sees a stop sign on the road, one would know to stop."

- Discussion participant in Omukukutu village

Other operational challenges included the medium of instruction, a lack of study materials and/ or a school uniform and/or shoes, and limited security at school hostels – the latter was cited at Ekoka Resettlement Project. For learners in primary schools, school fees were usually not requested from San learners/parents (also before January 2013 when the obligation to contribute to the School Development Fund was abolished in all public primary schools). However, other education-related costs, such as the costs of a uniform, shoes and books, still posed a financial challenge, if a lesser one than secondary schooling posed. Distance to school was considered to be a lesser challenge than those of teenage pregnancy, bullying by fellow learners and negative attitudes from teachers.

At Ekoka Resettlement Project, serious concerns were raised about the lack of security at the school hostel and the absence of a hostel matron. !Xun and Hai||om parents explained that certain males who frequented local shebeens would try to go to the hostel to have sex with the schoolgirls – mostly boys who no longer attended school, but allegedly some schoolboys residing in the hostel also visited shebeens. These males tended to disturb the hostel children even if they did not sexually harass girls there. Although teachers took care of the hostel during the day, there was no supervision at night. Given these complaints, the !Xun and Hai||om parents were of the opinion that there was an urgent need for improving security at the local hostel.

A lack of parental involvement also contributed to low levels of enrolment as well as learners' failure to progress in both primary and secondary school. In relation to the observed lack of progress of !Xun and Hai||om children in the education system, the following two questions are key:

- What is the role of San parents in the education of their children?
- To what extent is the current type of mainstream education relevant to the lives of !Xun and Hai||om children?

Since education was considered important, and was free of charge, and there were amenities close to some of the places where the !Xun and Hai||om lived, one might assume that the children at these places, at least, would attend school, but most did not attend even if these basic conditions were met. Participants in Onane village found it difficult to articulate the importance of formal education; they only said that, "Education is important because the Kwanyama said it is." Although !Xun parents in Omiishi did not send their children to school, discussion participants there did deem education important. Asked to articulate *why* they regarded education as important, participants only said that it was important for their children to go to school because they would get an education there. Thus, our discussions with !Xun and Hai||om parents generally proved that it was very difficult for them to explain why education was important for their children. Our discussions brought to the fore the following factors concerning parents' role in their children's education:

- Parents leave it to their children to decide whether or not to enrol and attend school.
- Most parents do not reprimand children when they fail to attend school.
- Most parents do not encourage children to stay in school.
- Most parents do not attend teacher-parent meetings.
- Many parents spend most of their time at cuca shops drinking otombo.
- Many parents take their school-age children to local cuca shops to drink *otombo*.
- Sometimes, parents would rather have their children do household chores than attend school.
- Parents do not encourage their children to do homework.
- Parents cannot afford to buy study materials for their children.
- There are very few role models of educated San for the !Xun and Hai||om youth.
- Most parents did not go to school, hence many do not make the connection between better education and good jobs, especially since few !Xun and Hai||om children in Ohangwena progress sufficiently far in the education system to obtain jobs after completing school and if they do so, they might face prejudice or discrimination when applying for jobs.

Some of the factors listed above are related to traditional San socialisation practices. First of all, San in general strongly emphasise the importance of personal autonomy and free will, thus they would not apply disciplinary measures if children are reluctant to go to school (see Chapter 16 on education). Secondly, in the past, learning happened through practical experience and not in a formal classroom setting. Bothas and Longden shed more light on this issue:

"San children have only been able to access formal education during the last two decades and attending educational institutions is in general an enormous culture shock for many of them. San children are not used to formal classroom methods of schooling, rather, they are used to being fully integrated within all aspects of community life and are used to being regarded as equals to the adults." (Bothas and Longden (no date): 1)

Furthermore, many discussion participants had not seen a San person formally employed, thus for them there was no clear link between education levels and employment opportunities. However, some parents at Ekoka Resettlement Project and in Omukukutu village – two of the three places where !Xun and Hai||om children were attending primary school – did link higher education levels with job opportunities. Table 7.10 shows that participants at the three sites where children were not enrolled in primary school could not make a connection between higher educational levels and jobs.

 Table 7.10: Jobs that require a secondary school diploma – responses from San in Ohangwena (The cell shading indicates that a secondary school diploma would be needed for the job.)

Jobs	Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	Ekoka Resettlement Project	Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	Onane village	Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)	Omukukutu village
Government jobs						
Nurse						
Teacher						
Pilot						
Astronaut						
Soldier (NDF)						
Builder						
Farmer						
Office cleaner						
Shop/bar (cuca shop)						
Doctor						
Police officer						

It might also be assumed that the level of alcohol abuse in Ohangwena Region (see below) might have an impact on the involvement of parents in the school attendance of their children.

7.4.6 Health

Table 7.11 summarises the main health issues at each of the six Ohangwena research sites in respect of the main illnesses experienced by adults and children, access to health services, use of traditional medicine, delivery of babies, alcohol abuse, violence, and external support for healthcare.

Cata	Outed	Else I	O-I-II I	0	0	
Category	Ouholamo	Ekoka	Oshikoha	Onane	Omiishi	Omukukutu
Main diseases (according to participants)	• TB • HIV/AIDS • STIs	TBHIV/AIDSMalaria	 TB HIV/AIDS Malaria Polio 	 TB HIV/AIDS STIs Malaria Polio 	• TB • HIV/AIDS • STIs	 TB Leg pain Swollen body
Main illnesses for children	Not mentioned	 Acute respiratory infection Diarrhoea 	 Diarrhoea Malaria Oshido (fever see table next page) Flu 	 Diarrhoea Vomiting Anaemia 	 Coughing Diarrhoea Lack of immunisation 	 Eye illness Chicken pox Pimples on body
Access to health services	Within 2 kmMust pay	Within 500 mNo payment	● 55 km● No payment	● 50 km● No payment	● 1 km ● Must pay	● 60 km ● Must pay
Ambulance/ transport	 Clinic nearby, but does not deal with emergencies. No access to ambulance; lack means of transport to nearest district hospital 	available, but lack	No ambulance; lack means of transport to nearest health facility	No ambulance; lack means of transport to nearest health facility	Sometimes ambulance from Eenhana District Hospital	No ambulance; lack means of transport to nearest health facility
Traditional medicine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Delivery of babies (births)	Mostly at clinic nearby	At home	At home	At home	At home	At home
Alcohol and violence	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur 	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur 	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur 	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur 	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur 	 Almost all drink otombo Domestic and gender- based violence occur
Alcohol and children	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo	Children over breastfeeding age drink otombo
External health support	NRCS	NRCS	NRCS	None	NRCS	NRCS

Table 7.11: Summary of health issues at the Ohangwena research sites

Main illnesses

Most discussion participants at the Ohangwena sites, apart from Omiishi, could easily name and describe illnesses that commonly occurred in their communities. The situation in Omiishi differed in that the !Xun there received treatment at the Omundaungilo clinic, but were rarely told what they were suffering from; they were told only if the nurse considered the problem to be serious (e.g. if TB, malaria or high blood pressure was suspected/diagnosed, or if backache or leg ache was thought/found to be a symptom of a serious illness). At all six sites, the most common illnesses that participants regarded as serious and life-threatening were TB, HIV/AIDS, malaria and STIs.

Most participants could speak informatively about the causes, prevention and treatment of TB. One male !Xun participant mentioned that one of the main challenges in adhering to TB treatment was the drinking habit of !Xun patients: most of them would continue drinking despite being aware of the dangers of doing so while suffering from TB.

"I was treated for TB before and felt better within six months, and could start drinking *otombo* again." – Discussion participant in Ouholamo (Eenhana)

HIV and AIDS were regarded as serious diseases because reportedly they had caused the deaths of many San in Ohangwena. Discussion participants at all six sites, as well as other stakeholders in our study, raised their concern that Kwanyama men were targeting San women for sexual relationships because of their belief that San women were not infected with HIV. Another concern raised at all six sites was that of San women being impregnated by Kwanyama men – which was evidence that unprotected sex had taken place. The discussion participants said that the current HIV-prevalence rate among the !Xun and Hai||om was low, but the prevalence rate among adult pregnant women at the Eenhana District Hospital was at a high of 18.6% in 2010 (Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) 2010a: 26). All told, it seems that the risk of Kwanyama men infecting San women, and San women in turn infecting San men, remains high. Furthermore, stigma and discrimination, inter-relationship violence and the isolation of certain San communities allegedly prevented many !Xun and Hai||om adults from going for HIV testing.

At four sites – Omiishi and Onane being the exceptions – most discussion participants knew how malaria is transmitted and how to prevent it. The !Xun in Omiishi said that malaria is caused by "having too much air in the stomach" or "[eating] bad food"; none of these participants connected malaria to mosquitoes. Female participants in Omiishi did not mention any symptoms, whereas male participants said that a person with malaria gets tired quickly, feels cold and has no energy. The participants in Onane also did not know how malaria is transmitted, but they did mention that the government had given one San woman a mosquito net to protect herself from infection.

STIs were mentioned by both male and female participants in Ouholamo, Onane and Omiishi, but not at the other three sites. Male participants in Ouholamo felt that STIs were more of a problem among women, and female participants felt that they were more of a problem among men. Women were concerned that men were reluctant to go for STI testing, and men were concerned that women slept around for money and got infected as a result.

Other illnesses that participants regarded as serious but not life-threatening, and illnesses that they did not regard as serious, are listed in Table 7.12.

lable 7.12: Status of illnesses base	d on participants	opinions at the Ohangwena research sites

Illnesses that are serious but not life-threatening	Illnesses that are not serious but occur frequently
Coughing	Oshidu*
Chicken pox	Swollen feet, leg pain and other body aches
Eye sickness	Flu
Back and neck pain	
Below	

* This was described as 24-hour fever that occurred during winter, but it could also occur if a person ate undercooked food.

Main illnesses among children

According to discussion participants, the main illnesses experienced by children were coughing and diarrhoea. Coughing was said to be caused mainly by the constant inhalation of smoke when sitting around the fire, and also to some extent by inhaling smoke when parents smoked tobacco.

A nurse confirmed that Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) was common among !Xun and Hai||om children due to their constant exposure to smoke. Several mothers reported that some children fell ill during the period of breastfeeding, and some had even died of unknown causes during this period. Mothers also indicated that some children did not grow properly even if breastfed for six months. Some pregnant women reportedly got sores on their arms, but participants did not seem to know what this illness was and what caused it. Malnutrition was not mentioned as a concern, but we saw children with bloated stomachs in villages such as Onane, thus malnutrition among children might be quite common. Children tended to be taken to health facilities when they needed to be vaccinated, and almost all San children were said to have been vaccinated.

Pregnancy

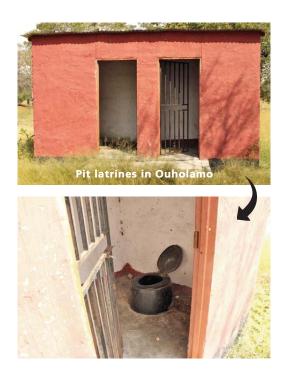
Pregnant San women usually gave birth at home. At remote research sites concerns were raised about the health of pregnant women as there were no healthcare specialists nearby to administer ante-natal checkups and post-natal and maternal care. At a couple of the more remote sites, there was a sense of hopelessness among !Xun and Hai||om women because they received attention only after giving birth, when the mobile clinic visited (once a month) or when the new mother was sufficiently strong to make the journey to the nearest health facility (and could afford to do so).

Sanitation facilities

The lack of sanitation facilities was a concern at all six sites, i.e. including Ouholamo and Ekoka Resettlement Project where there were pit latrines. Using the bush was regarded as unhygienic due to flies and limited options for handwashing. Some participants complained of a shortage of money to buy soap for personal use and washing clothes, and this was said to be a factor that contributed to poor hygiene and health.

Alcohol abuse and violence

As described in the section on food security, there was an exceptionally high rate of *otombo* consumption among adults as well as children at the Ohangwena research sites, and this had serious health and social consequences. Acts of physical violence between men and men and between men and women were regarded



as a serious problem at all six sites, and at other sites visited in 2010 as part of the evaluation of a support programme targeting the San resettlement projects of Ekoka, Onamatadiva, Oshanashiwa and Eendobe.²⁸ Verbal and physical fights were associated mainly with alcohol abuse. The most common acts of violence included stabbing, axing, and shooting people with arrows. These types of fights were usually solved among community members themselves, as officials did not seem to be interested in addressing them. Allegedly the headman would tell those involved in quarrels to go home and sleep, and the police would tell the injured to go to hospital for treatment. Elderly villagers did not get involved in solving violent physical conflicts as they could be hurt in the process.

²⁸ The resettlement projects in Ohangwena were visited as part of an external evaluation of the DRFN's LIPROSAN project (Mouton 2011). Some of the evaluation findings were relevant to this San Study.

Discussion participants at various research sites considered domestic and gender-based violence to be a problem in their communities. In an all-female discussion in Ouholamo, gender-based violence was mentioned as a serious concern, but details were not forthcoming as the older women asked the younger women not to talk about the issue, and there seemed to be some fear about discussing it. In Omukukutu the research team had to stop the discussion about domestic violence as it provoked a heated exchange between a husband and wife. It was clear that violence is a common phenomenon in the !Xun and Hai||om communities in Ohangwena, and excessive alcohol consumption was one major contributing factor, but the degree of violence must be seen in a broader context, because in all likelihood, poverty, inequality, power dynamics and marginalisation also contribute to violent behaviour in these communities: where hopelessness and frustration are generated by these four factors and coincide with regular drinking, misunderstandings between people are common and anger and violence are the likely results.

Access to health facilities

As Table 7.11 shows, the distance of the research sites to health facilities varied considerably. Three sites, namely Ouholamo, Ekoka Resettlement Project and Omiishi, were within 2 km of the closest facility, whereas the other three were very far from the closest facility: Onane is 45 km from Okongo; Oshikoha is 55 km from Okongo; and Omukukutu is 60 km from Eenhana. These remote villages were supposed to be visited by mobile clinics on a monthly basis, but sometimes the visits were less frequent.²⁹

San at the latter sites would visit the mobile clinic but it was said that such clinics could only treat ailments such as headaches, backaches and infected wounds. Patients with more serious conditions were advised to visit (or were specifically referred to) the Okongo or Eenhana District Hospitals.

Due to the distances, transporting sick people was considered a major problem. Private or public transportation was often unavailable or was too costly for the San. Discussion participants in Ouholamo mentioned that they had had to carry a seriously sick person to the hospital 2 km away, and they alleged that three San residents of Ouholamo had died as a direct result of the lack of means of transport to clinics and hospitals. In addition, the walk from Ouholamo to Eenhana was said to be unsafe, especially at night.

"In some cases we get help from the people who live here and have cars. But sometimes when they do not help us, then we just use a donkey, and if we cannot get a donkey, we just watch the person die." – Discussion participant in Omukukutu village

In Omiishi it was reported that the Eenhana District Hospital would sometimes send an ambulance to transport San people who were considered critically ill, but this was not the case at the other five sites. When San people in Onane got ill and needed medical attention, the patient was normally transported by donkey to the tar road in order to find a lift to the Okongo District Hospital. If the person was too weak to sit on a donkey, he/she was put on a makeshift bed and carried to the tar road this way. In other villages, such as Oshikoha (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy), the village headman was usually approached for support, and he often borrowed a vehicle to take a very sick person to Okongo.

²⁹ The discussion on public participation could not be held in Omiishi due to a recent death in the village.

Government policy is that public health services have to be accessible to all Namibians. At the time of our field research, the public health facilities in Ohangwena required payment, i.e. a fee of N\$4 fee at clinics and a fee of N\$9 at hospitals, but vulnerable people (e.g. OVC, pensioners and marginalised groups such as the San) were exempted from paying these fees. However, this policy was not uniformly implemented across all health facilities: at three of the six sites it was reported that health facilities exempted San people from paying, whereas at the other three sites it was said that San were required to pay, which was a problem for many of them. San people would normally borrow money from Kwanyama people when they desperately needed to visit the clinic and did not have the funds required.

Traditional medicine

Traditional medicine was used at all six sites. !Xun participants in Omiishi said that they would try to heal their ailments with traditional medicine before visiting the clinic – mainly because they did not have the N\$4 to pay for treatment. Traditional healers were not used because they also expected to be paid. Traditional medicines used by !Xun households are listed in Table 7.13.

Table 7.13: Traditional medicines used by !Xun households in Ohangwena Region

Ailment	Medicine	Preparation
Coughing	Tree bark (various trees)	The bark is boiled and the fluid is consumed.
Diarrhoea	<i>Eefila</i> roots	The tree roots are boiled and the fluid is consumed.
Stomach/digestive problems	Eeshe leaves	The leaves are boiled and the fluid is consumed.
Open wounds	Omapupakeke leaves	The leaves are pounded and applied to the wound.

External support for health

The only external support for San health in Ohangwena Region – apart from the public health services – was provided by the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS), although it seems that many of the San were ignorant of the aims of the NRCS interventions. San discussion participants in Omiishi, for example, reported that the NRCS had asked many questions about TB, but never returned to the neighbourhood for follow-up purposes. In Ouholamo it was



said that the NRCS stopped providing support to the !Xun because of !Xun people's reluctance to attend health meetings. At Ekoka Resettlement Project the NRCS had discontinued its TB Directly Observed Treatment Support (DOTS) due to funding shortages. The NRCS provided support to Omukukutu village and Omundaungilo settlement for treating water for domestic purposes, but San residents of Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo) preferred to drink untreated water because they were used to it.

Caring for the sick

As Table 7.14 on the next page reflects, at three of the six sites it was said that both men and women were responsible for caring for sick people, whereas at the other three sites this was said to be the responsibility of women mainly.

Table 7.14: Responsibility for the care of sick San at the Ohangwena research sites, by gender

Research site	Mostly women	Mostly men	Both women and men
Ouholamo (Eenhana)			
Ekoka Resettlement Project			
Oshikoha (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)			
Onane			
Omiishi (Omundaungilo)			
Omukukutu			

7.4.7 Gender

Most tasks at the Ohangwena research sites were gender-specific tasks, and some were carried out by both men and women – i.e. tasks usually carried out by women could be carried out by men, and vice versa, in the case of illness for example). Table 7.15 provides an overview of tasks by gender.

Table 7.15: Responsibility for household tasks at the Ohangwena research sites, by gender

Tasks of women	Tasks of men	Tasks of women and men
 Fetching water Cooking Looking after children Cleaning house Washing clothes Collecting firewood for cooking Planting seeds and protecting crops Piecework: domestic work; collecting thatching grass for house construction 	 Collecting firewood for the <i>olupale</i> (traditional seating place) Herding livestock Piecework: herding livestock; collecting poles for house construction 	 Collecting veldfood Taking care of the sick (adults and children) Harvesting Piecework in crop fields

At all six sites, relative to the men, the women appeared to be somewhat reluctant to contribute to the research discussions. In the discussions at some sites, the women always sat on one side and the men on the other, and at some sites (e.g. Ouholamo) the group was always mixed. Remarkably, one female participant indicated that females preferred not to speak because they were "poor" – perhaps this should be interpreted as meaning that women 'did not feel confident enough' to speak due to being poor. Nevertheless, in some discussions at various sites, women participated more than their male counterparts.

Due to the limited degree of women's participation in the discussions, a separate discussion about gender roles was convened with only women at one site (Ouholamo), but even then the women did not participate actively.

At five of the six sites, the !Xun and Hai||om inheritance practices prescribed an equal distribution of assets, thus the widow or widower inherited the household belongings needed to maintain the family lifestyle and livelihood activities after the spouse's death. In some cases the deceased person's relatives would also get some belongings; most would still be left with the spouse. The exception in this regard was Ouholamo, where participants said that most of the family belongings would go to the deceased husband's relatives, and his widow would receive only a small portion – enough "just to get by". The female participants in Ouholamo noted that they were unhappy with this inheritance practice, as they were normally left with very little to fend for themselves and their children. Several male participants at this site also disagreed with this practice. As one man put it, "The wife gets killed [not physically] by the family of the husband."

	Inheritance when husband passes away			Inheritance when wife passes away		isses away
Research site	Wife and children inherit	Husband's relatives claim inheritance	Wife and children and husbands' relatives share inheritance	Husband and children inherit	Wife's relatives benefit	Husband and children and wife's relatives benefit
Ouholamo (Eenhana)						
Ekoka Resettlement Project						
Oshikoha (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)						
Onane						
Omiishi (Omundaungilo)						
Omukukutu						

* The cell shading indicates that the inheritance practice applies at the applicable site.

7.4.8 Political participation and representation

Traditional authority structure

The San (!Xun and Hai||om) of Ohangwena Region did not have a traditional leadership structure of their own, thus land tenure and other customary affairs were governed by Kwanyama headmen. Three of the six research sites (Oshikoha, Onane and Omukukutu) did not have any San leaders, and the other three (Omiishi, Ekoka and Ouholamo) had San leaders who reported to Kwanyama headmen. The San in Omiishi and Ekoka had democratically elected the !Xun leaders, whereas the !Xun leader at Ouholamo was nominated by the Kwanyama village headman. San leaders in Ohangwena did not have the title of 'village headman', but served as leaders for the San of their respective communities under the jurisdiction of Kwanyama headmen. Their powers were limited as they were not involved in major decision making at village level; land provision, for example, remained the prerogative of the Kwanyama headmen. The !Xun and Hai||om of Ekoka Resettlement Project used to have their own headman, but he had limited power and some of the San did not respect him. In Omukukutu, one discussion participant claimed to be the San headman who had been elected by his people, but other participants indicated that they did not recognise him as their leader. Thus there seemed to be uncertainty about the !Xun leadership in this village, whereas all participants there were very certain about who the Kwanyama headman was. They also held that there cannot be a 'village within a village', meaning there could not be a !Xun leader when there was already a Kwanyama headman.

At most sites the Kwanyama traditional leadership structure allowed for community consultation and participation in decision making, however the !Xun usually felt excluded because even when they expressed their views, generally these were not taken into consideration. !Xun participants stated that they were given a platform to speak (i.e. community meetings), and the men tended to make their voices heard in these meetings, but their contributions were ignored, simply because they were !Xun. Most of the !Xun and Hai||om would prefer to have their own headmen, but others felt comfortable being under the leadership of Kwanyama headmen because these leaders were perceived as having more resources with which to govern (e.g. means of transport, access to information and access to regional authorities), and most of them could read and write.

Most participants at all six sites were of the view that it would be difficult for a !Xun or Hai||om woman to become a leader of the applicable San communities – and interestingly, more women than men shared this sentiment. Only if a San headman had no son to succeed him might a !Xun or Hai||om woman serve as community leader.

Public participation and representation

According to discussion participants, public participation of San in decision making was weak at both local and regional level, and it was said that the !Xun and Hai||om of Ohangwena were not represented in any decision-making body at national level. Few !Xun and Hai||om were members of local committees such as village development committees (VDCs) and water point committees (WPCs), and although there were platforms for the !Xun and Hai||om to participate in decision making at local level, the !Xun and Hai||om at five of the six research sites stated that their inputs were rarely regarded as relevant or worthy. Public participation at each site is explored in more detail in the following subsections.

Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)

The !Xun at this site were sometimes invited to meetings of the Ohangwena Regional Council, where issues concerning the development of the San in Eenhana Constituency were discussed. !Xun representatives had also attended regional meetings called by NGOs such as the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA). Representatives who attended such meetings were usually nominated by officials of the regional council or regional offices of line ministries or NGOs, based on the active involvement of the !Xun in certain development activities – thus usually the !Xun had not elected their own representatives. Our research findings suggested that the !Xun tended to feel that they were merely informed about planned and upcoming developments, rather than being consulted about the desired approach to such developments. For example, discussion participants in Ouholamo claimed that the AGDN did not consult the community about the houses to be built there, but merely informed the community that houses would be built there. Ouholamo had no VDC, WPC, church committee, youth committee or any other committee.

Ekoka Resettlement Project

The government had consulted the San of Ekoka regularly, especially since the resettlement project's inception. Via the MLR Project Coordinator and NGOs which supported the community (e.g. the NRCS, AGDN and DRFN), the government had convened numerous consultations with the !Xun and Hai||om at Ekoka on a wide range of topics (e.g. food security, health, education, self-reliance, water, agriculture, income generation and public participation). These discussions were conducted in a participatory fashion, with the aim of facilitating community involvement in local development initiatives. The government usually consulted the !Xun and Hai||om at Ekoka via a separate project office within the MLR office in Okongo, which project beneficiaries, their representative at Ekoka and the general public in Okongo Constituency referred to as the "San Resettlement Office".³⁰

³⁰ The "San Resettlement Office" is a project office established by the MLR in Okongo, currently managed by the DRFN as part of the LIPROSAN project on behalf of the MLR.

The "San Resettlement Office" and its representative at Ekoka represented a unique avenue through which the !Xun and Hai||om could be actively involved in their own development, and outsiders also used this avenue to contact the San when necessary. This office gave the !Xun and Hai||om a 'body' that could help them to solve problems, and, to a lesser extent, a 'platform' where they could make their voices heard. The San at Ekoka also felt comfortable approaching the Okongo Constituency Councillor's office for support; they said that the councillor's door was always open for them.

However, the !Xun and Hai||om were not involved in making decisions about the allocation of land. Discussion participants complained about Kwanyama people settling within the San people's designated resettlement farm area with the permission of the local headman, but not with the consent of the San. They said that the Kwanyama did not respect the boundaries of the resettlement farm, and just allowed new farmers to settle on San land – so by implication they felt that they were not respected by the Kwanyama farmers concerned.

The following committees were active in the village of Ekoka:

- Ekoka Farm Management and Development Committee (FMDC) serving the resettlement project;
- Ekoka Water Point Committee (WPC) serving the resettlement project;
- Ekoka Village Development Committee (VDC) serving the whole village; and
- a church committee serving the whole village.

The aim of the FMDC – in the past also called the "Resettlement Development Committee", was to plan activities on behalf of the !Xun and Haillom residents of the resettlement project, and mobilise community members for agricultural activities, income-generating projects, and maintenance of equipment and infrastructure. The FMDC consisted of three San women and one San man, all of whom had been elected by the !Xun and Hai||om residents. This committee was organised somewhat differently to those in the other three San resettlement projects, as the DRFN had decided to test a new approach in Ekoka Resettlement Project, whereby FMDC members would undertake specific roles and tasks allocated to them in return for a monthly stipend. The Ekoka FMDC met at least once a month for planning purposes, and also convened community meetings, but the community members' attendance of these was not always good. Nevertheless, the results of this approach were somewhat more positive compared to those obtained by electing FMDC members who had to fulfil their roles and tasks on a voluntary basis. For example, the new approach resulted in a broader leadership base in the !Xun and Hai||om segment of the Ekoka village community. In comparison with the FMDCs in the other three resettlement projects, this approach also precipitated faster progress in the planning of community development initiatives, and more sharing of concerns between the !Xun and Hai||om community and the service providers (e.g. the DRFN and indirectly the MLR, as well as the Ekoka Constituency Office and the Ohangwena Regional Council).

Members of the Ekoka FMDC also represented the !Xun and Hai||om community in meetings at regional level, for example special meetings convened by the Ohangwena Regional Council and meetings of the LIPROSAN project, where representatives of the four San resettlement projects were expected to represent their respective communities. Participants in our research discussions at Ekoka said that their representatives' opinions were regarded as essential in these meetings. This perception has been affirmed by the appointment of a !Xun representative of the Ekoka community to the LIPROSAN steering committee, and more recently by the invitation for two representatives of the Ekoka project community to represent all of the !Xun and Hai||om of Ohangwena Region on the Namibian San Council (see Chapter 3).

Only one !Xun person was part of the VDC. He felt that he had an equal opportunity to speak in meetings and that his opinion was taken into consideration. One San man served as a volunteer

borehole caretaker but was not a member of the WPC itself. The Kwanyama had a church committee but the !Xun and Hai||om were not part of this committee as they did not attend church.

"We would like to go to church, but we cannot read and we do not know how to sing Kwanyama songs." – !Xun participant at Ekoka Resettlement Project

Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)

Regular consultations between the government and the !Xun used to occur at this site, but had stopped recently. (Actually, discussion participants said that they did not always know for certain who was consulting with them, but they indicated that there always seemed to be a link with the government.) Consultation usually focused on the needs of the !Xun residents, and many of their needs were provided for in past as a result of such discussions, but in the past few years, support had diminished considerably. There were three village committees, namely the VDC, the Okongo Community Forest Management Committee (CFMC) and the WPC, but the !Xun were represented only on the CFMC. !Xun people were invited to community meetings, and they attended these and participated in elections of committee members, but were not elected themselves. It was said that the Kwanyama discriminated against them. For example, the Forest Management Plan (FMP) specifically made provision for !Xun representation on all community fora, but a report published by the Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Corporation (SIAPAC) in 2008 states the following:

"The integration of the San community in the forest management concentrated on the recognition of their traditional lifestyle, and to use their huge knowledge [sic] on natural resource management. However, after handover of the Community Forest project to the FMC, the only San representative resigned from the committee in early 2007 and was been [sic] replaced by another San representative. The San community felt that there was no need to sit on the committee, because their needs were not met." (SIAPAC 2008: 36)

At the time of our field research, there seemed to be another San member on the committee, but he did not want to be interviewed.

Onane village

Asked whether they were ever consulted by the government, the immediate response of the !Xun discussion participants in Onane was, "No, you [i.e. the research team] are the first ones we see here." Government representatives had apparently not visited the !Xun in Onane (a remote village) in a long time, with the exception of representatives of the councillor's office who delivered drought relief food. The participants indicated that they would really appreciate a visit from the government to give them an opportunity to voice their concerns and make requests for help. Recently some "other people" (whom the !Xun could not identify) had passed through the village "to register" the San, but the discussion participants did not know the purpose of this registration. (It is likely that these visitors were enumerators for the Namibia Population and Housing Census of 2011.) The !Xun of Onane also did not know who had drilled the borehole in their village. Likewise, none of them could identify their constituency councillor, and most of them could not identify the regional governor, nor his responsibilities or what they could expect of him. These participants also could not identify the OPM San Development Coordinator for Ohangwena – unlike most of the San at the other research sites, who were familiar with her. The !Xun in Onane were not represented on

the local VDC nor the WPC, and they were not active participants in the traditional court. Some !Xun attended community meetings, but very few participated actively in such meetings, thus the extent of !Xun inclusion in decision making was extremely limited. Kwanyama villagers (whom we interviewed separately) indicated that they were unsure why the !Xun did not participate actively, as they were afforded ample opportunity to do so.

Omukukutu village

According to the discussion participants at this site, the government had never consulted the !Xun residents of Omukukutu, but the NRCS had consulted them about its livelihoods development project (for details about this project, see section 7.4.10 on the impact of external support).

This NRCS project committee was composed of 15 men and women – seven Kwanyama and eight San (four men and four women) – and the chairperson was Kwanyama. According to the discussion participants, the Kwanyama had gradually taken over the project, with the result that the !Xun had very little involvement. Participants indicated that they had very little say in decision making, and that the project was currently benefiting the Kwanyama primarily, rather than the !Xun.

The village did not have a VDC and there were no !Xun members of the WPC.

Decision-making processes in the village were led by the Kwanyama headman, his deputy and his advisors. There were no !Xun people advising the headman, thus no !Xun participated in decision making; they only voiced their opinions in community meetings. Male and female !Xun felt that they were free to speak in community meetings, and their ideas were sometimes implemented and sometimes not.

Omiishi neighbourhood (Omundaungilo)

An in-depth discussion on political participation and representation could not be held at this site due to the death of a community member.

7.4.9 Changes over time and visions for the future

Changes over time

Changes in quality of life over time were perceived to be similar at three of the five sites and slightly different at the other two – it was not possible to discuss this issue at Omiishi due to the death of a community member. Most discussion participants at the five sites said that their overall quality of life before Independence was worse than after Independence, chiefly because of the various restrictions placed on people during the war between the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the South African Defence Force (SADF).

The !Xun in Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy) disagreed with the above, because the SADF provided them with food, clothing and "many other things" during the war. At Ekoka Resettlement Project, life before Independence was also regarded as good, because of the support from the Finnish missionaries, who provided food, clothing, blankets and education. The time before the Finnish missionaries' arrival was "not so good" because of the nomadic lifestyle of the San at that time, and the fact that !Xun and Hai||om lived in *omapundo* houses at that time, which they did not like very much. Participants indicated that life improved with the arrival of the Finnish missionaries, but that eventually the war had negatively affected their quality of life.

"In the past we spent the entire day in the veld looking for food, the sun burned us, the lions chased and ate us, and we were bitten by snakes. It is now better, since we no longer need to move around for food so much."

- Discussion participant at Ekoka Resettlement Project

Participants at the other sites generally felt that life was much better after Independence, although it was noted that veldfood was no longer abundant because many people had moved into these areas since Independence, and this had contributed to an ongoing depletion of both flora and fauna. Those who felt that life improved after Independence said that this was due to more opportunities arising after the war, which in turn were due to there being more schools, improved access to schools and other institutions, more agricultural support services, and support for food security in the form of food aid and drought relief – all of which made life somewhat easier for the San.

Interestingly, participants at three of the five sites (Ekoka, Onane and Oshikoha) noted that their quality of life in 2012 was equal to, or even better than, their quality of life just after Independence. According to them, external support was the essential element that changed their quality of life over time. Participants directly associated the livelihood support provided to their communities (e.g. by the DRFN's LIPROSAN project) with improvements in their quality of life. Such support had not in fact been provided in Onane and Oshikoha, but still participants at these sites regarded life in 2012 as "good". The !Xun in Oshikoha noted that the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy had improved the availability and condition of many natural resources, although restrictive by-laws prohibited the !Xun from benefiting from the increased availability of some of these resources (e.g. they were no longer allowed to hunt). In Ouholamo and Omukukutu, on the other hand, the quality of life in 2012 was said to be "bad", because all external support had come to an end – and allegedly the NRCS project had not benefited the !Xun in Omukukutu.



Across the board, discussion participants stated that *otombo* drinking is much more common now than in the past. One participant said, "After the war we started to see *otombo* in Okongo. We now drink more *otombo* than in the past, because it is readily available everywhere." (The consequences of increased alcohol abuse among the San in Ohangwena have been discussed in the sections on food security and health.)

Visions for the future

As was the case in other regions covered in this study, envisioning the future appeared to be a relatively difficult exercise for the San in Ohangwena. As one !Xun participant put it, "How can we talk about the future if we have not been there?" The participants at three of the five sites (Ouholamo, Onane and Omukukutu) did not have any hope that their quality of life would change for the better in the future, whereas those in Oshikoha had little hope of change for the better, and those at Ekoka Resettlement Project seemed to be very optimistic about the future. It is noteworthy that in two villages where there was either little or no hope of change for the better, namely Oshikoha and Onane, the children were not attending school. Most participants at all five sites felt that without external support from the government or appropriate NGOs, their situation would remain the same. The external support sought was agricultural equipment mainly, followed by improved access to services such as schools and clinics. Asked what contribution might be expected from the !Xun and Hai||om, all claimed that they would work hard to improve their lives. Many participants stated that they wanted their children to become nurses, teachers or councillors.

Research site	Extent of hope	Expectation of change	External support needed	Internal contribution	Children's future jobs
Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana)	No hope	Will remain the same without external support	Agricultural equipment	Will work hard	NurseTeacherCouncillor
Ekoka Resettlement Project	Very optimistic	Will be better	Advice and technical support	Will work hard	 Nurse Teacher Councillor "and more"
Oshikoha village (Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy)	Little hope	Will remain the same without external support	Primary schoolClinic	Did not say	NurseTeacher
Onane village	No hope	Will remain the same without external support	 Agricultural equipment Primary school 	Will work hard	NurseTeacher
Omukukutu village	No hope	Will remain the same without external support	 Agricultural equipment Better soil Advice on how to save 	Will work hard	• Anything they want

Table 7.17: Summary of San people's visions for the future, by research site in Ohangwena

The participants in Onane felt that their lives would remain the same unless external support for cultivating crop fields was provided. Those in Ouholamo and Omukukutu were similarly pessimistic – one comment being, "I would give the future in Ouholamo 0, 0, 0 sticks." In Omukukutu only three participants felt that life might get better, but only if their children completed secondary school. In Oshikoha participants set great store in their children, hoping that they would complete secondary school, find good jobs and then provide support for their parents. Female participants in Oshikoha were more concerned about their children's education, whereas males seemed to be

more concerned about the availability of food for the family. Ultimately in Oshikoha, participants reached agreement that a primary school and a clinic were the most-needed forms of support.

Ekoka Resettlement Project was the exception with regard to the future.³¹ The participants there were very optimistic, for three reasons:

- More San were now expected to learn how to read and write.
- More San had learned how to save some money and how to look after their belongings and resources.
- They would work hard in order to change their lives for the better.

Interestingly, most participants at this site did not ask for more external support to improve their lives, but rather focused on what they could do for themselves. External support was already being rendered in the form of community mobilisation and some technical support for income-generating activities (e.g. craftmaking) and agricultural development. This included advice on how to save money and how to improve the community's quality of life. Participants stated that they aimed to become self-sustainable rather than continue depending on external support. Most participants also confirmed that they would prefer to stay at Ekoka for the foreseeable future. They wanted to work the land, but were also seeking employment opportunities for their young people. This attitude differed greatly to those at the other sites, where most participants felt that nothing would change for the better unless additional external support was forthcoming. At Ekoka, participants focused more on what they could do themselves to improve their standard of living, although admittedly the !Xun and Hai||om at Ekoka had already received a fair amount of livelihood support over the preceding six years. It is worth considering whether this is the very reason for the more positive attitude at Ekoka. Indeed the community-mobilisation efforts there seemed to have paid off to a considerable degree.



³¹ Many San at the site decided not to attend the research meeting, and they may have had different views.

7.4.10 Impact of external support

Different stakeholders provided different forms of support to the San in Ohangwena Region, with the main aim of alleviating poverty and enhancing the social, economic, health, environmental and participation status of the San. Table 7.18 details some of the main support mechanisms in place for the San of this region. This section on the impact of external support focuses on three of the main projects, with the aim of drawing conclusions about successes and failures, and with the goal of establishing what makes a project for San effective and what fails to do so.

Sites	External support	Partners	Timeframe
 Onamatadiva Resettlement Project Oshanashiwa Resettlement Project Eendobe Resettlement Project Ekoka Resettlement Project 	Livelihood Support Programme for the Ohangwena San Resettlement Projects (LIPROSAN)	 Custodian: Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) Donors: Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and MLR Implementer: Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) 	 MLR/AECID: April 2007 – March 2009 DRFN: April 2009 – June 2013
 Omukukutu Epembe Ohakafiya Oonduda 	Livelihoods development project	 Donor: AECID Implementers: Spanish and Namibia Red Cross Societies (SRCS/NRCS) 	2006-2011
Ouholamo	 Housing Rural water supply 	 Donor: UNESCO Implementer: Acacia Grassroots Development Network (AGDN) 	2006-2007
Omundaungilo	Water decontamination tablets	Implementer: NRCS	Continuous
 Oshikoha Omauni Okanyandi 1 Omandi 	Okongo Community Forest	 Donor: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) Implementer: Directorate of Forestry (Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry) 	1998-2006
Onane	None	None	None
Wherever San in Ohangwena Region live	 Home-based care (TB, malaria, HIV/AIDS) Food aid Drought relief food School uniforms Blankets, clothes, cutlery Rural water supply Sanitation ECD centres Hostels Healthcare 	Ohangwena Regional Council with support from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	Continuous. Apart from drought relief, most of this support commenced in or after 2009.

Table 7.18: External support for the San in Ohangwena Region – some of the main projects

LIPROSAN at four resettlement projects

The Livelihood Support Programme for the Ohangwena San Resettlement Projects (LIPROSAN), co-funded by AECID and the MLR, has had three implementation phases: in 2007-08 the project was implemented directly by a project manager who reported to the MLR; in the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years it was implemented by the DRFN; and in the period April 2011 to June 2013 the MLR continued as sole sponsor with the DRFN as implementing agency. Compared with other support programmes in San communities in Ohangwena, LIPROSAN has made relatively large strides throughout the implementation period.

"The overall objective of the programme was therefore to sustainably enhance the livelihoods in the four resettlement projects. The specific programme purpose was to empower the community members to more effectively mitigate influences that bring them into poverty. LIPROSAN is based on the philosophy of the Resettlement Policy that, 'resettlement does not only mean providing people with land, housing, infrastructure, knowledge and skills to maintain and develop their new environment and entitlements, but it also means establishing an innovative attitude, in which the spirit of self-reliance is the underlying principle on which development is to be built by the government or the peoples themselves'." (MLR 2001a: 2)

To achieve the objective cited above, the project aimed for two main outcomes (Mouton 2011: 4):

- 1) **Improved food security**, to be achieved by:
 - a) enhancing crop production in the San's own fields and gardens;
 - b) improving water infrastructure and water management;
 - c) animal husbandry (including poultry); and
 - d) craft production and marketing.
- 2) **Improved standard of living**, to be achieved by:
 - a) improving life skills and social organisation;
 - b) improving the interface with service providers; and
 - c) improving the health and standard of living of beneficiaries.

Based on an evaluation of LIPROSAN in 2011, participants in the evaluation felt that their food security and standard of living had improved because:

- they now ate two meals a day on average;
- their young children attended pre-primary school, and some of their children attended primary and secondary school, with some residing in school hostels;
- most TB patients were on treatment;
- they owned their own land, including grazing, agricultural fields and gardens;
- they owned their own houses;
- they owned livestock; and
- they knew how to cultivate their crop fields and gardens.

Some of the main factors that contributed to LIPROSAN achieving some of its aims were:

- the ongoing commitment of the project custodian, donors and implementer to continuing their technical and financial support;
- these partners' presence on the ground to mobilise community members for project activities;
- the partners' shared understanding that development of marginalised communities takes a long time, and that such communities require long-term support to attain self-reliance;
- the flexibility to provide support in accordance with beneficiaries' needs and at the pace of the beneficiaries rather than in accordance with what outsiders believe is appropriate for San people in terms of the forms of support and pace of development;
- moving away from communal management of gardens and fields to individual or household management of gardens and fields;
- the project's ability to concentrate on what beneficiaries considered important, and its flexibility to shift some activities to a time when the community was ready to implement them; and
- the involvement of the community in the design, planning and implementation of the project.

Some of the main factors that contributed to LIPROSAN failing to achieve all of its aims were:

- the entrenched marginalisation of community members and extremely low levels of self-esteem the reversal of which requires more time and special initiatives;
- the entrenched dependency of many San in the beneficiary communities on external support as opposed to taking responsibility for their own development more actively;

- San people's constant need to engage in *otombo* drinking instead of productive activities;
- a lack of coordination between different stakeholders promoting the aim of San self-reliance (as opposed to dependency);
- a lack of knowledge of proper community development strategies on the part of some project coordinators employed by the MLR;
- a lack of in-depth understanding on the part of many stakeholders of how to organise developmentoriented support for and with the San;
- the unwillingness of some San people to participate and learn;
- San people's constant need to work for non-San neighbours for immediate returns instead of working in their own fields;
- the (initial) allocation of communal plots for gardening and crop farming; and
- limited protection of the boundaries of San resettlement projects, enabling people of other ethnic groups to encroach on the project land.

In sum, LIPROSAN was well designed and well planned, but its implementation was challenged primarily by a limited degree of coordination with other major stakeholders. Not all of the major stakeholders supported the San in a manner that promoted their empowerment and self-reliance. LIPROSAN's progress was also affected by the allocation of valuable staff time to support services that were expected to be carried out through the "San Resettlement Office" (i.e. the project office set up within the MLR office in Okongo) by both the San beneficiaries and stakeholders in the constituency – including arranging funerals, bringing sick and dead people to the hospital, and tasks for which other government agencies are responsible, such helping San individuals to obtain relevant documentation). Such activities also tended to demoralise the project staff, contributing to a high staff turnover. In addition, LIPROSAN primarily sought to change the livelihood attitudes, behaviours and actions of the San, but such an endeavour cannot be achieved in only six years.

Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy

The Okongo Community Forest – commonly referred to as the "Omauni Community Forest" – resorts under the Directorate of Forestry (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF). Initially, in 2002, it was gazetted as a Community Forest only, and in 2009 it was gazetted as the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy.³² Technical and financial support was provided by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) for the implementation of forest development activities over a period of eight years, i.e. 1998-2006. This entity was established with the overall goal of improving the living standards of the participating communities while sustainably managing natural forest resources with the beneficiaries' full participation. Kwanyama and San living in the area constituted the target population. The main aims were:

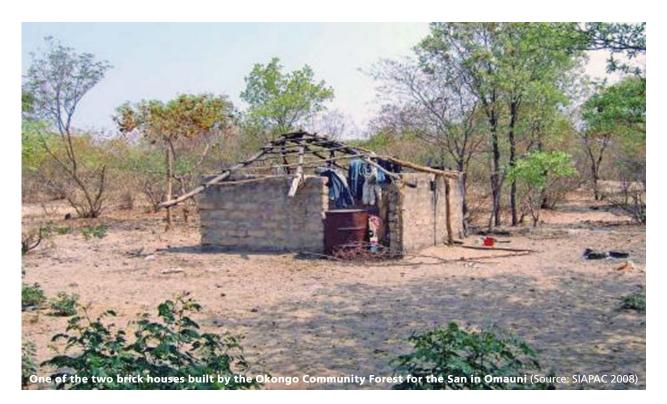
- 1) to secure tenure and user rights for the beneficiaries of the Okongo Community Forest;
- 2) to develop a Forest Management Plan for the Okongo Community Forest in cooperation with the Okongo community;
- 3) to enhance the community's capacity to implement and evaluate the Forest Management Plan;
- 4) to improve and institutionalise the participation and resource management capacities of marginalised groups in the Okongo Community Forest;
- 5) to establish efficient management systems for this community forest; and
- 6) to document experiences and disseminate this documentation to support sustainable management of other indigenous forests.

³² The transition to conservancy status was achieved through support from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Namibian Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Support Organisations (NACSO).

San participation proved to be a challenge from the start to the end of the project implementation. However, the final evaluation of this project found that the San beneficiaries had been "excluded from the Community Forest Project's decision making, implementation and monitoring and evaluation" (SIAPAC 2008: 47). The evaluation also found that the San's participation in project activities was largely restricted to piecework: cleaning the central yard of the forest, collecting firewood and watering trees. They were paid for their services, but the payment was provided in a piecemeal fashion. The Forest Management Committee comprised mainly Kwanyama people, and its members did not have the skills and experience required to engage the San in a more meaningful way, while the San seemed happy to merely make some money by providing labour only. The San did engage – to a limited extent – in some of the income-generating activities such as arts and crafts, rearing guinea fowl, beekeeping, collecting thatching grass and wood, operating the hammer mill, harvesting veldfood, and working in the carpentry section and the campsite. The project constructed two brick houses for the San living in Omauni at the time. However, the San used these houses for purposes other than accommodation, and hence opted to sleep outside the houses.

For the San, the major benefit of the forestry project was increased access to veldfood and other natural resources. However, the research team found that the San community was not happy with the project on the whole because various laws and by-laws inhibited their livelihood strategies. For example, hunting was not allowed, and the by-laws prohibiting the cutting of trees restricted the San's ability to access food such as honey, and limited their opportunities to build new houses or to renovate existing ones. Discussion participants said that they could not even kill a snake, or cut down a tree in which a snake lived, to protect themselves. Nevertheless, the !Xun said that they were happy that there was now more veldfood available, and they acknowledged that this was a direct result of the forestry by-laws.

The project evaluation report also stated the following: "No support has been provided to the San, since the completion of the pilot measure in 2006. Contributing factors lie within the management style of the FMC, a lack of willingness among the San community to participate, and the general cultural settings in which the San live." (SIAPAC 2008: 42)



Projects that do not cater specifically for San (i.e. those designed to benefit all residents of an area regardless of ethnic group) should strive for a better understanding of San culture so as to improve their participation, but also to mitigate the potentially negative impacts of such projects on the San, and to ensure that the positive impacts are shared by the San and the non-San alike. Concerted and strategic efforts are required to ensure effective participation of the San, with local, regional and national institutional mechanisms strengthened to ensure continued effective involvement of the San together with other residents.

Namibia Red Cross Society livelihood support project

The goal of the NRCS livelihood support project was to promote poverty alleviation and economic self-sufficiency within the populations affected by HIV/AIDS and other health and social problems in Caprivi and Ohangwena Regions. The participating communities in Ohangwena were those of Omukukutu, Epembe, Ohakafiya and Oonduda. Although the project faced several challenges, it did reap successes. Following is an overview of the shortcomings described in the final evaluation report (Mouton 2009: 57, 72):

- The design of the IGAs did not allow for sufficient production of food or income to be made from livestock or crop farming.
- The project timeframe did not initially fit well with the agricultural season.
- Goat-farming activities were time consuming, with very little in the way of returns or benefits in the short term.
- Social issues such as relations between members of the various project associations³³ were not always conducive to the communal maintenance of livestock (in this case goats). An example was given of a chairperson who dismissed association members and replaced them with family members.
- There was a lack of ownership of the process due to a lack of community participation at the start of the project.
- Some association members did not understand the concept of a revolving fund.
- Unexpected events (e.g. the theft of goats, and natural disasters such as floods or excessive rains) influenced community members' willingness to continue undertaking project-related activities.
- There was a lack of proper monitoring by project implementers, and there were misunderstandings between implementers and beneficiaries.
- All association members had their own fields, and these were very likely to take precedence over the association's communal field in terms of labour allocation.
- Some of the San lacked commitment to participating actively in agricultural activities.
- Ownership of the project was lacking in the San community as a whole.
- Kwanyama members of the project associations lacked willingness to allow San members to take ownership of the project.
- There was a lack of proper mechanisms for food distribution to association members, especially San members.
- Inappropriate types of seeds were distributed, and there were irregularities in distribution.
- There were misunderstandings between the San and the Kwanyama.
- The Epembe village headman did not allocate land in time, and he expected payment for the allocation of land.

As was the case with the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy, the lack of an in-depth understanding of the San, and of any acknowledgement of how this lack might contribute to the

³³ Community members interested in participating in the project formed associations that were responsible for making decisions about the project design and implementation.

San's unwillingness to participate, were overarching factors that compromised the project's success. The project design was such that Kwanyama beneficiaries transferred skills to San beneficiaries, but the project environment was such that the San were not necessarily regarded as equal partners in development; in effect the San were instructed, not capacitated. This resulted in the Kwanyama "taking over" the project, and San slowly pulling out. The report on an intermediate evaluation of this project in Caprivi and Ohangwena states the following (Mouton 2009: 87): "Taking the above-mentioned issues with regards to the San into consideration, generally, the project could potentially be regarded as an appropriate response to their identified needs, however at an extremely small scale resulting in very little positive impacts on food security."

7.5 Regional conclusions and recommendations

7.5.1 Conclusions

Livelihood strategies

Ohangwena Region is the second poorest region in Namibia after Kavango Region, and the !Xun and Hai||om people in Ohangwena are considered to be the poorest of all of this region's ethnic groups. It should be acknowledged that there are poor and very poor Kwanyama too, but the !Xun and Hai||om as a group are the very poorest and the most vulnerable to social and economic shocks. They find themselves in this position because their traditional way of life is no longer feasible, and has not been replaced by other viable livelihood strategies. Due to weak leadership and weak institutions, the !Xun and Hai||om have lost both control over and access to productive land. The loss of control over land is compounded by their limited degree of formal education. Consequently the !Xun and Hai||om lack formal and informal employment opportunities as well as diversified livelihood strategies. This lack is exacerbated by very limited degrees of political representation at local, regional and national levels. This combination of factors has had repercussions in the form of discrimination against the !Xun and Hai||om by the main ethnic group in the region, and the consequent subordinate position of San in society.

Food security

Food insecurity is brought about by numerous challenges to certain livelihood strategies. Most San households in Ohangwena were food insecure (and possibly nutritionally deprived) because of limited food and limited access to different types of food on a daily basis. *Otombo* drinking – whether or not this alcoholic beverage is regarded as a substitute for food or a food in itself – affects whole communities with detrimental results. Participants reported that almost all people (men, women and children) drank *otombo* on a daily basis. This alcohol consumption had serious negative psychological, physiological, social and economic consequences at all six research sites. Without doubt, if this issue is not dealt with in a comprehensive manner, it will perpetuate the poverty of the San in Ohangwena.

Land issues

The land currently inhabited by Kwanyama people in Ohangwena was originally inhabited by the San, but currently none of the San have formal land rights in this region. In theory, all San people had access to land for crop production, livestock farming and the construction of homesteads in Ohangwena, but very few San households had applied for, or had claimed, customary land rights,

because of a shortage of agricultural inputs and assets, but also because they were not aware of their land rights in the first place.

Many of the San in Ohangwena live in resettlement projects or centres which are part of the MLR's National Resettlement Programme (NRP). However, San were often resettled without taking into consideration their views and opinions (Burford et al. 2009: xii). The San on resettlement farms did have a sense of ownership over the land on which they now lived, with all saying that the land comprising the resettlement farms belonged to them because it was given to them by the Namibian Government. Nevertheless, none of the households on these resettlement farms had any documentation confirming that the land belonged to them as a community. Land belonging to San in resettlement projects therefore needs to be officially registered to the San, as concerns were raised about Kwanyama moving onto the farms, in some cases with permission from local headmen, but not with the San's consent.

Wellbeing of the !Xun and Hai||om

Most of the !Xun and Hai||om households who participated in the study regarded themselves as poor or very poor, mainly because they did not have land or agricultural equipment to cultivate crop fields; owned hardly any livestock; had limited or no formal education; had hardly any formal employment opportunities; could access only small pensions; and/or owned nothing more than a few household items. Consequently the !Xun and Hai||om generally perceived themselves as being worse off than their Kwanyama neighbours, which in turn resulted in a low level of self-confidence. Any improvement in the standard of living – specifically from being poor to better off – was possible only when an elderly person turned 60 and started receiving the Old Age Pension, or when a San person married a Kwanyama person, or when San children had an opportunity to obtain a better education and hence access to better jobs.

Education

Uniquely in terms of this study on the San in Namibia, the majority of !Xun and Hai||om children in Ohangwena did not attend primary school; only a small number enrolled in primary school – and generally this was at sites where ECD centres had been established. Very few !Xun or Hai||om progressed to secondary school, and if they did, many dropped out before or in Grade 8. Similarly, very few San youth managed to enrol in, and complete, any form of tertiary education.

Health

The most serious illnesses experienced at the six research sites were TB, malaria and HIV/AIDS, and the main illnesses among children were diarrhoea and coughing. Malnutrition among children was not mentioned as a concern, although the researchers' observation of children with bloated stomachs at some of the sites is an indication that children at those sites were in all likelihood malnourished. Almost all San children at all six sites had been vaccinated. The regular or daily consumption of *otombo* by adults is a serious issue, and the fact that *otombo* was also commonly drunk by children is a matter of grave concern because it could well influence their overall social and physical development.

At three of the six sites, the long distance to health facilities was a significant problem for the San. There was no ambulance service available to people at these sites at any time, and they lacked means of transport to get seriously ill people to a health facility. Only two of the three sites which were close to a health facility had access to an ambulance service – but not always.

Language and Identity

Most San in Ohangwena spoke !Xun. Most participants (except for some at Ouholamo) regarded their mother tongue as important even though they spoke Oshikwanyama as well. All children could speak their respective San languages. Most of the !Xun and Hai||om perceive the terms 'Bushman' and 'Kwangara' as having negative connotations. The integration of the !Xun and Hai||om into Owambo (in this case Kwanyama) society as an underclass continues to diminish the cultural practices of these San groups, and consequently a lack of sharing of traditional San knowledge with the younger generation. In certain communities this integration also means that San languages are used with decreasing frequency by the youth as they tend more and more to speak Oshikwanyama.

Relationships with other groups

The relationships between the Kwanyama and the !Xun and Hai||om is based on an unequal distribution of power; the San basically constitute an underclass in Ohangwena. The !Xun and Hai||om are regarded as inferior (as in the past), and are viewed as people to be used as labourers or as people who cannot work for themselves and who cannot take care of themselves. They are generally regarded as a people with little knowledge who are always in need of external support, and they are not regarded as equal partners in the development of their communities. These are all issues of long standing.

Sexual relations between !Xun and Hai||om women and Kwanyama men did take place, but the Kwanyama frowned upon a formal marriage or consensual union between the two ethnic groups. Kwanyama men who impregnated San women normally did not provide any form of support to the mother and child – in contrast to the Kwanyama tradition between two people of that ethnic group. Children born from inter-ethnic relationships were generally referred to as San and were not considered to be Kwanyama at all.

Political participation and representation

Traditional authority

All !Xun and Hai||om in Ohangwena fall under the jurisdiction of the Kwanyama TA. None of the !Xun and Hai||om communities at any of the six sites had their own TA. Some !Xun had been appointed as leaders of their !Xun community, but still they reported to a Kwanyama headman. The few who had been appointed as San headmen found it difficult to 'rule' as the Kwanyama had little respect for them, and sometimes even their fellow San did not respect them. As such, these San leaders had little influence within the overall TA system.

Public participation is extremely weak as the !Xun and Hai||om are rarely represented in institutions that constitute local, regional and national platforms. Management bodies established in the San resettlement projects around Okongo had received extensive support and training from the DRFN, but remained relatively weak – partially, it appears, due to the difficulty of recruiting and retaining suitably qualified technical advisors with the necessary expertise in Ohangwena. Somewhat more positive results were obtained by electing three or four representatives from the !Xun and Hai||om community at Ekoka Resettlement Project, who were given specific tasks and roles to perform in return for a monthly stipend. This resulted in a broader leadership base in the !Xun and Hai||om segment of the Ekoka community, and in improvements in the planning of communal development initiatives and the sharing of concerns by the !Xun and Hai||om.

However, aside from these positive developments at Ekoka, a limited degree of collective social standing and a lack of self-esteem on the part of San individuals had resulted in a limited degree of representation of the !Xun and Hai||om, and a lack of active !Xun and Hai||om participation in decision-making processes. Not only did underpin the prevailing unequal power dynamics between the !Xun and Hai||om and the Kwanyama, but also it reinforced the processes that spawned the social marginalisation of the !Xun and Hai||om in this region. The regional authorities and the Kwanyama TA appointed a !Xun representative from the Ekoka community to the LIPROSAN project steering committee so that the perspectives of the !Xun and Hai||om could be represented, and this positive initiative might provide some countervailing force in societal processes that have hitherto alienated the San. More recently, the Namibian San Council invited two members of the Ekoka community to join this body as representatives of all of the !Xun and Hai||om of Ohangwena Region. The next step is to increase the ability of these San representatives to raise the most pressing concerns of the !Xun and Hai||om in this council or other such forums.

7.5.2 Recommendations

The following general recommendations are based on the research team's assessment of the main findings in Ohangwena Region, including findings of previous studies as well as this study regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the three main livelihood support projects in this region.

Firstly, development in a piecemeal fashion has proven unsustainable. **Long-term interventions** are needed to build the self-confidence of the !Xun and Hai||om as a people; they need interventions that serve to make them proud of being !Xun and Hai||om.

A **long-term educational project** – with a timeframe of 20 years or more – should be designed and implemented. Education is the key to improving the poor conditions in which the San in Ohangwena currently find themselves. The recommended project would entail, in the first place, taking young children through ECD to primary school, secondary school and tertiary education. However, the cultural and traditional practices of the !Xun and Hai||om would have be taken into consideration in the design of such a project, thus the !Xun and Hai||om should be actively involved in designing it. Mainstream education has failed – and continues to fail – the !Xun and Hai||om in Ohangwena, therefore in any new project it would be wise to incorporate certain aspects that do not characterise mainstream education. One aim of such new educational practices should be an appreciation of the traditional San processes of knowledge transfer: formal education practices characterised by classroom study and learning from books may not necessarily be useful to !Xun and Hai||om children, thus new initiatives are needed to build a bridge between the current mainstream education system and traditional !Xun and Hai||om ways of learning. The !Xun and Hai||om should be involved in helping to bridge that gap (Le Roux (no date)). Such bridge-building initiatives could include features that will help to meet the following needs identified in this study and previous studies:

- !Xun and Hai||om children should be educated by !Xun and Hai||om teachers in the first years of school, and !Xun and Hai||om languages should be used as the medium of instruction for the initial years of kindergarten and primary schooling.
- Primary and junior secondary schools should be situated close to San communities so that the children are not separated from their parents at a very young age.
- Further investigation is needed into the practice of Kwanyama families fostering !Xun and Hai||om children, with the main aim of finding workable solutions for the !Xun and Hai||om children and parents concerned.
- Support mechanisms and creative monitoring systems are needed within the !Xun and Hai||om communities to support school-going children and their parents, with a view to encouraging the children to stay in school.

- Use all of the above to create a sense of ownership of the education of !Xun and Hai||om children among parents and the wider community.
- Affirmative action is needed to engage !Xun and Hai||om youth in certain job categories after finishing secondary school, so that !Xun and Hai||om parents see the benefit of completing an education. The same holds true for teaching jobs.

Regarding to access to land, given that the San in Ohangwena do not have their own TA, and that they do not necessarily occupy or use the land in the same manner as Kwanyama farmers do, San are seen as subordinates, despite the fact that they are the original inhabitants of the land on which they and the Kwanyama are now living. Concerted efforts should be made to **formalise and protect land ownership** for and by the !Xun and Hai||om.

Resettlement farms may not be the best form of land tenure for the !Xun and Hai||om, therefore an assessment of alternatives is needed. For a start, the relevant provisions of the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 and the National Resettlement Policy should be implemented more proactively and consistently to ensure that the !Xun and Hai||om have access to land, and control over the land allocated to them.³⁴ Furthermore, the proper implementation of national laws and policies pertaining to land should be augmented by applying international protocols that elaborate the rights of indigenous peoples in relation to land, so that the voices of the !Xun and Hai||om with regard to the management of land and other resources in Ohangwena Region can be heard. A widespread awareness-raising campaign should be initiated to inform the !Xun and Hai||om of their general human rights, specifically as indigenous and/or marginalised peoples.

It is important to review the approach to development within !Xun and Hai||om communities in Ohangwena, as many things have been tried but few things seem to have worked in the long term. In this regard it would be highly relevant to undertake an **in-depth anthropological study** on the needs and aspirations of the San in this region, because their situation and aspirations differ to those of other San in Namibia. Such in-depth research should then form the foundation of the design of strategies for the development of the !Xun and Hai||om in Ohangwena.

As far as **livelihood support programmes** are concerned, one lesson learned in recent years is that communal approaches to agricultural development – whether animal husbandry or crop cultivation – within !Xun and Hai||om communities have proven ineffective, and family- or household-based initiatives should be encouraged instead. Such approaches would then have to be supported by local management structures that are sensitive to the needs and interests of the !Xun and Hai||om. This does not necessarily mean that VDCs must be established in the !Xun and Hai||om communities in the same manner as they are in other villages; in some cases, smaller and more flexible leadership structures may be required. Furthermore, it is important to actively engage the !Xun and Hai||om in decision making on developments in their own communities and in the region at large. This means that they must have representation on bodies such as constituency development committees (CDCs), the Ohangwena Regional Development Committee (RDC) and the regional land board. Given the prevailing levels of poverty among the San in Ohangwena, local and regional authorities may be compelled to evaluate the need for monetary allowances that would enable San leaders to represent their respective communities properly, without necessarily creating more dependency of these leaders on external support.

³⁴ The group-rights initiative mentioned in Chapter 14 on access to land might also have some relevance for the San in Ohangwena.

Chapter 8 Omusati Region

By Randolph Mouton

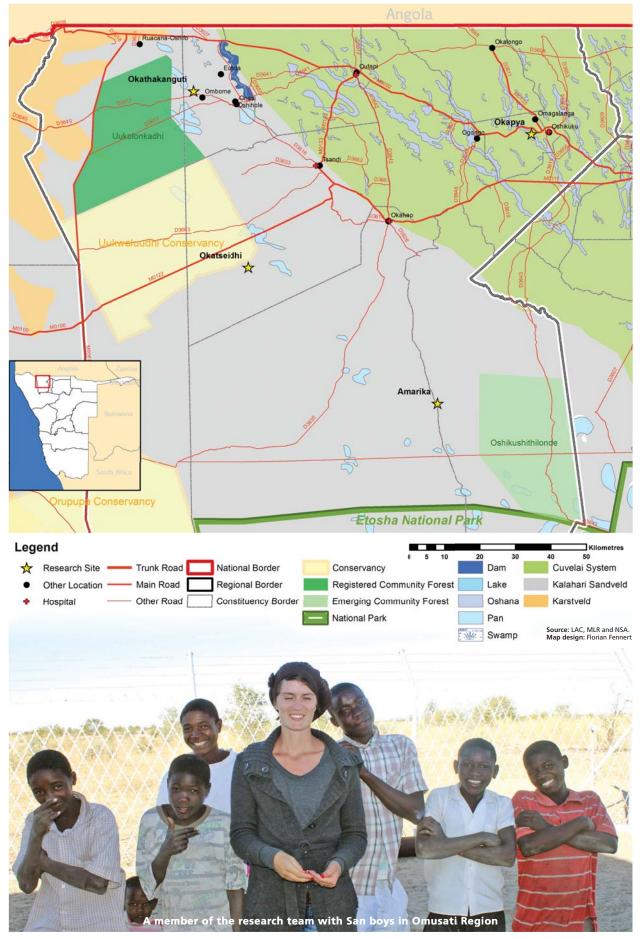


8.1 General background

Omusati Region is situated in the north-western part of Namibia, bordered by Angola to the north, Kunene Region to the west and south, and Oshana and Ohangwena Regions to the east. The natural landscape is primarily made up of sand dunes, mopane trees, makalani palms, fig trees and marula trees. The climate of Omusati Region is similar to that of the three north-central regions of Namibia (Oshana, Ohangwena and Oshikoto), with very hot summers and cool to warm winters.

Omusati Region comprises 12 administrative and political constituencies, Outapi being the regional capital. The region encompasses four main towns (Outapi, Okahao, Oshikuku and Ruacana), four main settlements (Ogongo, Okalongo, Onesi and Tsandi), four settlements in development (Elim, Etayi, Onawa, Otamanzi), and nine traditional authorities (Okalongo, Omabalantu, Ongandjera, Otjikaoko, Oukwanyama, Uukolonkadhi, Uukwaluudhi, Uukwambi and Vita Royal House).

Omusati Region and the research sites



Omusati's population of 240 900 is the third largest regional population in Namibia, preceded by those of Khomas and Ohangwena (341 000 and 242 700 respectively). Almost the entire region (94%) comprises rural communal areas, complemented by four towns, four main settlements and several conservancies. The population density is very high: 9.1 persons per km² compared with the national population density of 2.6 persons per km². The average household size in Ohangwena Region was 5.2 persons in 2011 (down from 5.9 in 2001), but this is still much higher than the national average household size of 4.4 persons. However, many Omusati households can have as many as 10 or more members, based on the extended family structure culturally practised in the region. Most households (55% compared to 62% in 2001) are headed by females (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 8-18).

The main economic activities in the region are agriculture in the form of rain-fed crop farming, irrigated crop-farming projects (Epandulo and Etunda projects), livestock farming and freshwater fish farming. For subsistence, residents mostly engage in communal agricultural production, and the most common source of income is wages and salaries (25% of all income sources). Formal employment opportunities are limited to towns and some other major settlements. Informal employment opportunities are available in rural areas in the form of hiring of labour for, inter alia, cultivating fields, herding livestock, collecting water, cleaning houses, washing clothes, collecting firewood, collecting thatching grass and erecting fences.

Omusati is one of the five poorest regions in Namibia. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) statistics for 2001, of Namibia's 13 regions, Omusati had the fourth worst life expectancy at birth, the sixth worse literacy rate and the third lowest annual average per capita income (Levine 2007: 10). Omusati, along with Kavango and Oshikoto Regions, had the highest Human Poverty Index (HPI) (45) of the 13 regions (Levine 2007: 11).

Almost all Omusati residents (96.1%) speak Oshiwambo, followed by those who speak Otjiherero (2.8%), English (0.5%), Lozi (0.1%), Rukwangali (0.1%), other European languages (0.1%), other African languages (0.1%), Tswana (0.1%) and German (0.1%). The NSA *Population and Housing Census Basic Report* further noted that 0% of the region's households spoke a San language (NSA 2013: 171). All San at the four sites visited for this study were fully conversant in Oshiwambo dialects, depending on where they lived.

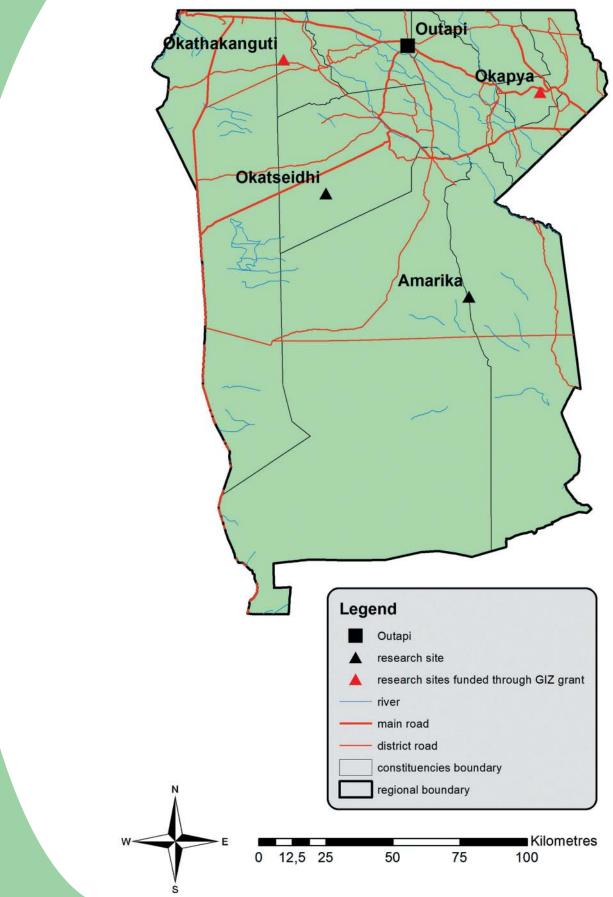
8.2 The San in Omusati Region

Mosimane and Mbandi (2009: 4) noted that, "Due to powerlessness, voicelessness and lack of organisation, the San are not visible and that creates the impression that there are no San in the Omusati Region." Determining the San population in Omusati is extremely difficult because:

- the San are scattered across the region;
- they do not use San names any longer;
- their main language at home is no longer a San dialect and thus they are not counted in the census as a San group; and
- they are not registered as San for regional development purposes.

The San in Omusati Region have adopted Owambo cultures and lifestyles to such an extent that their homesteads, farming methods and cultural practices are similar to those of the Owambo and their overall lifestyle has taken a form similar to that of the Owambo communities in which they live. However, insofar as they retain characteristics of a discrete group known as *Kwangara* – they are the poorest population group in the region.

Research sites in Omusati Region



Source: Ministry of Lands and Resettlement and Legal Assistance Centre

8.3 Research sites in Omusati Region

This section of the report introduces the four participating sites: Okatseidhi, Amarika, Okathakanguti and Okapya. It provides a summary of the location, population, history and infrastructure for each site. These sites were purposefully selected on the basis of certain criteria, as set out in Table 8.1.

Research	Urban/rural Land		Language	Population	Institutional support	
sites	status	tenure	group			NGOs
Amarika	Rural (extremely remote)	Communal village	Oshiwambo dialect	Majority	Water desalination plant	Water desalination plant
Okatseidhi	Rural (somewhat remote)	Communal village	Oshiwambo dialect	Minority	Drought relief	Health
Okathakanguti	Rural (somewhat remote)	Communal village	Oshiwambo dialect	Minority	Drought relief	Health
Okapya	Rural (close to peri- urban area)	Communal village	Oshiwambo dialect	Minority	Drought relief	Health

 Table 8.1: Main characteristics of the Omusati research sites

8.3.1 Okatseidhi

Okatseidhi is located in Tsandi Constituency. The village is just over 7 km from the new tarred road between the main Okahao-Tsandi road and Omakange, and about 5 km east of the turnoff. There were more than 300 homesteads in Okatseidhi at the time of our survey there; only around 30 being San households and all the others Uukwaludhi. The total population of San was 185, consisting of 14 male-headed households and 15 female-headed households. Numbers of orphans were counted by discussion participants as 27 across 11 San households.



San discussion participants indicated that San were the original inhabitants of this area. They did not remember when their ancestors first moved to this area, but they noted that they were all born on this land. They indicated that they lived here before the war for Namibia's independence. One participant said, "Our grandparents have lived and died in this village." Before the war for Namibia's independence, the Uukwaludhi King requested land from the San living in the areas, but most Uukwaludhi people moved into the area only after Independence. A male participant said, "Once they [the Uukwaludhi people] came here, they took over the land."

As indicated earlier, the homesteads of the San were similar to those of the Uukwaludhi people, with a traditional fence around the agricultural fields and houses. In general, San homesteads in Omusati were very different from the *omupondos*¹ found in Ohangwena Region, as San homesteads in Omusati had similar structures and layouts to those of Owambo homesteads.

We found the following infrastructure within the village boundaries:

- a primary school (Grades 1-5);
- a clinic, with one nurse;
- a police station (only a tent) with six police officers;
- one water tank and two taps (NamWater);
- a church;
- a cemetery;
- several shebeens some owned by San people;
- two community meeting places one for the community and one for SWAPO meetings; and
- a two-track road connecting the village with the main tarred road.

As water must be paid for, and most San in the village could not afford to pay for it, the water infrastructure (tank and taps) was utilised mostly by Uukwaludhi residents, and only a few San residents, i.e. recipients of pension funds (Old Age Pension and War Veteran Pension). San who could not pay had two alternatives: borrowing the water cards of those who could pay, or collecting water from one of the several open wells which had been dug in the village.

The village did not have electricity, nor a cellphone network, although cellphone reception was sometimes available at one specific place close to the clinic. The lack of a cellphone network was a serious concern, especially in cases when someone needed urgent medical attention.

Compared with many other remote villages in Omusati, Okatseidhi had better access to services and resources, i.e. those related to health, education, pension payments, water, security and land.



¹ San houses made out of sticks and various other materials (blankets, plastic, boxes, etc.).

8.3.2 Amarika

Amarika is an extremely remote village (around 50 km from the main tarred road) south of the town of Okahao in Otamanzi Constituency, Omusati, and approximately 5 km north of the northern border of Etosha National Park.

Currently, Amarika is the home of a mixed group of people who are collectively called Ovakwakuti, meaning 'the people from the bush of Amarika'. They are the offspring of mixed marriages and relationships, mainly between Owambo and San persons, but also between Herero and San as well as Nama/Damara and San. There were approximately 75 households in Amarika, most of which were Ovakwakuti households and some of which were Ongandjera households.

The San were the original inhabitants of this area. According to discussion participants and the oral history provided by an elderly San woman, the first person who came to this area a long time ago was a San man known as Amarika, from whom the village took it name. He was the first person to find water at the site, and the first in the area to dig an open well – by means of a special digging procedure using a gemsbok horn. San people (perhaps led by Amarika) moved to what is now known as Amarika village, possibly in the mid-1900s.² Participants noted that their forefathers moved upwards from the area now known as Etosha National Park, and that they were the first people to settle at Amarika, where they found suitable water for their animals and could access veldfood. The Ongandjera, Herero and Nama/Damara people moved in afterwards. The participants were not sure when the Herero and Nama/Damara moved in, but they were certain that the Ongandjera moved in first and established a cattle post. After the latter was established, many people moved in over time.

The homesteads of the Ovakwakuti residents were similar to those of the Ongandjera, with a traditional fence around the agricultural fields and houses. Most Ovakwakuti households had their own agricultural fields with traditional fences made of poles and sticks.

The village had the following infrastructure:

- a clinic with one nurse;
- a primary school from Grades 1-4;
- a church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) with a female Ovakwakuti pastor;
- a cemetery with no fence;
- a water desalination plant, sponsored by Kreditanstalt f
 ür Wiederaufbau (KfW a German development partner), with the Desert Research

Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) serving as the community facilitation consultancy;

- hand-dug open wells, from which cattle and other farm animals could drink – the water level seemingly being very high in this area where there were over 60 handdug wells;
- a two-track road connecting the village with the main tarred road; and
- veterinary services.

An open well dug in Amarika village

² It was difficult for the participants to determine the time, but some said it might have been during the time of what they referred to as "the Hitler war".

One borehole filled several tanks at the desalination plant with clean drinking water for human consumption. At the plant there were two taps for water collection. Participants noted that diarrhoea among children decreased after the plant was established. Water collected from the plant cost 25 cents per 25-litre container. The payment was made to one of the two caretakers responsible for the monitoring of plant operations.

The following infrastructure was unavailable in Amarika: a cellphone network; a police station; and electricity.

8.3.3 Okathakanguti

Okathakanguti village is located in Onesi Constituency, some 12 km west of Onesi settlement. Okathakanguti is an Oshiwambo name meaning 'a small pond where doves come to drink water'.

Okathakanguti is a fairly small community in terms of population size. The total population was 173 residents, living in 30 households, seven of which were San households (i.e. about 20% of all households) with a total population of 35 San, thus an average household size of five. The San participants estimated that there were 23 non-San households (Uukolonkadhi, Uukwambi and Kwanyama), with an approximate total population of 138 and an average household size of six.

According to the participants' oral narrations, the first San in the area lived in Oshihole village in the greater Onesi settlement area. As people from other ethnic groups (mainly Owambo) moved closer, the San moved westwards to Ombome B village. This movement is likely to have taken place before the war for Namibia's independence. Circa 1998, the adult and married offspring of the Ombome B San settlers moved away from their parents to Okathakanguti village to find more space for their households and to cultivate fields for their crops – however it should be noted that people moved to Okathakanguti village at different times and not en masse. The elderly people could remember that when they moved to Ombome B there was no one living in the Okathakanguti area. Therefore the San of Okathakanguti considered themselves to be the first settlers of this area.

There is no clinic, school, church or water point in Okathakanguti. The closest school is in Ombome B village (about 2 km away), the closest hospital is in Onesi and the closest clinic is at Eunda village (a three-hour walk from Okathakanguti). Okathakanguti residents get water from Ombome B.

8.3.4 Okapya

Okapya is 3 km from Oshikuku on the main tarred road between Oshikuku and Okalongo. The road divides the village into two, and participants regarded the two 'halves' as being separate communities despite their having the same name. Okapya is an Oshiwambo word meaning 'small crop field'.

The study participants estimated Okapya's total population to be 284, the largest proportion being from the Uukwambi group (63%). The total number of village households was estimated to be 43, of which 13 were San households, with an average of eight persons per household, which brings the total number of San to 104. The total non-San population was said to be 180, with approximately 30 households and an average of six persons per household. Of the 13 San households, five were female-headed, and female-headed households were larger in size than male-headed households.

Okapya's San population consisted mostly of younger married couples. Most moved into this area recently from neighbouring villages where their parents resided (probably in the early to mid-1990s).

As in Okathakanguti, residents moved there when they established their own families and needed more land for crop farming.

Okapya lacked certain infrastructure, i.e. a school, a clinic and a police station, but the residents could access these in nearby settlements and towns: the nearest clinic was at Omagalanga, about 4 km away; and the nearest hospital, school and police station were in Oshikuku, about 3 km away.

The village did have water taps, but most of the San could not afford to pay for the water, so instead they collected water from the open canal running from Outapi to Oshakati – despite their view that the canal was unhygienic due to the presence of garbage. The cellphone network was operational.

8.4 Research findings

8.4.1 Livelihoods and poverty

San in Omusati Region derive their livelihoods primarily from their own agricultural fields, piecework, self-employment (shebeen ownership), selling arts and crafts, and pensions (Old Age Pension and War Veteran Pension). Food aid supplies were important for three of the four participating villages, and veldfood was important for the San's food security in all four villages. Formal employment and remittances were not available for most San in the region, but child labour provided support to households to a limited extent.

The regional government did not consider the region's San to be marginalised, thus the San do not receive special support from government – i.e. through the San Development Programme (SDP) run by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) – nor from other institutions in terms of agricultural equipment, seeds and/or capacity building. The regional government recently developed detailed plans and projects to support the San communities, but a lack of funds and other competing priorities have curtailed the implementation of these.



Livelihood strategies

Subsistence agriculture

Almost all San in Omusati relied heavily on subsistence agriculture for household food consumption, and to some extent for trading. They have become accustomed to cultivating their own fields and harvesting crops to the extent that San households live from their crop produce for many months of the year. Land for crop farming was allocated by village headmen. Unlike the San in Ohangwena Region, San in Omusati regarded their own agricultural crop fields as an essential livelihood strategy.

The two main immediate challenges experienced in cultivation were the lack of draught-animal power and the lack of proper fencing around agricultural fields, resulting in the cultivation of insufficiently small parcels of land. The observed unequal power relations between San and Owambo residents in three of the four villages surveyed also contributed to these challenges. Unequal power relations between the main Owambo groups and San were evident in Okatseidhi, Okathakanguti and Okapya, but not as much in Amarika. The situation in Amarika was different because the majority of the residents were Ovakwakuti, whereas in the other three villages the majority were Owambo.

Piecework

Piecework and casual labour (e.g. herding cattle) were important livelihood strategies for generating cash income. Significant money was also generated by selling self-made products and through self-employment (owning shebeens) but not through formal employment. Very few of the discussion participants were formally employed either in or outside their villages, the exceptions being two caretakers responsible for the desalination plant in Amarika and youth from one household in Okapya. Piecework included erecting or repairing fences, cutting/chopping poles, collecting thatching grass, working in shebeens and doing domestic chores (fetching water, digging wells, herding livestock and cultivating crop fields).

Piecework done by men	Piecework done by women
Cutting/chopping poles	Running a cuca shop
Digging wells	Doing domestic chores
Working in crop fields	Working in crop fields
Herding cattle	Collecting thatching grass
Erecting or repairing fences	
Running a cuca shop	

(The cutting of poles for piecework is influenced by the rules, regulations and bylaws of both the Directorate of Forestry and local conservancies. Currently, poles can be cut only with a permit from the Directorate of Forestry. Such permits cost money, which renders them unaffordable for San, the result being a loss of piecework for them.)

Most piecework in this region, if not all, was undertaken by San for Owambo people, although very poor Owambo people also undertook piecework for other Owambo people in the region. Some San preferred to do piecework in the crop fields of Owambo farmers instead of working their own fields because this piecework provided an immediate return on their labour investment, whereas working one's own field did not immediately provide for the family – although it could provide food in the long term. Although piecework (together with other factors mentioned above) hampered the ability of San to prepare their own crop fields properly, it was needed for the San to survive.

The remuneration for piecework varied considerably, depending on the type of work. Payment for piecework usually took the form of cash, food, clothing or *otombo* (home-brewed beer). The payment method was normally agreed upfront between the work provider and the San worker. In some instances, piecework providers had failed to honour the payment agreement and had underpaid the San worker, and the worker had accepted less pay – a choice usually based on immediate needs. Some discussion participants noted that they were not happy to be paid with *otombo* as this meant that only they benefited rather than their family members. As one male participant said, "… we are not happy with *otombo* as payment, because when I drink *otombo*, my children go hungry." Often the Owambo people providing work would just decide to pay in *otombo* on the grounds that the workers were San.

Some San were self-employed, such as the men and women in Okatseidhi and Amarika who ran their own shebeens. They could usually turn over about N\$40 per day, but still needed to purchase sugar for producing the next *otombo* stock. In the rainy season, some San in Okapya caught fish in the *oshanas/okangos* (shallow depressions seasonally inundated by rain) for their own consumption and also to sell. Men usually made the fishing hooks, women and children fished, and children were usually responsible for selling the fish.

Many San men – especially those living in villages known as cattle posts (e.g. Amarika) – engaged in herding cattle, which was a more regular type of employment but still one based on an informal arrangement. Usually the payment was made on a monthly basis. Herding cattle could bring in N\$250-300 per month, which was an important contribution to household needs – but then, losing a cow could cost the worker a few months' salary.

The types of work that men did (e.g. herding cattle and digging wells) seemed to pay more than the types of work that women did (e.g. domestic chores).

Formal employment

In all four villages, only two participants in total were formally employed, and only one household had children working elsewhere. However, five people (two women and three men) of Okatseidhi and Amarika had been employed as soldiers in the past, and were now on War Veteran Pensions. Unemployment was a big concern for the San in all four villages. Throughout the discussions, participants continuously stressed the importance of formal employment. Participants in Okatseidhi, for example, were not expecting handouts from government, but rather were seeking employment opportunities so that they could take care of themselves. They also wanted to be better educated so that they could find employment. Participants in Okatseidhi village complained that employment opportunities were available only to Uukwaludhi people, and this was echoed in the other three villages. In Amarika, for example, participants cited jobs which had been created for San but were awarded to Uukwaludhi people instead. One such job was that of cleaner at the local clinic, which a San person could have done, but apparently San were not considered for the post. It was claimed that when government posts became vacant, the San were not informed about them, or they were given the wrong forms to fill in.

"It is just because Owambo want us [San] to remain poor. Those who are in top positions in government are Owambo, and only give jobs to Owambo and not other people. If you are San and you die, they do not care, because it is a San who died."

- Discussion participant

Discussion participants continuously complained about discrimination against them by Owambo people. They stated that they were currently undermined by Owambo people because the San were poor, and were regarded as *Kwangara*, an Oshiwambo term meaning 'feckless' and/or 'adrift' – 'those who do not think of tomorrow', or 'those who do not or cannot save for tomorrow', or 'those who neither have nor own anything', or 'people who live in the bush'. One San woman said that she has "not tasted Namibia's independence yet".

When asked what would need to happen to improve their situation, participants responded that they needed employment, good education, better healthcare, and better communication between the San and government. One respondent said, "Some of us are talented, even though we are not educated, we know how to work with our hands."

Old Age and War Veteran Pensions, and grants for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

Pension payments were regarded as an important source of income for some households, but the money was usually spent before it was received. The value of pension payments was reduced by debts at cuca shops (for food and *otombo*) and the fact that there were many members within a single household who all depended on pension payments as their only source of income. State pensioners received N\$550 per month (increased to N\$600 in April 2013). Most of this pension was spent on food for the household. Households with recipients of the Old Age Pension were normally regarded as better off than other San households, unless such a household had many members. Concerns were raised about the many elderly San who were not registered for pensions despite being eligible for this pension. The main challenge in respect of non-registration was a lack of vital national documentation or the presence of incorrect information on existing documentation. The same was true for many children who were eligible for the OVC Grant. A few San in Okatseidhi and Amarika (five in total) received a War Veteran Pension: a N\$50 000 once-off payout and N\$2 500 per month subsequently. These households were also considered better off.

Remittances

With the exception of one household in Okapya, none of the San households reported receiving remittances. This household's children worked in major towns and sent money, food and/or clothing home when possible. This was regarded as an important source of income. Other households either did not have family members employed elsewhere, or those employed elsewhere (a rare situation) did not earn enough to send money home.

Child labour

Child labour was another acceptable source of income at all four sites.³ San parents did not have a problem with their children working for Owambo families when such children were regarded as old enough for certain chores. Uukwaludhi households at all sites temporarily employed San children to look after cattle or do some other types of piecework, and either paid the child directly or paid the parents. San parents welcomed such opportunities as they contributed to the family's wellbeing. The types of work in which San children engaged, such as carrying water, were not regarded as harmful,

³ In Namibia, almost all working children live in rural areas and undertake labour in communal settings. The NPC noted in 2010 that, "The majority of child workers are engaged in reasonable household chores that are considered as part of children's family responsibilities." (NPC 2010: 45) Poverty and inequality are seen as primary causes of child labour in Namibia. The perception of child labour is very different for people at grassroots level compared with lawmakers. Some chores which some people regard as acceptable may be illegal under Namibian law.

even though some children were expected to carry heavy containers of water over long distances, which could physically harm a child. Some children worked when they were supposed to be in school. The National Planning Commission (NPC 2010: 45) concluded that there might not be a clear understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable labour for a child to undertake.

Arts and crafts

San women made traditional baskets, necklaces, arm bands and clothes to generate income, and San men made traditional knives, bows, arrows and wooden cups. However, few women and men at the study sites engaged in these activities due to the lack of markets in which to sell such products. Arts and crafts were usually sold or exchanged within the villages, or otherwise in larger nearby settlements such as Onesi, Tsandi, Etilyasa or the town of Okahao. External support for these art and craft income-generating activities was non-existent in Omusati Region.



Veldfood

A variety of veldfoods were gathered by the San at all four research sites (see Table 8.3). These foods were gathered in and around villages and eaten on a daily basis when in season. San people also sold mopane worms as an income-generating activity, or traded them for used clothing.

Food aid

Food aid, including drought relief food, food-for-work and food-for-cash initiatives, target the whole population of Omusati Region rather than only marginalised groups. Constituency offices had lists of people of various ethnicities who were in dire need of food supplies, but had yet to be reached through these initiatives. In three of the four villages, food aid in all its forms was not seen as an important food source supplement because its provision was unreliable and inconsistent. San participants noted that they never knew when food was supposed to be distributed, what types of food they were supposed to receive, or the quantity, therefore they could not rely on food support – but they did appreciate it when it came. By contrast, Okapya participants regarded food aid as important. They reported having received food two to three times over the last year – although the last supply had arrived in June 2012 – four months prior to the discussion). This included one 12.5 kg bag of maize-meal, one 750 ml bottle of cooking oil and two tins of fish. Mosimane and Mbandi (2009: 18) indicated that the Omusati conservancy communities regarded government food support programmes (e.g. drought relief) as an important livelihood source, so in respect of food security the conservancy communities were in a similar situation as the San of Okapya.

Livestock

Very few San households owned cattle, donkeys or goats, but many owned small numbers of chickens (although poor San households did not own these either). The Okatseidhi San community collectively owned four donkeys which the Deputy Prime Minister had donated to this community under the OPM's SDP, although the San residents appeared to have no access to them. San participants claimed that Owambo households had authority over the donkeys, although the San headman still looked after them. None of the other villages owned communal livestock.

Hunting

Hunting was no longer regarded as a livelihood strategy because of new laws to control the killing of wild animals. Though not necessarily happy with these laws, participants claimed that they adhere to them.⁴

Food security

Food insecurity among the San in Omusati was a concern (because of limited quantities of food), but was much better than in Ohangwena Region. This was mainly due to the fact that most Omusati San cultivated their own crop fields and thus were less dependent on external support for food security.

The number of meals that households ate depended largely on access to land, ability to cultivate the land accessed, and the household size and income. Most households reported that they ate two meals per day; some households who were regarded as very poor ate only one meal per day, and those who were regarded as well off ate three meals per day. Most of those who ate three meals per day were households with a recipient of the War Veteran Pension.

In most cases schoolgoing children had two meals per day: one meal at school and one at home in the evening. Those children who did not go to school and accompanied their parents to shebeens during the day were given *otombo* when hungry, as there was no food available at these shebeens.

Main food items

The San depended mostly on subsistence crops and veldfood for food security, but also accessed other types of foods by purchasing and/or exchanging labour or various commodities. The main crops cultivated by the San included *omahangu* (pearl millet), maize, sorghum, beans, groundnuts and watermelon. Mosimane and Mbandi (2009: 16) found that "San families are subsistence crop producers and seldom produce surplus for sale", and our research confirmed this finding, as many participants noted that their crop supplies ran out before the next harvesting season. Various types of veldfoods were available during the rainy season, and some were available throughout the year. Veldfoods were used as relish for *omahangu* and maize porridge, but were also eaten by themselves and were usually eaten on a daily basis, depending on availability and seasonality. However, certain wild fruits were not eaten on a daily basis because they were not collected regularly.

Access to food depended on various factors: the right circumstance for cultivation; access to social grants (e.g. the Old Age and War Veteran Pensions); piecework; and having a small informal business (shebeens or sales of arts and crafts and tools).

"The foods that we eat frequently are the foods that we grow in our fields. But the foods that we buy with money are the foods that we eat less frequently, because we can only buy when we can afford it."

- Participant in Okatseidhi





⁴ This reaffirms the claim cited in Mosimane and Mbandi (2009: 20): "The San claimed that since the establishment of the conservancy, quality of live [sic] has been declining because they are not allowed to hunt."

Table 8.3 shows the foods to which San across the four sites have access. The frequency at which different foods were eaten across the four sites is detailed in Table 8.4. It must be noted that not all San households within a village or across the four participating villages (or at the sites visited for other studies cited in this chapter, e.g. Mosimane and Mbandi 2009) were homogeneous, therefore frequencies differ per household depending on above-mentioned factors.

From the crop fields	Mostly bought	Veldfoods*	
<i>Omahangu</i> (pearl millet) Maize Beans Groundnuts Watermelon Pumpkin	Potatoes Onions Sweet potatoes Fruit Carrots Rice/macaroni Cabbage Meat Fish Cooking oil	Rainy season: Eshegele Omadhamba Eenyekulushe Mopane worms Okatalashe worms Omboga (spinach) Ombutu (tuber) Ombeke (berry) Eendunga (Makalani nuts) Eembanyu	Throughout the year: Enuwa (watermelon) Embibo (root) Ombu (berry) Enanga (melon seeds) Onyandi (berry)

Table 8.3: Foods available to the San in Omusat

* The assistant who checked the Oshiwambo terms for the veldfoods could not identify those which are not specified in brackets.

Table 8.4: Frequency of foods eaten at the four study sites in Omusati

	Okatseidhi	Amarika	Okathakanguti	Окаруа
Most frequent	Omahangu Sorghum Oshikundu (non-alcoholic drink made from fermented millet) Pumpkin Watermelon Groundnuts Beans	Omahangu Maize-meal Oshikundu Milk Otombo	Omahangu Sorghum Cooking oil Onona Emange	<i>Omahangu Oshikundu</i> Beans Cooking oil
		Beans <i>Okatalashe</i> (worms from kraal)	<i>Oshikundu</i> Beans	
	Maize-meal Meat Cabbage Potatoes Rice Onions Cooking oil		Maize-meal Traditional bread	Maize-meal Traditional bread
		Meat	<i>Onyandi</i> (berry) <i>Enuwa</i> (watermelon) <i>Ombu</i> (berry) <i>Eshegele</i> <i>Embibo</i> (root) <i>Eendunga</i>	Fish Milk Cooking oil Chicken meat Groundnuts Mopane worms <i>Ombu</i> Frogs <i>Omboga</i> (spinach) <i>Eshegele</i>
			Cabbage	
Least frequent	Sweet potatoes Carrots Fruits	Fruits	Fish Meat Bread	Meat (beef, rats, dog, donkey) Bread Cooking oil Biscuits <i>Euni</i> Tea/coffee Macaroni/rice

The staple food across all of the participating villages was *omahangu*, followed by sorghum and maize. *Omahangu* was said to be the main crop as it was eaten on a daily basis across the four villages as a soft or hard porridge mixed with different types of relish such as cabbage, meat or veldfoods. Maize-meal was eaten when distributed by government, but was also bought for consumption, especially at the end of the month when the social grants were paid out. Maize-meal was therefore not eaten frequently in the villages visited, especially in households



which did not have a regular cash income. Some San, especially some of those living in Amarika and villages surrounding Amarika, grew more maize than *omahangu* as maize was their personal preference, thus they ate more maize than San in other villages.

Beans, groundnuts, watermelon and pumpkin were eaten on a daily basis, or less frequently when availability was scarce. The participants in only two of the villages reported eating fruits, though infrequently (see Table 8.4 on the previous page), while participants in the remaining two did not report eating fruit at all. Vegetables were more likely to be eaten by schoolgoing children as part of the government school feeding scheme. Rice and macaroni were eaten by some households in one village only, but very rarely. Rice was sold at some of the local shebeens in the villages visited.

Meat was rarely eaten in these villages. It was only available when an animal was slaughtered for a funeral or wedding, or when a sick animal died and its meat was put on sale. Even if meat was sold locally, San sometimes did not have the necessary cash to buy it, but occasionally they would exchange *omahangu* for meat.

Fish was usually purchased in the main settlements, at a cost of between N\$5 and N\$10. In Okapya tins of fish were also received as food aid. Chicken meat was not eaten frequently as there were insufficient numbers of chickens. As one participant put it, "We will finish our chickens if we eat them frequently." Meat types eaten by San varied across the villages but included beef, goat, donkey, chicken, rats and dogs.

Milk was used for human consumption on a daily basis in Amarika, most likely because this village is a cattle post with many cattle. In the other villages milk was not mentioned as an important food item.

Cooking oil was used in three of the four villages. It was used on a daily basis by many households in Okathakanguti and Okapya, and less frequently in Okatseidhi. In Amarika it was not mentioned at all. San households in Okapya accessed cooking oil through food aid, and San at the other two villages produced their own oil from the marula fruit.

Households in Okathakanguti also accessed vegetables when they engaged in temporary work on the Etunda Irrigation Scheme in the northern part of Omusati Region (approximately 20 km away). This gave them access not only to money but also to maize and vegetables (e.g. cabbage).

Drinking *otombo* seemed to be an important leisure activity for almost all residents across the four participating villages, including both Owambo and San. Owambo and San families would spend many hours a day at the local shebeens drinking *otombo* and socialising with fellow villagers. While



some San would first work on their fields and then visit the shebeens, others would wake up in the morning and go straight there. This was observed by the data collection team on many occasions, but especially in Okatseidhi and Amarika.

All participants noted that they drank *otombo*, with the exception of a few San who were on treatment for tuberculosis. Several other homemade alcoholic drinks are consumed locally.⁵ *Otombo* was regarded as the strongest in terms of alcoholic content. Participants noted that they liked *otombo* as it was fermented with sugar, which gave them energy to work in their fields. Indeed, both male and female participants agreed that they could not work in their fields without drinking *otombo*: "When we are going to our field we are taking a calabash of *otombo* with – we need the energy. Also when you ask somebody to help you on your field you will just buy *otombo* for that person. We will work and drink together." Participants noted that they drank *otombo* as a "refreshment", to "talk a lot", to "feel happy" and to "feel totally good". They also indicated that when they are hungry, *otombo* can take away the hunger pangs: "Yes, of course, if I feel hungry and take *otombo*, I will not feel hungry until the next day."

Children in the villages also drank homemade alcoholic drinks. Participants reported that all children, except babies who were breastfeeding, drank homemade alcoholic drinks. In some villages children drank *okaketere* or *okanyatau* instead of *otombo*. *Oshikundu* (non-alcoholic) was actually the preferred drink for children who were hungry or needed refreshment. It is noteworthy that all participants agreed that it is not right for children to drink homemade alcoholic beverages.



Excessive consumption of homemade alcohol has historically impacted negatively on the ability of local people (both San and non-San) to undertake labour and spend the necessary amount of time on food production. Some of the village headmen in Omusati have responded to this problem by imposing rules, such as restricting the opening of shebeens to afternoon hours. In some villages (e.g. in Amarika) the headman had also invited the police to close the shebeens when important community meetings were being held, to ensure that people attended the meetings instead of visiting the shebeens.

⁵ Okanyatau, mapwaka, epwaka and okaterere.

Challenges to food security

Most of the San reported that food from crop harvests was insufficient in supply and rarely lasted until the next harvest. The main challenge in respect of the San's crop fields was the absence of fences. Most complained that their crop fields were frequently destroyed by the livestock belonging to Owambo families because of the lack of proper fences. San indicated that they lacked the tools and materials (e.g. wire) that they needed to construct fencing.

The second main challenge was the lack of agricultural equipment and livestock to support crop farming. San did not earn sufficient income to purchase ploughs, hoes and other crop-farming equipment. Those who cultivated their fields normally borrowed equipment from Owambo families, but the equipment could only be borrowed once Owambo families had already cultivated their own fields, leaving very little time for San households to prepare their own fields (or no time at all). In Okatseidhi it was said that the community donkeys were used by Owambo families first, leaving little or no time for the San to use them. Another challenge was manpower: young San sometimes preferred to do piecework for the Owambo people rather than working in their parents' fields or building/repairing fences because they received immediate payment. Other threats to good harvests were droughts and pests.

Access to land for crop farming was not a challenge for most San as land was readily available on request. Nevertheless, some San reported an inability to pay for such land: in Amarika, some Ovakwakuti people had difficulties accessing fields because they could not pay the required once-off payment of N\$600 per field to the Ovakwakuti headman.

Coping mechanisms in time of food shortages

The most important coping mechanism, as mentioned above, was the consumption of *otombo* and other alcoholic beverages in order to satisfy hunger in times of food shortages.

Despite this, residents would ask the village headmen for food support during these times, and in turn he would ask the constituency councillors for support. The councillors' office seemed to be responsive, but only to those in dire need. It is assumed that this was because of limited supplies of food aid and in order to avoid increasing dependency among people.

Begging for food was seen as a last resort. Some San households resorted to begging only once all of their food had run out and when veldfoods were not available. Those begging approached Owambo households because San households did not have much to share. It was difficult to determine how often begging took place because circumstances differed from one household to the other and depended on their needs. Begging was regarded as a survival strategy only; it was not a preferred means for achieving a livelihood.

Perceptions of poverty and wealth

The San's perceptions of poverty and wealth were determined by means of a participatory approach (described in detail in Part 1 of this report), and were based on local attributes of wealth. Indicators of wealth were employment, education, livestock, land, agricultural equipment, social grants and businesses. Remittances played a role in only one village. Indicators of wealth were, inter alia, food, clothing, household goods and housing.

Village	Very rich	Rich	Middle	Poor	Very poor	Total
Okatseidhi	5	3	3	8	11	30
Amarika	0	7	0	21	11	39
Okathakanguti	0	0	0	1	9	10
Okapya	0	0	2	13	1	16
Total	5	10	5	43	32	95

Table 8.5: Number of San households per wealth category (total 95 households)

Most of the San households (78.9%) across the four participating villages were regarded as being 'poor' (45.2%) or 'very poor' (33.8%). It is noteworthy that 5% of the San households in Omusati were regarded as 'very rich' and 10% as 'rich', compared with Ohangwena Region where no San household was regarded as falling within either of these two categories. The remaining 5% of San households in Omusati were regarded as in the 'middle' (somewhere between rich and poor). The factors contributing to San being either 'rich' or 'very rich' were formal employment and being a war veteran (see Table 8.6 on the next page), and most of the San households regarded as 'very rich' were in receipt of War Veteran Pensions.⁶ These people could also have crop fields with fences, tools, enough food, some livestock, good clothes and good hygiene. The other attributes for 'very rich' (see Table 8.6), such as possessing a brick or zinc house, many livestock, a good education and formal employment, were relevant to Owambo households primarily and not to San households in the 'very rich' category. Okatseidhi and Amarika were the only villages with 'rich' and 'very rich' San people, mainly because of War Veteran Pensions.



⁶ Recipients of the War Veteran Pension were regarded as 'very rich' and 'rich' because they received N\$2500 per month (which San regard as a lot of money), even if some became 'poor' due to spending most of their money on alcohol.

Households regarded as 'poor', 'very poor' and in the 'middle' shared the following common attributes: crop fields with no fences, limited to no harvest, no livestock, no brick or zinc house, no car and no beds. Some of the 'very poor' households received an Old Age Pension, but these households were still regarded as 'very poor' because of their large size. For example, one pensioner living in Okathakanguti had 13 grandchildren whom she looked after using only her pension. Disability Grants also separated 'poor' from 'very poor' households – showing the importance of social security services provided by the state for those in need. All San households except for the 'very poor' ones owned chickens. It should be noted that for participants at Okapya, general hygiene was considered an attribute of wealth for the San. They pointed out that 'very poor' people did not have good hygiene, while the opposite was true of 'rich' and 'very rich' people. It is also noteworthy that the participants of one community (Okapya) included "respect" as an indicator of wealth, stating that people who were 'very poor' were disrespected by other community members.

Very rich	Rich	Middle	Poor	Very poor
Formally employed		Piecework	Piecework (one person employed at desalination plant, earning N\$200/month	No piecework, or a few have some piecework
War Veteran Pension	War Veteran Pension (but spent too much on alcohol)			
Crop fields with wire fences	Crop fields with fences	Crop fields with no fences	Crop fields with no fences	Crop fields with no fences
Agricultural tools	Agricultural tools	Hoes	No agricultural tools	No agricultural tools
Harvest lasts a year	Harvest lasts a year		Limited harvest	No harvest, and beg for food
Many cattle	Few cattle	No cattle	No cattle	No cattle
Many goats	Few goats	No goats	No goats	No goats
Donkeys	Donkeys	No donkeys	No donkeys	No donkeys
Pigs				
Chickens	Chickens	±3 chickens	±3 chickens	No chickens
Brick house	Brick house	No brick house	No brick house	Live with other people
Zinc house		Zinc house	No zinc house	
Car (maybe two)	Car	No car	No car	No car
Beds	Some have beds	No beds	No beds	No beds
Good clothes		Clothes and shoes	Old clothes and shoes	Torn clothes
	Shebeen	Shebeen	No shebeen	No shebeen
	Old Age Pension	Old Age Pension	No Old Age Pension, or only a few*	No Old Age Pension, or only a few*
		Sell mopane worms	Sell mopane worms	Do not sell mopane worms
			Get disability grants	
Good education	Good education		Poor education	Poor education
				Large families
		Remittance	Remittance (Okapya)	No remittance
Good hygiene			Better hygiene	Poor hygiene
				Disrespected by others (Okapya)

* Those who do not have the necessary documentation to prove their age do not receive this pension.

San participants categorised almost all Owambo households as 'very rich' or 'rich'; only a few were regarded as belonging to the 'middle' category or the 'poor' category, and no Owambo household was regarded as being 'very poor'.

The San at the research sites generally perceived themselves as being similar to other San in Omusati Region with regard to wealth status. Remarkably, they were of the opinion that they were worse off in comparison to San in other regions who received external support from government. This is interesting because San in Omusati were observably better off than most of the San in Ohangwena Region where extensive government support was provided to them. Some were aware of the external support to certain San communities in Ohangwena Region and could speak informatively about the houses and agricultural equipment provided to those communities.

San in Omusati appeared to be better off than San in Ohangwena because the following factors:

- security on the land on which they lived and cultivated;
- access to more food items as they cultivated their own fields;
- access to more money because they could use produce from fields to trade for clothes or other commodities;
- more seemed to have access to War Veteran Pensions; and
- they owned more small stock and more chickens.

To the research team it appeared that San in Omusati Region were living in more hygienic conditions because of the types of homesteads which they had built for themselves. Also, their children were dressed in clothes that appeared to be of better quality. As compared with Ohangwena, more San children in Omusati enrolled in primary school, more graduated to secondary school and more completed secondary school. The San in Omusati were also less dependent on external support for their livelihood.

Very few San had experienced upward social mobility, although the Old Age Pension and War Veteran Pension did provide the means for some to move up the social ladder. Five San in Okatseidhi had moved from being regarded as 'poor' to being 'rich' or 'very rich' because of the War Veteran Pension. They received a once-off payment of N\$50 000 and a monthly pension payout of N\$2 500. These factors are outside the influence of individuals, however, meaning that it is impossible for people not receiving these pensions to become better off of their own volition. Participants also gave examples of people who moved back and forth from one wealth category to the next.

"My husband was working and with his money we used to buy our food and paid for school fees. During that time we were regarded as poor. Then we received my husband's war veteran payout and pension and became rich. But now we are not rich, because my husband drinks a lot and is not working anymore."

- Female participant in Okatseidhi

Another example was that of a San woman who had started to receive a War Veteran Pension and was regarded as 'rich'. She started eating meat and drinking every day. She had many goats and donkeys, but these herds did not last because she ate meat often. Ultimately, by the time of fieldwork, she was considered to be 'poor'. This implies that "using money wisely" is also regarded as a factor influencing wealth – and the same applies for many study sites in other regions. A factor that caused people to move downwards in terms of social mobility was age, since elderly people could not look after their livestock anymore, with the result that they lost their herds. None of the households had moved upwards socially because of external support from government or NGOs. Most of the participants identified the main causes of poverty as being a lack of education and a lack of employment opportunities for San in Omusati. This view differed to that of the Ohangwena participants, most of whom who said that a lack of external support was the main factor contributing to poverty.

8.4.2 Access to land

All San in the four participating communities stated that they had access to land like all other people in the region.⁷ Most of the San in Amarika, Okatseidhi, Okathakanguti and Okapya actually had land for crop farming and building homesteads.⁸ However, there were a few in Amarika who reported that they could not afford to pay the required N\$600 to the San (Ovakwakuti) headman for the land and therefore remained landless.⁹ Other landless San in the four villages indicated that they had not requested land because they lacked the necessary agricultural equipment and livestock to make proper use of it.

All the San interviewed lived in communal villages within the regional boundaries. All focus group discussions found that the San were the first inhabitants of the land on which they were currently living. In three of the four participating communities (Okapya being the exception), the land on which the San lived fell under the jurisdiction of San headmen. San headmen in these three villages had jurisdiction over decision making within the village boundaries, including allocation of land. However, the San headmen were presided over by Owambo senior headmen who reported to the kings of the respective Owambo groups.

8.4.3 Identity, culture and heritage

The San in Omusati have been integrated into the Owambo culture to such an extent that San people across the four participating villages – and many of the communities in the conservancies – have adopted aspects of Owambo culture, such as language, dress codes, names, agricultural practices, dwelling-construction practices, economic activities, politics and religion. Mixed relationships and marriages are fairly common.

The following are the cultural changes noted in the study:

- All San spoke Oshiwambo dialects only; none of the participants remembered the name of the San language spoken by their ancestors, and none spoke a San language.
- All San had adopted Oshiwambo names; none had San names.
- The architecture of San homes and homesteads was exactly the same as that of the Owambo people.
- Gathering of veldfoods was decreasing.
- Hunting was not practised, primarily because it is against the law.
- Nomadic movements were not taking place.
- San wedding and funeral ceremonies were no longer practised. Owambo dances were practised but not San dances.
- Many women dressed in traditional Owambo dresses.

⁷ This is consistent with statements from the San living in Uukolonkadhi and Sheya Uushona conservancies (Mosimane and Mbandi 2009: 15).

⁸ Please note that this means that the San paid a certain amount for the plots on which they live and cultivate, but that they do not have legal documentation proving that the land belongs to (or is 'owned' by) them.

⁹ According to the regulations of the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, the payment of N\$600 to the headman or traditional authority is illegal.



The San in Omusati were usually referred to as *Kwangara* (see page 300 for an explanation of this term). However, many San did not appreciate being referred to as such due to the negative connotations attached to the word when referring to an individual. Our discussions made evident that 'Kwangara' is a social label that identifies people of a lower socio-economic class generally, rather than people of an ethnic group with cultural and linguistic markers. Many San indicated that they would refer to themselves as Ongandjera, Uukwaludhi, etc. when identifying themselves to people outside their respective villages – in Oshakati or Okahao for example. San participants also referred to themselves as Ayelele, an Oshiwambo term meaning 'light-skinned people', which was said to be a new term that the local government officials used. San preferred this term because they regarded it as less derogative – however this term did not come up in discussions unless the researchers referred to it. Furthermore, the participants were aware of the word 'San', but would not refer to themselves as such – nor, indeed, did they refer to themselves as 'Bushmen'. For example, participants in Okathakanguti noted that they were not Bushmen, as the real Bushmen lived in Tsumkwe, were light in skin colour and spoke a different language. Remarkably, San in Okatseidhi indicated that although they could not speak the language of the San in Tsumkwe, and had never even met them, they still felt a "connection" with them.

8.4.4 Relationships with other groups

The main groups with whom San in Omusati have relationships are the Ongandjera, Uukwaluudhi, Kwanyama, Uukolonkadhi, Omabalantu and Uukwambi (all Oshiwambo-speaking groups), and to a lesser extent the Herero, Himba and Nama/Damara. This section focuses mainly on relationships between San and Owambo people, as the latter constitute the vast majority of the region's inhabitants. Relationships between San and Owambo people take a number of forms: employer-employee, sexual partners, spouses, fellow villagers, fellow drinkers and fellow committee members.

San relationships with Owambo people are currently essential to the survival of San people because the Owambo provide the San with piecework, food, transportation, communications, leadership and support for funerals and weddings, as well as support in times of crisis. However, the study found such relationships to be highly exploitative, with San finding themselves in subordinate positions at all levels. Owambo people often treated San in the same way that people generally treat children – as people who did not know much and/or could not take care of themselves. San were looked upon as drunks who were dependent on Owambo people for their survival.

As in other regions, many San in Omusati raised their concern about discrimination against San in relation to job applications. They perceived their chances of employment as being minimal, even if they had the same skills as Owambo applicants. Owambo people were mostly the ones in charge of

employing others in the region, and participants gave examples of nursing study and employment opportunities at Tsandi District Hospital being given to Owambo people when they could have been given to San. It was said that San frequently registered for employment in the Namibian Police or Namibian Defence Force, but never heard from the registrars again. San people had therefore lost all hope of finding full-time employment. Some indicated that the only way for their families to improve their status was for their children to complete secondary school successfully and to then try to study further.

In Omusati, both male and female San engaged in 'romantic' and sexual relations with Owambo females and males. There were many examples of San males who married Owambo females, and San females who married Owambo males. In Ohangwena, on the other hand, it was rare to find a San male in a 'romantic' or sexual relationship with an Owambo female, whereas some Owambo men in Ohangwena did have such a relationship with San women. Traditional practices with regard to pregnancies out of wedlock were not adhered to when the pregnant female was San. A female San participant noted that it was Uukwaludhi tradition for the male's family to pay the female's family when the male impregnated the female outside of marriage, but no such payment was made when an Uukwaludhi male impregnated a San female outside of marriage. When asked why, one participant said, "Just because we are San and they do not see us as people equal to them."

8.4.5 Education

Most people (87%) in Omusati Region have attended school, and most (88%) are literate (NSA 2013: 18).

Early childhood development

None of the four participating villages had a kindergarten. Children in Okathakanguti could attend the kindergarten in Ombome B village (about 2 km away), which was said to charge N\$50 per child per term. As most San parents could not afford this payment, they did not send their children there.

Primary education

It was not problematic for San parents to enrol and keep their children in lower-primary grades. Those who dropped out of primary school in Okatseidhi reportedly did so due to ill health, and mental health problems were said to be the main reason – a reason cited numerous times.

Secondary education

In Okatseidhi the team met a young San woman who was very enthusiastic about life, completed Grade 12 three years before our visit, and was now looking for opportunities to further her studies. Most San children were not as fortunate as this woman, however, and did not have the opportunity to complete Grade 12. As was the case in other regions, one of the major challenges to secondary education for the San of Omusati was that the secondary schools were generally far from the San villages. Therefore, to access secondary education, San children had to move from their homes and live with other (non-San) families or in school hostels. Parents of San children were very concerned about this. One respondent asked, "Is there no one who can help us with this situation? Can you please tell this to the relevant ministries?" Most San children of Omusati moved in with Owambo families, and some moved in with Herero families – as was the case with children of Okatseidhi village. In most cases, reportedly, Owambo and Herero host families treated the San children well,

but concerns were raised about some San children being treated unfairly. Examples were given of some guardians who kept San children at home to work while their own children went to school. Most of the San children who went off to live with other families returned home without completing their secondary schooling, for the following reasons:

- bullying by other children and in some cases by teachers;
- unfair treatment by host families;
- homesickness;
- not fitting in;
- not having a school uniform (which is not compulsory for attending school, but children fear discrimination when they do not have a uniform);
- inability to pay school fees;
- teenage pregnancy;
- having to work to support the family;
- no enforcement by parents;
- too old for the grade;
- ill health; and
- not progressing well, or failure.

San parents also raised their concern that not one of the teachers in the region was San. Discussion participants, especially in Okatseidhi, continuously indicated that they needed San teachers because San teachers understand San parents and learners better than non-San teachers do.

Tertiary education

Reportedly none of the San in Omusati had ever attended a tertiary educational institution, and there were no such institutions in this region at the time of the fieldwork. Unfortunately participants had no information about support available to San students through the OPM's SDP.

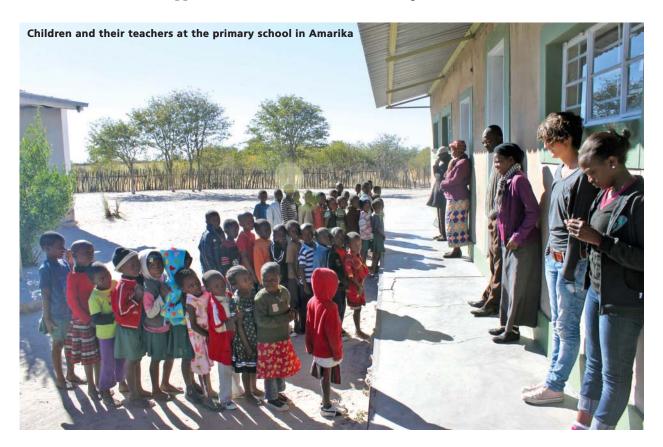


Table 8.7 provides a summary of information on education as reported by study participants in the four participating villages.

Village	Distance to primary school	School fees (de facto)	Reasons for San learners dropping out of school	Importance of education
Okatseidhi	Less than 200 m	N\$6 (P)	 School (Grade 7) too far away Ill health Cannot afford the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) – to complete Grade 10 Not allowed to return to Grade 10 after failure due to Ministry of Education (MoE) policy at the time Teenage pregnancy Mistreatment by Owambo host family Did not want to proceed 	Very important
Amarika	Less than 200 m		 Distance to secondary school Cannot afford school fees 	Very important
Okathakanguti	Around 2 km – in Ombome B	N\$50 (K) N\$30 (P) N\$90 (S)	 Long distance Cannot afford school uniform Cannot afford school fees Looking after cattle (herding) Cannot afford transportation Over age for grade Teenage pregnancy No enforcement by parents 	Very important
Okapya	Around 3 km – in Oshikuku		 Cannot afford school fees Cannot afford school uniform Orphaned Over age for grade Parents do not know why children dropped out – no motivation Need to look for jobs Need to look for food Weak in school Teenage pregnancy 	Very important

* P = primary school, S = secondary school and K = kindergarten

School feeding scheme

The school feeding scheme was very important for San children because this gave them their second or third meal each day (see subsections on food security and main food items, page 302ff). All primary schools had a school feeding scheme. San children attending secondary school ate in the school hostels or the homes of their host families.

A bag of maize-meal distributed as part of the school feeding scheme 12,5 kg nett AOT FOR SALE WITE of MANUFECTURING BATCH ND: 12 p10

Importance of education

"Education brings development, when one is educated, she/he will know how to develop themselves. Everything good in this world is brought about by education. We are like this because we are uneducated."

- Discussion participant in Amarika

Most participants linked higher education with better employment opportunities, noting that children who finished secondary school and tertiary education could get better-paid jobs than those with only primary education. They believed that a person who completed Grade 12 could become a nurse, government minister, president of the country, councillor, teacher or computer technician, or they could do office work. They also stated that those with only primary education would only be herders, do domestic work, work in shebeens or become shop assistants. However, as already noted, participants had concerns that even San children with Grade 12 would have difficulties in finding employment due to what they described as discrimination, favouritism and corruption. All participants noted that it was the responsibility of parents to send children to school and to ensure that they remained in school; it was not the choice of the child. However, some parents were not able to motivate their children to remain in school.

In sum, most San children in Omusati went to primary school, a few proceeded to secondary school, a few completed Grade 12, but none (by the time of our visit) had ever progressed to tertiary level. On average, according to our observations and in contrast to many other regions, San women tended to have higher levels of education than San men. This was also reflected in their being more vocal than men in the discussions, and more eager than men to respond to questions.

8.4.6 Health

Table 8.8 provides a health summary for the four Omusati sites visited.

Information sought	Okatseidhi	Amarika	Okathakanguti	Okapya
Main diseases (according to participants)	 Tuberculosis (TB) HIV/AIDS Malaria Diarrhoea Chicken pox STIs Malnutrition Toothache Lymphatic swellings 	TBHIV/AIDSMalaria	 TB HIV/AIDS Malaria Diarrhoea Polio Headaches 	• TB • HIV/AIDS • Malaria
Main illnesses for children*	 Chicken pox Mental problems Epilepsy (probably) Toothaches Sores on the body 	MalariaDiarrhoea	 Malaria Diarrhoea 	MalariaDiarrhoea
Access to health services	Clinic in village	Clinic in village	 3-hour walk to Etunda 4-hour walk to Onesi	Nearby – Oshikuku District Hospital or Omakalanga clinic
Payment required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ambulance/transport	None	None	None	Sometimes ambulance available
Traditional medicine	No	No	No	Yes
Where do women deliver?	At home	At home	At home	Oshikuku District Hospital
Alcohol/violence	Serious concern	Serious concern	Serious concern	Serious concern
Alcohol and children	Yes, drink traditional alcoholic beverages	Yes, drink traditional alcoholic beverages	Yes, drink traditional alcoholic beverages	Yes, drink traditional alcoholic beverages
Drug use	None	None	None	None
Outside health support	None	None	Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS); Total Control of the Epidemic (TCE) programme	Catholic Aids Action (CAA) community health workers

Table 8.8: Summary of information on San health in Omusati

* Almost all San children had received the standard vaccinations provided by government.

Main illnesses

Across the four sites, the illnesses most commonly mentioned as illnesses which are serious and could cause death were tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS, malaria and diarrhoea.

Most San could speak informatively about the causes of TB, methods to prevent it, and treatment for this illness. TB infections were attributed to alcohol abuse, people coughing close to each other, and people not having enough blankets (in that people share blankets and thus sleep very close to each other, thereby increasing the risk of infection).¹⁰ Participants in Omusati noted that many lives were lost due to TB because of the failure of patients to adhere to their medication regimen, mainly due to alcohol abuse.

HIV and AIDS were regarded as serious problems because many San men and women in the region have reportedly died of AIDS. Participants could speak informatively about basic infection transmission and infection prevention methods. They noted that children can also be infected via mother-to-child-transmission, and that both boy and girl children were equally vulnerable to this form of transmission.

Most participants across the four village were informed about malaria transmission and methods to prevent this illness. Participants noted that many people have passed away because of malaria. The main challenge was a lack of mosquito nets. Households compensated for this lack by using herbs and/or smoke from burning certain types of wood to keep mosquitoes away.

Diarrhoea was a concern in only two villages (Okatseidhi and Okathakanguti), mainly because of hygiene and water quality. This illness had been a concern in Amarika in the past, but the problem was solved when the desalination plant was constructed, resulting in residents having access to safe water. Other illnesses regarded as serious (but which did not cause death) and illnesses regarded as not serious are detailed in Table 8.9.

A lack of sanitation facilities was not mentioned as a challenge. All of the San at these sites used the bush as their primary sanitation facility. In contrast to the San in Ohangwena, those in Omusati did not mention a lack of soap for washing their bodies or clothes as a factor contributing to poor health.

Table 8.9: Status of illnesses based on participants'opinions at the four Omusati sites

Serious illnesses, but do not cause death	Not serious illnesses, but occurring frequently
Eye diseases	Cholera
Toothache	Body aches
Chest pains	Flu
Gout	
Ear problems	

Main diseases for children

The main illnesses experienced by children were malaria, diarrhoea, chicken pox, mental health problems, epilepsy, toothache and body sores. Malaria in children was caused by children not being covered with blankets in households which did not have mosquito nets. Malnutrition was not mentioned as a concern, except in Okatseidhi. The research team did not see any obvious signs of malnutrition.

¹⁰ No one mentioned smoking and sharing of pipes and cigarettes as a transmission method as in Ohangwena. It should be noted that very few San participants in Omusati were smokers, an observation which differed markedly to that in Ohangwena where most participants smoked tobacco.

Pregnancy

Pregnant San women usually gave birth at home, but some did visit health facilities a few days after giving birth when they were physically strong to make the journey. Delivery of babies by (experienced) midwives in villages was a common practice for all households in the four villages. The only challenge mentioned with regard to home delivery was the lack of gloves (excluding other challenges in emergency cases). Some pregnant women who lived close to hospitals (e.g. the Oshikuku District Hospital) used the hospital facilities for delivery if they had money. For women at most sites, a lack of access to transportation services (ambulance, public transport or private vehicle) and/or a cellphone network presented serious problems if they needed to go to a hospital while pregnant.

Taking care of the sick at household level

Taking care of the sick at household level seemed to be the responsibility of both males and females in three villages; in Amarika the participants said that it was mostly the responsibility of the women (i.e. mainly the mothers). Participants said that when a child had to be taken to the hospital, the mother accompanied the child as it was too expensive for both parents to do so.

Violence

Physical violence between men and men and men and women was regarded as a serious problem across three of the sites; in Okapya it was said that *otombo* drinking and violence were not prevalent. Other stakeholder interviewees in the region also considered violence to be a major concern. Verbal and physical fights seemed to occur mostly when San people were drunk. Physical fights could be fist fights, knife fights and fights using other objects as weapons. Some said that violence was exacerbated by poverty and a lack of employment, for example one person may want to borrow money from another, the other might refuse and a fight would break out as a consequence.

"People even fight over *otombo*. One person can grab a glass of *otombo* from another because he is hungry or thirsty because he has no money to buy *otombo*, and this can cause a fight."

- Female participant in Amarika

Fights sometimes occurred at home, but most of the time they took place at shebeens. Fights at home occurred when there was no food to eat; spouses usually fought over money, especially when men spent their money at the shebeen.

Community institutional structures to deal with violence were absent in all four villages, therefore violence and disputes were dealt with by residents. Most village headmen seemed not to be actively involved in resolving conflicts or crises among San community members.

Access to health facilities

Two of the four villages had a clinic within the village boundaries, one used the clinic in another village about 3 km away, and people in the fourth village had to walk for 3-4 hours to reach the closest clinic. Most illnesses could thus be dealt with by the clinics – to the extent that they were equipped to deal with particular health problems. The challenge was accessing a hospital when people had more serious illnesses, due to distance and the lack of transportation. Ambulance services were not available at three of the villages; at Okapya an ambulance was sometimes available.



Transport for seriously sick San people was a major challenge in Amarika, Okatseidhi and Okathakanguti. Okapya was close to the Oshikuku District Hospital, thus transport was not problematic. In Amarika, a lack of private or public transport was given as the reason for limited access to hospitals. In addition, if transport was available, the costs limited access to it. San in Amarika had to pay between N\$400 and N\$500 one way to be taken to the closest hospital using private transport. If such transport was unavailable or someone could not afford it, a donkey-cart or even a horse (if the person was physically strong) was used in Amarika. Participants reported that one sick person had died on a donkey-cart on the way to Okahao. Transport in Okatseidhi became more difficult during the rainy season because the main gravel road was usually flooded by rainwater. Another main challenge was the lack of cellphone networks in three of the four villages, preventing people from calling for help when in desperate need.

Cost of health services to the San

Government policy is that public health services must be accessible to all Namibians. Although payment is required in the form of a N\$4 fee for clinics and N\$9 for hospitals, certain exceptions are made. (Costs are higher for certain situations, e.g. it costs N\$20 to deliver a baby at the Oshikuku District Hospital and N\$20 to access the Onesi Hospital on weekends.) Vulnerable people such as OVC, pensioners and marginalised groups (e.g. the San) are supposed to be exempted from paying health facility fees as per a policy directive. However, none of the San in Omusati reported that they had been exempted from paying fees; rather they indicated that they could not afford to pay fees. On the other hand, some of the other stakeholder interviewees raised concerns that some San spent days at local shebeens purchasing *otombo*, and then did not have money for accessing health facilities. San people normally borrowed money from Owambo people when they desperately needed to visit the clinic and did not have the funds needed.

Traditional medicine

Participants in Okapya mentioned the use of traditional medicine (e.g. herbs from the bush) to treat some diseases. For example, they boiled eucalyptus leaves or the roots of the *ohama* tree to prepare a tea for coughing children. Reportedly, San did not visit traditional healers, and furthermore some participants noted that they had lost the knowledge of using traditional medicine.

External health support

Limited external health support was provided to the four communities, with only two reporting that they received health support – from the Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS), Catholic Aids Action (CAA) and/or the Total Control of the Epidemic (TCE) programme. CAA trained community health workers to support communities and provide HIV/AIDS counselling, and TCE provided support with HIV testing and condom distribution.

8.4.7 Gender

As was found in Ohangwena Region, San men and women tended to have distinct tasks, but also shared some tasks. Tasks carried out primarily by females could also be carried out by males and vice versa (should such a need arise). Table 8.10 gives an indication of gender-specific tasks.

Tasks undertaken by women	Tasks undertaken by men	Tasks undertaken by both
Fetching water	Herding livestock	Collecting veldfood
Collecting firewood for cooking; cooking; cleaning the house; doing the laundry	Piecework: herding livestock, collecting poles for house construction, working in crop fields	Looking after the sick
Looking after children	Working in crop fields	Taking care of sick children (but normally women accompanied sick children to health facilities)
Planting seeds, protecting crops		Harvesting
Piecework: domestic work, collecting thatching grass for house construction, working in crop fields		Piecework: working in crop fields

Table 8.10: Household tasks of San men and women in Omusati

Unlike the participants in Ohangwena, San female participants in Omusati were more active than male participants across the four sites. Females were generally very assertive in making their voices heard in the discussions, and were not afraid to raise complicated issues. Younger females were especially assertive, whereas the younger males were less forthcoming. Women with a secondary education were more vocal and more assertive than those with lower levels of education. This could be an indication that higher levels of education contribute to women's emancipation from traditional or stereotypical gender roles.

The seating arrangements in the discussion meetings were such that women and men sat together, i.e. women and men did not sit in separate groups as they did in Ohangwena. However, in Okatseidhi, where women were especially outspoken, the men tended to be seated more towards the back of the participant group, and the women tended to be in the front.

In three of the four villages, inheritance was arranged on an equal basis, meaning that either a widow or a widower was left with household belongings and assets for continuing to make a living after the death of their spouse. Only in one village (Okapya) was it noted that on a husband's death, his family would inherit the cows, and the crop fields and household goods would be left to his wife and children – an arrangement also applying in Ohangwena. This arrangement is based on the perception that the husband is the owner of all household belongings and assets, thus important property belonging to him should revert to his family on his death.

Table 8.11: Inheritance	arrangements	in	Omusati
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When a husband dies			lies	When a wife dies		
Village	Wife and children inherit	Husband's family inherits	Both inherit	Husband and children inherit	Wife's family inherits	Both inherit
Okatseidhi						
Amarika						
Okathakanguti						
Okapya						

The cell shading indicates who inherits when a husband dies and when a wife dies at the applicable site.

8.4.8 Political participation and representation

Traditional authorities

The San and all other groups residing in the rural parts of Omusati Region abide by the leadership structures in their respective villages. As mentioned previously, three of the four villages visited were headed by San headmen under the respective Owambo traditional authority (TA) structures. Discussion participants indicated that having a San headman gave them an increased sense of belonging,



self-confidence and the authority to speak for themselves. However, local politics resulted in San headmen not being respected by many Owambo residents as the rightful leaders of their villages. One of the villages (Okapya) was headed by an Owambo headman, but a San man had been the deputy until he passed away. In all villages the San populations were smaller than the Owambo populations (except in Amarika whose residents were mostly Ovakwakuti), but the villages were still headed mainly by San headmen. By contrast, none of the Ohangwena villages in which San resided were headed by San headmen.

Participants stated that San headmen attempted to solve village-related problems locally. The local traditional court was used in cases of theft and other crimes. When such problems could not be resolved locally, they were referred to senior headmen, all of whom were Owambo. If the problem could not be solved at this level, it was referred to the Deputy of the King, who consulted the King for a solution. If necessary, San headmen, like their Owambo counterparts, could consult directly with the King.

At village level, the traditional court is led by the village headman, who selects a small group of people who support him in hearing a disciplinary case. If this court finds an accused person guilty, it normally imposes a fine as punishment. If the guilty person does not pay the fine, the case is reported to the police and the civil courts, and normally bail is set for the person. Participants noted that Owambo people could easily afford to pay the bail instead of the fine – meaning that Owambo people under the jurisdiction of San headmen would rather pay bail than the fine levied by the traditional court. Participants also said that San found it difficult to attend court cases at civil courts because they are located at some distance from their villages, and this results in court cases between San and Owambo people being cancelled. Such circumstances could weaken the authority of local traditional courts and the authority of local San headmen.

San headmen found it extremely difficult to manage Owambo residents of the villages under their jurisdiction, especially the Owambo of Okatseidhi and Okathakanguti. In these two villages, it was said, Owambo residents continuously disregarded the authority of the San headmen, making the village administration extremely difficult for the headmen. Both of these headmen cited several examples of how Owambo residents showed their disrespect. The Okatseidhi San, including the village headman, felt hopeless and powerless under the Uukwaludhi people.

"The Uukwaludhi people undermine us, because our headman does not have a good house, education and cattle. The police comes here, and tells them that they must respect the headman, but as soon as the police leave, they continue to disrespect the headman. The nurse one day told the San headman, you go away from here, you are Kwangara, and you do not even know where the councillor's office is."

- Female participant in Okatseidhi

Participants in Okathakanguti said that many of the Owambo residents were actively campaigning to have the San headman replaced by an Owambo headman because apparently they did not want to be under the leadership of a San headman. When asked what could be done to address such instances of disrespect, the San participants said that they could not do anything because the Owambo people were more powerful in terms of wealth and local politics. It was reported that San headmen were treated with disrespect specifically because of their ethnic origin, and Owambo people did not feel comfortable living under a San headman. The San had tried several different strategies in the past, but nothing had changed. For instance, in Okatseidhi the King had personally instructed the Uukwaludhi people to respect the San headman, but this had not brought about the desired results.

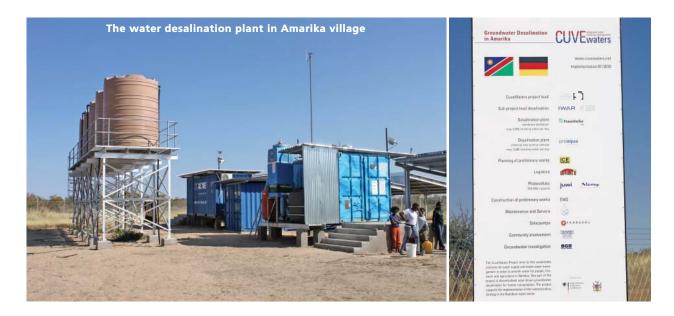
In general, participants noted that for someone to become a village headman, he would have to have certain characteristics, such as respect for others, good relations with people, good manners and trustworthiness. Ethnicity or political affiliations were not regarded as important factors. However, San participants could not imagine a San woman becoming a headwoman; in Amarika it was said to be against cultural practices for a woman to be head of a village (and a non-Ovakwakuti could not be a headman of Amarika either). According to participants across all four sites, a village leader must be:

- someone who can think;
- someone who has respect for the community and is respected by the community in turn;
- someone who provides feedback in and after meetings;
- someone honest;
- someone possessing good manners; and
- someone who can be relied upon to display responsible behaviour.

Public participation and consultation

Most San participants were not aware of national bodies established to support San communities and individuals, such as the SDP of the OPM, and NGOs representing the interests of the San, such as the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA). San people in Omusati were represented by the Omusati Regional Council at both the national and regional levels – as residents of the region, not specifically as a marginalised group.

Visits by regional representatives to villages in which San resided were said to be ad hoc, irregular and infrequent. Development projects in villages did not usually target San specifically, but there were exceptions – for example, the newly appointed Deputy Prime Minister had visited Okatseidhi to hear for himself about community challenges and needs. This resulted in the San community receiving four donkeys and two ploughs from the SDP, which, according to participants, were later used mostly by Owambo residents of the village instead. In some cases, it was reported, government officials visited villages to inform the San and fellow villagers about forthcoming projects which had been planned without prior consultation. In other cases, government had promised certain projects which had never materialised, such as the enlargement of the local clinic in Okatseidhi. Some communities were last visited three years before our field research, and members of these communities reported feeling neglected by the government. However, there were also positive perceptions relating to consultations which had resulted in government support, e.g. the desalination plant in Amarika. Amarika participants noted that they had informed their councillor about the salty water in the area, and this was followed by further discussions between the councillor and development partners, which resulted in the construction of the desalination plant.



Participants at all four sites asked for more consultations with government and other developmental partners. The main issues they wanted to tackle in a thorough consultation process were: education; employment; food security; housing; national documentation (e.g. birth certificates); democratic elections of leaders; clean water; violence; and respect for San inhabitants.

Community meetings in all four villages were normally attended by both San and non-San residents. In Okatseidhi, San participants complained that their views and opinions – including those articulated by the San headman – were not taken seriously in such meetings.

"We talk in such meetings, but no one take our words seriously. They just tell us, you Kwangara, be quiet, we understand what you are saying."

- Female participant in Okatseidhi

Representation of the San in decision-making structures differed considerably across the four villages. The San headmen in three villages had members of the community supporting them in decision making. The most community influence on decision making took place in Amarika, where the Ovakwakuti residents were in the majority. There, decisions were made by Ovakwakuti sitting on different bodies such as the traditional court, school development committee, traditional council, village development committee and church committee. The pastor of the ELCIN Church was an Ovakwakuti woman who concurrently served as secretary to the Ovakwakuti headman. Interestingly, the Amarika participants were the only ones aware of the Otamanzi Constituency Development Committee (CDC), noting that two Ovakwakuti people sat on the CDC. By contrast, in Okapya the headman was Owambo and there were no San elected to the headman's committee, thus the San residents' influence on decision making was very limited.

There were water point committees (WPCs) in Okatseidhi, Okapya and Amarika, but not in Okathakanguti (because there was no water point in this village). Most of the WPC members in Okatseidhi were Uukwaludhi, while one San man was responsible for opening and closing the tap and a San woman was the secretary. WPC members who attended study discussions in Okatseidhi noted that San members of the WPC actively participated in the committee and their views were taken into consideration, just like anyone else's. In Amarika all WPC members were Ovakwakuti, and in Okapya no San sat on the WPC due to the social exclusion of San in the village.

A water well at Ombome B used by San of Okathakanguti village



The Roman Catholic Church had a women's group in Okapya, with three San members. The group was led by a steering committee which included a San representative. The Church also initiated a community health committee in Okapya, with two San members.

When in need of help to solve a problem, the San in the four villages would normally approach their respective headmen, who would help as far as possible. If they could not solve the problem, the headmen approached constituency councillors for help.

8.4.9 Human rights awareness

Participants found it difficult to talk about human rights. However, they identified the following rights that they have as citizens of Namibia:

- the right to be treated equally based on gender;
- the right to a job;
- the right to own land ("... right to say that this is our land and not for the Uukwaludhi people.");
- the right to own property; and
- the right to move around.

Some participants felt that the following rights were withheld from them:

- the right to employment;
- the right to receive vital national documentation;
- the right to education; and
- the right to communication.

Participants were unaware of international instruments dealing with indigenous people. They were also unaware of national policies/programmes aimed at marginalised people.

In summary, public participation in Omusati Region was found to be stronger than in Ohangwena Region. This was due to the San representation in the TA structures (three sites) and their relatively higher levels of education compared with Ohangwena levels. Nevertheless, the San in Omusati still felt that the Owambo people treated them as inferiors and discriminated against them.

8.4.10 Changes over time and visions for the future

Changes over time

The participants at all four sites regarded the years just before Independence (i.e. the 1980s) as the worst years, because of the war and the violence taking place in Omusati Region at the time. Furthermore, due to the war, movement of people was restricted, food production was destroyed, access to social facilities was limited and food supplies were low. Conversely, the years just after Independence were regarded as the best years in terms of quality of life because at Independence the torturing and killing of people by soldiers stopped; children could go to school; crop field fences were no longer destroyed by army vehicles; there were sufficient supplies of food (including food aid from government); pensions were given to old people; and clinics and schools were built.¹¹ It was only in Okapya that the quality of life did not improve immediately after Independence; this was due to heavy flooding resulting in the inability of the community to cultivate crops and access social services. Most participants in three of the villages also agreed that the quality of life in 2012 was more or less as good as it had been at Independence, for the following reasons: San households had access to potable water, clinics, primary schools and churches; San were headmen of villages; pensions were being provided; and in some cases food for work was available.

Although previous sections of this regional chapter detail challenges that San were experiencing in Omusati Region, the participants felt that their quality of life was by and large good in 2012; only participants in Okatseidhi were not happy with their quality of life in 2012. Their main concerns throughout the discussions were: perceived discrimination against the San by Owambo people; perceived undermining of their headmen; and the continuous influx of Owambo people into their village. One male respondent said, "We are being colonised by the Uukwaludhi people."

Visions for the future

When asked, "What would you like your life to look like in the future?", a participant in Okatseidhi said, "I want an independent normal standard of life. I want Independence to come to my village." Participants in all four villages envisioned better lives for themselves and their children in relation to food supplies, education, health and certain material commodities, but the strategies identified for achieving this vision varied from village to village. In sum, Okatseidhi and Amarika participants recommended capacity-building and empowerment strategies that would enable the San to move towards self-reliance and independence, whereas those in the other two villages mainly recommended the provision of material support – a strategy which, the researchers fear, runs the risk of deepening San dependency on outside support. Table 8.12 summarises the strategies recommended.

	Okathakanguti		
For children	For adults (age 18+)	For elderly people	and Okapya
 Good education Knowledge about HIV and AIDS Employment when they finish school 	• Employment	 Blankets Mattresses Food Warm clothing Proper housing Pension when eligible 	 Borehole School Fences Donkeys Ploughs Clinic Tractors Payment of hostel fees Blankets Electricity

Table 8.12: San recommendations for improving their quality of life in Omusati

The participants in Okatseidhi and Amarika stressed that they needed good education for their children, employment for the adults, and basic necessities for elderly people who could no longer work. This is evidence of communities not asking for handouts, but rather seeking opportunities for moving towards self-reliance. The strategies recommended for children were clearly aimed at empowering children to contribute to the improvement of their own lives, thereby decreasing their dependency on external support. Strategies for elderly people were different as they addressed their immediate needs in the form of material support that would make the lives of elderly people more comfortable, taking into consideration the fact that they can no longer do hard work.

¹¹ Interestingly, in one village it was said that shebeens established after Independence increased the quality of life.

In contrast, the San in Okathakanguti and Okapya wanted government to provide the material support listed in Table 8.12; in fact they had already requested this support. Although in principle this support could also decrease dependency, the manner in which these villages had requested the support suggested that the "we do it ourselves" philosophy of the first two villages was lacking.

All four communities hoped that their lives would improve, but their hopes were based entirely on the implementation of their recommended strategies – which would largely entail external support.

8.5 Conclusions and recommendations

8.5.1 Conclusions

Livelihood strategies

The main livelihood strategies of the San in Omusati Region were subsistence crop production, piecework and veldfood gathering. Other sources of income were government social grants (Old Age Pension, War Veteran Pension and OVC grants), sales of self-made crafts and ownership of small businesses (e.g. shebeens). On the whole, the San in Omusati were more self-reliant than those in Ohangwena Region. According to the discussion participants in Omusati, formal employment opportunities for San were extremely limited, mainly because of their lack of education and the perceived discrimination and favouritism militating against their employment.

Food security

In comparison to the San in Ohangwena (and perhaps other regions), those in Omusati had a wider variety of food available to them, although in insufficient quantities. The main crops cultivated by San in Omusati were *omahangu*, maize, sorghum, beans, groundnuts and watermelon. San in Okathakanguti village accessed vegetables from the Etunda Irrigation Scheme in exchange for casual labour. Across the four Omusati research sites, veldfood gathering had reduced significantly due to the high influx of people.

The extent of alcohol abuse is an issue requiring further attention. Participants reported that almost all people (males, females and children) drank *otombo* on a daily basis. This drinking of alcoholic beverages potentially holds serious negative consequences for physical and mental wellbeing, especially because of its impacts on children's growth and development.

Wealth status

Most of the households (almost 80%) regarded themselves as 'poor' and 'very poor', mainly because of a lack of formal employment opportunities, limited livestock, no fences around their crop fields, no pension grants for the eligible elderly, limited education facilities other than primary schools, and no local business opportunities. Some of the San (15%) were regarded as 'rich' and 'very rich' because they received War Veteran Pensions, had crop fields with fences, owned a few livestock or owned shebeens. Pensions represented the only opportunity for people to become upwardly socially mobile. The causes of poverty were said to be a lack of education and employment opportunities for the San, coupled with a lack of agricultural tools and draught-animal power. San generally perceived themselves as being worse off than their Owambo neighbours. Factors included a lack of employment opportunities, discrimination against San, a lack of secondary schools close by and/or a lack of social networks outside the villages, which meant that San children attending secondary school had to live with people from other ethnic groups.

Land issues

Village headmen allocated land within the villages to San, which involved some financial costs. This allocation of land provided San with a sense of pride and security, which the San in Ohangwena, for example, did not have. A few San, especially in Amarika, could not afford to pay the headman the fee requested for land to be allocated to them. San headmen were appointed and recognised as the legitimate administrators of the land over which they presided.

Identity, culture and heritage

Our study found that in Omusati the San were perceived as comprising an underclass as opposed to an ethnic group, and cultural and linguistic markers were clearly diminishing. None of the San across the four participating villages could speak a San language, and many had adopted specific aspects of the neighbouring cultures. Nevertheless, the terms used for referring to them, such as *Kwangara* and *Ayelele*, clearly indicated that there was a perceived difference between them and their Owambo neighbours. They felt disadvantaged in comparison to their Owambo neighbours, and discriminated against by them.

Relationships with other groups

San relationships with Owambo neighbours could be categorised as employer-employee, sexual partners, spouses, fellow villagers, fellow drinkers and fellow committee members. San households called on Owambo households for the provision of piecework when in need of support. However, unequal power relations between the two groups had problematised relationships; in particular, unequal opportunities for employment and disrespect towards San headmen had created serious tensions between the two groups. Many San reported that many Owambo people treated them as subordinates, or as people who cannot take care of themselves ('Kwangaras').

Education

San parents regarded education as essential – mainly as a step towards a better future for their children, and ultimately so that offspring might support San families and contribute to alleviating poverty. Most San parents ensured that their children enrolled in primary school, and most of the children completed primary school, but very few completed secondary school. Distances to secondary schools, the limited number of secondary schools, bullying, a lack of funds, teenage pregnancy and child labour were the main reasons for San children dropping out of school.

Health

The most serious illnesses experienced across the four sites were TB, malaria, HIV/AIDS, and diarrhoea. The main illnesses for children were malaria, diarrhoea, chicken pox, mental health problems, epilepsy, toothache and body sores. Malnutrition among children was not mentioned as a concern, and almost all San children were vaccinated. Distance to health facilities was a serious concern at two sites, and San were expected to pay for public health services, which many were unable to do. External health support was minimal and limited to support from the NRCS, CAA and/or TCE.

Traditional authorities

Three of the four participating villages were headed by San headmen, and the fourth by an Owambo headman. San headmen in villages with an Owambo majority found it difficult to carry out their headman duties due to Owambo residents' alleged disrespect for their authority. All San preferred to be under the leadership jurisdiction of San headmen, and they respected the current leadership.

Having San as headmen played a big role in the manner in which decisions were made, as more San were part of decision-making bodies – in notable contrast to Ohangwena where such participation was severely lacking. San community members under San headmen were also more actively involved in community activities, and had more confidence to stand up for their rights. They spoke with authority in meetings, ensuring that their voices were heard. However, challenges remained with implementing San recommendations/suggestions in villages with more Owambo than San residents.

Public participation

San in Omusati participated actively in decision making at village level, but not at regional and national levels. San discussion participants were not aware of national bodies that represented them, and had no regional-level representation either – San were treated the same as all other groups at regional level and no specific provision was made for them as a marginalised group. This has contributed to their not receiving the government support that they need.

Visions for the future

All participants hoped that their lives would change for the better in the future. They indicated that such change would come about with community members working hard, combined with external support. Lessons learned in other regions (e.g. Ohangwena) showed that external support needs to be provided in such a manner that it enables communities to become self-reliant and does not increase dependency on outside support. Capacity-building support such as better-quality education, better access to educational facilities (including tertiary education), and better and equal employment opportunities would enable beneficiaries to take care of themselves. On the other hand, it has been proven that handouts tend to increase dependency.

8.5.2 Recommendations

The situation of the San in Omusati is unique due to the extent to which they have integrated into dominant regional cultures and the resultant changes over time in livelihood strategies, traditional structures, cultural practices, education levels, and knowledge of health issues and other issues. Although many cultural practices have been lost, the San were still a highly marginalised group in this region, thus affording them the same choices and opportunities as their Owambo neighbours requires giving them special attention. Our findings in Omusati lead us to recommend the following.

Firstly, government and development partners should intensify support for education, especially by making upper primary, secondary and tertiary education more accessible to the San in the region. It is acknowledged that other groups living in the same villages have similar educational challenges as the San, but the situation of the San is exacerbated by their having less-extensive social networks (e.g. for accommodating children attending secondary school). The issue of long distances between homes and schools needs urgent attention, especially for upper primary and secondary schools.

Secondly, affirmative action in formal employment provision should be encouraged and implemented with a view to employing more San than is currently the case. Special employment programmes need to be developed for San to be absorbed into the overall work environment, until such time as the unequal distribution of jobs has been addressed satisfactorily.

Thirdly, support should be provided to enable elderly people who cannot take care of themselves to access daily necessities to continue to live a dignified life. Government should ensure that the San get national documents to facilitate their registration for social grants, as appropriate. Special attention is needed in relation to food support, blankets, clothing, shoes and transportation to health facilities.

Implementing three main recommendations above will better equip San children for their adult lives; help adults to take care of their families; and support those elderly people who cannot take of themselves. It is assumed that if San are better educated and employed, the current unequal power relations will fade away – an additional benefit besides those accompanying better education and employment. The recommendations above are geared towards long-term sustainable livelihoods.

In the interim, the following initiatives are needed to support the poor and very poor San (and other ethnic groups, where relevant):

- Provision of agricultural equipment to poor and very poor residents.
- Provision of materials to fence agricultural fields.
- A widespread awareness campaign to inform San of their human rights, including their rights as an indigenous people.
- An in-depth study on alcohol abuse among the San in Omusati (in particular the practice of feeding alcohol to children) and on possible prevention measures.
- Owambo TAs need to give special attention to the manner in which Owambo residents treat San headmen. Disciplinary actions need to be applied to those who do not respect village headmen.
- Strengthening of village, constituency and regional institutional structures to increase public participation by San at these levels. This needs to be a bottom-up, coordinated approach.

Chapter 9 Kavango Region

By Maarit Thiem and Brian T. Jones

Note: At the time of editing this report in August 2013, Kavango Region was split to form two regions: Kavango East and Kavango West. As all of our research was conducted before this development, we have retained all references to a single Kavango Region.

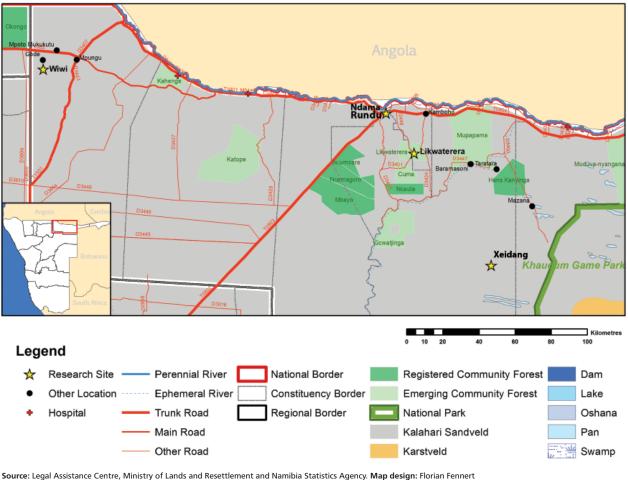


9.1 General background

Kavango Region is situated in north-eastern Namibia, bordering Angola to the north. The region, covering an area of about 48 456 km², has nine constituencies: Kahenge, Kapako, Mashare, Mpungu, Mukwe, Ndyona, Rundu Rural East, Rundu Rural West and Rundu Urban. As most of Mukwe Constituency lies within the boundaries of the Bwabwata National Park (Chapter 10), Mukwe is not covered in this chapter on Kavango Region.

The administrative centre of Kavango Region is the town of Rundu, situated on the Okavango River. Slightly less than half of Kavango's land area is available for communal farming, and the remaining areas are used for various purposes, particularly commercial farming and conservation (Brown 2010: 28).

Kavango Region and the research sites



Kavango is classified as semi-arid (National Planning Commission (NPC) 2007c: 14). Temperatures are generally warm with average maximum temperatures above 30° Celsius in all months except May, June and July, and frost occurs rarely in the winter months (Mendelsohn and El Obeid 2003: 43).

Although rainfall in Kavango is higher than in most other parts of Namibia, there are a number of environmental constraints to agricultural development. For example, rainfall in Kavango is variable and unpredictable: the annual average is less than 475 mm in the southernmost part of the region and more than 550 mm in the northernmost part, and annual totals vary from less than 300 mm in the driest years to more than 1 000 mm in the wettest. About 80% of the rain falls between December and March (Mendelsohn and El Obeid 2003: 40).

A further constraint to agricultural development is the predominance of sandy soils that are low in nutrients (Mendelsohn and El Obeid 2003: 62). More fertile soils suited to crop production are concentrated in small areas along the Okavango River, along *omiramba*¹ and in long valleys between old sand dunes. Generally, however, all soils in Kavango have low fertility.

According to the 2011 national census data, Kavango has a population of 223 352 (compared to 202 694 counted in the 2001 census). The population density of 4.6 persons/km² is relatively high compared to the Namibian average of 2.6 persons/km² (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 13).

¹ Ancient river beds – plural of *omuramba*.

The 2011 census counted 36741 households in Kavango. The average household size is 6.0 persons, which is the highest total number of people living in one household in Namibia. Of all Kavango households, 57% are headed by males and 43% by females, both figures being close to the national averages. The overall literacy rate for Kavango is 79% of the population over 15, which is below the national average of 89% (NSA 2013: 13; 8).

Urbanisation is taking place, and Rundu's population has grown from 36964 in 2001 to nearly 63431 in 2011 (NSA) 2013:39).

Rukavango-speaking people constitute by far the largest language group in Kavango (79.4% of the population), and San constitute just 0.4% of the region's population (NSA 2013: 171).

Most of the region's inhabitants are engaged in some form of agricultural production, primarily small-scale farming of *mahangu* (pearl millet) on a few hectares, with small numbers of goats and cattle. Recently, however, most of the southern and western parts of the region have been divided into what are designated as "Small-scale Commercial Farms" (SSCFs), most of which are 2 500 hectares in size (Brown 2010: 25; Mendelsohn and El Obeid 2003: 92ff). These farms have been allocated to individuals under a leasehold system. However, most of the crop-growing activities on these farms generate little income because fields are small, soils have limited fertility, yields are low, surplus harvests are rare, and markets are small (Brown 2010: 25). Livelihoods are thus considerably diversified, with residents relying also on wages and salaries, pensions and cash remittances. According to (Brown 2010: 25), small-scale *mahangu* farms provide some food self-sufficiency but little food security – and no opportunities for economic development or poverty reduction.

Livestock provide an important source of draught power for cultivation, meat and milk. Perhaps more importantly, the household cattle herd is regarded as a form of savings (NPC 2007c: 9-10). According to the NSA, cattle and poultry are the most important assets in terms of livestock (NSA 2013: 109). Fish are an important source of protein for people living close to the Okavango River. Fish populations in this river have always been low because the river is naturally very low in nutrients, but it is widely agreed that fish populations have dropped to even lower levels because of overfishing (Brown 2010: 30).

About 70% of Kavango's population live within a 10 km-wide ribbon along the river. This is where people first settled due to the availability of water and the suitability of the soils and pastures for farming. Settlements have developed to the south of the river, but living conditions in small, remote villages away from the river and main roads are difficult. Here people are far from services and their opportunities to participate in the region's retail and cash economy are limited (Brown 2010: 22).

Kavango is one of the poorest regions in Namibia, and this is clearly reflected in various reports and surveys. According to a Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)² analysis of poverty data, the highest incidence of poverty in Namibia is in Kavango Region, where 56.5% are poor and 36.7% are severely poor (CBS 2008: 9).³ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) underscores that of Namibia's 13 regions,⁴ Kavango had the second worst life expectancy

² In 2011 the CBS was replaced by the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA), established by the Statistics Act 9 of 2011. The NSA is an independent state institution which reports to the National Planning Commission (NPC).

³ The CBS in the NPC assessed poverty levels in Namibia by using a poverty line in terms of which 'poor' households were those whose monthly expenditure was less than N\$262,45 per adult, and 'severely poor' households were those whose monthly expenditure was less than N\$184,56 per adult (CBS 2008: 3).

⁴ Fourteen as of August 2013 when Kavango Region was split into two: Kavango East and Kavango West.

at birth, the third worst literacy rate, the sixth worst gross school enrolment ratio and the second lowest annual average per capita income in 2001. As a result, Kavango Region had the second lowest HDI (0.410) for Namibia after Ohangwena Region (Levine 2007: 14).

In addition, according to the UNDP's Human Poverty Index (HPI), of the 13 regions, people in Kavango had the fourth highest probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, the third highest illiteracy rate, and the second highest share of the population in households that spent more than 60% of total income on food (Levine 2007: 10). As a result Kavango, along with Omusati and Oshikoto Regions, had the highest HPI ranking (45) of the 13 regions (Levine 2007: 11).

The provision of services – such as water, transport networks, telephones, education and health – has improved significantly in Kavango during the past 15 years (Brown 2010: 31). In 2010 there were about 335 schools in the region, and 42 clinics, 9 health centres and 4 hospitals. Roads have been upgraded and tarred; cellphone coverage is available in the most densely populated areas; electricity supplies have been expanded greatly; and retail services are much more widely available than before. Nevertheless, people living deep in the interior of the region are far from these services, thus access to education and medical treatment is difficult. The Okavango River is the main source of water for the people living along the river, and for their livestock, whereas inland villages depend entirely on groundwater from boreholes and in some cases from seasonal pans.

9.2 The San in Kavango Region

Historians generally concur that San people have been living in what is now Kavango Region for thousands of years (Mendelsohn and El Obeid 2003: 35). There are different opinions as to when the various Kavango ethnic groups settled in the region, with estimates including the 1500s and late 1700s/early 1800s, but there is evidence that crop farmers have lived along the river for over 1 100 years. Contact between San and Kavango peoples intensified after 1950, when a growing population forced Kwangali⁵ people to move from the river south to the Mpungu area. Before that time the Kavango tended to use the area south of the Okavango River only seasonally (Cole 1999: 13). Before the Kwangali started to move permanently to the Mpungu area, the !Xun San moved periodically towards the river and worked for Kwangali farmers in return for food (Gordon and Douglas 2000: 125).

Suzman reports that by Independence the majority of the San were dependent on Kavango farmers. The number of San in the area was reduced in the late 1970s and early '80s when the South African Defence Force (SADF) started to remove them to Western Bushmanland. After Independence some of the resettled families returned to Kavango Region (Suzman 2001b: 36-37).

The !Xun are the main San group in Kavango Region, and live mainly in the south-west of the region around the Mpunguveld. Other groups live in small villages east of Rundu across to Andara. In addition to the !Xun, small numbers of Hai||om and Khwe San live scattered throughout the region, and small numbers of Ju|'hoansi live near Khaudum and Samagaigai (Suzman 2001b: 36). Other San groups in the region include the Khwe and !Xun communities living within the Bwabwata National Park (see Chapter 10).

The data gathered from our research sites, as well as the information given above, indicate that the San are still widely distributed in Kavango Region. There are groups of San living in and around

⁵ The Kwangali people are a sub-group of the Kavango people, and their language, Rukwangali, is the most widely spoken language in Kavango Region today – effectively the region's *lingua franca*.

urban areas such as Rundu and Nkurenkuru, and other groups live in small villages of their own, and in small numbers around many villages inhabited mainly by Kavango people.

The 2001 national census found 2 277 people speaking a San language at home in Kavango Region. Table 9.1 provides an overview of the number of San people per constituency, based on the 2001 census figures.

Constituency	Number of individuals speaking a San language at home	Percentage within the constituency	
Kahenge	159	0.5%	
Kapako	182	0.7%	
Mashare	141	0.9%	
Mpungu	538	2.9%	
Mukwe	1 001	3.8%	
Ndyona	56	0.3%	
Rundu Rural West	147	0.6%	
Rundu Urban	53	0.3%	
Total	2277	1,3%	

Table 9.1: San population of Kavango Region according to national census data, 2001

Sources: "Population and Housing Census 2001: Kavango Regional Profile" (NPC 2001b) and authors' own calculations

Remarkably, the census of 2011 found that the proportion of San-speaking households in Kavango had decreased to 0.4% (NSA 2013: 171).



9.3 Research sites in Kavango Region

This section introduces the four research sites in Kavango Region: Likwaterera; Wiwi; Xeidang and Ndama. Table 9.2 summarises the main characteristics of these sites. The sites selected for the research in Kavango cover the spectrum from remote rural to peri-urban communities, and also represent different types of land tenure.

Research site*	Urban/ rural status	Land tenure	San language groups	Population	Institutional support	
				status (numerical)	GRN	NGOs
Likwaterera	Rural	Resettlement village on communal land	!Xun and Ju 'hoansi	Minority in a Shambyu community	 Regional Councillor OPM 	None reported
Wiwi	Remote rural	Village on communal land	!Xun	Majority with Nyemba, Kwangali and Owambo minorities	None reported beyond normal GRN rural services	None reported
Xeidang	Remote rural	Village incorporated into small-scale commercial farm	Ju 'hoansi	Majority	None reported beyond normal GRN rural services	None reported
Ndama	Peri-urban	Townland – neighbourhood of Rundu	!Xun	Minority among various ethnic groups	 MGECW Constituency Office 	Catholic Aids Action

Table 9.2: The main characteristics of the Kavango Region research sites

* All of the research sites are in Kavango East Region.

9.3.1 Likwaterera

Likwaterera village is in Rundu Rural West Constituency, and is located about 40 km south-east of Rundu along a new gravel road going south just beyond the Rundu municipal boundary (see map on page 330). The village is populated mainly by Shambyu people. In 2010, 140-160 San people were moved to Likwaterera from other villages closer to the river: 12 San families came from Mazana village and 8 families came from Kamboho village; the number of people per household ranged from 4 to 16.

The San of Likwaterera are living in a 20 ha compound which has been fenced off to keep their livestock within the compound – i.e. to prevent them from wandering into neighbouring fields. However, between the time that the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) erected the fence and the time of our field research, some of the cattle had died. There was no water within the compound, so the San collected water from a water point in the main village. There was no clinic in the village area, and focus group discussion (FGD) participants said that a mobile clinic visited only irregularly. There was a kindergarten within the fenced area, but a part of this building was still being constructed at the time of our visit, and the kindergarten was not functioning at the time, reportedly because the kindergarten teacher had not been paid by the OPM. There was a primary school in the main village (i.e. outside the fenced area). The San at this site were dependent mainly on piecework and Old Age Pensions for cash. A few people cultivated fields, but most were dependent on government food aid and purchasing or bartering for *mahangu* or mealie-meal. Gathering veldfood was important when there was insufficient food in a household and few opportunities to earn cash.

The San name for Likwaterera is *Gcedang*, meaning 'many hyenas'. Some FGD participants identified themselves as Ju|'hoansi, and we were told there were also !Xun among the families in the fenced

area. FGD participants said that San people were among the original inhabitants of the Likwaterera area, but they were unable to provide any indication of the period of San habitation there; they only said that their forefathers had lived in the area "a long time ago", but had moved around in pursuit of water and to hunt, and had finally moved away from the area.

Regarding their identity, some FGD participants did not like to be called "San", and others had no objection to this word. They did not know where the name "San" had come from, but some said that it was "white people" who initiated the use of this name in the area. They said that their forefathers had not been happy with the term "Bushman": today they no longer lived in the bush, "so why the name Bushman?"

The two groups of families living in the compound had been moved there by the Kavango Regional Council in 2010, with the Rundu Rural East Constituency Councillor overseeing the move. In our interview with the Councillor, he explained that the aim of the relocation was to help the people to change their lifestyle and to move into crop cultivation and livestock farming. He indicated that it had taken him about two years to convince the San to relocate, and he had told them that if they moved, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) would support them. Some of the San did not want to be moved because, he said, "As you know these people are different from us; they just want to continue with their nomadic lifestyles," but he had wanted the San to move to a single site so that the government could support for the people to move to Likwaterera, as well as the fence for the compound, large tents for shelter (in which some of the San were still living at the time of our visit), a small number of cattle, and a 12.5 kg bag of maize-meal and some canned fish for each resettled person.



9.3.2 Wiwi

Wiwi village lies in Mpungu Constituency, about 30 km south-west of Mpungu in the Kwangali traditional area. Most of the village residents are San (seven main households), and their neighbours are Kwangali, Nyemba and Owambo. The San of Wiwi are in fact living on Kwangali communal land; the Kwangali Traditional Authority (TA) had given them permission to settle there. At the time of our visit, Wiwi had a borehole with a diesel pump, as well as a kindergarten and a primary school catering for Grades 1-4 – whereafter learners would go to school in Mpungu. The nearest clinic was in Mpungu, but children in the village were served by a mobile clinic which visited the village every two months specifically to treat children. There was a veterinary kraal at the village, but the San did not use it has they had no cattle. The main livelihood strategies of the San in Wiwi were piecework, veldfood gathering and Old Age Pension money. The San also received food aid from the government. Only one person had a crop field.

The San in Wiwi identified themselves as !Xun, which means 'human being'. They said that "white people" had given them the name "San". Many people had names adopted from neighbouring ethnic groups, but FGD participants said that they still retained and used their !Xun names. They had originally left Mpoto village (in the same constituency) because of Namibia's war for independence, and had settled in Gode village (which is close to Wiwi). There were still three !Xun homesteads in Gode (including that of the headman), but most people had moved to Wiwi from Gode as there was no water in Gode. Some people said that they could never leave Wiwi because this was their land.

FGD participants said that the SADF took many !Xun from the Wiwi area to Bushmanland during the war, and forcibly took other !Xun to South Africa. At the time, they were unhappy about the community being split up in this manner, and they remained unhappy as they had never again seen the people who were taken to Bushmanland and South Africa.



9.3.3 Xeidang

Xeidang is a small, remote village located deep in the bush in Mashare Constituency, about 60 km south of Taratara and about 30 km west of the Khaudum National Park. The village is located on land that has been incorporated into a small-scale commercial farm (SSCF) which the Shambyu TA allocated to an individual farmer (who was still waiting for the communal land board to grant him a lease for the land). There were about 50 San residents of the village, most of whom were related to each other. (The same number of San in Xeidang were registered with the Mashare Constituency Office for the food aid programme.)

Water was available from a borehole provided by the South African Government through the South West Africa Administration. The hand pump used in the past to draw the water from this borehole had been replaced by a diesel pump belonging to the farmer, but villagers said that they now had a problem accessing the water because the farmer sometimes stopped the diesel engine, and he also stopped them digging into the ground to reach the water. There was no school at the village, and the nearest school (catering for Grades 1-6) was at Taratara, about 60 km away. The nearest clinic was at Baramasoni, about 75 km away, and FGD participants reported that a mobile clinic visited the village only irregularly. Since people who might wish to avail themselves of the mobile clinic were often out in the bush when it arrived, it was not always possible for the health workers to attend to all those requiring healthcare services during a single visit.

The main livelihood strategies of the Ju|'hoansi in Xeidang were piecework, veldfood gathering and Old Age Pension money. They also received food aid from the government. One man had some livestock, and some men hunted springhares for food. Several people had small gardens for growing vegetables and maize.

The San of Xeidang identified themselves as Jul'hoansi, and said that they had lived at Xeidang for a very long time – since before Independence. Their parents and grandparents had always moved through the area, but then later discovered good water points at Xeidang so they decided to settle there permanently. They were emphatic that they had been living at Xeidang in colonial times, and said, "This is our place!" The Shambyu TA had asked the Jul'hoansi of Xeidang if they would vacate the village and move to an area near Taratara because Xeidang had been allocated as an individual farm. By the time of writing, the Jul'hoansi had not agreed to move (see section 9.4.2 on access to land).

9.3.4 Ndama neighbourhood, Rundu

Ndama is a small peri-urban neighbourhood, located on the outskirts of the town of Rundu in Rundu Rural West Constituency. The research was carried out on the southern edge of Ndama where a group of San were living together, about 1.3 km south of Ndama Primary School. Ndama's inhabitants included San and other ethnic groups, but all of the FGD participants were !Xun.

The Shambyu TA had given the !Xun of Ndama permission to stay there, and alledgedly the Rundu Town Council had allocated land to them. Subsequently the !Xun had allowed non-San people to move in and settle there too. It was said that the first occupants of the land were entitled to allocate it to newcomers at a fee, but the legal basis for such transactions was unclear and was not clarified in any research discussion in Kavango.

The FGD participants indicated that they accessed their water at Ndama Primary School. They explained that they had helped to clear the forest when the school was being established, and



thenceforth had been allowed to fetch water and wash their clothes there. Even though the taps for the pre-paid system were closer to their homes, the school principal had continued to allow them to fetch water from the school because the San could not afford to pay for the pre-paid water. There was a clinic nearby for healthcare services, and if there was a serious problem, patients went to the Rundu State Hospital. There was no electricity supply where the San lived in Ndama, but other parts of the neighbourhood did have an electricity supply. San children attended Ndama Primary School, which FGD participants said was originally established for the San. At the outset the school had a San teacher, but not anymore.

The Ndama community received different types of support from the government. In 2009 the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) provided shoes for elderly people, and reportedly paid school fees for some San children. The Constituency Office helped the San of Ndama to start a butchery project, but the project failed (details provided further on). The community had also been visited by health workers from the New Start HIV/AIDS programme and Catholic Aids Action (a Namibian NGO).

The !Xun in Ndama derived their livelihoods mainly from the Old Age Pension, veldfood and piecework. They had comparatively more opportunities than San in other areas of Kavango to find piecework due to their close proximity to the town of Rundu. In addition they sold firewood and crafts (e.g. bows and arrows, baskets etc.).

Most of the !Xun in Ndama had moved there from other places in Kavango. The FGD participants said that the advantages of living in Ndama were the easier access to piecework, the closer proximity to the hospital and the availability of water at the school. They had previously lived closer to the school, but had moved to the southern edge of Ndama in 2000 because it was very noisy close to the school. They had named the part of Ndama where they now lived *Musive Dundu zo Mundu* (no translation provided). They mentioned that there were other people from their own San group living in different parts of Ndama, and they saw each other as one family but living in different places.

9.4 Research findings

9.4.1 Livelihoods and poverty

This subsection looks at the various livelihood strategies employed at the four sites in Kavango. We begin with an analysis of the livelihood options available to the San at each site, and then discuss the food security of the San in Kavango, and then examine the perceptions of poverty at each site.

Livelihood strategies

Table 9.3 indicates that the San in Kavango derive their livelihoods mainly from government food aid (mostly mealie-meal), Old Age Pensions, income from piecework, and gathering veldfood. This table also shows that, compared to Likwaterera, Wiwi and Xeidang, Ndama, as a peri-urban neighbourhood adjacent to the region's main town, offers a wider range of livelihood options that can generate cash – mainly opportunities to draw a small income from selling crafts and firewood. In Xeidang the gardens were regarded as important because the harvests normally lasted for about three months.

Livelihood strategies	Likwaterera	Wiwi	Xeidang	Ndama
Old Age Pension				
Food aid				
Piecework				
Veldfood				
Crop fields				
Vegetable gardens				
Bartering veldfood for maize-meal				
Hunting springhares				
Selling chicken				
Selling crafts				
Selling firewood				

Table 9.3: Main livelihood strategies at the Kavango Region research sites*

* The order in which the strategies are presented does not necessarily reflect their importance. The cell shading indicates that the strategy is employed at the applicable site.

Food aid

Food aid appears to be important for ensuring that San do not starve: the supply of maize- or milletmeal helps to keep people going when they cannot afford to buy staple foodstuffs themselves. It appears that the frequency of supplies of government food varied from site to site: in Xeidang, for example, FGD participants indicated that they received food aid sporadically, while participants in Ndama said that they received food aid every three months. The types and quantities of food supplied also varied from site to site. In Ndama participants mentioned that they sometimes exchanged their mealie-meal for other food, depending on what else was included in the food aid rations. At times they received just mealie-meal without relish, so they either exchanged some of it for other food items or sold a small quantity to get money to buy relish. Occasionally they would also exchange mealie-meal for non-food items such as clothes and buckets.

Box 9.1: Selling or bartering of food aid

The issue of San selling or bartering their food aid is controversial. Government officials maintain that people should not sell or exchange the food aid, but it can be argued that people are using their food aid strategically to meet their basic needs. At the regional feedback meeting on the findings of our research held in Rundu in October 2012, a !Xun woman from Ndama gave the following explanation as to why people sold or exchanged food aid:

"I want to talk about the selling of maize-meal bags. I want to say that all of us need money including people who occupy higher positions. We as San are the lowest, because we do not work and as such where do we get the money? I also want to buy soap, lotion, relish and pay school fees in order to send my child to school. We are also expected to buy our own pots, dishes and blankets and even build our own houses. When you ask someone to put a house with iron sheets [sic], you must pay the builder something and in our case we give them a bag of maize-meal because that's all we have."

Thus, although food aid is intended to feed people, if it is sold or bartered, it is still making an important contribution to the livelihoods of the San.

Piecework

Piecework was an important livelihood strategy at all four sites, despite the fact that piecework is generally not very well paid: in Xeidang, Jul'hoansi reported receiving N\$15 per day for piecework, from which N\$5 was deducted for food. They were not always paid in cash; they might be given mealie-meal or traditional beer instead – which might be by choice, but sometimes the employer decided on the form of payment irrespective of the worker's wishes. Much of the piecework was seasonal, for example clearing fields and planting in the growing season. The residents of Xeidang were able to use their cash earnings to make small purchases at cuca shops on neighbouring farms. People in areas closer to urban centres, such as Ndama, had more opportunities for piecework than those in remote rural areas. In addition, some !Xun in Ndama were able to derive a small income from making and selling items such as bows and arrows and baskets.

Employment

Very few people had formal permanent employment. For example, among the FGD participants in Ndama, only one person had a permanent job (a man employed by the Namibian Defence Force), and only one participant in Likwaterera had a permanent job (a young woman employed as a kindergarten teacher). A lack of education was said to be a significant barrier to formal employment, and FGD participants indicated that it was also difficult to get unskilled work as the government expected unskilled workers to have completed Grade 10 at least. Thus most formal jobs were given to people of other ethnic groups, leaving only low-paid jobs open to most San. Because of their low wages, and the situation of several household members being dependent on only one wage, it was very difficult for San in Kavango to escape poverty, even if a household member had a full-time job.

Veldfood

Veldfood was an important part of people's diet, and at each site FGD participants could provide a long list of veldfoods that they consumed. Table 9.4 (page 342) clearly reflects the importance of consuming veldfood as a livelihood strategy: it is the second most important food source, depending on seasonal availability (see the subsection on food security).

"Mostly we survive on wild food but sometimes we get piecework and get mealie-meal in exchange." – Discussion participant in Xeidang village

When piecework provides little or no money, veldfoods are the main form of relish eaten with mealie-meal.

Sharing

A positive aspect of the San livelihoods in Kavango is that people with little or no income managed to survive lean times through the support of family members who were prepared to share with them, meaning that those without work or other means of income could still get by, and this even seems to be a crucial strategy for preventing starvation. However, at the same time, sharing keeps the San caught in the poverty trap as the little income and food to which they have access is shared rather than accumulated (see also the following subsections).

Livestock

Only a few San had cattle or goats (thus Table 9.4 does not include livestock). Many FGD participants kept poultry, but mainly for sale rather than consumption. The majority of those who owned cattle or goats managed to do so only after a long period of saving some of the little money earned from piecework. In Xeidang it was said that only some young unmarried men were able to save money to buy cattle, goats or chickens as they had few or no dependants. The colonial government had given some people livestock, but these animals had either died or had been sold to raise cash.

Crop fields

Few San at the Kavango research sites cultivated land, and none of them did so on a large scale; most of them had small vegetable gardens at their houses, and only the San of Likwaterera had crop fields. !Xun in Wiwi and !Xun and Ju|'hoansi in Likwaterera said that they would cultivate land if they were given oxen and ploughing equipment, which they could not afford to buy themselves.



Old Age Pensions

At all four sites, Old Age Pensions were an important means to survive, and the pensions provided a regular cash income not just for the pensioner, but for the pensioner's whole family. The cash would be used to buy food, household necessities and alcohol. However, a number of elderly people were not receiving their pensions because they did not have the documents necessary for registration. For the elderly in Likwaterera, Wiwi and Xeidang, one of the main reasons for this situation was that they could not afford transport to Rundu to process the documents, whereas in Ndama, which is very close to Rundu, the main complaint from the elderly San was the unexpected long delays in processing their documents. When the elderly received their pensions, the income was often used immediately to pay the accumulated family credit at shops/shebeens, whether for food or alcohol.

Food security

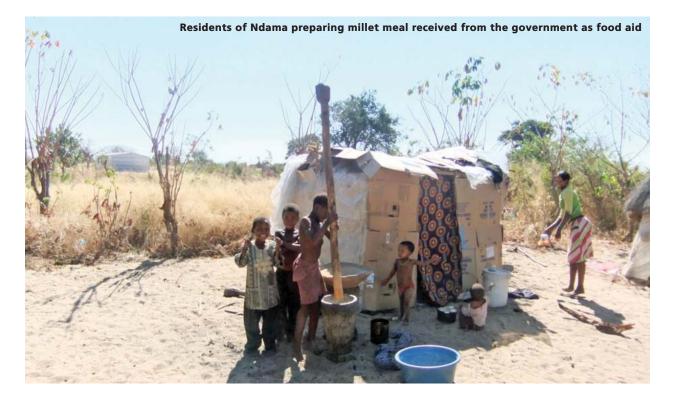
Table 9.4 shows that maize products (maize-meal or mealie porridge) were important foods at all four sites, whether provided by the government as food aid⁶ or obtained by other means, such as piecework. At all sites, maize (in one form or another) was listed as a 'most important' food, i.e. eaten every day. In Xeidang it was said to be less important as the Ju|'hoan community there rarely received food aid, however it appears that they frequently consumed maize grown in their gardens. Veldfoods were the second most important type of food for most people, and FGD participants at all four sites were able to list a wide range of fruits, tubers, berries and leaves which they consumed, whether daily or rarely or at intervals in between – depending on seasonal availability.

Research site	Most important (eaten daily)			Least important (eaten rarely)
Likwaterera	 Mahangu meal Maize-meal Ta* Tjiha* Tjau* To* 	 Sha* Ncahani* Nkwcankua* Dwi* Animal skin 		 Meat Beans Rice Pasta Tea Sugar Coffee
Wiwi	 Maize-meal Mangetti nuts* Wild potato* Ncoro Nomughimbo* (tuber) Traditional beer 	 Nompandu* (berries) Grewia berries* 	Monkey orange*	Meat
Xeidang	 Veldfood Garden products (maize, beans and peas) 	Maize-meal	Hunted meat: • springhares • porcupine	 Other meat Tea Coffee Sugar Pasta Rice
Ndama	 Mealie porridge Mutete (leaves) Cassava leaves Tinned fish Biscuits/sweets 	 Makwevo* (fruit) Grewia berries* Maka* (berries) Nonsimba (berries) Nonsivi* (berries) 	 Matuu* (fruit) Monkey orange* Nompeke* (fruit) Maghudusi* (gum) Kakukuru* (fruit) Mwimbo* (tuber) Makopa* (berries) 	 Rice Noodles Tea/coffee Meat Wild honey* Nompundu Wild onions*

Table 9.4: Ranking of the most important food items at the Kavango Region research sites

* All these are veldfoods, including fruits and seeds from trees.

⁵ Whether the food aid was channelled through the OPM San Feeding Programme or the Drought Relief Programme was not clarified at any site except Ndama, probably because the FGD participants were unsure about this; in Ndama participants made clear that they received their food aid through the San Feeding Programme.



The Ju|'hoansi in Xeidang were the only research participants who listed small game as part of their diet – despite the fact that participants at all four sites stressed the importance of hunting as part of San culture. The data indicates that hunting does not play a crucial role in maintaining food security, most likely due to a lack of wild animals in many places. Anti-poaching legislation of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) has undoubtedly also had repercussions in terms of the diminishing importance of hunting for food security among the San in Kavango Region.

In Likwaterera, *mahangu* was mentioned as an important staple food alongside maize-meal. This was the only site where several San had crop fields. Ju|'hoansi at Xeidang said that vegetable produce from small gardens comprised an important part of their diet.

Most of the least important food items listed in Table 9.4 are items which have to be purchased. As opportunities to earn cash were irregular and payments were low, items such as meat, rice and noodles were consumed only rarely – whenever people had some spare cash available.

FGD participants in Likwaterera, Wiwi and Ndama reported that they normally ate two main meals per day, usually consisting of mealie or *mahangu* (millet) porridge with some form of relish, if the latter was available. If sufficient veldfoods (e.g. Grewia berries) were gathered, they would snack on these during the day. In Likwaterera, for example, most participants ate *mahangu* porridge in the morning and leftover porridge in the evening, and in the afternoon they might eat a 'snack' such as pounded mangetti nuts with a dug-up veldfood called *gcau* to get them through the day. In times of food scarcity at these three sites, people ate only once a day or not at all. Xeidang differed to the other three sites in that participants said that they generally ate only once per day.

Perceptions relating to 'having enough food' varied from site to site: for some, having enough food meant having adequate supplies continuously throughout the year; for others it meant having enough food for the next meal. The !Xun in Wiwi said that they only really had enough when they received food aid, which might last a family three weeks. Traditional beer was an important food item in Wiwi when there was little or no cash to buy other food.

Food security varied according to season: during the rainy season ample quantities of a variety of veldfoods were available for gathering. In addition, San with crop fields or gardens had the most food during and just after the rainy season since water is not usually available for growing a large amount of produce year round. Depending on the size of the harvest, the food produced from fields or gardens might last up to three months.

The main threats to food security include:

- irregular delivery of government food aid;
- a lack of cash to purchase food;
- drought, which reduces harvests of rain-fed crops and garden produce as well as veldfood;
- enclosure of land by individuals (especially small-scale commercial farmers) who then refuse San access to veldfood;
- wildfires that destroy veldfood; and
- wild animals eating crops and garden produce in some places.

The San in Ndama appeared to be the most food secure, primarily because they had more regular sources of cash income due to their proximity to the town of Rundu.

Perceptions of poverty

The *Kavango Regional Poverty Profile* (RPP) report published by the National Planning Commission in 2007 conveys that the San were generally perceived as belonging to the poorest group in the region. At three of the six sites visited for the NPC study, the San were placed in the "very poor" category "... as they do not own crop fields and do not produce their own food" (NPC 2007c: 53).⁷ Although the RPP shows that the majority of the inhabitants of Kavango Region face challenges with regard to poverty, it explicitly links extreme poverty to the San as an ethnic group.

Our research confirmed the general findings of the Kavango RPP regarding the San and poverty. Table 9.5 shows that most of our FGD participants in Kavango classified themselves as "poor" or "very poor". At all four sites people initially reported that all San were poor – perhaps comparing themselves to other groups in the region – but with further probing they differentiated between those San who were "better off" and those who were "poor". Generally the "very poor" were people who had no income, no assets and nowhere to stay. Those described as being "better off" owned assets (e.g. cattle and ploughs) and had formal employment, or at least job opportunities.

Dependence on only a few sources of income, some of which were highly unpredictable, increased the vulnerability of the San. They were unable to cope with shocks or stressors such as losing essential assets. A participant in Ndama said, "A poor person cannot replace the things that have been damaged. There was a time a San house got burnt with everything in it. They could not replace the blankets and the things in the house."

The research brought to light that those who were able to diversify their livelihood strategies – whether through Old Age Pension money, wages from permanent work, sales of goods or having a few head of livestock or a crop field – were generally better off than those who had a more limited range of livelihood options. It should be noted that livelihood strategies that require assets (e.g. farming) were rarely available to the San in Kavango, as very few had the means to invest in any form of assets, and external support was very limited in this region.

⁷ The other three sites visited for the Kavango RPP had no San inhabitants.

Research site	Very poor	Poor	Better off	Rich	Very rich
Likwaterera		 No blankets No food No work Cannot afford to plough No livestock No assets San 	 Livestock Working in town 	 50 cattle 200 goats Lots of chickens Large fields Cars Money for problem solving Brick/zinc houses Household assets Lot of shops Kavangos only 	
Wiwi		 No fields No ploughing equipment No seeds No livestock No assets San 	 More piecework Some chickens <i>Kavangos and a few San</i> 	 Lot of livestock Cars Education Fields Money to buy livestock Ability to get work Kavangos only 	
Xeidang	 Garden Piecework No job No money No clothes No crop fields San 	 No soap Cannot eat whenever one wants No own water source Cannot afford to buy clothes San 	 Cattle/goats Equipment for ploughing Oxen Crop field Good harvest to sell Only one or two San 	 Car Cattle money Nice food Kavangos only 	 Job Cattle Lots of shops Can eat whenever one wants Can afford rice and macaroni Cars Kavangos only
Ndama	 Piecework Vulnerable to shocks Cannot replace assets easily No livestock Hopelessness Old blankets Hungry No good clothes San and other groups 	 Piecework People who sell things Old Age Pension Better clothes Better houses Job Other groups and a few San 	 Garden Business Farm with goats Job with better salary Other groups only 	 Brick house Shops Cattle Can eat whenever one wants Car Money Other groups only 	

Table 9.5: Wealth ranking per site in Kavango Region*

* The participants created their own wealth categories, thus these varied from site to site, and the research team has standardised the category names appropriately for reporting.

Even a San individual who received a regular income through permanent employment or an Old Age Pension could end up in the "poor" category if he or she had many dependants to support on this income. Sharing helped the San to survive in times of crisis, but the strategy of sharing with family members and neighbours in need could also prevent people from escaping the cycle of poverty. It was noteworthy that in some places, sharing was no longer practised in the same way as in the past: in Likwaterera, for example, FGD participants said that families shared very readily in the 'old days' but not so much nowadays, because of jealousy between families.



Wealth rankings in Xeidang: poor (above) and rich (below)



"Rich" people were described as having large numbers of cattle (e.g. more than 50), goats and chickens, a car, a job and a business or businesses. A participant in Xeidang said, "A rich man has food any time of the day and can eat whenever he feels hungry because food is just available."

In terms of the FGD participants' definitions, there was not a single "rich" (or "very rich") San person in Kavango. In Wiwi and Xeidang, participants deemed a very small number of San to be "better off", but the vast majority of participants at all four sites said that they were "poor" or "very poor".

Generally, the San who participated in the FGDs regarded themselves as worse off than people of other ethnic groups in Kavango. Although they acknowledged that there were poor people among their neighbours, they felt that poor people of other groups were generally still better off than the San because they had relatives who helped them, for example by providing cattle, millet or agricultural equipment. In addition, participants said that it was difficult for San to get jobs and to move out of the "poor" category because of discrimination against San, which was often due to a lack of formal education: "If our elders went to school, it would be easier."

"Someone who only drinks traditional beer and eats some bushfood, they are the very poor." – Discussion participant in Wiwi village "We as San people will never be rich, our lives will always be the same, we will always be poor." – Discussion participant in Likwaterera village

9.4.2 Access to land

The San are generally recognised as being Namibia's first inhabitants, and according to people's oral narratives at the Kavango research sites, they lay claim to being the first inhabitants of Kavango Region. Participants in Wiwi said the village name was a San place name and the area had always been part of their land, even if they had practised a nomadic lifestyle in the past. The perceived mobility of the San (and a lack of documentation on their past land-use patterns) might partly explain why it is difficult for them to claim land of their own now (see Box 9.2). The settlement patterns of the San have also been disrupted by various events: the !Xun in Wiwi, for example, said that the SADF had moved them away from the area during Namibia's liberation struggle, and they had returned only after Independence. Also, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the SADF had moved some community members to Bushmanland, and some had left for South Africa at Independence.

Box 9.2: Resettlement of the San communities in Kavango Region

Resettlement is a strategy that the government is employing to address the problems faced by San people in Kavango Region (and regions, e.g. Caprivi). !Xun and Ju|'hoan communities had already been relocated to Likwaterera, and there were plans to relocate the San of Ndama and Xeidang too.

Residents of **Likwaterera** were unhappy because reportedly many of the things that they had been promised had still not materialised after two years of resettlement there. A particular problem was water: they had been promised water within the compound area but this had not materialised, and the women had to walk far to collect water from the main village borehole. Most villagers felt that Likwaterera was not a good place to stay. One man said, "We do not have a clinic here, our livestock are dying here, no support from anyone …", and another man said that their clothes had been stolen, there was nothing to do and there was no employment available. A woman stated that it was a little better where they lived before because they had more employment opportunities, fields to plant *mahangu* and a grazing area. A man stated that the area where they previously lived provided insufficient grazing and crop fields, and they were told that Likwaterera would provide sufficient land for grazing and cultivation, but this had not proved to be the case.

However, having noted their problems, the FGD participants acknowledged that they were better off in Likwaterera than they had been elsewhere. One person said, "Although we complain, life has improved since we moved here." Nonetheless, in June 2012 *The Namibian* newspaper reported that some San people had left Likwaterera due to the lack of government support. In particular they still had to rely on too few oxen for ploughing (*The Namibian*, Staff Reporter, 26 June 2012).

There were also plans to relocate the San residing in **Ndama** to a new place called Gcaru. The Chief Clerk of Rundu Urban Constituency indicated that this San group had been informed and had shown interest in moving. They would be relocated once the Shambyu *Hompa* (King) agreed and the San themselves concurred that they would be willing to move. In our discussions with the San in Ndama, they acknowledged that although there were some advantages to moving to Gcaru, there could also be disadvantages, such as fewer opportunities to do piecework and sell items like the bows and arrows that men made. Most of the female FGD participants wanted to stay in Ndama due to its proximity to health facilities and schools for their children.

Both the Constituency Councillor and the Shambyu Traditional Authority (TA) were encouraging the Ju|'hoansi in **Xeidang** to relocate because the Shambyu TA had allocated the land to a small-scale commercial farmer. However, the Xeidang area was subject to a dispute between the Shambyu and Gciriku TAs, thus the regional land board had not yet issued a lease to the farmer. The Ju|'hoansi in Xeidang claimed they had lived there before the farmer arrived, and had set a number of conditions that they wanted the government to meet before they would move.

It is difficult to determine how well the government has consulted people regarding resettlement. International guidelines and policies – such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) – require that if indigenous people are to be resettled, this should be with their prior informed consent. Although resettled San in Kavango Region appeared to have been consulted, it was not clear whether the information they received was sufficient for them to make an informed decision about moving. Furthermore, it seems that sometimes the decision to move was based on promises made by the government that might or might not actually be fulfilled. In the case of Likwaterera, the Constituency Councillor told us that he had convinced people over a period of two years that it would be good for them to move. It seems as though the people agreed to move based on a number of promises of support that would come from the government, but they claimed that few of these promises had been kept.

In Likwaterera, FGD participants stressed that "This is our land, it belongs to us," and one participant said, "All the land belongs to us, but it is also for other people to live on and use." They said that their families who had lived in this area always lived close to water sources, and had temporary settlements at pans with seasonal water. In the past there were rules for using the land and its resources: there were hunting and gathering areas for specific family groups, and the boundaries of these areas were known by natural landmarks (trees, rocks, the river etc.). The name for such areas was *tse*.

In Ndama, !Xun said that the area where they lived had been created for the San, but other people had moved in and the !Xun were being squeezed to the southern edge of the area. This was said to be one result of San people giving up land to people of other ethnic groups in exchange for money: there appeared to be a system in Ndama whereby the first person to occupy a plot of land was recognised as having the right to that plot, and the right to negotiate the 'sale' of that plot. As mentioned previously, the legal basis for such transactions was not clarified in the course of our discussions. !Xun in Ndama said that they had come to recognise the importance of land, and did not wish to give away any more land.

The situation was different for San living on land allocated as small-scale commercial farms (SSCFs). To reach the research site at Xeidang, we travelled through a large block of SSCFs west of the Khaudum National Park in the Shambyu and Gciriku traditional areas. It was clear that these farms were being developed. Many had already been fenced off, and most had a signboard with the names of the farm and the 'owner'.⁸

After our visit, the Shambyu TA approached the San in Xeidang to ask them to vacate the village due to the ongoing conflicts (see section 9.3.3 and Box 9.2). It was proposed that they move to an area near Taratara (see the map on page 330). According to the Regional Councillor, the Jul'hoansi had agreed to move to that area only if the government provided them with their own school, a water point and a clinic there. The Regional Councillor believed that these demands would delay the relocation because some of them were unrealistic (e.g. the request for a school for Jul'hoansi only) and/or were against government policies.



³ Many farms, although not owned under freehold title, are held under leasehold from the communal land boards. However, some farms had been allocated by traditional authorities, and the land boards had not issued leases for these by the time of our visit.

There were San living on some of the other SSCFs in this part of Kavango, working as labourers or moving around to find piecework. Apart from conflicts over water, another problem for the San living in this block of SSCFs was restricted access to wild resources: reportedly, some of the new farmers chased away San who gathered veldfood on their farms. The farmers also seemed to believe that the San were stealing their cattle – an allegation that the Xeidang residents strongly denied.

Box 9.3: The need for land

At all four sites in Kavango, FGD participants said that they needed land which they could call their own. Many San in this region have access to land and natural resources by virtue of their residence in villages that fall under Kavango TAs, and if San need land for cultivation, they ask the local headman for such land and generally it is granted – although most FGD participants said that they could not afford the oxen and equipment necessary for ploughing. It is not clear whether the headmen would still grant portions of land if many more San applied for such land.

The Shambyu headwoman in Likwaterera said that the non-San villagers had welcomed the new San residents, and then she joked: "They in fact are the ones who are supposed to welcome us because they are the owner of the land." Nevertheless, the San groups in Kavango have no land that is formally recognised as *their* land in the same sense that other ethnic groups in this region have their own officially recognised traditional land.

9.4.3 Identity, culture and heritage

Generally the San in Kavango Region do not refer to themselves as "San", but rather as "*mucu*", a Kavango term which the San use often, or otherwise as "!Xun" or "Jul'hoansi". The Jul'hoansi of Kavango see themselves as separate from the Jul'hoansi of the Nyae Nyae area in Otjozondjupa Region. They do not, for example, recognise the chief of the Nyae Nyae Jul'hoansi as their own chief.

Despite being scattered among other ethnic groups and rarely forming the majority at the Kavango research sites, the San at all four sites had preserved a strong sense of cultural and ethnic identity. At all four sites it was said that people belonging to a San group can be identified by their language and physical characteristics. FGD participants at all four sites stressed that they were keen to preserve their traditional knowledge by passing it on to their children, but at the same time they said that they were adapting to the livelihood strategies and cultural traditions of neighbouring groups. For example, a general practice was to adopt names from other language groups, but to still use their San names among themselves.

Language was perceived as an important distinguishing marker for the culture of the various San groups. In Ndama the !Xun taught the children their own language and said that this was important "so that they don't get lost in other languages". In Xeidang, although the Ju|'hoansi usually spoke Gciriku among themselves (including the children), they still maintained that the Ju|'hoan language was culturally important.

Apart from language, the FGD participants listed a range of characteristics by which they defined San culture. Hunting and gathering were specifically defined as being part of San culture, not simply as livelihood activities. Gathering veldfood, even more than hunting, was still an important activity in day-to-day life, even in a peri-urban environment such as Ndama, from where San residents had to travel/walk a considerable distance to be able to gather veldfood (and hunt).



One of the elders in Likwaterera explained how young boys were taught how to hunt:

"Your father will take you to see how he hunts – it is like attending school. When you reach a certain age he allows you to see how he set traps and will make you re-set the traps. One day when he goes to the shebeen he will ask you to go and check the traps. The next step is now hunting animals with bows and arrows."

Traditional knowledge was transferred to the younger generation when they accompanied their parents into the bush: the men taught their sons about bush lore and how to hunt, and the women taught their daughters which veldfoods to gather. FGD participants stressed that they taught their children "cultural things" such as how to perform traditional dances, how to survive in the forest, how to make weapons, and how to collect firewood and make fires.

In Ndama the men emphasised that they taught their sons how to hunt, even though they had to go far away from this site to find animals to hunt. The women taught their children how to gather veldfood (e.g. they showed them how to identify the trees and bushes from which they could gather fruits and berries), and they also taught the children about dancing, making necklaces and playing traditional games. Although the women specifically taught their daughters about veldfood, their sons also picked up skills relating to gathering traditional food when accompanying their mothers on food-gathering trips while still young.

9.4.4 Relationships with other groups

The *Kavango Regional Poverty Profile* (RPP) indicates that generally there were no tensions among the different ethnic groups in Kavango Region, but that, while non-San groups considered themselves to be equals, they looked down on the San – as the following statement of a Kavango person quoted in the RPP exemplifies: "Sometimes we feel as if we own the San." The RPP does state that there was increased social exclusion of the San after Independence due to tribal differences, but that the San also excluded themselves and did not participate in community meetings or decisions (NPC 2007c: 44).

Our research confirmed these general findings relating to inequality between the San and other groups in Kavango, but we examined the situation in more detail, and we found that the San at all four sites had complicated relationships with their Kavango neighbours. As mentioned previously, the San depended on good relationships for gaining access to land, and they were also dependent on Kavango people for piecework – one of the San's main livelihood strategies. At the same time they complained that their temporary employers treated them badly and paid them poorly. Although the San recognised the need for piecework, they stressed that they would rather live deep in the bush "away from the black people". Thus, despite the pattern of semi-integration with other groups, the San still clearly articulated a desire to live on their own and manage their own affairs. In Ndama, for example, there was a parallel village development committee (VDC) for the San (see further detail in section 9.4.8 on political participation). The Chief Clerk of Rundu Rural West Constituency stated the following: "As you know, these people like their own things. In the beginning they were part of the broader VDC but they insisted on having their own. They are now asking to have their own chief, because they do not trust blacks."

Participants in our FGDs complained of discrimination by other ethnic groups, particularly when it came to job applications. They said that if a San person and a person from another ethnic group with the same qualifications applied for a job, the other person would always get the job because he/she came from the same group as the people who had to decide who to employ. In Likwaterera, discrimination was clearly linked to poverty. One participant said, "We are seen as San who are poor," and others agreed with this. One woman said that they were born poor, and would always be poor because no one had ever shown them how to move out of this situation.

"Whatever we get, we get with difficulty; nothing comes easy for us. We are not considered for good full-time jobs, only asked to look after cattle and work on people's fields."

- Discussion participant in Likwaterera

Box 9.4: Fostering/adoption of San children in Kavango Region

In Kavango it is common practice for people of other ethnic groups to foster/adopt San children. FGD participants made clear that the San believe that their children are likely to be better off in more affluent households, and many hope that the children will be educated by their foster/adopted families. However, there was an emotional cost to the San, particularly if the new family removed their children from their home area.

In **Wiwi**, for example, it emerged that several children had been given away to "black people" for them to raise. One such child was Lydia, the sixth child of the headman: she was raised by "black people" in the Wiwi area, but then the family moved to Walvis Bay and took Lydia with them without her parents' permission. Her parents had not seen Lydia since 2011. Another man in Wiwi said that four of his five children had been given to "black people" to raise. In **Xeidang**, a blind man said that he had agreed that two of his children should be taken away to live with foster families to work as babysitters, and both families were supporting the San children's schooling. However, neither child ever visited their biological father: "I don't feel good because since they took the children they don't bring them here for me to meet them." Many other San parents in this village had had a similar experience: they had consented to their children being taken by foster families but did not see the children thereafter. Asked if this was a good or bad thing, they said, "It is very bad." Asked why they allowed their children to be taken, they said, "These people when they come they give so many promises that they will pay something and that they will bring the children to see [us]."

FGD participants at all four sites reported that when San and people of other ethnic groups were employed to do the same work, the latter would be paid more, and for fear of losing their jobs, the San never asked why others were paid more. They expressed the view that "black people" did not want San to improve their lives. A male participant added that only San children were taken out of their families to live and work for "black families" (see Box 9.4).

9.4.5 Education

At all four sites it was said that few older people had been to school at all or for long. Many said that their parents had moved around a great deal, so either it was difficult to go to school or there were no schools in the vicinity. Consequently the literacy rate among the elder San in Kavango was extremely low.

Although more children were going to school and attending for longer periods than their parents or grandparents had done, the dropout rate was still very high (as it was in San communities in other regions covered in this study). Most of the parents of children who had dropped out attributed this to the unaffordability of school fees. Two types of fees were charged: a fee for staying in a school hostel, and a payment to the School Development Fund to cover various school-related costs.9 It appeared that schools were charging these fees despite the government's policy directive to exempt children from marginalised groups such as the San. In addition, children reportedly dropped out because they could not afford basic items such as soap and clothes: other children teased them and told them that they were dirty and smelly. In remote areas, children had to travel long distances to attend school or to stay in school hostels. Table 9.6 reflects the school attendance rates of a total of 163 children at the Kavango sites at the time of our visit (early 2012). The dropout rate was high at all four sites.¹⁰ Table 9.7 presents the reasons cited for children dropping out. Despite the fee-exemption policy, a lack of finance was the reason most frequently cited.

Table 9.6:	School attendance by San children
	at the Kavango research sites
	(early 2012)

Attendance	# of San respondents	% of San respondents
Attended but dropped out	62	38.0
Never attended school	54	33.1
Still attending school	47	28.9
Total	163	100.0

Table 9.7: Reasons for San children dropping out of school in Kavango Region

Reason	# of San respondents	% of San respondents
Financial	21	43.8
Other priorities	6	12.5
Gender	5	10.4
Lack of mobility	4	8.3
Started working	3	6.3
Issues at school	2	4.2
Misconduct	1	2.0
Other reasons	6	12.5
Total	48	100.0

In Wiwi all the parents said that they wanted their children to complete Grade 12, because then the children could get work and support their parents. They thought that the children would be eligible to get the following jobs if they completed Grade 12: teacher, nurse, police officer, pastor, office worker, soldier, hostel matron or government minister – depending on what job the child wanted

⁹ As noted in previous chapters (e.g. footnote 15 on page 73), in January 2013 the legal obligation to contribute to the School Development Fund was abolished in all government primary schools.

¹⁰ Information collected in the FGDs on individual participants' and their children's levels of education and reasons for dropping out of school (see Chapter 16 on education).



The primary school in Wiwi, where the !Xun children seemingly fared well among children from other ethnic groups

the most. Their children attended the village primary school, and the parents were generally happy with the school conditions as there was no dropout problem, no complaints about bad treatment of the !Xun children, and the principal allowed the children to stay at the school even if they could not afford school fees. The only problem identified was that the teachers were all non-San and the !Xun parents wanted San people to teach their children. After Grade 4 the children had to go to the school in Mpungu, where pupils were expected to wear shoes and a uniform, and to have their own blankets and soap, but parents said that they could not afford these things, thus their children dropped out in Mpungu.

San children in Likwaterera also attended the local primary school, where apparently the learners from other ethnic groups treated them well. However, parents in this village said that their children did not have school uniforms or toiletries, so they felt inferior to those who had these things and consequently they dropped out. The parents wanted their children to go to school and do well, but mainly so that the children could look after them when they were old.

In Xeidang the major problem facing children was that the nearest school was at Taratara, about 60 km away. Parents said that they could not afford the school fees there, nor the various other costs associated with children attending a school far from home. They wanted a school in the village so that their children could attain literacy without having to travel long distances for schooling: "We are crying for a school ... we want our children to be educated, go out there and get jobs and come back here in the village and help our village and develop it."

The children in Ndama lived close to the local primary school and secondary schools in Rundu. Here it was said that many children did not attend school chiefly because parents did not encourage or force them to do so. This reflects a contradiction found at numerous sites in other regions covered in this study: parents said that it was important for their children to be educated, but they did not enforce school attendance. This non-enforcement is linked to a number of factors, but chiefly:

- cultural norms, i.e. San parenting styles are very non-coercive and children are not normally forced or pushed to do things, but rather are allowed to learn and socialise at their own pace; and
- socio-economic status, i.e. San parents report feeling threatened or intimidated by the school environment and personnel. (This issue is discussed in more depth in Chapter 16 presenting conclusions on San education.)

"During the colonial times we were separate and taught separately from others. But after Independence we were mixed with others and the black people started telling us that San people are smelling and things like that. So it is very difficult for us."

- Discussion participant in Ndama

9.4.6 Health

Table 9.8 summarises the main health issues at each Kavango research site. The major health problems mentioned were TB, malaria and malnutrition. The latter occurred particularly among children, and diarrhoea was also said to be common among children.

Health category	Likwaterera	Wiwi	Xeidang	Ndama
Main diseases (according to FGD participants)	 TB Malaria Diarrhoea Heart attack Leg/body pain High blood pressure 	 HIV TB Malaria Back pain Diarrhoea 	MalariaTB	 Coughing Malaria TB
Main children's diseases	Malnourishment	No data	MalariaCoughing	No data
Access to health services	 Clinic a day's walk away Mobile clinic visits irregularly 	 Clinic at Mpungu (±30 km away) Mobile clinic, but only for children 	 Clinic at Baramasoni (±75 km away) Mobile clinic 	 Clinic at Ndama Rundu State Hospital
Ambulance/transport	By foot or ask for a lift	Ambulance fetches patient in serious cases	Clinic is far away – need a lift to get there	 By foot to nearby clinic Taxi (fare N\$8-10) to Rundu State Hospital Ambulance comes if someone is very sick
Delivery of babies (births)	Mostly at home	Mostly at home	At home	At home and at the clinic
Alcohol/violence	Alcohol abuse leads to violence	Children given beer when hungry	Alcohol misuse	Some people fight when drunk
Traditional medicine/ healer	Traditional medicine	Traditional medicine but no traditional healer. In serious cases consult a healer elsewhere in the area.	 Use traditional medicine Visit traditional healers living nearby 	No data

Table 9.8: Main health issues reported at the Kavango Region research sites

The nurses interviewed at the clinics in Ndama and Mpungu ranked TB as the most frequent and most common disease among the San, and both reported that treating TB is difficult due to a range of factors:

- Often the San do not complete their TB treatment.
- The medication is very strong, and because the San do not eat regularly, the medication can have negative side effects.
- Since the San often stave off hunger by drinking alcohol, the medication together with the alcohol can have negative side effects and the medication might not be effective.
- The San often do not collect their medicine because of the long distances to the clinic, or they forget to take it regularly due to alcohol abuse.
- There is no system in place for monitoring whether patients take their medication.

The picture regarding HIV and AIDS at the Kavango research sites is blurred. FGD participants referred to the fact that HIV status is a personal issue (i.e. not to be discussed in public), and testing did not seem to be a widespread practice.

In Likwaterera the FGD participants said that they did not know whether HIV/AIDS was a problem as they never went for testing.

People generally knew how HIV is transmitted, but condom use did not seem to be common. This was

"We don't think about HIV/AIDS. There is nobody to tell us so we don't know if we have it or not."

- Discussion participant in Likwaterera

partly due to the fact that condoms were not easily available in remote villages such as Wiwi and Xeidang, and partly due to the older generation not being comfortable using them. In Wiwi people identified HIV/AIDs, TB and malaria as the main diseases suffered. FGD participants said that AIDS was killing many people – the incidence of HIV infection was high because, "The way we stay here, a new person comes in and gets a girl and infects her." They knew that infection could be prevented by using condoms for men and women, and by abstaining from unprotected sex, but condoms were not available locally; people had to go to Mpungu to get them.

Malaria was said to be a problem at all four sites, but it appears that few people died from malaria.

Alcohol abuse was apparently a problem at all four sites. Although FGD participants did not explicitly identify this as a health problem, problems related to alcohol abuse were mentioned frequently throughout the discussions. Participants reported that everybody drank alcohol – even small children were given alcohol at some sites when they were hungry. One woman said, "If there is no milk in the mother's breast, we give them alcohol to drink because he is hungry." Some adults also drank to stave off hunger. Alcohol abuse was said to cause problems such as verbal and physical violence: people would get drunk and then quarrel at the bar or at home – sometimes violently. Participants also said that men and women sometimes had sex when they got drunk, even if they were not married or in any other kind of 'romantic' or sexual relationship with each other. According to the nurse in Mpungu, the death rate among San who had attended the clinic was proportionally higher than for non-San people. Between October 2011 and April 2012, six San people died at the Mpungu clinic as a result of alcohol intake combined with a lack of food.

FGD participants said that traditional medicines were effective. For example, if children were sick, they might give them traditional medicine made from roots. If a traditional healer was needed and there was no healer in the applicable village, the San would visit a healer in another village.

Access to healthcare services

As Table 9.8 indicates, residents of the three rural villages often had to travel far to access healthcare services. Mobile clinics did visit these villages, but not regularly.

Likwaterera's residents accessed health facilities in Sambyu, Rundu and Ncuncuni. The women at this site reported that they faced serious difficulties if they encountered problems while giving birth.

Residents of Wiwi could go to the clinic in Mpungu for treatment in cases of serious illness, and in very severe cases they could call for the ambulance to collect a patient – i.e. if they had cellphone credit; if not, they had to make alternative arrangements for getting the patient to Mpungu. A mobile clinic visits Wiwi every two months to treat children.

For the Ju|'hoansi in Xeidang, the nearest clinic was at Baramasoni about 75 km away, and they rarely went there due to having no transport. FGD participants said that healthcare workers from the Catholic health facilities at Shambyu and Nyangana visited Xeidang three times a year to vaccinate the children.

In Ndama the women reported that some women gave birth in the village and some in the hospital: they would give birth at home if it was the middle of the night and they had no money for the taxi – transport to the hospital in Rundu cost N\$8 during the day and N\$10 at night. An ambulance could be called to collect a person who was very sick.

9.4.7 Gender

Gender roles

At all four sites, men and women had clearly defined roles: women would fetch water, cook, look after children, clean the house and wash clothes, and men would assist with such work if a woman was ill or busy with another important task. Women and girls were responsible for veldfood gathering, but men also engaged in this activity on occasion. Women were also responsible for planting seeds and looking after crops (weeding, chasing away birds and insects, etc.), but both women and men did the harvesting. In Likwaterera only men looked after livestock because it was considered taboo for women to do so, but FGD participants could not say why this was the case. Men in Likwaterera also did the work of clearing fields, collecting building material, constructing and repairing huts, and collecting firewood for the fires that men used for storytelling among themselves and for educating their boys. Both men and women engaged in piecework, and the women would take their children with them when they did so.

Household decisions

Most participants said that if a man or woman earned some money from piecework, they would discuss with their partner how to use the money. In some places women said that they controlled the household budget: in Likwaterera, for example, women said that when deciding on household priorities, "Most times women would first think of using the N\$1 she makes to purchase food before they drink, while men would first think of going to the bar before buying food." A man in the same village stressed that both he and his wife would first spend money on food, and then would spend



a little on *otombo* (home-brewed beer). Asked who took the decisions in a marriage, one of the elders in Likwaterera said that it depends – a woman might decide what a man should do, as long as there was mutual understanding. Asked about family planning, he said that there were no such discussions: "People believe in having many children and can have as many as God allows. Maybe it is only people of today who can decide on how many kids to have and they go for contraceptives and this is the culture of white people."

Inheritance

FGD participants in Xeidang explained that if a husband died, his family would take any livestock that the family might have owned. The family might decide to give the widow one or two animals, but usually they would take most of them. Fields would be left in the widow's possession as they were needed to feed the children. In Xeidang it was said that if the husband died, his brother and/or cousins would inherit any property because the widow was not a member of the deceased's family as such; she was only indirectly related by marriage. If there was nothing left once the property had been distributed to these male relatives, the widow was expected to know where to go to survive; the deceased's brother would not take her in, although he would be responsible for the children. Asked if they thought this to be a good tradition, the women emphatically said "No!". Asked how a woman would survive in these circumstances, a man replied that when the children grew up they would assist her, but in the meantime the woman would have to go back to her own family and then look for another husband.

Participation in the research discussions

The men dominated the discussions at all four sites; the women sat separately and were usually reluctant to contribute. Often when we specifically addressed the women, the men took it upon themselves to answer on the women's behalf. At each site there were one or two more assertive women who were more willing to contribute, but they had to compete with the men for a chance to speak.



9.4.8 Political participation

The San in Kavango Region were only partially integrated into existing decision-making processes and structures. The various Kavango TAs and a number of other decision-making bodies had the potential to affect the lives of the San. Where San were living with other groups, as in Likwaterera, Wiwi and Ndama, the San were sometimes (not always) involved in local decision-making bodies such as the water point committee (WPC) or the village development committee (VDC). However, FGD participants who had been involved in such bodies reported that despite being able to express their views in meetings, these bodies took little or no action thereafter to address the issues made known to them. Table 9.9 summarises the situation regarding San representation in decision-making bodies at the Kavango research sites.

In Likwaterera the San were not represented on the VDC. They said that they had asked to be involved, but were denied the opportunity. Therefore this VDC did not take decisions that affected the San living in the compound, but rather concentrated on issues outside the compound. The San did have a representative on the WPC, however. He had a key for the water point and attended the WPC meetings, in which he was given the opportunity to speak. The government contributed money for the water point on behalf of the San, and this money went straight to the WPC leadership – but the FGD participants complained that they were not informed about the disbursements of this money.

Research site	Representation
Likwaterera	 Not represented on the VDC. A Shambyu VDC member is responsible for the San. Represented on the WPC, but complained of discrimination. No own structure for making decisions for the San villagers. Two San leaders elected by the San to report to the Shambyu headwoman.
Wiwi	 Represented on the VDC until recently when the representatives were removed. Represented on a committee of advisors to the Kwangali headman. Not represented on the WPC.
Xeidang	 No representation on the VDC and WPC. No reported relationship with a local Shambyu or Gciriku headman. Own village headman.
Ndama	 Separate VDC for San consisting of five members. Three San representatives on the overall VDC. No WPC in this neighbourhood. Communicate directly with the Constituency Office of the Regional Councillor.

Table 9.9: San participation in local decision-making bodies at the Kavango research sites

In Ndama, a separate VDC was created for the San to operate in tandem with the overall VDC in the area. The San VDC consisted of three men and two women, and there were three San representatives on the overall VDC. According to the Chief Clerk of Rundu Rural West Constituency, the San VDC members would hold their meetings and then communicate their issues to the Regional Councillor – issues relating to, for example, deaths in the community and the shortage of food. She described the San VDC members as the "eyes and ears of the councillor".

In Wiwi, both !Xun and Kwangalis had been on the VDC, but, according to the FGD participants, the !Xun representatives were removed during the VDC meeting preceding our visit, for reasons apparently unknown to the FGD participants. The !Xun wanted to be represented on the committee again because, "Since we are an independent country it is not fair that only one ethnic group should be represented." The participants said that the WPC consisted only of people of other ethnic groups: "It seems like apartheid, we are not working together." One of the !Xun men had been involved in the maintenance of the tap at the water point, but had since been removed from the WPC, also for reasons apparently unknown to the FGD participants.

Most FGD participants at the Kavango research sites said that they participated in national and regional elections, and a few did not because they felt that the government did not listen to them.

Most FGD participants at all four sites also said that they knew their rights under the Namibian Constitution, but when probed, they were unable to cite any examples of such rights. Very few people knew that indigenous people have particular rights by virtue of international policies/declarations regarding indigenous people – let alone cite examples of indigenous people's rights.

In sum, most San at the Kavango research sites shared a sense of being isolated from mainstream decision making, and a feeling that they cannot influence the government. At each site people said that they had communicated their problems to the government, but in most cases there had been no response. For example, a woman in Likwaterera said, "The government has registered us several times, but they go and sleep on those books. Nothing has happened since they brought us here." Our FGDs as well as our stakeholder interviews and regional workshops in Kavango (and other regions) brought to light considerable differences in the perceptions of San groups and government officials concerning the extent to which the government consulted the San about issues affecting them. For example, the Chief Clerk of Rundu Rural West Constituency reported that the Constituency Councillor visited the San in Ndama every two weeks, whereas the FGD participants in Ndama said that they rarely saw the councillor. It is possible that on the one hand the officials were keen to show that they were supporting the San, while on the other hand the San were deliberately exaggerating their experiences in order to gain sympathy – perhaps in the hope of acquiring some external support.

Traditional authority

The San interviewed in Kavango Region resorted under the jurisdiction of existing Kavango TAs by virtue of their residence on land which was officially the dominion of one or another traditional group, but in Likwaterera, Xeidang and Ndama, FGD participants did not feel represented by the TAs under which they resorted.

There was no unanimous opinion as to whether the San in Kavango should have their own TAs. FGD participants in Xeidang and Ndama would prefer to have their own autonomous TAs, whereas participants in Likwaterera thought that it would be impossible to establish their own TAs within the jurisdiction of existing Kavango TAs, and therefore that they would have to remain subjects of Kavango TAs, but with their own representatives in these TAs. Table 9.10 shows the different relationships between the San and the TAs at each site in Kavango.

Research site	Relationship with TAs
Likwaterera	 San chief passed way a few months ago. San resort under Shambyu Hompa (Chief) Matumbo Ribebe, but do not accept him as their chief. San have two representatives among the 12 advisors appointed by the local Shambyu headwoman.
Wiwi	San resort under Kwangali Chief Sitentu Mpasi, through the local senior headman.
Xeidang	 San officially resort under the Shambyu TA, but do not recognise the Shambyu chief as their representative. San have their own authority (headman/elder) in the village. San want to have their own TA, which could represent the San of Xeidang, Taratara, Samagaigai, Sedon, Ncali, Navara, Nhoma, Shinunga, Ncavazi, Shakambu and Likwaterera.
Ndama	 San resort under the Shambyu TA. San want to have their own TA in each tribal area in Kavango Region.

 Table 9.10: The San and traditional authorities at the research sites

9.4.9 Changes over time and visions for the future

Changes in quality of life over time

Discussions on changes in the quality of life over time at the Kavango research sites revealed similarities in perceptions, but also reflected the different histories and situations of the applicable communities. FGD participants in Wiwi, Xeidang and Ndama thought that life was better around 10 years (or more) before Independence, in particular because more food was available at that time and it was easier to get jobs. In this context participants also mentioned that they were still able to hunt at that time, because there was more game available and conservation laws were not strictly enforced. In addition, for some San, employment in the SADF provided a regular cash income. By contrast, participants in Likwaterera said that life was much more difficult before Independence because the San were not seen as human beings.

In Ndama, FGD participants said that they became poorer after Independence because "everything we asked for never came". They were given mealie-meal but no relish, for example, and they did not feel part of the Namibian nation. Before Independence they were assisted by "whites", but after Independence they were seen as part of the SADF as they had been used as trackers during the war. The San in Ndama considered the present time as the worst for them because it was more difficult to get work and food, and government food aid was not received regularly. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 representing the highest quality of life, FGD participants in Ndama ranked their quality of life in 2012 at 5 compared to 10 in 1980.

The quality of life for the San in Wiwi has fluctuated over the past 30 years or more. For them, life was best before the war for independence, when they moved from Mpoto to Gode and were provided with oxen and ploughing equipment. During the war their quality of life deteriorated because they had to move from Gode and lost everything, although some of the men were able to get employment in the SADF. Life improved a little after Independence because they could access more food, but worsened again when they had to move to Wiwi due to the lack of water at Gode. Now life had improved once again due to government food aid. The !Xun of Wiwi ranked their quality of life in 2012 at 3 compared to 10 before the war.



For the San in Xeidang, life was marginally better before Independence because healthcare was free of charge, the men could hunt and there was more wild food available. After Independence their quality of life declined because they could no longer hunt and they also had to pay for healthcare. Their quality of life was the lowest at the time of the research due to insecurity of land tenure and the irregular delivery of food aid. The Jul'hoansi ranked their quality of life in 1980 at 2 and in 2012 at 0. The FGD participants in Xeidang were the most negative about their quality of life in general, and we noted a strong tendency to exaggerate the negative aspects of their situation more so than at the other three sites. This is possibly due to their remoteness as well as the threat posed by the allocation of the land that they occupied to an individual as a small-scale commercial farm.

In Likwaterera the FGD participants said that their quality of life before Independence was worse than after Independence because they did not have schools, and were seen merely as a source of cheap labour on farms. Life improved after Independence because the San were encouraged to go to school and the food-for-work programme was implemented. The best time was in 2010, just after their move to Likwaterera, as some people had been able to cultivate their own fields, and the fence around the San compound facilitated good management of the livestock and fields. At the time of our research, however, their quality of life was not considered to be so good because the government had not kept its promises after the San moved to Likwaterera and food aid was delivered less frequently than in the past. FGD participants in Likwaterera used a scale of 0-20 to rate their quality of life, and their ratings were 0 before Independence, 18 in 2010 and 16 in 2012.

Changes in the future

It appeared that few participants in our research discussions expected their situation to improve significantly in the future: they saw little hope of their economic situation changing because they lacked education, skills and productive assets, and could not afford to buy such assets. Few imagined living and finding permanent work in a big town in the future. Educational and job ambitions rarely extended beyond Grade 12 and positions such as soldier, nurse, policemen or teacher.

"We as San people will never be rich, our lives will always be the same, we will always be poor. It seems that this is the way that God wants us to live. Even our forefathers have gone [sic] to urban towns such as Grootfontein where they found work, but all always came back with nothing."

- Male FGD participant in Likwaterera

Participants in Xeidang thought that they would still be there in 10 years' time. One person said they would like to see development such as schools, their own land for cultivation and access to a good source of water. However, others thought that there was no chance of life changing for the better because of the constant conflicts over the land, and because of the difficulty of communicating the San's needs to government officials. For example, participants said that they had no opportunity to go and talk to the government to get a school built: "It is for you who collect information from us who can talk with the right people about it."

9.4.10 Impact of external support

The San in Kavango Region are recipients of various types of external support, mainly from the government, although not all San receive the same level of support. For example, remote villages such as Wiwi and Xeidang did not receive much direct support in the form of projects or funding, but even remote villages such as these received food aid from the OPM's San Feeding Programme, which is the main source of government support to the San in this region.

In terms of impact, the San Feeding Programme clearly plays a major role in providing some degree of food security for the San in Kavango, and probably keeps some people alive who might otherwise starve (see section 9.4.1 on livelihoods and poverty). However, the sustainability of this programme is questionable (see section 9.5).

It was often difficult in the FGDs to acquire information about other forms of government support. In Ndama, for example, when we first asked about external support, people said that they had not received any support from the government or the regional councillor apart from food aid, but when questioned in a later session, they said that they had received some support from the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW). For example, the MGECW had visited them to investigate their problems and to check on the orphans and children in need. Furthermore, the MGECW had brought shoes for the elders. One woman said that she had approached this ministry for support for her children, and the ministry had duly provided support for the children's education, thus her children were now attending school. Asked if the MGECW had provided this support to all San people, this woman replied that indeed it did, but no other FGD participants confirmed having received such support.

It also emerged that the Rundu Rural West Constituency Office had assisted the people of Ndama with the establishment of a butchery project. The Chief Clerk of this office reported as follows: The Regional Council provided N\$15 000 to initiate the project. The beneficiaries received two weeks' training. The intention was that the butchery would be self-sustaining, but beneficiaries started misusing the money. Non-San people were taking meat on credit and not paying their debts to the butchery, and the San were taking meat for themselves. Consequently they could not make enough profit to buy the next consignment of stock, so they decided to withdraw the money and divide it among themselves. They also started selling the infrastructure and materials to non-San people – the Constituency Office put a stop to this. The project failed badly.

The Chief Clerk also reported that elsewhere in the constituency (i.e. in Sitenda and Ncuncuni), San were being supported with cattle projects. We also heard from a social worker in the MGECW that the government, in collaboration with other sponsors, was supporting about 180 San children residing in the community hostel at the Mururwani veterinary checkpoint. The children were being sponsored by the woman who runs the hostel, companies such as MTC, and sometimes the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The MGECW provided psychosocial support to learners – particularly some of the San learners who were as old as 18 but in lower grades at the school, who therefore needed encouragement to continue their schooling. The ministry also provided grants to orphans. Also, the MGECW Directorate of Community Development had helped the residents of Likwaterera. The children who moved there had not attended school previously, but the directorate had spoken to the parents and helped to register the children so as to encourage them to go to school. The directorate had also helped the San in Likwaterera to establish the kindergarten there.

Individual regional councillors were also providing different types of support to San communities in their constituencies, including assisting people to obtain identity documents and birth certificates, providing access to training and helping children through school. Such support has positive impacts for the individuals concerned, but it needs scaling up to have an impact on the majority of San.



9.5 Regional conclusions and recommendations

The San are among the poorest people in Kavango Region, but it has to be noted there are many very poor people among other ethnic groups in Kavango. The *Kavango Regional Poverty Profile*, based on village-level participatory poverty assessments (NPC 2007c), conveys how many Kavango people face livelihood problems akin to those of the San. However, a number of factors render the San more marginalised within this larger category of poor people:

• Difficulties obtaining formal/permanent work positions:

- Lack of education: San children drop out of school and so lose the opportunity that education might provide for them to escape poverty through employment.
- Discrimination: Employers are reportedly reluctant to fill vacant positions with San applicants and/or tend to appoint members of their own ethnic group.
- High level of vulnerability: The San cannot cope easily with shocks. For example, when San lose assets (e.g. livestock), it is extremely difficult for them to replace them. Their social networks do not include a critical mass of better-off people who can assist in hard times; their livelihoods are not diversified enough to cope with shocks; and there are not enough wealthier relatives who can offer temporary work. For the San, assistance in hard times is generally limited to sharing what little food they have with their families and neighbours.
- Marginalisation: The San are more politically marginalised than other groups, and find it difficult to make their voices heard.

Government food aid was clearly important for San livelihood, and kept some people from starving, but this aid is not a sustainable option for the long-term development of most San in Kavango. In addition there appeared to be practical problems in ensuring the regular delivery of food aid.¹¹

A number of other government interventions are taking place, but these are not necessarily having a major impact on livelihoods and lifting San people out of poverty, partly because many are small in scale or are initiatives of individuals such as constituency councillors, rather than being part of a larger, planned programme of support.

FGD participants often said that "the government must bring projects", but they had little idea as to what these projects should be in practice. In Kavango there are many examples of failed incomegenerating projects, and very few examples of successful businesses that improved livelihoods. However, many San said that if they could be given livestock and ploughing equipment, they could clear fields, plough and grow their own food. Some more strategic thinking about the nature of long-term support for the San of Kavango is required, building on the examples of the many failed garden and other projects that litter the region. Such support could include means to help people to grow their own food at a sufficient scale to make a real difference; means to help learners to stay in school; and creating employment opportunities for San. Monitoring and evaluation procedures should be thoroughly established to enhance the effectiveness of support and provide lessons for future activities.

¹¹ At the regional feedback meeting on the findings of our research held in Rundu during October 2012, the Chief Clerk of Rundu Urban Constituency explained that the frequency of delivery is affected by logistics and the vastness of the region. In addition he explained that in Namibia, 12.5 kg of maize-meal is given as a quantity calculated to meet the energy needs of a single person per month. This figure, he explained, is arrived at using international standards. A San person from Ndiyona Constituency questioned this explanation by arguing that the food is not provided regularly and that the quantity also keeps changing. The Chief Clerk then explained that the amount of food distributed may vary depending on the availability of food, and the government does not provide relish in the expectation that the people can still access wild food that they can use for this purpose.

The issue of resettlement also requires careful consideration. While efforts to relocate San seem to be based on good intentions in most cases, it is not clear whether the full implications of resettlement have been thought through in the choice of new sites. The relevant officials and the San themselves need to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of resettlement more carefully. For example, the proposed relocation of people from Ndama to an area much further away from Rundu will provide them with land, move them away from shebeens and perhaps give them easier access to veldfood, but it could also reduce their opportunities for piecework and for selling their crafts, and impede their access to schools and healthcare services. Such a situation could entrench the San's currently high dependence on government food aid, reduce the opportunities to educate San children, and increase the costs of healthcare, since scheduled visits by a mobile health facility would be needed if there is no health facility at the new site.

The research brought to light that some San wished to live "away from the black people", and this raised concerns among government officials in the feedback meeting in Rundu in October 2012: one official argued that the San should not categorise themselves as a minority group, but should rather integrate with others to enhance cohesion and peace; and another wondered why the San wanted to be treated as a special group - he worried that this was advocating for separation. Clearly, strategies to support the San should not promote a new form of apartheid, but it is important to recognise why some San feel the need to be on their own: this can be ascribed to the unequal power relations that they experience; San allege that they are on the receiving end of ethnic discrimination in many sectors (education, employment, land, politics etc.), hence they do not feel integrated into the broader Namibian society. They do not believe that they have a say regarding their own development or the distribution of resources such as land. Outsiders do not recognise their traditional land-use practices and claims of land ownership, and they feel squeezed out by incomers. For example, in the Rundu feedback workshop the headman from Wiwi stated the following: "I represent San people at Gode village near Wiwi. Before Independence, there were few blacks there and many San people. After Independence Gode village became full of blacks and the San people there became scattered. So even if we get cattle now, there is no land, because blacks have taken the whole area."

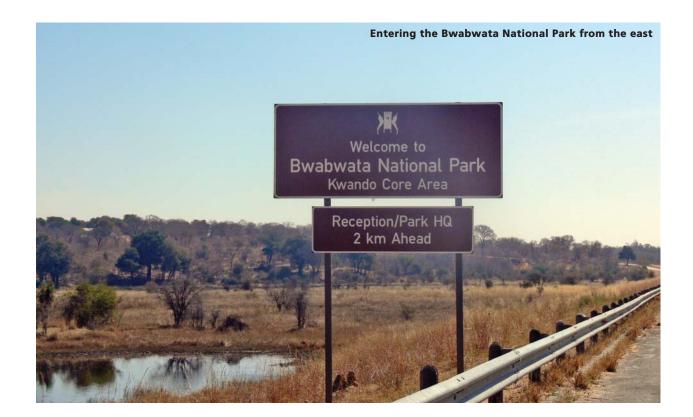
The need for San representation in local decision-making bodies such as VDCs and WPCs also has to be addressed. In the feedback workshop it was pointed out that such representation is subject to performance appraisal and not tribal balance, but in the case of the San there are strong arguments for applying positive discrimination to ensure their representation in key decision-making structures that affect them directly. Such an approach would aid the government's efforts to fulfil its obligations as a signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Positive discrimination is not a new concept in Namibia; since Independence it has been applied in favour of "formerly disadvantaged Namibians" in allocating jobs, resources and so on.

The same concept of positive discrimination needs application in the education sector to ensure that San children enrol in school, do not drop out, and move on to tertiary education should they so choose. San representation on school boards serving their communities must also be ensured.

Government in Kavango Region, through the OPM, line ministries and constituency offices, is providing a number of services to the San and a number of specific support activities. The message from our research sites is that the San themselves would like to participate more fully in discussions and making decisions about how they should be supported. We strongly recommend that the OPM and the Kavango Regional Council cooperate to work directly with the San communities to initiate a review of the existing interventions in support of the San across all sectors. This review should then lead to the government and San jointly developing a more coherent and comprehensive strategy of support to the San communities in the region.

Chapter 10 Bwabwata National Park

By Brian T.B. Jones and Ute Dieckmann



10.1 General background

The Bwabwata National Park (sometimes referred to as West Caprivi or the Caprivi Strip) falls within both Kavango and Caprivi Regions (see map on page 369), and is bounded in the north by the border with Angola, in the south by the border with Botswana, in the east by the Okavango River and in the west by the Kwando River. First proclaimed in 1937 as a "Nature Reserve" (Fisch 2008: 30), in 1963 the park was re-proclaimed as the "West Caprivi Nature Park" (Boden 2009: 44), although there had been plans to declare the area a "Bushman Reserve" in terms of the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission in 1962 (Nuulimba 2012: 3). In 1968 the park was re-proclaimed as the "Caprivi Game Park", with a higher degree of conservation protection (Brown and Jones 1994: 3). Soon thereafter, however, the South African Defence Force (SADF) declared the park a military zone and established military bases there, e.g. at Alpha (later renamed Omega), Pika Pau (later renamed Buffalo) near the Okavango River and Fort Doppies on the Kwando River (Boden 2009: 57). The SADF withdrew from the area in 1989 – shortly before Namibia's Independence in March 1990.

After Independence, the then Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism (MWCT) carried out a socio-ecological survey of the Caprivi Game Park to determine the status of its fauna and flora after the military occupation and the circumstances of its human population (Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) 2010: 134). The report recommended that the inhabitants (then mostly Khwe and !Xun San) be allowed to remain there; that any conservation plans for the area involve and benefit residents; and that a joint steering/management committee for the park be established, composed of conservation officials and community representatives (Brown and Jones 1994: 53-54).

In October 2007 the park was re-proclaimed as the "Bwabwata National Park" (BNP), covering 6100 km² and incorporating the Mahango Game Reserve (see map on page 369) on the west bank of the Okavango River (MET 2010: 134-135). The BNP has been zoned so as to provide for a central multiple-use area where people live, a core conservation area along the Okavango River in the west and a second core conservation area along the Kwando River in the east (see map). Although people are able to reside within the multiple-use area, some livelihood activities are restricted due to the area's status as a national park. Residents may use the land for cultivation and for harvesting natural resources. Cattle are not allowed in the central part of the multiple-use area beyond the veterinary fence erected east of Mutc'iku, although residents may keep goats in that area.

The BNP is characterised by three distinct physiographic features (Brown and Jones 1994: 1):

- the perennial Okavango and Kwando Rivers, their floodplains and riparian vegetation;
- parallel drainage lines (*omiramba*) which hold seasonal rain-filled pans between the two rivers; and
- deep aeolian Kalahari sands which are low in nutrients and in some places form linear dunes.

Wildlife in the BNP includes large concentrations of elephant, buffalo, roan and sable antelope, red lechwe, hippo, and predators such as wild dog, lion, leopard, hyena and cheetah. The BNP is home to about 5000 people (MET 2010: 135), most of whom are Khwe San and Mbukushu, and a few of whom are from other ethnic groups. There are also small numbers of !Xun San living in the area – around 150 in total, according to some reports (Chedau, personal communication, 2011).

Major San settlements within the BNP are located at Mushashane and Mutc'iku which are close to the Okavango River in the western part of the multiple-use zone; at Omega I and Chetto in the central part of this zone; and at Omega III and Mashambo in the eastern part of this zone (Suzman 2001a: 54). There are other smaller settlements scattered throughout the central part of the multiple-use zone, mostly along the B8 main road (see map on page 369).

Kavango and Caprivi Regions are two of the poorest regions in Namibia, and economic activity in the BNP is limited due to the area's status as a national park, so opportunities for people to lift themselves out of poverty are few. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and NGOs are attempting to provide development opportunities based on the sustainable utilisation of natural resources, trophy hunting and tourism. These are described in more detail in this chapter in section 10.4.21 on the impact of external support (page 394).

The residents of the BNP are represented by a community-based organisation (CBO), namely the Kyaramacan Association (KA), which aims to promote community development, particularly through the sustainable use of natural resources. In February 2006, MET officially recognised the KA as the legal body that represents all BNP residents on matters related to tourism development and the management and utilisation of natural resources within the park (Nuulimba 2012: 5). The KA receives support from the MET and the NGO named Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC).



10.2 The San in Bwabwata National Park

10.2.1 The Khwe

Before the onset of colonialism, the settlement area of the Khwe San was bounded by the Kwito, Zambezi, Linyanti and Okavango Rivers – thus an area which today spans parts of Angola, south-western Zambia, Caprivi Region and north-western Botswana. West Caprivi (today's BNP) was in the centre of this area and lay on the periphery of the areas occupied by different Bantu-speaking groups (Brenzinger 1998: 329; Boden 2009: 35). The Mbukushu originally came from south-west Zambia and reached the Okavango River in the late 18th century (Van Tonder 1966: 37). For the whole of the 20th century, especially on the banks of the Okavango, Mbukushu and Khwe lived as close neighbours, though spatially separated from each other to some extent (Boden 2009: 50).

There is little historical evidence of extensive Mbukushu settlement in West Caprivi prior to the 1920s. Expeditions of German troops travelling through West Caprivi from the Kwando River to the Okavango River in 1909 and 1912 encountered scattered groups of Khwe but no resident Mbukushu (Fisch 2008: 25). After this period, some Mbukushu settlements were established in the area now known as the BNP. In 1937, when the South African Administration declared West Caprivi a cattle-free zone and ordered the removal of all cattle and their owners, most Mbukushu left the area (Fisch 2008: 30). According to Fisch (2008: 32), "It is evident from official correspondence that from 1938 onwards the area was recognised as the traditional homeland of the Khwe." Some Mbukushu remained in the area, and in 1940, eight small settlements of Mbukushu on the west bank of the Kwando River were relocated to the east bank, along with their livestock, as part of a further drive to prevent the spread of cattle disease. Some Khwe voluntarily moved to the east bank of the Kwando at this time as well (Fisch 2008: 31). According to Suzman (2001b: 55), in the 1950s several Mbukushu families settled in West Caprivi with the permission of Khwe chiefs or headmen. Some new Mbukushu villages were built in the late 1960s, but this development was halted in 1968 with the declaration of the area as a Game Reserve, i.e. the "Caprivi Game Park" (Fisch 2008: 38). In 1970 the SADF removed all remaining Mbukushu from the area but again allowed the Khwe to stay.

Oral traditions indicate violent treatment of the Khwe by the Mbukushu in West Caprivi, with memories including slave raids until the 1930s, violations and abductions of women and children, corporal punishment and forced labour (Orth 2003: 124; Boden 2009: 50). Although these oral

traditions might derive from present-day conflicts between Mbukushu and Khwe, it can be concluded that their relationship was often conflictual in the past too.¹ A new influx of Mbukushu has been taking place since the mid-1990s (without permission from the Khwe leadership), which has led to conflicts with the Khwe inhabitants (see section 10.4.15 on relationships with other groups).

The population of Khwe in West Caprivi has fluctuated due to various events. When Angola became independent in 1974, many Khwe living there fled into Namibia and joined the SADF in West Caprivi (Brenzinger 2000). After Namibia's Independence in 1990, around 1 600 Khwe left with the SADF to live in South Africa. In 1998 around 600 Khwe fled to Botswana, alleging intimidation by members of the Namibian Defence Force, and more than 1 000 fled to Botswana when the Angolan civil war spilled into West Caprivi in 2000 (Boden 2003: 170-176; Suzman 2001b: 53-54). Some of those who left at this time returned to Namibia later. In 2005, IRDNC recorded 3775 Khwe, 830 Mbukushu and 70 !Xun living in the BNP (Taylor 2012: footnote p. 81).

10.2.2 The !Xun

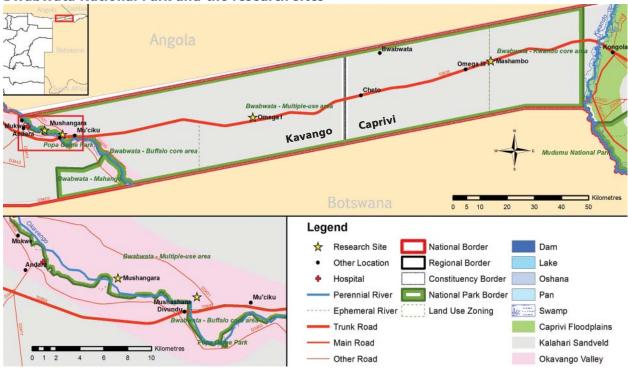
According to the "Investigation into the Bushman Population Group" launched by the South West Africa Administration in 1984, the !Xun did not live in West Caprivi in historical times; they moved there because of the war for Namibia's independence (Marais 1984: 24). Suzman (2001a: 54) also suggests that the !Xun did not view West Caprivi as historically their land. However, !Xun people interviewed during the socio-ecological survey in West Caprivi in 1990 said that !Xun-speaking clans had traditionally utilised the whole area from southern Angola through West Caprivi and into northwestern Botswana and the Nyae Nyae area of Namibia (Brown and Jones 1994: 40). Nevertheless, the number of !Xun in West Caprivi increased drastically due to the exodus of !Xun from Angola as from the onset of that country's War for Independence in 1961. The immigrants numbered hundreds in the 1960s, but with the withdrawal of the Portuguese Army form Angola in 1975 following the revolution in Portugal in 1974, many thousands of San (mostly !Xun) fled from Angola to West Caprivi (Brenzinger 2010: 351-352). The ethnic composition of Omega I (one of the research sites for this study) in 1982 was described as follows (Uys 1993, cited in Brenzinger 2010: 353): "99% of the Vasequela (!Xun) came from Angola as refugees, whereas about 40% of the Baraquena (Khwe) do. The rest are local [There are] about 6,000 Bushmen. Less than 800 are soldiers." In 1989 it was reported that 4800 Khwe and 2000 !Xun lived in West Caprivi. When Namibia became independent (1990), many Khwe and most of the !Xun left with the SADF for South Africa, and some !Xun went to Tsumkwe District West (Brenzinger 2010: 353). Shortly after Independence it was reported that around 600 !Xun remained in West Caprivi (Suzman 2001b: 63). Subsequently some of them left for Angola or Tsumkwe District or Kavango Region. In 1996, Brenzinger estimated that there were still 300 !Xun in West Caprivi (Brenzinger 1997: 16). As mentioned above, IRDNC recorded 70 !Xun in the BNP in 2005 (Taylor 2012: footnote p. 81). At the time of the research for this study, a KA board member estimated that around 150 !Xun lived in the BNP.

The !Xun essentially form a marginalised minority group in West Caprivi, subordinate to the Khwe (Brown and Jones 1994: 170). Suzman (2001b: 63) reported that one reason for the many !Xun leaving West Caprivi is that they felt marginalised by the Khwe. In our study, Khwe people at both Mushashane and Omega I indicated how they thought of the !Xun by describing them as abusers of alcohol and as "lazy" people because they survive mainly from food aid and piecework, and most of them do not cultivate.

¹ See Taylor 2012 (pp. 59-78) for a detailed outline of ethnic relations between Khwe and Mbukushu and state contributions to the construction of ethnicity in colonial times.

10.3 Research sites in Bwabwata

This section introduces the four research sites in the BNP: Mushashane, Mushangara, Omega I and Mashambo. It provides a summary of the site locations, infrastructures, services, populations, histories and general livelihood strategies. Table 10.1 summarises the main characteristics of the four sites. The sites selected for the BNP range from remote rural to village settlements, and include a settlement of !Xun people who are a minority San group in the BNP.



Bwabwata National Park and the research sites

Table 10.1: Main	characteristics of	the Bwabwata	National Par	k research sites
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Research site	Urban/rural status	Land tenure	Language group	Population status (numerical)	Institutional support (GRN)	Institutional support (NGOs)
Mushashane	Rural village	National Park, multiple-use zone	Khwe	Majority	MLR borehole	IRDNC – CBNRM project
Mushangara	Rural village (remote)	National Park, multiple-use zone	!Xun*	Minority	No specific support reported beyond normal GRN rural services	IRDNC – CBNRM project
Omega I	Rural resettlement project	National Park, multiple-use zone	Khwe and !Xun	 Khwe majority !Xun minority 	 MLR garden project OPM beekeeping project 	 IRDNC – CBNRM project; WIMSA support
Mashambo	Rural village	National Park, multiple-use zone	Khwe	Khwe		IRDNC – CBNRM project

* Although there were also Khwe living at Mushangara (according to Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 13/6/2013), only !Xun participated in the study discussions there. In the mornings the researchers organised transport for the Khwe participants at Mushangara to join the Khwe group at Mushashane.

10.3.1 Mushashane

Mushashane, a village in Mukwe Constituency, is located along the B8 main road in the western part of the BNP multiple-use zone, a few kilometres north-east of the town of Divundu.² The village has a mixed population composed of Khwe, Mbukushu, Caprivians, Owambo, Kwangali, Gciriku, Nyemba and a few !Xun. According to the Khwe headman of Mushashane, the Khwe there numbered 448 at the time of the research. The Khwe and the Mbukushu are the majority populations in the village. Just across the main



road from the village is the Divundu Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) for prisoners. An agricultural scheme with large cleared fields for the prisoners is attached to the DRC. Also nearby is a Namibian Defence Force (NDF) base. The villagers collect water from the DRC or the NDF base. Water is also available from the Okavango River, but collecting it entails a much longer walk, and the water is unsafe for drinking as it carries bilharzia agents. Electricity was available in parts of Mushashane. The village has a school, i.e. Martin Ndumba Combined School, and there is another school nearby, i.e. Kippie George Primary School at Mutc'iku, a village located a few kilometres along the main road to the east of Mushashane. There is also a clinic at Mutc'iku.

Like other larger villages in the BNP, Mushashane is represented on the management committee of the above-mentioned Kyaramacan Association (KA).

Mushashane was part of the resettlement programme of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (now named Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR)). In Kavango Region this programme was implemented by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) from 1991 to 1996 (an implementation arrangement similar to the one adopted for the programme in Tsumkwe West – see Chapter 5 on Otjozondjupa Region). The programme targeted the former "Bushmen soldiers" primarily, and aimed to prevent an economic 'disaster' among the West Caprivi Khwe and !Xun who had been economically dependent on the SADF before Independence (Boden 2003: 176). Through the programme, Khwe were resettled at Mushashane, Mutc'iku, Omega I, Chetto and Omega III. Each resettled family received a 4-hectare plot for cultivation (Brenzinger 1998: 334). At the time, ELCIN also provided capacity-building training for the settlers.³ Apparently, due to the armed conflict that erupted in the late 1990s between the secessionist Caprivi Liberation Army and the Namibian Special Field Force, the Khwe stopped ploughing their fields for at least two years for fear of striking landmines (Boden 2003: 177).

Mushashane is the Mbukushu name for the village; the Khwe call it *Kx'aica*, meaning 'vulture water'. According to Khwe respondents, only Khwe lived there in the past; Mbukushu have been moving into the area from across the Okavango River since Independence. The Khwe perceived this as a problem because the incomers did not ask for the Khwe residents' permission to settle in the area; it was Mbukushu Chief Erwin Mbambo who authorised this. Chief Mbambo had also appointed headmen for Mushashane but there were complaints that these headmen did not consult with the village community as a whole as to who should be allowed to settle there.

² The B8 crosses the Trans-Caprivi Highway (B2).

³ Boden reported that before 2000, Khwe relied economically mainly on agriculture on plots that were part of the resettlement scheme (Boden 2003: 176).

10.3.2 Mushangara

Mushangara, a village in Mukwe Constituency, is in the western part of the BNP multiple-use zone, a few kilometres upriver of the Okavango River bridge located about 7 km from the village of Mushashane. Mushangara's population comprises a mix of !Xun, Khwe and Mbukushu. Including children, there were 33 !Xun and 100 Khwe residents at the time of our fieldwork (late October 2011). The village has little infrastructure. !Xun respondents said that they get their water from the river. There is a small church building at the village. Children go to school at



Mushashane or Mutc'iku. In the past, the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) worked with the government to allocate plots to people at Mushangara, and helped them to develop these. Mushangara had no direct representatives in the KA, but the Association did employ a male !Xun of Mushangara as a community game guard, and a female !Xun as a community resource monitor.

Mushangara is a Mbukushu name. The !Xun participants said that the !Xun had moved to the area after the Khwe had left, and the Mbukushu started moving in gradually after Independence, without asking the !Xun residents' permission to do so. According to one !Xun participant, "We used to have a place of our own, but now we are just living among the Mbukushu."

10.3.3 Omega I

Omega I, a resettlement project in Mukwe Constituency, is located in the central part of the BNP multiple-use zone, just off the B8 main road, around 60 km from the town of Divundu, and east of the veterinary fence that extends from close to the Buffalo camp entrance to the Angolan border. This means that there are veterinary restrictions in the settlement area, and only small stock are allowed there, but some (mostly non-Khwe) residents do keep cattle. Omega I has several 'suburbs' or satellite settlements along the B8 to the west and the east. The main settlement is a former SADF base where many Khwe and !Xun were employed before Independence. The SADF gave the settlement its name. Omega I (i.e. the main settlement *and* the satellite settlements) has a mixed population composed of Khwe, !Xun, Owambo, Angolans, Caprivians, Gciriku, Mbukushu and Kwangali. In 2001, 630 Khwe and 100 !Xun were living at Omega I (Suzman 2001b: 54), and in 2013 the settlement was said to have about 1 000 residents, of whom 700-800 were Khwe (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 13/6/2013).

Omega I is the largest and most developed settlement in the BNP. At the time of the research it had a combined school (Grades 1-10), two kindergartens run by churches, a clinic and two boreholes – one powered by solar energy and the other by a diesel generator in the main settlement. Water was available from public taps, but was not supplied directly to homes. Residents of the satellite settlements had to get water from the main settlement. The SADF had installed the diesel generator, and had left it there to continue the electricity supply to the settlement. Today the Ministry of Works and Transport (MWT) provides the diesel. The generator was not in operation during the day, so the residents relied on the solar-powered borehole for accessing water during the day. Participants said that there were often problems with the solar-powered pump, and sometimes there were problems with the diesel generator. It was said that it can take as long as two months for someone to arrive to fix the generator.



The Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) has established an office at Omega I to facilitate the implementation of the MLR Western Caprivi Resettlement Project. One activity under this project is the development of a community garden, and this was underway at the time of our fieldwork. The Namibia Development Corporation (NDC) also manages an agricultural project in the settlement area. Omega I has representatives on the KA Management Committee, and the Association also employs some residents. The OPM's San Development Programme (SDP) had promoted beekeeping, and two young men at Omega I were undertaking this activity. WIMSA had a resident employee at Omega I, who was promoting cultural awareness and linking young people to educational opportunities.

In the past, Omega I was not a traditional settlement of either Khwe or !Xun, and there was still no Khwedam or !Xun name for it at the time of our fieldwork. In about 1975, during Namibia's war for independence, the SADF settled the Khwe and !Xun in a tented camp, named Zebra, opposite Omega I (named "Alpha" at the time), i.e. on the other side of the main road. Later they were resettled at Omega I itself. Gradually, more Khwe started coming from Angola and Botswana to settle at Omega I. The SADF also brought !Xun from Angola, and some !Xun moved from Angola into the Omega area on their own, seeking safety during the war for independence. Khwe participants said that before being settled by the SADF, the Khwe had lived in permanent villages such as Bwabwata and Yiceca. Yiceca (meaning 'God's water') is a bit further east of Bwabwata, within the boundaries of the BNP. They cultivated at those settlements, but moved around seasonally to hunt and gather, staying at wells and later at boreholes which the SWA Administration had provided before 1975.

10.3.4 Mashambo

Mashambo is the most isolated village in the BNP, in the sense that it is far away from any services and infrastructure. It is also the village most affected by proximity to wild animals. It is situated very close to the boundary of the Kwando core conservation area of the BNP, alongside the B8, about 40 km west of the Kongola bridge over the Kwando River. In 2001, 119 Khwe were living at Mashambo (Suzman 2001b: 54). At the time of our fieldwork, participants said that there were 273 Khwe living at Mashambo and 64 Khwe living at nearby Poca ('Jackal's water'). Another estimate in 2012 was a total of 380 Khwe living in the two villages (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 13/6/2013). Participants said that some Mbukushu tried to settle in the area in 2011, but the MET told them to leave as they had moved into the core conservation area.

At the time of our fieldwork there was a school at Mashambo catering for Grades 1-4 only, but there were plans for it to cater for Grades 5-7 as well. For Grades 8-10 the pupils would have to go to Ndoro School at Omega III. The closest clinics are at Chetto, about 50 km to the west but still within the BNP, and at Kongola, a similar distance to the east but outside the BNP. Participants said that Mashambo is also served by a mobile clinic. There is a borehole supplying water to the village.

In the past, some people had lived at the village of Bwabwata, and others lived around the area that is now Mashambo. Most of the residents at the time of our fieldwork had moved to Mashambo from Bwabwata village in 1990 following Independence. That was when they had given it the name *Mashambo*, an Mbukushu word meaning 'crossing'. Mashambo also has Khwe name, *||Xoageri*, meaning 'roan antelope" – these animals being abundant in the area – but the Khwe name is rarely used nowadays. Brenzinger (1998: 336) documented the name " $\pm Iyo$ -*||ana*" ('waterhole of snake'). Poca came into existence very recently. Most of Poca's residents had lived in Omega III before fleeing to Botswana in the late 1990s during the secessionist conflict in East Caprivi and the consequent security sweeps in both East and West Caprivi.⁴ When they returned from Botswana, they first resided at Mashambo and then built their own village at Poca.

10.4 Research findings

10.4.1 Livelihoods and poverty

Livelihoods in West Caprivi have undergone considerable change.⁵ Before the arrival of the SADF, Khwe engaged in a variety of livelihood strategies: hunting/trapping, veldfood gathering, cultivation (millet, maize and vegetables) and fishing along both rivers. Many men did contract work on the South African mines and bought cattle with their earnings. In the mid-1960s, for example, most Khwe men were contract workers on South African mines. The migration for mine work in South Africa stopped in 1975 when Botswana closed the border at Mahango, which was on the main route for mine workers. From the 1970s, wage labour, mostly from the SADF, largely replaced the men's traditional contribution to the subsistence economy, although women and older people continued to grow crops and collect veldfood. At the time of the 1990 socio-ecological survey, it was reported that people at all the settlements visited had some form of livestock, such as donkeys, goats, poultry and also some cattle. Some hunting was taking place and a small number of the elderly received pensions. The Khwe in particular had been involved in the cash economy, and had experience of cultivation and small-scale cattle farming for many years before Namibia's Independence (Brown and Jones 1994: 40, 45; Brenzinger 1998: 346).

The major change at Independence was the withdrawal of the SADF, which left many men without work. According to Marais (1984: 73), the San of West Caprivi had the highest per capita monthly income of San throughout the country, and this was more than 12 times the income of San on white-owned farms and more than 30 times the income of San living on communal land. The SADF also provided medical services, schools, food, shops and houses. When the South African military pulled out, the economy of West Caprivi collapsed. The MLRR Resettlement Programme, implemented by ELCIN, sought to buffer the disastrous economic impacts of the withdrawal of the SADF, but, according to Suzman (2001b: 56), the success was limited. The expansion of the Angolan conflict into West Caprivi and the secessionist movement in East Caprivi further hampered development efforts in the region. Only recently, with the end of the constant political conflicts that beset the

⁴ For more detail on the events and the impacts on Khwe in West Caprivi, see Boden 2003.

⁵ For an extensive description of Khwe livelihood strategies in the late 1990s, see Boden 2005, pp. 101-118.

region during the last three decades, have development efforts slowly started to impact positively on the livelihoods of the Khwe.

Table 10.2 shows that the Khwe and !Xun at the BNP research sites lived mainly from pensions, government food aid (mostly mealie-meal), income from piecework, employment (permanent and temporary), veldfood gathering and some cultivation. !Xun had proportionally less permanent employment, and were less engaged in cultivation and more dependent on piecework for cash income. The main sources of employment were the Namibian Police (Nampol), the NDF, the KA and schools. Table 10.2 further indicates that keeping livestock is not an important livelihood activity. At the time of the fieldwork, few people had livestock, partly because many people could not afford to buy livestock, and partly because some people with livestock had sold them to raise cash. In addition, veterinary policies have resulted in the removal of cattle held by the Khwe and the provision of goats as compensation (see Box 10.1 for further detail on cattle and veterinary restrictions in the BNP). Begging appeared to be a common strategy for people at Mushashane and Omega I.

Livelihood strategies	Mushashane	Mushangara	Omega I	Mashambo
Pensions				
Food aid				
Piecework				
Cultivation				
Veldfood				
Devil's Claw Harvesting				
Employment	Ca. 5%	Ca. 6%	Ca. 2.7%	4.7%
Begging				

* The cell shading indicates that the livelihood strategy is employed at the applicable site.

Pensions

At all sites, pensions for people over 60 years of age were an important means of survival. Pensions provided regular cash income, not just for the pensioner but for the whole family. Mobile teams distributed the pension money each month. However, a number of people said that the elderly have difficulty in registering to receive their pension because they lack the necessary documentation, such as birth certificates and identity documents. Residents said that the elderly cannot afford to go to Rundu or Katima Mulilo for registration. They need money for transport and also to pay for someone to accompany them to assist them with the registration process. A family's dependency on an elderly person's pension for its main cash income is an indication of poverty.

Food Aid

Suzman (2001b: 61) reported that the San in West Caprivi relied exclusively on food aid at certain times of the year. However, our research suggests that this situation has changed, in that more livelihood strategies were being undertaken. Food aid was important as a supplement to food that people were able to purchase or grow, and it helped them if there was little cash to buy mealie-meal. The !Xun were more dependent on food aid than most Khwe. Quantities delivered and frequency of delivery appeared to be inconsistent. At Mushashane and Mushangara, participants said that they received one 12.5 kg bag of mealie-meal per household, which they considered insufficient for a family. At Omega I, participants said that in the past they had received food aid three times per year. At the time of our fieldwork (late October 2011), participants said they were still waiting for

the third delivery for the year. In addition, they claimed that the mealie-meal supplied was often full of worms. Participants at Mashambo reportedly received one bag of mealie-meal three times per year. They mentioned that the government had incorrectly accused them of selling mealie-meal received as food aid.

Piecework

Piecework was an important livelihood strategy for both !Xun and Khwe. For many !Xun, this was the main source of income. Sometimes piecework was carried out for food rather than cash. At Omega I, Mushashane and Mushangara, dependency on piecework was viewed as an indicator of poverty. At Omega I, piecework in the NDC fields was available in the rainy season. Mbukushu or sometimes Khwe people hired Khwe and !Xun to work in these fields from morning to one o'clock for N\$15-25.

"Maybe if you are hungry the whole day, the next day, you will try to do piecework and get e.g. N\$20 and you could buy food."

- !Xun participant at Mushangara

Employment

Suzman (2001b: 60-61) reported that unemployment among Khwe in West Caprivi was high, and that few San had secure jobs. Our research indicates that the situation has not changed much. Few among the total number of Khwe adults living in the BNP had permanent employment. Participants at Mushashane said that 22 Khwe of the village were employed out of an estimated total population of 448 – mostly in the nearby prison, Nampol, the KA and various government ministries, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) and the Ministry of Education (MoE). At Omega I, 19 residents had full-time employment and two had part-time jobs. Most of the full-time work was in the school hostel (eight positions) and the KA (seven). A further 26 people were employed elsewhere, mainly in Nampol and the NDF. Participants said the people working elsewhere did not send money home to support their families. At Mashambo a total of 13 people out of a total population of 273 had full-time jobs: nine were employed by the KA (not all full-time), one by IRDNC and three by the school.

Cultivation

Traditionally, cultivation was one of the important livelihood strategies of the Khwe in the past. After Independence, a resettlement scheme was implemented and a 4-hectare plot was distributed to each family for cultivation (Brenzinger 1998: 350). However, cultivation is not practised on a large scale nowadays due to various problems, the main ones being a lack of equipment and oxen, and the destruction of harvests by elephants. Nowadays it is more common for Khwe to keep small gardens at their homes. At Omega I, for example, only a few Khwe were cultivating plots at the NDC fields because most Khwe could not afford the annual fees for the tractor used for ploughing. Most people had gardens at their homes or in the nearby *omuramba*. Participants at Mushashane said that some people were cultivating in fields around the houses. !Xun participants at Mushangara said that nobody was cultivating there, but subsequently one man there said that once in the past he had once hired equipment to plough his field. The Mashambo community used to farm quite actively, but cultivation had largely come to a halt during the last five years due to elephants and other wild

animals damaging the crops. A new conservation agriculture project will start in Mashambo in 2013. This is a pilot project to test vegetable and crop farming in essential elephant trans-boundary corridor areas, namely the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA).

Veldfood (bushfood)

Veldfood played an important role in the diet of the San in West Caprivi at the time of Suzman's research (2001a and b: 60). Participants in our research indicated that gathering veldfood was an important means of providing food for many people. However, it was also noted that veldfood had become scarce around all the sites. Veldfood was used mostly as relish to eat with maize or millet porridge. Participants at all sites identified a wide range of veldfoods which they ate, including fruits such as monkey orange, seeds from trees, tubers, honey and wild melons.

Hunting

It is always difficult to get reliable data regarding hunting practices because hunting in the BNP is illegal. Some older men in both Khwe and !Xun communities said that they still had hunting skills, and some !Xun still hunted with bows and arrows. Participants said the Khwe elders at Chetto and Omega III still hunt.

Livestock

According to the headman at Omega I, each community in the BNP had relatively large livestock herds before Independence, but, due to the restrictions introduced after Independence (see Box 10.1) and subsequent developments, nowadays only a few Khwe had cattle or goats, and not in large numbers. At Mushashane, residents said that only five Khwe had cattle and seven had goats. The !Xun at Mushangara reported that they had received five head of cattle some years ago from the CCN. According to the participants, these cattle had been taken by one of the Khwe headmen as he said that they were not being looked after properly. At Omega I, very few people had cattle, and not in large numbers, and some Khwe had 2-4 goats. Mashambo residents said that they did not have cattle due to veterinary restrictions, but some people had goats.



Box 10.1: Livestock and veterinary restrictions in the Bwabwata National Park

Veterinary policies that place restrictions on cattle ownership have shaped the history of the BNP and continue to shape development within the park today. In 1937 the SWA Administration declared that West Caprivi should be a cattle-free zone, and this resulted in cattle and their owners being removed from the park (Fisch 2008: 30). The Khwe were allowed to stay because at that time they had no livestock. Over time, however, the Khwe began to accumulate small numbers of livestock, particularly with income earned from working on the mines in South Africa and for the SADF.

In 1996 there was a renewed effort to remove cattle from the park in response to an outbreak of bovine lung sickness which resulted in the destruction of around 250 000 cattle in Botswana, and the Botswana Government's subsequent erection of a veterinary fence along the southern border of the park to prevent the spread of cattle disease. The Khwe sold or consumed some of their cattle, and a few of the study participants claimed that their cattle were shot by veterinary officials. Some participants said that they were compensated with small stock, and others claimed that they had not received such compensation. Subsequently, however, Mbukushu began settling in the park, bringing relatively large numbers of cattle with them. When the area was proclaimed as the Bwabwata National Park in 2007, the Namibian Cabinet decided that no cattle should be allowed in the park. This decision was taken partly to satisfy the Botswana Government, as it meant that part of the southern-border veterinary fence could be left open for the movement of wildlife without cattle diseases spreading to Botswana. The Namibian Government has also built a veterinary fence extending from close to the entrance to the former Buffalo military base up to the Angolan border. A number of Khwe were not in favour of this fence, saying that it restricted people's movements and their foraging for veldfood. Others welcomed it, as indicated by a Khwe leader at Mutc'iku: "The veterinary fence is a right thing; if it wasn't here, the cattle would get into the core area. The fence is only for animals, not for the people."

However, Khwe residents question why they are not allowed to have cattle in the park when other people continue to bring their cattle into the area. The MET Director of Regional Services and Park Management interviewed for this study stated that a BNP Technical Committee, on which the Khwe are represented, had made recommendations to the MET on ways to address this problem.

Devil's Claw harvesting

A large number of people in the BNP were involved in Devil's Claw harvesting, which can provide an important source of income. Table 10.3 on the next page shows that in 2010 there were 424 harvesters, earning a total of N\$278607 and an average of N\$896 per harvester per year.

The KA supported the harvesters by means of negotiating a central contract with just one buyer, with the aim of securing a fair and consistent price for this product. The KA collected the harvested product from the harvesters and stored it for sale to the buyer. In addition, the KA provided training in sustainable harvesting techniques. This situation was in contrast to areas outside the BNP – or outside conservancies and community forests – where individual buyers exploited harvesters with low prices, and where the harvesting is often unsustainable.



Table 10.3: Devil's Claw harvesting data

Year	Number of registered harvesters	Number of actual harvesters	Amount (N\$) earned per kilogram	Total kilograms harvested	Total amount (N\$) received	Average earning (N\$) per harvester*
2008	No data	388	16	24896	378989	976
2009	526	379	8	18216	145728	384
2010	424	311	13	21431	278607	896

* The average earning masks considerable differences between individual harvesters.

Source: IRDNC (unpublished data, October 2011)

Food security

Table 10.4: Ranking of the most important food items at the Kavango research sites in BNP

Research site	Most frequent (eaten daily)					Least frequent (rarely eaten)
Mushangara/ Mushashane*	 Mealie-meal Mahango Groundnuts Beans Maize 	Tubers			• Meat • Sugar	 Watermelon Tsamma melon Pumpkin Wild leaves Seasonal veldfood
Omega I	 Pumpkin Tsamma melon** Mahango Mealie-meal Maize 	 Groundnuts Wild leaves Beans Meat <i>Kyaara</i> ** Sorghum 	 Mangetti nuts False mopane seeds 	Various types of honey	 Various types of wild tuber Sweet potato Various wild fruits 	 Sugar Rice Melon Various tree fruits Berries
Mashambo ***	 Mealie-meal Various veldfoods (e.g. mangetti and false mopane) 				Meat	

* The participants at Mushangara joined the participants at Mushashane for this discussion.

** Tsamma melon is an oilseed melon, related to the watermelon. In Namibia it occurs mostly in the Kalahari.

Kyaara is a cooking oil made from a black fruit (Ochna pulchra). A bucket can last a year because it solidifies.

*** The data for Mashambo may be incomplete as it was obtained during a one-day visit, with various topics covered, whereas the data for the other sites was obtained by way of specific questions relating to food security.

Table 10.4 shows that generally, mealie-meal (maize-meal – provided by the government through the San Feeding Programme or obtained from other sources, such as piecework) was the staple food eaten by the Khwe and the !Xun at all of the BNP research sites. At both Mushashane and Omega I, cultivated foods such as maize, *mahango* (pearl millet), groundnuts, beans, watermelon, pumpkin, tsamma melon and *mutete* (a type of spinach) were more common and more important than at Mushangara and Mashambo. Participants at all sites were able to list a wide range of different veldfoods, fruits, tubers, berries and leaves that they ate according to season. These ranged from foods eaten on an almost daily basis to foods eaten rarely – depending on seasonal availability. Some of these veldfoods were more important than others. Berries, for example, were often eaten as a snack while people were travelling in the bush, and tubers could contribute substantially to a meal.⁶

⁶ For a list of gathered plants, see Boden 2005, p. 394.



Most families ate meat only occasionally. At Mushashane people sometimes bought meat from a local butchery or from individuals who occasionally slaughtered an animal when a person was sick and needed good food or income. Game meat was sometimes distributed by the KA from trophy hunting. At Omega I, people appeared to eat meat more often, as meat was ranked in the group of second most important foods that people ate. Residents of Omega I obtained meat from shops, and from the KA distribution of trophy-hunted meat. At Mashambo residents mentioned the KA meat distribution as their only source of meat, and said that they wanted to be able to keep cattle for meat and milk. It is likely that they also obtained some meat from small-scale hunting of animals such as spring hares.

!Xun participants from Mushangara said that, "To have enough food shows that you are a hardworking person instead of someone waiting for others to help you." For the Khwe of Mushashane, having enough food meant that in your home you already have everything that you would like to eat. They ate 1-2 meals per day. At Omega I, having enough food meant having enough of the following foods in your storeroom to last the whole year: mealie-meal, whole maize, *mahangu*, beans and groundnuts (i.e. virtually everything that people there cultivated), and relish from veldfood such as mangetti nuts, false mopane seeds, tubers and leaves. Discussion participants said that a few Khwe in Omega I were in such a position, but the majority were not (i.e. most residents did not have enough food. However, these differences regarding the perception of what it means to have enough food shows the importance of cultivation at Omega I, compared to Mushashane where apparently more food was bought.

Perceptions of poverty

Table 10.5: Wealth ranking by research participants

(The participants at each site created their own categories, thus the categories varied between sites: Omega 1 did not have the "lower rich" and "medium rich" categories)

Site	Very poor	Poor	Better off	Lower rich	Medium rich	Rich
Mushashane/ Mushangara*	 No work, No pension Piecework (e.g. harvesting Devil's Claw 	 Cultivation for subsistence Few cattle Pension 	 Full-time work but not so well paid Goats Cattle Fields 	 Full-time work Cattle Goats Fields 	 Shebeen Cattle Car Fields 	 Cattle Car Business cash Ioan Can hire Iabour Fields
	 Khwe Mushangara (!Xun) people without work 	 Many Khwe Mbukushu 	 Khwe and !Xun who are e.g. teachers or CGGs/CRMs** Many Mbukushu in Mushashane 	 Mbukushu 1/2 Khwe 	 Mbukushu 1/2 Khwe 	Mbukushu
Omega I	 Example 1: no work no pension no field to cultivate no livestock no education begs and does piecework no home (stays with relatives or "live around everywhere" and has maybe one blanket) wholly dependent on others Example 2: has a home no education no field no livestock no pension piecework 	Example 1: • pension • some cultivation • some livestock Example 2: • big field • no work • goats Example 3: • big field • no work • no livestock Example 4: • pension • no field • no livestock Example 5: • has a pension • cultivates • no livestock	 Example 1: permanent work fields to cultivate no livestock Example 2: permanent work no field no livestock Example 3: big fields for cultivation no work some cattle 			Example 1: has permanent work (cook in MoE hostel), cultivates at home, and has chickens, goats, cattle and donkeys Example 2: no work but has a pension, a headman's salary and fields to cultivate (one at NDC project and one in the bush), and has chickens, cattle and goats Example 3: has permanent work, goats, chickens and a big field
	Majority of Khwe	Many Khwe	45 Khwe with full-time work, including those who have left for work elsewhere plus those with big fields and cattle			3 Khwe persons

* The participants at Mushangara joined the participants at Mushashane for this discussion.

** CGG = community game guard; CRM = community resource manager

Table 10.5 shows that most participants ranked the Khwe and !Xun in the BNP as "poor" or "very poor". Generally the very poor were people who had no work, no pension and no fields to cultivate, and who depended on piecework and begging for small amounts of cash to sustain themselves. Those described as poor had some income from pensions and piecework, cultivated their own food, and some had a few livestock. Those ranked as better off mostly had full-time work, fields to cultivate and some livestock. There were different categories of rich people, but the richest tended to have a business, fields to cultivate and livestock. They could afford to buy assets such as cars, and could afford to hire people to work for them.

Regarding perceptions of ethnic stratification, the Khwe did not consider the Mbukushu to be better off than them per se – they stressed that some Mbukushu were as poor as the Khwe – but Mbukushu could be found in all of the categories whereas very few Khwe were in the better-off and rich categories. By contrast, Owambo were regarded as rich per se, because they were the ones running businesses in the area. !Xun were generally considered to be at or below the poverty line.

Participants indicated that it was possible to move up or down from one wealth category to another. Moving down was mainly considered to be the fault of individuals, in that they did not have the necessary skills, and/or did not make arrangement for emergencies, and/or spent all their money. Even the death of a family member who ran a business was not perceived as a threat per se, as the other family members could take over the business and make a success of it if they were careful with their income. Moving up depended on how individuals or families controlled their income. If the income was wasted, then it was not possible to move up.

10.4.2 Access to land

The Khwe participants said that the area of the park "between the bridges" is their ancestral land. People at Omega I, for example, said that the land from the bridge over the Okavango River to the bridge at Kongola over the Kwando River is called *Khwe xom* ('Khwe ground') or *Khwe ŋú* ('Khwe land') – in both cases meaning 'the area of the Khwe'. They said that *Khwe* means "human being", but that this was the land of the Khwe alone, not of all human beings. They mentioned that there is also a *Khwe xom* in both Botswana and Angola. Yet, at all of the BNP research sites, the participants felt insecure about living in the BNP because the MET had imposed a number of restrictions on the residents due to the area's status as a national park. On the other hand, the Khwe acknowledged the benefits accruing to them by way of a share of income with the MET from trophy hunting and through tourism concessions in the park. However, they regarded the lack of *de jure* land rights as a major obstacle to development.

The Khwe and the !Xun felt threatened because of a high influx of Mbukushu people into their area. They perceived the lack of their own recognised Traditional Authority (TA) as a huge problem in the context of land rights. Were the government to recognise an independent Khwe TA, their chief would have the right to allocate land and control the use of land in the same way that the chiefs of other groups do once their TAs are recognised. However, despite serious efforts on the part of the Khwe with NGO support, the government still saw the Khwe (and the small number of !Xun) in the BNP as falling under the Mbukushu TA led by Chief Erwin Mbambo. According to many Khwe, Chief Mbambo had even encouraged Mbukushu people across the Okavango River to settle in the BNP multiple-use areas – land which the Khwe believe to be theirs. The Khwe participants said that the influx of these Mbukushu people and their cattle into their area had led to both competition for and depletion of natural resources which were formerly used by the Khwe predominantly. For instance, at Mushashane the Khwe had observed that Mbukushu people had been cutting down Mangetti trees – an important food resource of the Khwe. It was also claimed that the Mbukushu did not use sustainable burning methods, and were burning the veld at inappropriate times.

"People are pulling from different directions – people from Caprivi say the area is theirs, the Kavangos say it is theirs and MET is fighting for the same land."

"We want to stay here with the wild animals because this is our ancestral land; it is our own land."

- Khwe leaders at Mushashane

10.4.3 Identity, culture and heritage

The study participants in the BNP stressed that they preferred to be referred to by the name of their ethnic group, i.e. "Khwe" and "!Xun" rather than "San". They did not use the term "San" themselves; they always called themselves "!Xun" and "Khwe", and only "other people" call them "San". It was also mentioned that "whites" called them "Bushmen" – term which they did not like.

"We don't like the word 'San', it makes us confused. We need to be called 'Khwe'. We do not like the word 'Bushman'." - Khwe participant at Mashambo

The Khwe saw their culture and way of life to be changing rapidly, and in their view this change was imposed mostly by developments outside their own control. According to the participants, the change started with the presence of the SADF in the area, and the concurrent relocation of the Khwe to newly established settlements, and the limitations that both the SADF presence and the relocation placed on their mobility. A male participant at Omega I provided this explanation for the onset of change in the Khwe way of life: "Then the old way of life and the modern life was mixed up; the borders between the countries were also put in at that time – before that we could move freely. And that time as well, schools and churches were introduced to the Khwe culture as well as the modern clothing."

However, despite such changes – and compared to some other San communities consulted in this study – the Khwe and !Xun communities still exhibited a very deep consciousness of their specific (largely shared) culture. Language was mentioned as one of the most important aspects of cultural identity.⁷ Hunting and the gathering of veldfood were also mentioned in discussing the Khwe and !Xun culture; in other words these are not simply livelihood activities. Participants were concerned about the fact that they could not perform their culture (meaning hunting) anymore. For example, at Omega I, an elderly man said that other people still practised their culture but the Khwe were restricted in doing so because they could no long hunt. Asked if people still had traditional hunting skills, participants responded that some Khwe and !Xun elders still had some skills, and some still possessed bows and arrows. Reportedly the Khwe elders at Chetto and Omega III still hunted.

Although the participants acknowledged that they received income from trophy hunting, it became evident that they regarded the restrictions on their own hunting activity as a major limitation of living in a national park, not only because hunting was a livelihood strategy in the past, but also because it was an important aspect of their culture, which they feared would be lost. Participants remarked that more consideration should have been given to the cultural and social rights of the people, not only to their economic rights (i.e. securing economic benefits from the trophy hunting). A Khwe headman suggested that the KA and the MET should find a way for individuals to get a permit to enable them to go out and hunt traditionally. Another suggestion was the establishment of a cultural centre, with support from the KA, where old people could record songs and knowledge, and youngsters could learn from them.

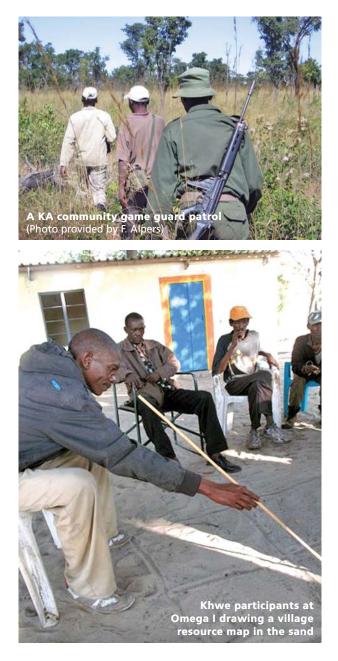
At the time of our fieldwork (late October 2011), IRDNC was supporting the KA in the development of a Traditional Environmental Knowledge Outreach Academy (TEKOA) which aimed to establish a community-based "Training Centre and Training Programme in Bwabwata National Park (BNP)",

⁷ For a detailed description of the construction of Khwe identity over time, see Taylor 2012.

which would transfer indigenous knowledge to San youth. It was hoped that this transfer of knowledge would help to renew the youngsters' cultural pride, increase their employability, and ultimately provide the foundation for a culturally appropriate and sustainable approach to education (IRDNC 2012: 3-4).

The collection of veldfood was also seen as an important part of the shared cultural heritage of the Khwe and !Xun. A woman at Omega I, for example, in emphasising the importance of veldfood as part of the tradition, offered this anecdote: A woman had brought a particular wild fruit from Rundu for her children to taste, because in former times this fruit had been one of their traditional foods. The children did not even know the fruit, and in any case they did not like the taste. "We feel that it is bad," said the narrator, "because we grew up with these traditional foods, but nowadays the children don't know them anymore."

Compared to some other San communities (e.g. San in Omusati and Ohangwena Regions, and San commercial farmworkers – see Chapters 7, 8 and 12) who over decades or centuries have become an underclass in their respective sociopolitical environments and have already lost many cultural characteristics (their language, their knowledge and consciousness of former hunting and gathering practices and so on), the Khwe still exhibit a very strong feeling of ethnic identity, which is not only an identity



as a marginalised group, characterised by poverty, discrimination and social exclusion, but also a specific cultural identity. It was feared, however, that recent developments were endangering these cultural elements to such an extent that they would be wholly lost in the near future. As discussed in Part III herein (the national analyses), there is an obvious connection between this strong feeling of ethnic identity and the fact that the Khwe still have access to their ancestral land, albeit limited, and that they still constitute the majority population in their ancestral area.

10.4.4 Relationships with other groups

As described earlier, the Khwe and the !Xun in the BNP were living alongside the Mbukushu, most of whom moved into the park after Independence. The Khwe and the !Xun were unhappy about this situation because they now had to compete with the Mbukushu for land and resources on what they consider to be their own land. The !Xun of Mushangara reported that the Mbukushu arrived gradually after Independence in order to develop fields there, since Mushangara had good soils for cultivation. "When they [the Mbukushu] came, they didn't ask us, the !Xun, for permission and allocation of land; they just started to clear land. [They] don't allow us to pass their fields – one person was beaten up by a Mbukushu. They also don't bother if some of us are living close to a tree, for example; they just start to chop it down."

"Why doesn't Chief Mbambo regard us as human beings? God created all of us! Please put this in the book, so that stakeholders can do something about it! I am tired. We are not sleeping during the night; the criminals are busy during the night."

- !Xun participants at Mushangara

Both historical records and oral tradition indicate that Khwe living close to the Mbukushu were subservient to them – for example, they had to pay tribute to the Mbukushu *fumu* ('chief') and provide various services to the Mbukushu such as assisting hunting parties. At times, Mbukushu chiefs kept some Khwe (along with Mbukushu) as slaves (Fisch 2008: 18). Those Khwe living at a distance from the rivers and Mbukushu settlements were more independent. Today, both the Khwe and the !Xun believe that the relationship between themselves and the Mbukushu is very unequal. A Khwe participant at Mushashane stated that, "If they [Mbukushu] come here, they change the life here ... they bring their own rules and names." The conflicts with Mbukushu have been worsened by the lack of government recognition of the Khwe TA. Our discussions established that the Khwe felt powerless in relation to the Mbukushu, not least because they had no voice in negotiations with the Mbukushu about land and resources.

Contrary to the findings at other research sites in the BNP, residents of Mashambo fell under the Mafwe TA led by Chief Mayuni whose main area was the Mayuni Conservancy east of the Kwando River. Apparently the Khwe residents of Mashambo, like many of the Khwe in Caprivi Region (see Chapter 11), did not face as many problems with the neighbouring TA. In fact, the participants at Mashambo mentioned that Chief Mayuni was willing to help the Khwe – for example, when they had poor rains, or by taking up their concern about lacking a transmitter for cellphone reception. One resident said, "Mayuni is interested in living with us. He says he is not really our chief; he is just helping us while we are waiting for our chief to be recognised." Thus the residents' perceptions of Chief Mayuni were very different to their perceptions of Chief Mbambo, mainly because the latter strongly opposed government recognition of a separate Khwe TA.

10.4.5 Education

Education levels among the Khwe and the !Xun in the BNP were very low. Table 10.6 (page 386) summarises the findings of discussions on education. Most elderly people did not go to school, mainly because there were no schools in the area when they grew up, and also because their parents moved often from place to place. In West Caprivi, Namibia's war for independence had an additional impact on schooling. The level of education among Khwe and !Xun males in their 30s or 40s might have been a bit higher than that of adults in the same age group in some San communities in other regions. At least, many Khwe men had completed a few years of formal education in the military camps (Boden 2008: 116).

As in all other regions, there was a high dropout rate among current learners, and few had reached Grade 12. At Mushashane it was reported that only one Khwe pupil had completed Grade 12. At Omega I it was reported that only nine Khwe had completed Grade 12. Five of them had been able to get permanent jobs outside the region, and two had jobs in Omega I. At Mushangara, only two Khwe children were still at school (at Mushashane) but it was said that they might drop out due to lacking financial resources to pay the hostel fees. All other children had dropped out at an early age,

and it was said that, "Now, we can try to teach our learners in a different way; we can teach them at home, how to plough, how they can help themselves in future". At Mashambo, three children had completed Grade 12 and all three had employment – one was a nurse at Mutc'iku and two had undertaken further training courses. Mashambo was the only site where participants said that the dropout rate had decreased over the last years, for three reasons: parents there had become more concerned about their children's education; only Khwe children attended the school at Omega III, so the levels of discrimination and bullying were much lower there; and no fees were charged there.

A lack of financial resources was said to be a major cause of dropout. Participants at Mushangara, Mushashane and Omega I said that they were unable to cover the costs of school fees as well as the clothing and other basic items that schoolgoing children require, given their level of poverty and lack of cash income.

"When children go to school with people from other tribes, they see the other children with cellphones and nice clothes which they don't have ... this is the main reason for dropping out – the Khwe children are ashamed because they are teased and laughed at."

– Khwe participant at Omega I

At Omega I, participants suggested that a separate school should be established for Khwe: "Then, we can all be poor together."

Many girls at all sites had dropped out of school due to getting married and/or becoming pregnant (*The Namibian Sun*, Selma Ikela, 19 November 2012). At Mushashane, early pregnancy was said to be the main reason for girls dropping out of school, but this was also linked to poverty: reportedly, girls would get involved with sugar daddies or truck drivers in the hope of being given money for buying items needed for their schooling. In many cases, pregnancy and dropout were the results of such relationships. Regarding boys, at Mushashane and Omega I it was said that alcohol abuse, smoking and the consequent distraction from school activities were the main reasons for dropout.



Additionally, the lack of mother-tongue education was mentioned by a KA board member as a reason for the high dropout rate.

Although parents participating in the discussions acknowledged the importance of education, they stressed that they could not force their children to go to school. Parents suggested that programmes could be provided for learners after school (to keep them out of the shebeens), and that the VDCs could be used to force the children to stay in school.

Regarding motivation to complete secondary schooling to qualify for jobs, participants said that Khwe and !Xun applicants for jobs were usually discriminated against; the jobs usually went to applicants from other ethnic groups. The Khwe and !Xun also said that it was easier in former times to find jobs without formal qualifications (e.g. jobs in the SADF, and jobs as cleaners or domestic workers), whereas today, no formal employment is offered without educational qualifications. We also found that there were very few formal employment opportunities in the area itself. Young Khwe generally had to find employment in other areas, which meant working in an unfamiliar environment, usually without a social network. At Mushashane, eight children had completed Grade 10, but were still living unemployed in their parents' homes. Generally it appeared that Khwe and !Xun children in the BNP who had managed to find employment had moved away.

Most of the main villages in the park have a primary or combined school close by. This was not the case only for secondary school learners at Mashambo who had to go to school at Omega III about 13 km away.

Research site	Distance to school	School fees	Reasons for dropping out of school	Aspirations /importance of education
Mushangara/ Mushashane*	Combined school at Mushashane and primary school at Mutc'iku – for Mushangara around 7 km to primary school	"The principal makes us pay."	 Beaten by the chief for allegedly stealing Bullying Never went to school Made to work instead Made to work in SADF during colonial times Children not interested, just want to be free Early pregnancy 	 Important for getting jobs "Improving your life" Starting a business
Omega I	Combined school (up to Grade 10) at Omega I	"We cannot afford the school fees."	 Never went to school (9 cases) Lacked financial means Bullying Dismissed for alcohol abuse Got married Got pregnant Had to look after child Dismissed for absenteeism Ashamed because teased and laughed at 	 Important for a good life in the future To get jobs
Mashambo	Primary school at Mashambo and secondary school at Omega III about 13 km away	"They are requesting school fees from us."	Girls drop out because "boys are troubling them", otherwise no problems with current schoolgoing children	No data

Table 10.6: Summary of key education findings

* The participants at Mushangara joined the participants at Mushashane for this discussion.

10.4.6 Health

Major diseases mentioned included HIV and AIDS, TB, diarrhoea and malaria. On participant said that "Malaria is always with us." Another participant said that HIV/AIDS was "the highest" in the area (i.e. the most common illness), followed by malaria. Apparently, there had been some HIV/AIDS programmes in the past, consisting of the organisation New Start coming to the villages to provide education on HIV prevention and treatment. As in other areas visited for the study, many people were afraid to go for HIV testing.

Young Khwe women from Omega I who were interviewed by journalists prior to the study had informed them that TB was a serious problem in the BNP. They said that some patients would take their medication but did not have enough food to sustain their health, and others would stop taking their medication, which brings about resistant strains of the disease. As women deliver their babies at home, mothers infected with TB would infect their babies as well (*The Namibian Sun*, Selma Ikela, 19 November 2012).

Most main villages in the BNP were close to a clinic. This was not the case only for Mashambo, whose residents had to travel about 50 km to reach the closest clinic at either Chetto or Kongola. Reportedly a mobile clinic was visiting Mashambo, but it served children only, and parents had to pay N\$4 for the treatment. The closest hospital was at Andara. Most women gave birth at home unless there were complications, in which cases a plan was made to find transport to take them to the nearest clinic or the hospital. Traditional medicine was still important at some sites in the BNP.

Alcohol abuse was a problem in the BNP. Residents said that people abused alcohol, became lazy and did not work, and sometimes became violent. Reportedly several pupils had been dismissed from school due to alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse was also mentioned as a reason for becoming poor or staying poor. The Khwe perceived alcohol abuse to be worse among the !Xun in the area.

"Sometimes the drunken men come home and fight with their wives. And even the women, when they get drunk and they come home, then she will also start to provoke the husband and later on they fight. So elder people and young people, violence comes along with alcohol."

"Every day, every time after drinking they fight ... It is quite common."

- Residents of Mushashane

It is noteworthy in this context that some forms of piecework were paid for in *tombo* rather than cash. In fact, BNP residents refer to such piecework as *cáca-djàó*, meaning 'beer work' (Boden 2005: 112).

Khwe women who were part of the "Speaking for Ourselves" project of the Women's Leadership Centre (see section 10.4.21 on external support) mentioned to journalists that alcohol abuse in Omega I was common: "There is nothing to do apart from drinking alcohol." They also mentioned that women would sell their bodies in exchange for alcohol (*The Namibian Sun*, Selma Ikela, 19 November 2012).

10.4.7 Gender

The gender roles among the Khwe and the !Xun in the BNP had changed drastically over the years due to the changing economic opportunities in the park. During the times of contract labour in the mines, men contributed considerably to household income (in particular by buying modern goods with their wages), and women stayed in West Caprivi and managed the household, cultivated

fields and gathered veldfood. During the time of the SADF presence in the area, women were restricted to the role of housewife. Gathering activities in the bush were restricted, and women contributed almost nothing to the family economy and experienced a considerably reduced status (Boden 2008: 116). Men were the sole breadwinners during that period. Boden notes (2008: 116-117): "After Independence, women's productive share increased considerably in absolute and, especially, in relative terms. Since then, women did most of the daily work in the fields and engage in different kinds of craft production, especially basketry. Unlike hunting, the gathering of wild foods is still tolerated by the nature conservation officials." Men, on the other hand - except for the few who had jobs - were generally not able to contribute to the household income until they were over the age of 60 and receiving pension money, and/or, in some cases, taking on bits of piecework. According to Boden, the loss of socio-economic opportunities was especially severe for young men, who, in pre-colonial times, contributed the main share in meat and skins and later could buy sought-after (western) goods for their families, using there contract-labour wages or army pay (Boden 2008: 117). Although difficult to prove, it seems fair to say that these changes in gender roles, and the loss of opportunities for young men especially, have led to some degree of social destruction, including alcohol abuse and violence.

Within San families in the BNP today, we found that women are the main caretakers of children, and women gather and prepare food for the other family members. Gathering, however, was not left to women only: generally, but not always, women gathered tubers, men collected honey, and other gathering activities were undertaken jointly – for example, to get the fruits from large trees, men climbed the trees to shake the branches while women collected the falling fruit. In recent years, employment opportunities for Khwe had improved a bit, due to the KA's activities: men were employed as community game guards (CGGs), and women were employed as community resource monitors (CRMs), i.e. persons responsible for monitoring the use and status of plants and other natural products that people used for producing food and traditional medicine. According to the participants at Mashambo, the CRMs earned N\$900 per month and the CGGs earned N\$1100 (junior) or N\$1400 (senior) per month. A few women at Omega I and Mashambo were involved in the producers complained that they had to wait a long time for payment, and that the payment of up to N\$70 for a high-quality basket was not high enough as this amount did not give them a sufficient monthly income. They also said that the demand for baskets was not high enough for more women to be involved.

The Khwe women in the BNP were also involved in Devil's Claw harvesting, but, as illustrated in Table 10.3 (page 378), their average annual income for this work was not very high.

As already noted, young girls did go to school, but many dropped out early due to early marriage and/or pregnancy. Older men who had worked and had money would promise the girls money for sex. Participants at Mushashane said that girls needed money to buy soap and other items needed for going to school, but then, if they fell pregnant, they had to leave school (*The Namibian Sun*, Selma Ikela, 19 November 2012).

Participants discussed the possibility of a woman marrying a richer man in order to lift herself out of poverty. Remarkably, they were of the opinion that if a Khwe woman married a rich man from another ethnic group, this would not make her richer because he would not give her anything, nor would he build a house for her, whereas if a Khwe woman married a rich Khwe man, then she could become rich because he would give her money with which she could start a business. This seems to imply that a woman would not become rich simply because her husband was rich and they pooled their resources, but rather, she would become rich because she could use some of his money to acquire an income independently.

Participants said that a Khwe woman is severely disadvantaged by the death of her husband, as his belongings go to his own family while his wife and children are left with nothing. If the widow had been a "good" wife, however, then the brother of the deceased might marry her.

The Khwe women at Omega I felt that there should be more women representatives in the KA. They had raised this issue in the past but nothing had come of it. There was no women's group at Omega I, and women said that they would like to start one, not least because this



would enable them to send appointed women for skills training, e.g. in sewing, and those trained could impart their skills to other community members. However, they felt that outside support was needed for organising such a group.

10.4.8 Political participation and representation

Traditional authority

Historically the Khwe had no paramount chief (Boden 2009: 52), but well-working institutions of local leadership, best known as díxa ||áé ('responsible owners of settlements' - today referred to as 'headmen'), granted access to land, water and other resources; settled conflicts within the community; and represented the local community in conflicts with outsiders. Personal qualities and good reputation were as important as a certain genealogical relationship to a predecessor. Some of these local leaders, referred to as *laxa* (today meaning 'chiefs'), had a wider reputation because of their conflict-solving abilities, and were consulted by local leaders of the Khwe. The first *l'axa* to be recognised by the SWA Administration, in the 1950s, were Martin Ndumba, residing at Mutc'iku, and his vice, Kadunda Kaseta, living at Bwabwata (Boden 2003: 186). This recognition installed Ndumba as paramount chief, and he was succeeded by his nephew, Kippie George, in 1989. The first application for official recognition of a Khwe TA was made in 1997 by Chief Kippie George, but in October 1998, he and several hundred Khwe left for Botswana after being harassed by the Namibian security forces for their alleged collusion with secessionists in East Caprivi. Chief George was repatriated in September 2000. Just three months later, on 17 December 2000, he died in Mutc'iku. In July 2001, the Khwe were informed that Namibian President Sam Nujoma had accepted the Council of Traditional Leaders' recommendation that a Khwe TA should not be established, because the land claimed by the Khwe belonged to the Mbukushu TA, thus there was no need for a Khwe TA (Boden 2011: 2). In 2006 the Council of Traditional Leaders rejected a second application, and later that year, a third application was made for official recognition of the newly elected chief, Ben Ngobara (Boden 2011: 3). At the time of writing, the government's final decision on this third application is still awaited.

During our fieldwork, Khwe participants stressed repeatedly that they needed their own officially recognised TA for their interests to be properly represented. They attributed the increased Mbukushu settlement on "Khwe land" wholly to the fact that they did not have a recognised TA of their own. The community felt powerless because they had no clearly defined land rights in the BNP and no recognised leader who could carry their views to government. As the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 requires newcomers to an area to seek permission from the TA to reside there, the Khwe,

having no recognised TA of their own, were unable to stop incomers from settling on what they consider to be their land. At the time of our fieldwork, there were two parallel authority systems:

- The officially recognised TA under Mbukushu Chief Erwin Mbambo, with whom three Khwe headmen were working, one of whom is the official Khwe representative in the Mbukushu TA, who received a government salary.
- The Khwe TA, which, although not officially recognised by the government, appeared generally to have more legitimacy among the Khwe than the Khwe members of the Mbukushu TA.

Khwe community members did not agree on who should be the Khwe chief and who should be part of the Khwe TA. Some Khwe complained that the current Khwe TA did not meet regularly in 2011, partly because of a lack of strong leadership and partly because of the distances between settlements. It was also said that TA members did not communicate regularly with each other due to the lack of cellphone coverage in parts of the park (Boden 2011: 7-8). Despite the internal conflicts about the right candidates for an independent Khwe TA, there was strong agreement that the government should recognise a Khwe TA so that the Khwe voice can be heard and their interests represented. Most participants strongly emphasised this need, although less so at Mashambo, which is in Caprivi Region where the influx of Mbukushu is less of a threat to San people than it is in Kavango Region.

"WE DON'T HAVE A CHIEF! We must get a chief to stand up for our rights and land or we need a representative in government. People in government, they are aware of our difficulties but they don't assist us."

- Male participant at Mushashane

The !Xun in West Caprivi also had no recognised TA of their own. At Omega I there had been an attempt to appoint a !Xun headman, but this had not succeeded due to internal divisions. A !Xun man at Omega I said that from there to Rundu in Kavango Region, the !Xun people did not have a headman. The !Xun in Tsumkwe District had a chief, and they were reaping a lot of benefits because they were closer to the chief. The !Xun leader interviewed at Omega I said that one of the Khwe headmen there had tried to appoint him to represent the !Xun, but some !Xun and some Mbukushu had opposed this move. As a result, the !Xun worked through one of the Khwe headmen who tried to solve their problems. An elderly !Xun man said that the Khwe headman was willing to help them, and that the Xun could live with the Khwe; it was not a problem if they did not have their own chief.

Community institutions

Kyaramacan Association (KA)

The most important community organisation in the BNP was the KA, which was established in 2005 because the MET required resident communities to register a legal body if they wanted to benefit from safari/trophy hunting and tourism in the park. In February 2006, the MET officially recognised the KA as the legal body representing all park residents on matters related to tourism development and



the management and utilisation of natural resources in the park (Nuulimba 2012: 5). Authorised by the MET, the KA took decisions on land and natural resource management (Boden 2011: 18). The KA had 5 000 members in 2007; the number at the time of the fieldwork in 2011 was not known.

The KA's main objectives, according to its constitution, are as follows (Kyaramacan Association 2012):

"To promote the general welfare, conserve and develop the resources of the residents of the Bwabwata National Park, and to secure for themselves and their descendants security of tenure within or in connection with Bwabwata National Park under the protection of law within the Republic of Namibia. In particular, and without derogating from the generality of the aforesaid:

- To enable the residents of the area to derive benefits from the sustainable management of and the consumptive and non-consumptive use of natural resources in the area;
- To enable its members and their families to assert and gain rights to develop tourism accommodation establishments and conduct and operate guided tours within the boundaries of the area;
- To enable the Association to apply and operate tourism and/or hunting concessions within the area for the benefit of all of its members;
- To undertake programmes and activities which encourage the social and economic upliftment of the residents of the area;
- To generally represent its members and their families in issues regarding the development of the area; and to engage in any other activities as may be necessary to promote the above aims and objectives."

The KA shared a trophy-hunting concession in the park with the MET, which in 2011 brought the KA N\$1.9 million. The KA used this income to employ staff such as community game guards and female community resource monitors. The KA provided 43 jobs in 2011, increasing to 67 in 2013 (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 13/6/2013). In 2011 the KA distributed to residents 32 000 kg of elephant meat from the trophy hunting and 7 000 kg of other game meat (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 26/10/2011). In December 2012 the KA distributed a total of N\$425 000 among its community members as a cash benefit (Kyaramacan Trust (KT) 2013). In the past the KA also made cash payments to households from its income. The KA has also budgeted N\$60 000 for support to orphans and vulnerable children (KT 2013).

Further, the KA helps to prevent exploitation of the park's Devil's Claw harvesters by unscrupulous buyers. To this end it negotiated a central buying contract with a reputable buyer, and collected the harvested product from harvesters and stored it for sale to the buyer. The KA was supporting garden activities at some settlements in the park, and was planning to support such activities at all of the park's major settlements. To this end, in 2013 over 20 students were enrolled in various training colleges with support from KA-contracted trophy-hunting operators, and the KA also established a craft market at Mashambo in 2013 (KT 2013). The MET had also awarded the KA a tourism concession at White Sands (at Popa Falls on the east bank of the Okavango River). The KA had awarded the operation of the concession to a tourism company through a tender process, but at the time of the research the contract had not yet been finalised due to the recent recession. The projected additional income from the concession was N\$400 000-500 000 annually. The lodge was expected to employ 15-20 people, most of whom would be Khwe. The lodge would be owned by the KA after 20 years. The KA was also exploring other concession opportunities with the MET.

There were several mechanisms for the KA as a community organisation to be involved in key issues affecting park residents (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 26/10/2011):

- The MET is responsible for management of the core areas, but carries out joint monitoring and patrols with KA staff in these areas.
- There is a Joint Management Committee (KA-MET) for overseeing hunting in the park.
- There is an informal joint natural-resource management forum (KA-MET) which addresses outbreaks of fire, livestock issues, village issues, Devil's Claw harvesting and wildlife in the park.
- The park warden attends KA board meetings.
- The KA is represented on a technical committee composed of the MET and a few other stakeholders, which advises the MET on major park management issues and development in the park.

Each of the 10 major villages in the BNP (including an Mbukushu settlement near Omega I) is represented on the KA board. The !Xun at Mushangara were not represented on the board because only the larger villages were, so the board member for Mushashane was responsible for Mushangara as well. Although the KA employed two !Xun from Mushangara, the !Xun were disappointed that they had no representative on the board, and that more !Xun were not being employed. Besides Khwe and !Xun, the KA employed some Mbukushu and Owambo people.

Most participants viewed the KA as an organisation that represented their interests, although some people claimed that only those with employment really benefited from the organisation. Khwe at Omega I said that the KA was the only organisation they had which could speak on their behalf because they did not have their own officially recognised TA. At Mushashane, Khwe felt that the KA would be the right channel to represent their interests to the government, but that the government ministries did not channel enough information through the KA. Some residents thought that the KA should provide more information about its activities, and consult more with the villagers. At Omega I participants said that the KA gave residents information at its annual general meeting, but should also inform them at other times. They suggested that community members should be invited to KA board meetings as observers.

In sum, the KA was an important body for residents of the BNP. It represented them and gave them a voice in interacting with government and outsiders. It provided a platform for community involvement in decision making affecting their development, and helped to drive development activities. Considering the situation prior to its establishment, the KA represented a huge step forward in ensuring that the voices of the Khwe (as the BNP's majority population) are heard. And, the wages from employment and spending on social projects and cash payments to households provided support for the residents' livelihoods. The KA also played a positive role in negotiating a good deal for Devil's Claw harvesters and ensuring sustainable harvesting of this resource.

Other community bodies

Water point committees (WPCs) as well as village development committees (VDCs) have been established at some BNP villages, but only a few were functional at the time of our fieldwork. At Omega I the VDC (with mostly Khwe members) had stopped meeting. Its secretary (a Khwe man) said it had last met in 2008. At Mushashane the VDC (Khwe members only) had also stopped meeting. Participants there said it was important to revive it because VDCs were responsible for development. They would be able to develop their plans in the VDC and then get assistance for implementing them. At Mushashane, four Khwe were on the school board. At Mushangara there were no community bodies apart from the church, of which many or most !Xun were members.

There was no functioning borehole at Mushashane, and thus no WPC there. Boden reported that at one of the Mutc'iku residential areas, namely Block Echo, residents paid a fee for the management of their borehole, and allowed only residents of the block to access the water. At Chetto the WPC had to stop working after its members misused the money for diesel (Boden 2011: 15). There was also a WPC at Mashambo.

Consultation by government

Khwe participants at the research sites did not feel properly consulted by the MET and other ministries (e.g. MLR and MoE) operating in the park. At Omega I, participants said that the MET did not hold meetings with the residents but rather worked with the KA which then informed the community. Omega I residents thought that the MET should hold meetings to tell them directly

about its plans for the park and inform them about development before they take place. However, they did acknowledge that the number of villages and people as well as the lack of a Khwe chief made proper consultation difficult.

"We thought the KA idea with the board members would be the best, but even though we have organised ourselves, the GRN does not even come to us."

- Male participant at Mushashane

With regard to support from the OPM's SDP, participants said that there had been some support in the past (e.g. beekeeping project and donations of computers) when Dr Amathila was the Deputy Prime Minister. They did not know the current head of the SDP, and felt that the OPM should provide more support to them.

10.4.9 Visions for the future

Some participants (mainly older people), did not believe that much would change in the future. Others felt that life would improve if their children were educated. Some emphasised that hard work was needed to improve their lives. If people worked hard in the gardens, they could harvest enough to feed their families and also encourage their children to go to school. Several people said that the government should introduce more projects, especially garden projects, but that these should be implemented



differently: the people had not been consulted in the planning of the existing garden project, and the beneficiaries had been selected by outsiders. Instead, the government should develop a garden project that is open to all interested individuals, and should consult the community before doing so.

At Omega I, participants hoped that the future would bring an improved supply of electricity and water, as this would make it possible to establish more projects. They also hoped for further developments through the KA. It was noted that the KA planned to give N\$10000 to the bigger villages to start projects, and if this happened, there could be improvements. According to the KA Benefit Distribution Plan for 2012/13, the villages had already been consulted in 2011/12 to identify projects, and an average of N\$20000 was to be given to the projects. These were the projects envisaged:

- Mashambo: bread baking, clay brickmaking, a tracking and ecology-monitoring training centre, community gardens, a campsite, and a Khwe cultural and craft market.⁸
- **Omega I:** a community garden, expansion of the NDC agricultural project, and a KA-BNP tourism office.
- **Mushashane:** a restaurant and traditional food centre, a community garden and a thatchinggrass project.

Some of the projects were successfully implemented up to June 2013. Some had yet to be implemented, and some faced implementation problems (e.g. the water pump at one community garden project was broken). The KA also planned to provide support for school children to complete Grade 10 or Grade 12, and support for children/youth who wanted to undertake tertiary education (Kyaramacan Trust 2013).

⁸ The Gya Xai Khoeji Craft Market was opened at Mashambo in April 2013.

One middle-aged woman stressed that they knew that development was a long-term process, and that the old generation might die during the process, but then at least the young generation would enjoy the improvements.

10.4.10 Impact of external support

Support by government

One of the main government programmes of support is the Western Caprivi Resettlement Project which is implemented by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) from its regional office in Rundu, Kavango Region. The project aims to provide various support services to settlements in West Caprivi (i.e. the BNP). These services include boreholes, ploughing services, seed distribution, sanitation (pit latrines), garden projects and a sewing project.

According to the MLR Deputy Director for the North East, the garden project at Omega I was not up and running at the time of the research, partly because the fence had been vandalised. The fence had been fixed and three gates had been put in at the request of the community to facilitate access to the garden. However, the site had not been well chosen, and the soil was poor. The garden would need to be irrigated for it to have any impact on people's lives. A borehole had been drilled at Omega I which served the whole village (not just the garden project), and a borehole had been provided at Mushashane, but this provided only a little water.

By the time of our visit in October 2011, no pit latrines had been provided yet, and the funding did not suffice to equip all of the boreholes. No sewing project had been established yet, but the machines were at the MLR offices in Rundu. The problem was that there was no one to provide training. The MLR Deputy Director for the North East said that in any case it was unlikely that local women would be able to compete with cheap imported Chinese clothing.⁹

The settlements supported were supposed to be self-sustaining once the funding stopped, and there was a plan to eventually transfer the projects to the regional council as part of decentralisation. The stakeholder reckoned that the best way to provide support of this nature would be to contract a company or NGO, which had been done at other sites such as the resettlement farm Bravo in the south-western corner of Kavango Region (bordering Oshikoto). Participants at Omega I added that the MLR had no permanent presence at Omega I: "[MLR] people from Rundu only come now and then to visit Omega I; they do not do any work. Sometimes they come for a day or stay overnight, and just say, 'Start a gardening project!', without any further instructions." Participants said that the garden at Omega I operated by the Namibia Development Corporation (NDC) was working well, but few Khwe had plots there due to the annual fees payable for the tractor. There was also a beekeeping project at Omega I, supported by the OPM's SDP. Only two young Khwe men worked on this project, but they said it was going well. Boden (2011: 19) reported that the large community garden started by the SDP at Mutc'iku was not operational because Mbukushu people had allegedly stolen solar panels and fencing material.

Another major area of government support mentioned by participants was the provision of food aid. This support undoubtedly assisted food security and ensured that the most vulnerable did not starve. However, as noted above, the delivery did not appear to be regular, and at Omega I people said that the maize-meal delivered sometimes had worms in it.

⁹ Funding for the project was provided from the MLR budget as follows: 2010/11 – N\$400 000; 2011/12 – N\$400 000; 2012/13 – N\$200 000; and 2013/14 – N\$210 000.

In addition, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) provides different levels of support to the park residents. It had provided tourism concessions to the KA, shared hunting revenue with the KA, and involved the KA in the BNP Technical Committee. MET officials also carried out joint anti-poaching patrols with KA community game guards (CGGs). However, residents told us that they would like to have more direct interaction with MET officials.

In sum, government-supported development projects in the BNP – particularly those promoting the establishment of gardens – had not been very sustainable so far, and the food aid programme appeared to be irregular and inconsistent.

NGO support

Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)

In terms of its support for the KA, IRDNC was and is essential for many reasons.¹⁰ First, IRDNC has played an essential role in ensuring that the KA is representative of the park residents. It has also provided natural resource management support, including logistical and technical support for joint patrols and game monitoring by CGGs and MET staff, as well as for Devil's Claw harvesting, including support for maintaining the organic status and ensuring sustainable harvesting. It has also assisted with enterprise development, including supporting the KA in its tendering for community hunting and tourism concessions in the BNP (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 26/10/2011). IRDNC has also supported the development of a community-run campsite at Popa Falls, and the negotiations for a tourism concession for the development of a lodge near the existing campsite.

IRDNC plans include supporting small-scale intensive gardening close to people's houses; reviving the sustainable harvest and sale of thatching grass; expanding craft sales; and developing the Traditional Environmental Knowledge Outreach Academy (TEKOA) for equipping young BNP individuals with tracking skills with the aims of generating jobs and preserving traditional knowledge. IRDNC will also help the KA and the MET to implement the existing BNP tourism plan which provides for additional tourism concessions for residents, such as campsites in the multiple-use area which could offer tracking and cultural village visits (Friedrich Alpers, personal communication, 26/10/2011).

IRDNC hopes that its role will ultimately diminish and the KA will be able to manage its affairs with minimal external assistance in the form of ongoing extension support for wildlife management.

WIMSA

WIMSA had a field office at Omega I, but the study participants only mentioned this in passing. After our fieldwork in the BNP (i.e. in 2013), WIMSA introduced an HIV/AIDS awareness programme at Omega I, targeting all youth aged 13-24. This programme reaches the youth in general and the San youth in particular, through performing-arts activities developed and undertaken by the settlement's San Youth Cultural Group, and through community outreach activities (i.e. peer education) for youth who dropped out of school. The aim is to effect change in personal behaviours and attitudes to reduce the risk of HIV infection. In addition, this HIV/AIDS programme aims to reduce HIV-related stigma, discrimination and gender stereotyping. The programme will empower girls to make informed decisions about sex to protect themselves from the effects of HIV/AIDS. Since the programme started only in 2013, its impact cannot be assessed yet.

¹⁰ For the role of IRDNC in West Caprivi between 1996 and 2005, see Taylor 2012.

Women's Leadership Centre

In 2012, after our fieldwork in the BNP, the Women's Leadership Centre (a national NGO based in Windhoek) started a project called the Khwe Women's Voices Project: "Speaking for Ourselves", with the aim of strengthening the voice and leadership skills of young Khwe women living in the BNP, through education on their rights as women and as indigenous people. With oral-history activities, creative writing and photography, the young women are encouraged to learn from the past in order to understand the present and envisage a future (Women's Leadership Centre 2012). During several visits to Windhoek in 2012/13, the young women had opportunities to speak to a wider audience about the situation of Khwe women in the BNP, and to share their poems about the past and their current realities. As the project started only recently, its impact has yet to be assessed.

10.4.11 Living in the Bwabwata National Park

We found that the Khwe and the !Xun living in the BNP faced many of the same problems that San face in other parts of Kavango and Caprivi, and a number of additional problems posed by the area's status as a national park. However, this status also provided some opportunities that are not necessarily available to people living in Kavango and Caprivi but outside the park boundaries.

The MET implicitly recognised the land rights of people living in the BNP by recognising the KA as a legal body representing the residents, and by awarding concessions to the KA. However, people's land rights have never been explicitly recognised or spelt out, and this has spawned a sense of uncertainty. People live in the park under restrictions that had not necessarily been negotiated with residents or which residents had not necessarily agreed to. On the other hand, despite the influx of other people into the park (e.g. Mbukushu people), it could be argued that the proclaimed status of the area has helped to secure land for the Khwe and the !Xun (Nuulimba 2012: 8).

The following are some of the main problems identified by participants in our study:

- People suffered losses of livestock to predators and damage to crops (mainly due to elephants), but could not do much about it because MET policy states that there are no problem animals in a protected area. However, the MET allows people to live in this protected area, and to keep small stock and grow crops there. In effect this has meant that residents are not compensated for losses of livestock or, more importantly, losses of harvests.
- Development options for residents were limited:
 - They may live only in those parts of the park designated as multiple-use areas. In addition, people were given plots in the Mushashane/Mutc'iku area, and government told them that they should settle only north of the main road, but now there were many Mbukushu homesteads south of the road, which government did nothing about.
 - The most productive land along the rivers had been denied to them by the designation of this land as core areas where no settlement, livestock, hunting and gathering were allowed.
 - There were supposed to be no cattle in the central part of the park. The MET told the Khwe in 1996 that they could not have cattle in the park, and their cattle were in fact destroyed, but they had observed that Mbukushu people had a lot of cattle in the between Omega I and Chetto, and this was not sanctioned by government.
 - The MET did not encourage the development of new infrastructure in the park..

Participants were aware that it was not a good idea to settle in the core areas due to the presence of too many wild animals (predators, elephants, etc.), but one resident said that moving closer to the core areas might be good for many people: "Sometimes we feel we would like to settle deeper

in the bush". Mashambo residents thought that there were disadvantages to being near a core area. However, they were aware that the resources in the Kwando core area were abundant because no one was allowed to use them, and they thought that they should have access to these since the area where they lived was depleted of resources. To allow for this, they thought that the boundary of the Kwando core area should be moved 20 km eastwards towards the Kwando River.

There were also restrictions on hunting in the park, even within the multiple-use areas. At first in our discussions, the Khwe at Omega I were unsure as to whether or not they could hunt in the area. It then emerged that the KA and the MET had agreed on some restrictions, but no one was sure of what these actually entailed. It appears that better communication from the KA and the MET is required to inform people about the restrictions and how they were decided. Clearly both the Khwe and the !Xun linked hunting to their culture, and this is an issue that the KA and the MET need to explore further. People recognised that they were getting meat from the safari/trophy hunting, but they wanted to be able to hunt themselves. The headman at Omega I suggested that means should be found to enable individuals to get a permit for going out to hunt traditionally.

As to whether or not it was good to live in a national park, opinions differed: some people saw more advantages (i.e. benefits from hunting concessions) while others saw more negative impacts such as those noted above. At Mushashane some people said that the wild animals and the people must stay apart, thus they welcomed the veterinary fence at Buffalo, whereas other people said, "The wild animals should not go away; they are for us like domestic animals and we own them. Let animals stay and have development the same time." Another view was that animals should be around so that they could teach their children – the descendants of hunter-gatherers – about the animals and the traditions associated with the animals.

"We elders, we did not know mealie-meal and sugar; we grew up with the animals and we ate the meat of the animals, e.g. springhares. For us, our mealie-meal was a grass [translator does not know the English term], called $b\hat{i}$ in our language. The grass seeds were pounded – that was our mealie-meal. We still want to be with animals."

- Kyaramacan Association board member

At Mashambo there was strong agreement that the wild animals should be protected. People said that before others came, the Khwe were taking care of the animals. They said that they had a special relationship with the wildlife, and pointed out that most wildlife on the east bank of the Kwando River had disappeared because people had killed them. Some participants viewed the income from hunting and the potential future income from tourism as opportunities that were not available to people outside the park.

That the MET received 50% of the income from hunting concessions was widely regarded as a problem. It was suggested that the KA should receive the full amount to pay for losses due to human-wildlife conflict in the BNP. An IRDNC employee, for one, pointed out that the MET used its 50% share in different regions and other projects rather than in the BNP alone, but he suggested that it *was* being used as compensation for losses due to human-wildlife conflict in the BNP. A KA board member said that they liked the wildlife and should continue living together with the wildlife.

"We want to stay here with the animals because this is our ancestral land; it is our own land." - Kyaramacan Association board member

10.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, the Khwe and the !Xun in the BNP are politically marginalised. This is due partly to the fact that neither group has an officially recognised TA, and partly to their past association with the former South African regime. In the past the government viewed the Khwe in particular with suspicion, because many Khwe were employed in the SADF when it occupied the BNP before Independence. In addition, some Khwe were allegedly involved in the failed uprising launched by Caprivi secessionists. This historical and political legacy still haunts the attempts of the Khwe to secure a place in Namibian society equal to that of other Namibian citizens. While more research and development attention has focused on the Khwe, the small number of !Xun residents of the BNP constitute the most marginalised group in the park.

Another important point is that the BNP is split between two regions and constituencies, and the Mbukushu TA exerts a strong influence in the Kavango portion. These circumstances make it more difficult to address issues as a group. The existence of the KA is very important as this is the only overarching organisation for the Khwe and other residents in the BNP. The KA has a relatively large source of funding and assists local development. In the absence of a recognised Khwe TA, the KA is the organisation that represents the interests of residents to outsiders.

The MET and IRDNC efforts have improved the situation of San residents of the BNP over the last decade (cf. Suzman 2001b: 53-69). These entities are providing and promoting development options through wildlife use and tourism, which have increased the number of jobs and income-generating activities available to residents. But these activities alone will not lift the majority of residents out of poverty; increased efforts are needed to give more people wildlife- and tourism-based jobs, and to boost household income through sustainable use of other natural resources (e.g. Devil's Claw). Other initiatives are needed to support the livelihoods of the portion of the population who cannot derive a secure livelihood from these activities. There is also a need for a formal agreement between residents and the MET that clearly identifies people's rights, particularly to land.

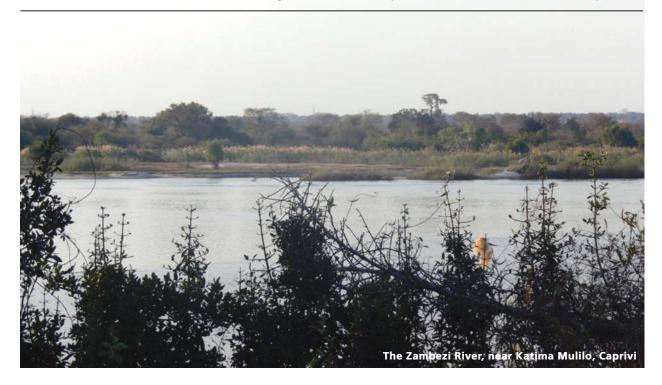
Practical solutions are required for enabling people to grow their own food. Garden projects are important but not very successful at present. Better prior consultation with beneficiaries must take place, and – as experiences in other regions have also shown – the focus must shift from community projects to individual plots. Much more attention must be paid to reducing and mitigating human-wildlife conflict, and to paying compensation for losses of livestock and harvests. Government's insistence that people may not keep cattle east of the Buffalo veterinary fence means that residents have no draught animals for ploughing, thus government should ensure them alternative means of ploughing, such as access to a tractor or support for the introduction of conservation farming techniques which involve minimal tillage.

Development for BNP residents can also be improved through a closer partnership with the MET, building on the existing joint wildlife management activities and the KA's involvement in the BNP Technical Committee. The MET, other government departments and park residents should jointly formulate a vision for development in the BNP, which clearly sets out the development goal for the park and options for strategies to achieve it. This development vision should take into account the restrictions that living in a national park places on residents. If tourism and wildlife are to provide adequate alternatives to development, much more needs to be done to develop wildlife and tourism enterprises so that they provide more jobs and income. Otherwise, many park residents will be condemned to a life of ongoing poverty and dependency on government and donor aid.

Chapter 11 Caprivi Region

By Brian T.B. Jones and Ute Dieckmann

Note: At the time of editing this report in August 2013, the name "Caprivi Region" was changed to "Zambezi Region". As all of our research was conducted when the region was still named Caprivi, we have retained this name in this report.

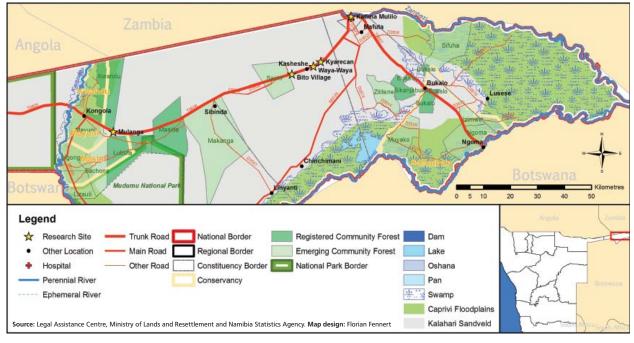


11.1 General background

Caprivi Region covers the eastern part of the Bwabwata National Park (BNP – also referred to as 'West Caprivi' and 'western Caprivi') and the land east of the Kwando River. The portion of Caprivi Region within the BNP is covered in Chapter 10, thus it is excluded from this chapter on Caprivi which focuses on the area *east* of the Kwando River. (See map on the next page.)

Caprivi is mostly flat and characterised by several rivers and floodplains. Much of the region is lowlying, and in high-flood years large areas of land are under water. A large part of the region's land surface is taken up by state-run protected areas: the BNP, the Mamili National Park, the Mudmumu National Park and the Caprivi State Forest. Large parts of the region along the Kwando-Linyanti river system and on the eastern floodplains have been established as communal conservancies and community forests.

Caprivi Region and the research sites



Caprivi has the highest rainfall of all of Namibia's regions, with an annual average of just under 700 mm around Katima Mulilo (the region's capital). Most of the region is covered by soils that are moderate to poor for crop farming (Mendelsohn and Roberts 1998: 6, 17).

Caprivi is divided into six constituencies: Kabbe, Katima Mulilo Urban, Katima Mulilo Rural, Kongola, Linyanti and Sibbinda. The region has a population of 90 596 (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 9). The main ethnic groups are the Masubia, Mafwe, Mayeyi and Mbukushu, and there is a small population of Khwe as well as a few !Xun – very few. There are four recognised traditional authorities: the Masubia under Chief Liswani, the Mafwe under Chief Mamili, the Mashi under Chief Mayuni and the Mayeyi under Chief Shufu.

Agriculture provides the majority of people with most of their income and food. Residents combine cattle farming with crop cultivation (mostly pearl millet, sorghum and maize). Fish provide an important additional source of protein for many residents. Most farms are small and do not provide large surpluses, but there is also a growing trend of more wealthy individuals farming commercially on larger areas of land (Mendelsohn and Roberts 1998: 28-29).

Turpie et al. (2000) found that rural households in Caprivi regard crop production for domestic consumption as an important livelihood strategy. Other activities ranked high by communities in this respect include natural resource utilisation (especially thatching grass and reeds, both for construction and for sale) and livestock production. Pensions, crop sales and the sale of natural resources were considered important for cash income among rural households in the region. While cattle are not so important in terms of cash income, they are very important insofar as they provide meat and milk for consumption and are used for crop production, providing draught power and enabling larger areas of crops to be cultivated (Mendelsohn et al. 2006:26). Cattle also represent accumulated wealth, and are therefore an important means of livelihood security.

Of Namibia's 13 regions, Caprivi is one of the poorest. It has the third-lowest ranking in the UNDP Human Development Index, and the fourth-highest ranking in the Human Poverty Index (Levine 2007: 8, 11). Long (2004: 58) also reported that although not everyone is poor in Caprivi, poverty

is more widespread there than in the country as a whole. People living in Caprivi's rural areas have little access to jobs and cash, and depend mostly on cropping, livestock, piecework (temporary manual work), wages, pensions and the use of a variety of natural resources. Wealthier people tend to be those with larger cattle holdings who are less reliant on pensions and natural resources (Long 2004: 61).

11.2 The San in Caprivi Region

The majority of the San of Caprivi are the Khwe who live in the Bwabwata National Park (BNP – see Chapter 10) and in a number of settlements east of the Kwando River. A small number of !Xun (sometimes referred to as Vasekele) also live in the Caprivi portion of the BNP.

The Khwe are widely distributed in small numbers in the western part of Caprivi, but available information about them is rather limited. Suzman (2001b: 54), for example, simply stated that, "The relatively few San living east of the Kwando River are found in several small settlements between Kongola and Katima Mulilo." Brenzinger (1997) provided a little more detail: he referred to Waya-Waya as an important old Khwe settlement, and cited sources that indicated the presence of the Khwe at Waya-Waya as early as 1881 and also in 1908. According to Brenzinger (1997: 22), the settlement called Bito – which includes a small village called "Dam" due to the nearby water reservoir tank (see section 11.3.2) – was established in 1981 by Khwe from Zambia who had been taken back to Namibia by the South African Defence Force (SADF) in 1979. The Khwe in Bito still had contact with their relatives in Zambia who lived east of the Zambezi River near Lusu village. Brenzinger (1997: 22) also referred to the settlements of Sachona and Lizauli (just east of the Kwando River) as having "a long Khwe tradition".

Khwe participants in the study discussions mentioned having lived previously at Sachona and Lizauli, and a few said that they had previously lived in Botswana. They also informed us of a group of Khwe living at Chinchimane – the seat of the main Mafwe *Khuta* (tribal court) – and a small group living at Lubuta, and a few families living north of Kongola along the Kwando River.

The national census of 2001 found 839 people speaking a San language at home in Caprivi Region. Table 11.1 shows the number of San people per constituency in 2001.

Constituency	Number of individuals speaking a San language at home	Percentage of speakers of San languages per constituency
Kabbe	31	0.2%
Katima Mulilo Rural	19	0.1%
Katima Mulilo Urban	121	0.8%
Kongola	408	9.9%
Linyanti	147	1.1%
Sibbinda	113	1.2%
Total	839	1.2%

* The figures presented in this table derive from the raw data of the 2001 Population and Housing Census and the chapter authors' own calculations. (See Chapter 1, section 1.3 on "The problems with quantitative data on the San in Namibia" for an explanation of the need for 'own calculations' in addition to the census findings.)

Remarkably, according to the census of 2011, the percentage of San-speaking households in Caprivi had decreased to 0.5% by 2011 (NSA 2013: 171).

11.3 Research sites in Caprivi Region

During the study-planning phase we were aware of only three sites in Caprivi east of the BNP where Khwe were living, thus we planned to study two sites in depth, in line with the main methodological approach to the study. However, as the study progressed and the date of the planned fieldwork in Caprivi drew nearer, we became aware of other sites that presented different and interesting sets of circumstances (e.g. Kyarecan, where Khwe from Katima Mulilo had been resettled only a month before our field trip). Due to the lack of in-depth literature on the various Khwe communities in Caprivi east of the BNP, we decided to cover more sites in less depth in the time available.

The sites selected were: Mulanga, Waya-Waya West (both in Kongola Constituency), Dam/Bito, Kyarecan (both in Sibbinda Constituency) and Makaravan (Katima Mulilo municipal area). These sites are described in detail in this section, and Table 11.2 summarises the main characteristics of these sites. The site selection allowed for coverage of sites with different statuses: three are rural villages of different sizes, one is an urban informal settlement, and one is a small rural settlement of people recently resettled from the aforementioned urban informal settlement.

Research	Urban/rural	Land	San language	Population status	Institution	al support
sites	status	tenure	groups	(numerical)	GRN	NGOs
Mulanga	Rural (a small village of several households)	Land allocated to the Khwe by the Mafwe Traditional Authority in the Mashi Conservancy	Khwe	All residents are Khwe, who form a minority group in the conservancy.	Indirect, through Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) support to the Mashi Conservancy; food aid and normal government services	Indirect, through NGO support to the Mashi Conservancy; receive various benefits from the conservancy.
Dam/Bito (Dam is part of a bigger settlement called Bito.)	Rural (Dam is a very small village, consisting of just two households.)	Land allocated to the Khwe by the Mafwe Traditional Authority	Khwe	All residents of Dam are Khwe, who form a minority group in the Bito resettlement area.	No specific projects apart from food aid and normal government services	No NGO support
Waya-Waya West	Rural (a fairly large village with several households)	Land allocated to the Khwe by the Mafwe Traditional Authority	Khwe	All residents are Khwe, who form a minority group in the area.	No specific projects apart from food aid and normal government services	No NGO support
Makaravan	Urban (a fairly large informal settlement in the town of Katima Mulilo)	Municipal land designated as an industrial area	Khwe	Khwe live as a minority group among people from other ethnic groups.	No specific projects apart from food aid and normal government services	Garden project
Kyarecan	Rural (a small settlement of several households resettled from Makaravan)	Land allocated to the Khwe by the Mafwe Traditional Authority	Khwe	All residents are Khwe, who form a minority group in the area	Support for resettlement; food aid	No NGO support

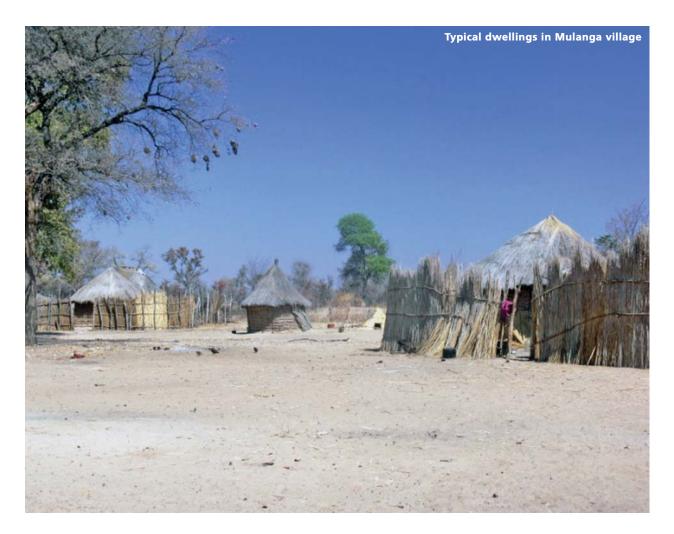
Table 11.2: Main characteristics of the research sites in eastern Caprivi

At each site, shortened versions of the study tools were applied as appropriate. At Makaravan and Kyarecan a major focus of our questions was the resettlement of Khwe from Makaravan to Kyarecan, how this had affected the resettled people, and how they had been involved in the resettlement decision-making process (see Box 11.1 on page 408). As a result there was less time available at these two sites for focusing on some of the main research themes.

11.3.1 Mulanga

Mulanga is a village located in Kongola Constituency about 8 km east of Kongola on the south side of the main tarred road (B8) between Kongola and Katima Mulilo. At the time of the fieldwork, the village consisted of several Khwe families with an estimated total of 25 adults – the number of children was not established. The land is under the jurisdiction of the Mafwe Traditional Authority (TA) and was allocated to the Khwe people by the Mafwe *Khuta* (tribal court). The village is located in the Mashi Conservancy and is represented on the conservancy committee. Mulanga's residents accessed water from the nearby NamWater pipeline, and there was another water point with a solar pump further away. The village had no electricity. The closest clinic and school were at least 8 km away at Kongola. Government provided a mobile pension service.

Mulanga is a Khwedam word meaning 'sleep in the eye' (i.e. the matter in one's eyes upon awaking). All of Mulanga's residents are Khwe. They had moved to the area from different places: most had come from Waya-Waya circa 1989 (and some of those who had lived in Waya-Waya had originally lived in Botswana), and others had come from Botswana and the BNP.



11.3.2 Dam/Bito

Bito village is located on the southern side of the main tarred road (B8), 30 km south-west of Katima Mulilo. Within the Bito area is a tiny Khwe village called Dam. The Khwe named their village "Dam" because there is water reservoir tank nearby.

Participants in the study discussions at Dam said the whole surrounding area had been allocated to the Khwe, but there were only 16 people living in two households at Dam at the time of the fieldwork. One household consisted of the official headman, his wife and three children, and the other consisted of 11 people. Water could be obtained from the NamWater pipeline along the main road, but it had to be paid for, whereas the water from a borehole a bit further away was free, so they obtained their water from the borehole instead of the pipeline. A clinic and a combined school were located 4-5 km away at Kasheshe, and there was a primary school nearby in Bito village. Neither Bito village nor Dam had electricity.

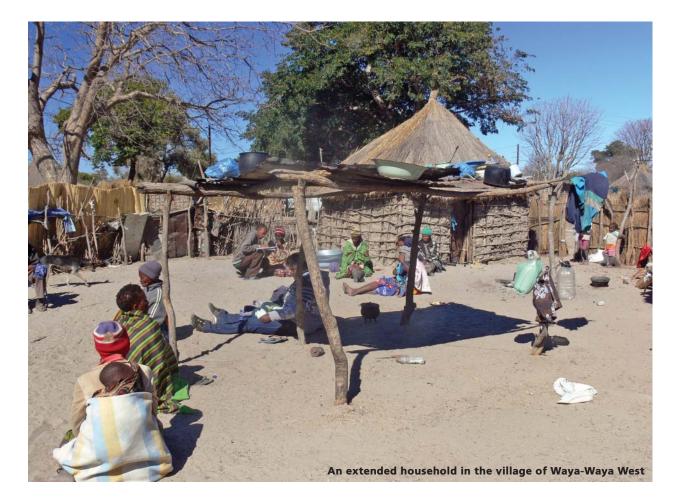
The village headman claimed that Khwe people had been living in the Dam/Bito areas since colonial times, although he himself was born close to a place called Tawa in Zambia. Three other older participants were born at Sibbinda in Caprivi, in Angola and in Zambia. The headman mentioned that many Khwe had left Dam/Bito in recent years – for example, some people now living at Waya-Waya had lived at Dam/Bito previously, and some had left Dam/Bito for Kyarecan and Makaravan. He expressed concern about the fact that Khwe had moved away from Dam/Bito and indicated that his preference would be to see the Khwe staying together at one place. The Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency informed us that there were internal conflicts between the different Khwe groups, which might be the reason for the small number of Khwe in Dam/Bito.



11.3.3 Waya-Waya West

Waya-Waya is situated on the main tarred road (B8) about 23 km from Katima Mulilo and past the turn-off to Mpacha Airport on the northern side of the road. Waya-Waya is split into two main areas: Waya-Waya East with 10 households and Waya-Waya West with eight households. The closest water point was along a NamWater pipeline about 90 m away across the main road. Respondents expressed concern that they would not be able to access this water because the person responsible for paying at NamWater had allegedly used the money that the residents had given to him for his own purposes instead of settling the account. There was a clinic and a combined school at Kasheshe, 4-5 km away. Electricity was available on a pre-paid system and a few residents (e.g. those with employed family members) used it to power radios, TVs and fridges. Discussion participants said that they received no external support apart from government services such as visits by a mobile clinic to give polio injections; the regular spraying of huts against mosquitoes; and food aid. There was also a mobile pension service.

Reportedly there was no Khwedam name for Waya-Waya; other people had given the village this name. At the time of the fieldwork, the whole of Waya-Waya (both West and East) was inhabited only by Khwe. In the past (i.e. during Namibia's war for independence) there was apparently a tented camp, known as "Bushman Camp", on the other side of the main road. Discussion participants reported that SADF soldiers had moved them to Bushman Camp – some participants had been moved from places along the Kwando River, such as Lizauli (a settlement situated in the bush just east of the Kwando, close to the border with Botswana). The Khwe men were then given work with the SADF. Only the Khwe had resided at Bushman Camp; the South African soldiers had stayed at the army base at Mpacha.



11.3.4 Makaravan

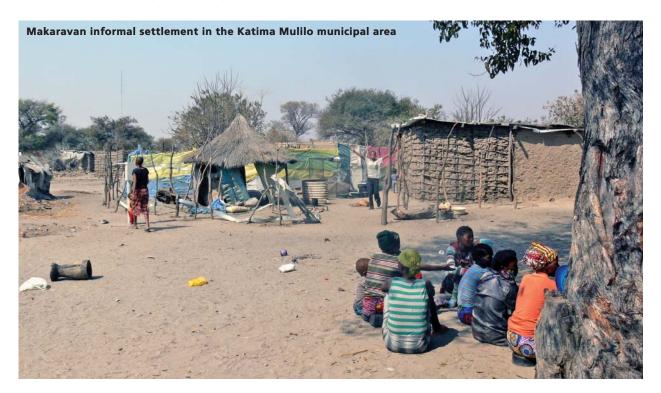
Makaravan is an informal settlement within the municipal area of Katima Mulilo (town), and is located at a site zoned by the municipality for industrial development. It is behind the Meatco and Namib Mills premises off to the right of the main B8 tarred road to Mpacha Airport. According to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) representative in Katima Mulilo, there had been 88 Khwe households at Makaravan until very recently; a month before the field research (conducted in August 2012), about half of them had been relocated to Kyarecan due to plans to develop the settlement into an industrial area. The remaining Khwe had decided to stay on in Makaravan, where they lived among various other ethnic groups, but were unsure about their future. There was a system for the supply of prepaid water at Makaravan, but discussion participants said that most Khwe could not afford to pay for this water, so instead they collected water from the Zambezi River about 1 km away. Makaravan residents had access to a clinic and schools close to the settlement, and to the hospital in town. There had been a kindergarten for Khwe, but it had been moved to Kyarecan.

Discussion participants said that after Independence the Khwe had moved to Makaravan at different times from western Caprivi and from other places in Caprivi Region, such as Sachona, Waya-Waya and Kasheshe, mainly in order to find work.

"We came here from West Caprivi to look for a job. But when we came here, we found out that they want qualifications for jobs. No employment; we cannot afford to buy shoes or clothes. I came here in 1990. Since then, I cannot find a job because they want education. I have some papers, testimonial [but] even if I go to companies looking for workers with the testimonial, they don't give me a job because of education."

– Male participant at Makaravan

Apparently there had been plans since shortly after Independence to develop the area as an industrial zone and to relocate the residents, but serious efforts to relocate the Khwe from Makaravan had been undertaken only in recent years (see Box 11.1 on resettlement from Makaravan to Kyarecan).



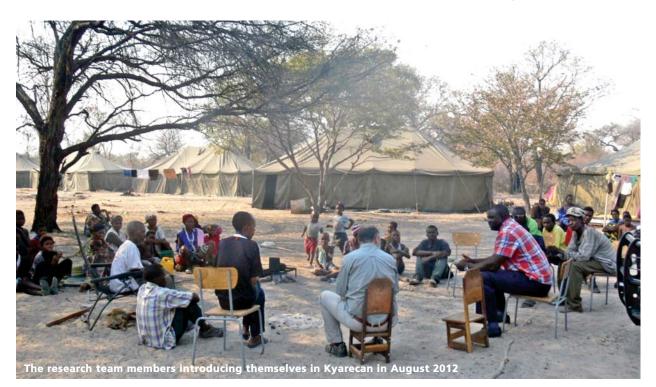
11.3.5 Kyarecan

Kyarecan settlement is located about 23 km from Katima Mulilo along the main tarred road (B8), a few kilometres after the turnoff to Mpacha Airport, on the southern side of the road close to Waya-Waya. The name *Kyarecan* means 'coming back' in Khwedam – signifying the people's return to the area when relocated by the government from the Makaravan informal settlement in Katima Mulilo in July 2012. As mentioned previously, about half the 88 Khwe households at Makaravan had been relocated, however the Khwe at Kyarecan said that many people had already returned to Makaravan, and out of the 120 people originally resettled from Makaravan (including children), there were now only 23 adults left in four households at Kyarecan.

At the time of the fieldwork, the Kyarecan residents were living in tents provided by the OPM. There was a hand pump to provide water, but there was no electricity. There was a kindergarten which had been relocated from Makaravan, but this was not yet fully operational at the time of the fieldwork. The closest school (a combined school) and clinic were at Kasheshe about 2 km away.

In September 2012, the Deputy Prime Minister visited Kyarecan and directed that corrugated-iron houses be built for the 49 households there (Oreseb 2013). By February 2013, "40 houses received all the building materials (sand/mud, rafters and poles), the houses for the elderly people were completed and some elders already moved into their new houses." (Oreseb 2013:) We are unsure why the Deputy Prime Minister directed that houses be built for 49 households when we had found only four Khwe households remaining at Kyarecan in August 2012. At the time of writing it is not known whether those who had returned to Makaravan relocated again to Kyarecan when they heard that houses were being built for them.

As the name ('coming back') indicates, the place now called Kyarecan had formerly been a Khwe settlement. During the war for independence, the SADF brought the Khwe who had fled to Zambia back to Namibia, settled them at the site now called Kyarecan, and drilled a borehole for them there. After Independence, these Khwe left the area for other places in Caprivi Region, such as Waya-



Waya and Dam/Bito. According to discussion participants, when the relocation of the residents of Makaravan was planned, the Khwe chose to be moved back to the Kyarecan site because Khwe people had lived there in the past. The government had agreed to resettle Khwe at that site seeing as it was already land allocated to them.

Box 11.1: Resettlement from Makaravan informal settlement to Kyarecan

According to the government official in charge of the San Feeding Programme in Caprivi Region, about half of the 88 Khwe households at Makaravan settlement were moved voluntarily to Kyarecan in July 2012. The move had been scheduled because the town council had designated the part of Katima Mulilo where the Khwe were living as an industrial zone that was due for development.

Among the residents of Makaravan who chose to stay, there appeared to be confusion about the future: some discussion participants thought that they might be able to move to another part of Katima Mulilo where the town council was planning to resettle other ethnic groups; others were under the impression that all of the Khwe were expected to move to Kyarecan; and a third viewpoint was that the government might send the remaining Khwe back to West Caprivi. The participants said that they had known since 1993 that Makaravan was designated as an industrial area which would eventually be developed.

The Makaravan discussion participants said that they had not wanted to go to Kyarecan because it was in the bush and there was nothing there. One participant said, "The people at Kyarecan are suffering, there is no work, only food aid; you have to stay and can't do anything; you have to sell one bag of mealie-meal [food aid] in order to buy relish, toiletries, etc." At Makaravan it was said that there were more opportunities to do different types of work for cash, and people could more easily buy the things they needed, whereas at Kyarecan there was only piecework employment in other people's fields, and people there received less money.

It also appeared that there was a split between the different groups of Khwe at Makaravan. Discussion participants there told us that the Khwe who had not gone to Kyarecan were mostly from West Caprivi, and those who had gone to Kyarecan were from other parts of Caprivi. One woman said, "My daughter was given a tent there and I also wanted to go there, but we were chased out and told by the people at Kyarecan that we are from western Caprivi." One man said that if the government wanted to move them to Kyarecan, they would not go.

At Kyarecan, discussion participants were waiting for government to provide the support which had been promised them. They said government had told them that they would be helped with cattle, brick houses and electricity. They also said government would bring the fences from the garden project at Makaravan and help the people at Kyarecan to develop gardens there. Participants had expected the brick houses to be built before they moved to Kyarecan, but to date they had been living in tents. They reported that government had told them to move because Makaravan was not a good place to live, but also because the Khwe should move away from people of other ethnic groups.

Asked if people wanted to stay at Kyarecan, one man said that some people had already left. He added, "From what shall we survive here? What can we eat? The best way is to run away!" Other people agreed: "In this bush, what should we get? Here there are no piecework opportunities. How can we survive?"

However, as indicated earlier, some Khwe were willing to stay at Kyarecan because they felt that it was their home, and others felt that it was safer at Kyarecan compared to Makaravan as there was less alcohol available.

11.4 Research findings

11.4.1 Livelihoods and poverty

Table 11.3: Main	livelihood	strategies	at the	eastern	Caprivi	research	sites*

Livelihood strategies	Mulanga	Dam/Bito	Waya-Waya West	Makaravan	Kyarecan
Food aid					
Old Age Pension					
Piecework					Rare
Small-scale cultivation			Only one person		
Veldfood	Little				
Devil's Claw harvesting					
Employment	3 persons at Mashi Conservancy		 3 men at NDF in Grootfontein; 1 woman teaching in the BNP 	2 persons	3 persons
Small-scale backyard gardens					
Selling thatching grass and poles					
Selling scrap iron and bottles					
Selling firewood					

* The cell shading indicates that the livelihood strategy is employed at the applicable site.

Table 11.3 shows that Khwe families at the research sites in eastern Caprivi had to engage in a number of different livelihood activities to survive. Government food aid (mostly mealie-meal) and Old Age Pensions played a major role in sustaining their livelihoods. The Khwe did not earn enough income from regular employment to buy enough food to meet their needs. Also they did not cultivate enough land to produce sufficient food, and veldfood was scarce at some sites. At the urban site (Makaravan informal settlement), people had a wider range of livelihood options that could generate small amounts of cash, such as selling firewood, scrap iron and empty bottles, and the range of piecework available there was reportedly wider than at other sites. In general, veldfood gathering was less important for the San groups in eastern Caprivi than for those in other regions (e.g. Otjozondjupa, Kavango and the Bwabwata National Park – see Chapters 5, 9 and 10 respectively). Few Khwe in eastern Caprivi had full-time jobs, and none reported owning livestock.

Food aid

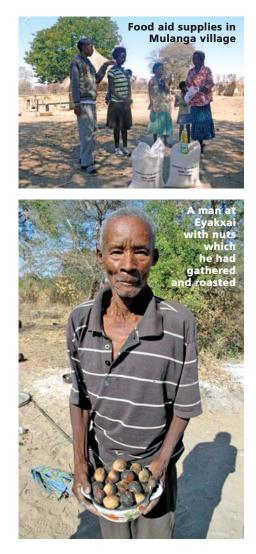
Food aid was received at each research site in eastern Caprivi, although delivery was erratic. In Waya-Waya West, discussion participants reported that they received food aid only twice in 2012 (in June and July), and they never knew beforehand when it would be delivered. In 2011 they received only mealie-meal, but in 2012 they received cooking oil as well. In Dam/Bito and Mulanga villages participants said that they received food aid only twice annually, and those at Makaravan settlement said that food aid came three times annually. The residents at Kyarecan had received food aid only once since being resettled there, and they were actually in dire need of the next delivery. In Mulanga village participants said that they had received two 12.5 kg bags of mealie-meal and two 750 ml bottles of cooking oil for every person in the village (even children), whereas at Makaravan settlement people said that they had received only two 12.5 kg bags of mealie-meal and four bottles of cooking oil per household.

It seems that food aid was also shared between relatives at different research sites. For example, during the workshop at Mulanga village, our translator was given a bag of mealiemeal after mentioning to his relatives there that there was no food aid left at Kyarecan where he lived.

According to an officer of the Caprivi Regional Council's Disaster Risk Management Committee, each household should receive 12.5 kg bags of mealie-meal per month as food aid. The OPM provided these rations to the regional council, and when these were depleted the council had to send a new submission to the OPM for new supplies.

Old Age Pensions

Like for San in other regions, Old Age Pensions were an important means for Khwe in eastern Caprivi to survive, as they provided a regular cash income – not just for the pensioner but for the whole family. However, as in other regions, a number of elderly people did not receive their pensions because they did not have the documents needed for registration and/or could not afford to pay for transport to go to town to register. For some families these pensions provided an important additional source of income that could be used for specific purposes. For example, in Dam/Bito a grandmother's pension had been used to send a grandson to school, and in Mulanga village some elderly people had used their pension money to pay for the ploughing of their fields.



Piecework¹

Different types of piecework (temporary manual work) formed one of the main sources of income at all sites, with the exception of Kyarecan where piecework opportunities were scarce (apart from looking after cattle for other people). Discussion participants there said that they had done piecework while living at Makaravan, but were still trying to find opportunities at their new home. Table 11.4 summarises the information obtained regarding piecework undertaken at the five sites.

Table 11.4: The main forms of piecework or temporary work done by	Khwe in eastern Caprivi
(the order does not necessarily reflect the importance of the diffe	rent forms of work)

Mulanga	Dam/Bito	Waya-Waya West	Makaravan	Kyarecan
 Mending houses Clearing fields Ploughing 	 Clearing and working in other people's fields (up to N\$500 per field) Building houses 	 Mending houses with clay (earning up to N\$200, or N\$400 for a big house taking 3-4 weeks) Women hoe for other people in the rainy season (N\$50 for a day's work) Men clear fields for N\$500-1 000 (about a month to clear a new field) 	 Domestic work / gardening Cleaning for businesses Offloading trucks Transporting water to the shebeens Spraying mosquito repellent Cleaning other people's yards Selling firewood 	 Looking after cattle Seeking piecework opportunities

¹ The authors of this chapter did not distinguish between 'piecework' and 'casual work' (see Chapter 14, page 468).

At Makaravan a wider variety of temporary work was available and participants said that this was one of their main reasons for staying there. Most female participants at Makaravan were not involved in piecework and had not done piecework in the past. Participants in Dam/Bito said that they looked for piecework when hungry, or they might hear of someone looking for workers and take up piecework that way. When they received money for piecework, they went to Katima Mulilo to buy mealie-meal, fish, etc., and when those supplies were about to run out, they looked for more piecework. Much of the piecework was seasonal (e.g. clearing fields and harvesting Devil's Claw), thus it did not provide cash all year round, particularly at the rural sites. As Table 11.4 indicates, some forms of piecework paid quite well, and some (e.g. fetching water) provided only a couple of dollars or a glass of *otombo* (home-brewed beer).

Employment

Very few people had formal, permanent, full-time jobs. Out of a total of 50 persons at all five sites of an employable age, only eight were said to have full-time jobs, and the discussion participants at all five sites were not aware of any other residents having full-time jobs. A few men of Mulanga village were employed by the Mashi Conservancy and one man worked in Windhoek – having completed his tertiary education with support from the OPM and the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA). Three men of Waya-Waya West were soldiers at Grootfontein and one woman was a teacher at Chetto in West Caprivi. Discussion participants claimed that these employees did not send money back to their families. Nevertheless we observed large pieces of shopbought furniture in the house of a woman whose husband was working in Grootfontein, which might indicate that her husband was contributing to the household needs.

According to the Regional Councillor for Kongola Constituency, it was difficult for the Khwe to obtain permanent employment because the requirement for such work was usually a Grade 12 education, thus most Khwe did not qualify to apply.

Veldfood

Veldfood gathering was still an important livelihood strategy for the residents of Waya-Waya West, where discussion participants mentioned a range of veldfoods that they gathered, including mangetti nuts (which they used in different ways, e.g. as an ingredient in a soup that could be very filling) and various tubers and berries. At Kyarecan veldfoods were still important, though seemingly less so than at Waya-Waya West. The mangetti nuts gathered at Kyarecan were used for their oil and for making soup, and various berries were gathered, particularly *!Kumbe* (black berries), *Tcinca*, and *Tceu* (false mopane), but it was said that the *!Kumbe* was far away, and there was no point collecting false mopane fruit and mangetti nuts because "There is no meat, so what should you eat it with?" Participants in Dam/Bito said that they had gathered food to the north of the B8 main road in the past, but this area was now a quarantine camp, so they could no longer get veldfood there. They added that the forestry and wildlife officials would arrest them if they went to the bush to gather food, so they did not rely on veldfood anymore. Participants in Mulanga said that veldfood was no longer available in their area, and at Makaravan it was likewise reported that there was no veldfood left around the settlement for residents to gather.

Cultivation

Most Khwe in eastern Caprivi had some experience with cultivation, but few grew their own food crops on a large scale due to lacking equipment and livestock for ploughing. Cultivation – e.g. of millet (*mahangu*), maize, groundnuts, beans and squash – was more important in Mulanga and

Dam/Bito villages than at the other sites, but the fields used for cultivation were small, reportedly because the residents had neither the oxen nor the equipment needed to cultivate large areas of land. Participants in Mulanga noted that it was mostly the elderly residents who cultivated fields because they could use their pension money to pay for ploughing, whereas other residents had to hoe themselves. Both of the households in Dam/ Bito had small fields, and both used piecework income, pension money or credit to pay for the ploughing.



A donor-funded garden project was started at Makaravan in 2011, but this came to halt after the announcement of the forthcoming relocation of Khwe residents to Kyarecan (see Box 11.1 on page 408). The garden had been used by individuals, and some had even been able to sell surplus produce. Apparently the government had informed the Khwe at Makaravan that the garden project would be moved to Kyarecan, so they had ceased their gardening activities.

Cultivation seemed to play an important role with regard to wellbeing (see Table 11.5), i.e. people who were able to cultivate land were perceived as being better off.

Devil's Claw harvesting

The harvesting and sale of Devil's Claw provided additional income for women in Mulanga and Waya-Waya West villages. In Mulanga, nine women were involved in selling Devil's Claw and it was reported that they had received N\$200 for a 50 kg bag, which would take them between two weeks and a month to collect. They only harvested from June to October, however, and in this period they could collect between two and four bags. In the past they sold their harvest to buyers who came to the village, but in 2012 they sold it to the Lubuta Community Forest. In Waya-Waya West, the Khwe women said that they earned up to N\$ 500 per 50 kg bag.² They needed to harvest for three weeks to a month to collect 50 kg, which they then sold to different buyers who visited their village. Devil's Claw harvesting and selling thus constituted a rather informal income-generating activity as compared to the formalised operation in the BNP (see section 10.4.10, pages 377-378).

Collecting food at the dumpsite (Makaravan)

Until fairly recently, Khwe at Makaravan informal settlement were able to go to the municipal dumpsite to collect expired food which shops, supermarkets and Meatco had thrown away. This appeared to have been an important livelihood strategy for them as it was mentioned in discussions at other sites as well. However, the municipality stopped this activity in 2011, and the dumped food has since been burned immediately to circumvent the health risks posed by its consumption.

Perceptions of poverty and vulnerability

The *Caprivi Regional Poverty Profile* report (NPC 2006b: 59-61) provided a description of different categories of wellbeing in the region developed by residents of six villages, one being Omega III, a

² However they also mentioned that they would get around N\$15 per kilo which would amount to N\$750 per 50 kg bag.

predominantly Khwe community in the BNP (see Chapter 10). The residents at other sites, as far as could be established from the report, were predominantly – if not exclusively – from other ethnic groups. Table 11.5 summarises these categories.

Extremely poor	Slightly poor	Moderately poor	Slightly rich	Rich
 No employment No oxen for ploughing Struggle to get food Eat only once a day Only small-scale cultivation Collect and sell natural resources Work for better-off households Collect veldfood 	 Similar to extremely poor but: do more work for other people; work in exchange for the loan of oxen for ploughing; but often plough their fields late due to having to work for others. 	 2-3 head of cattle Borrow only part of the team of oxen for ploughing Plough their fields in time to get a reasonable harvest 	 Plough their own land Have 100-200 head of cattle Some have low-paid employment Can hire people to work for them Can pay the rich for tractor hire 	 Employed Have many businesses Can buy and sell cattle as and when they like 300-500 cattle Can cultivate large areas of land

Table 11.5: Summary of wellbeing ranking for Caprivi Region based on data provided in the
Caprivi Regional Poverty Profile (NPC 2006b: 59-61)

In terms of the categories in Table 11.5, most of the Khwe at the eastern Caprivi research sites were either "extremely poor" or "slightly poor"; none had livestock, so none – except perhaps for the few who had full-time jobs – could be categorised as "moderately poor". Only the very few Khwe who had jobs and had managed to accumulate some livestock could be classified as "slightly rich". and none could be categorised as "rich" – but in terms of these categories, none of the participants in our study in any of the regions covered could be categorised as "rich".

From an internal perspective, according to participants in our study, the Khwe in eastern Caprivi considered themselves to be "poor" or "very poor". This was attributed partly to their lack of means (e.g. oxen and ploughing equipment) to produce their own food, and partly to the scarcity of employment opportunities (due to perceived discrimination against them and a lack of education).

In general the Khwe considered themselves to be poorer than people from other ethnic groups. The Mulanga residents, for example, considered the Subiya and the Mbukushu to be the richest ethnic groups as they had many cattle and some had government jobs. The Mafwe were considered to be less rich than the Subiya as they had only a few cattle – but they could use the cattle for ploughing and therefore could harvest maize and sell it. The Khwe were at the bottom of the social ladder: they had no cattle, so they could not plough and consequently could not earn sufficient income.

Perceptions of wellbeing

We compared the information on wellbeing provided at each of the five sites so as to evaluate the perceived differences and the factors contributing to these perceptions. The evaluation brought to light slightly differing perceptions of which communities were better off and which were worse off. The differing perceptions could be attributed to the (slightly different) ranking criteria applied by each community and the varying degrees of knowledge that each community had about the others. In summary, factors contributing to the perceptions of wellbeing of Khwe in eastern Caprivi were:

- employment;
- piecework opportunities;
- the means to engage in cultivation (including equipment and livestock for ploughing);
- access to services and the means by which to pay for them;
- infrastructure;

- government provisions (e.g. livestock and food rations);
- compensation for crop destruction by other people's cattle;
- alcohol availability;
- safety;
- cash distribution and meat distribution (i.e. in the BNP only);
- housing conditions; and
- assets (e.g. furniture).

At most of the eastern Caprivi sites, discussion participants gave communities in West Caprivi



(i.e. the BNP) a higher wellbeing ranking relative to their own. The collective opinion at the five sites was that the BNP communities had more employment opportunities (e.g. as game guards) through the Kyaramacan Association (KA), and that they could receive cash and meat through the KA as well as various other forms of external support (e.g. monthly food rations and livestock from the government, and garden projects and chickens from NGOs). The residents in Dam/Bito perceived the Khwe at Chinchimane as being better off than the Khwe in the BNP and other Khwe in Caprivi because the Khwe at Chinchimane were said to have cattle (which they did not need to sell) and they had jobs. However, Mulanga residents ranked their own village as the best place to live because they could farm there, they had water, and if cattle of neighbouring groups entered their fields, they would be compensated because they were part of a conservancy. They were also aware that in the BNP elephants destroyed the crops and the cultivators were not compensated because the regulations pertaining to national parks did not provide for compensation.

At the other end of the wellbeing scale was Makaravan informal settlement, which participants at the other four sites perceived to be the worst place to live. Participants in Waya-Waya West and Dam/ Bito, for example, mentioned that the people at Makaravan went to the dumpsite in Katima Mulilo to get expired food: "That life is not good. It is not good for us to go there," said one respondent in Waya-Waya West.³ Furthermore it was said that people at Makaravan lived in dwellings made of plastic sheets and had many children who did not attend school, and that the extent of alcohol abuse there was not conducive to the residents' wellbeing. Participants in Mulanga also mentioned that the costs of water and funeral services were high at Makaravan, and that cultivation was not possible there. The residents of Kyarecan, having chosen to be relocated there quite recently, saw advantages in living there rather than at Makaravan, however they had many expectations regarding improved conditions at Kyarecan in the near future as government had made many promises before the relocation.

It is therefore interesting that the residents of Makaravan considered the informal settlement to be a better place to live compared to other places such as Waya-Waya West and Dam/Bito: there were more piecework and income-generating opportunities in town; they were closer to medical facilities where they could take their children if they fell ill; and it was easier for them than for rural residents to get identity documents (IDs) and other important documents in Katima Mulilo. Asked if Makaravan was better than West Caprivi, a participant responded that they were in town because of work: "This is not our place. West Caprivi is our home; our houses are there," meaning that Makaravan was only a temporary place to stay and they would eventually return to West Caprivi.

³ Apparently the participants were not aware of the fact that the municipality had stopped this practice in 2011.

11.4.2 Access to land

In stark contrast to our finding in the BNP, participants at the eastern Caprivi sites did not perceive land tenure as a problematic issue that could threaten Khwe livelihoods. In Waya-Waya West, Dam/ Bito and Mulanga villages, residents said that the land on which they had settled was allocated to them by the Mafwe Traditional Authority, i.e. they felt secure because the Mafwe had allocated the land to them specifically. In Waya-Waya West it was said that Khwe who wanted to cultivate large fields were expected to obtain the Mafwe Traditional Authority's permission to do so, and this posed no problem, but if a Khwe person started ploughing without permission, he/she would be chased away. Dam/Bito residents did not perceive any threat to their land, as in their opinion it was generally accepted that Dam/Bito was Khwe land and no other group would try to take it over. This situation differs completely from that in the BNP where the influx of Mbukushu was perceived as a major threat (see Chapter 10). In eastern Caprivi it was the lack of equipment that hampered sustainable cultivation as opposed to concerns about land rights.

At the urban site of Makaravan, as indicated above, the Khwe residents' access to land was threatened by the town council's plans to develop the area designated as an industrial zone. The discussion participants were uncertain what would happen next with regard to the relocation of the residents.

11.4.3 Identity, culture and heritage

The discussion participants at all five sites in eastern Caprivi were Khwe, and all said that they preferred to be known as such, rather than by any other name. In Waya-Waya West, participants indicated that they had no problem being called "San", and "Barakwena" was also acceptable to them, but they considered the word "Bushmen" to be pejorative: "Bushman means staying in the bush; we don't like that," one participant said. In Mulanga, participants said that they had heard the word "San" but did not know what it meant, and they thought the word "Bushman" referred to people who speak with clicks, but they were not sure – maybe it meant 'people who live in the bush.

In general, for discussion participants at the five sites, language and culture were ethnic markers. Cultural aspects mentioned included dancing, cooking, hunting, gathering and (Khwe) traditional healing. In Waya-Waya West, physical appearance and skin colour were mentioned too.

11.4.4 Relationships with other groups

As mentioned above, Khwe people clearly saw themselves as different from other ethnic groups, whom they generally referred to as "black people". The Khwe of Caprivi were observed to be at the bottom of the social ladder, and were dependent on their Caprivian neighbours in manifold ways, such as for piecework and allocations of land. However, it seemed that the Khwe in eastern Caprivi had come to accept the lowly socio-economic position in which they found themselves, and were content to be governed by traditional authorities not their own. The relationship between Khwe and neighbouring groups was not as tense as that found between other San communities and their neighbours in some other areas, an example being the relationship between Khwe and Mbukushu in West Caprivi which was much more problematic. This might have to do with the fact that the Khwe are a tiny minority (0.5%) in eastern Caprivi (NSA 2013: 171) and thus were not considered to be a threat to neighbouring groups in terms of competing for land and natural resources. The Khwe generally expressed a wish to live among people of their own ethnic group, but this desire did not seem to be a consequence of conflicts with others.

11.4.5 Education

As in other regions, most of the elderly people at the eastern Caprivi research sites had either not attended school at all or had left school at a very early age. Discussion participants recognised the value of education for obtaining employment, but the Khwe in this region – like the San in all other regions – faced a number of problems regarding education, most of them related to finance and the fact that long distances to secondary schools led to high dropout rates. According to the Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency, some Khwe children were not even admitted to school because they did not have IDs. Although many Khwe children did not pay school fees (e.g. in Mulanga and Dam/Bito), they could not afford other items such as school uniforms, shoes, toiletries and food, and consequently children dropped out of school, sometimes before completing primary school. In other cases, such as in Waya-Waya West, Khwe children were reportedly asked to pay school fees that their families could not afford. The lack of family income to support children at school was one of the main reasons for children dropping out.

Most Khwe lived at some distance from schools, especially secondary schools, and, according to the Governor of Caprivi Region, the exam fees of about N\$300 in Grade 10 and Grade 12 presented an additional barrier to the Khwe completing their secondary education. The Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency reckoned that there were probably no more than 10 San children in the whole of Caprivi in Grade 12 in 2012. He suggested that San children should go together as a group to one school for Grades 10-12 so that they could be with their own people and not feel isolated at different schools – a suggestion similarly expressed in some of our stakeholder interviews in other regions.

Box 11.2: Separate schools for San?

Regarding the suggestion to group San learners together, it is pertinent to examine the developments at the primary school in Dam/Bito. Apparently this school was established specifically for the Khwe, but, according to the Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency, the children kept leaving the school, so a perimeter fence was erected around the premises to stop this. Reportedly in 2009 the OPM provided school uniforms for the Khwe children and made food available for them at the school. However, at the time of our field research, only a few Khwe were still at the school. (Apart from those in Dam/Bito, there were few Khwe living in the neighbourhood of the school.) Apparently there had been two Khwe teachers at the school, but one had been transferred to Omega III in West Caprivi and the other had recently died. This meant that Khwe children could not be taught in their own language anymore. Although the research team was not able to confirm all of the details of the planning and implementation of this San school project, it is evident that a lot of factors would have to be taken into account to achieve success in separate schooling for San.

The experience of one family in Dam/Bito illustrates the problems facing the Khwe with regard to education. One son was supported through school by his grandmother's Old Age Pension, but when she died there was no more money to support him. The family eventually received help from the former regional governor who arranged for the child to continue at school – possibly by asking the school principal to waive the fees. Largely due to the personal efforts of the father of the family – particularly in respect of travel arrangements – and the son's outstanding performance at school, he eventually passed Grade 12 and managed to get a good position in government. However, there was no money available to support his younger sister in a similar manner, and she had recently dropped out because it was not possible to source the clothing she needed to attend school. Her father said, "I cannot afford to support her; it is hard to get money." (In addition, her father alleged that his daughter had a drinking problem.) It was not clear whether the lack of support for the

daughter was simply due to a lack of finance, or whether it also had to do with gender issues and possibly also the fact that she was not the first-born child.

11.4.6 Health

The main health problems among the Khwe in eastern Caprivi were said to be TB, malaria, back pain, headaches, pain in the legs and diarrhoea (the latter occurring among children particularly).

Access to healthcare

Access to healthcare was generally a problem at all but one of the five sites in eastern Caprivi, the exception being Makaravan which was in close proximity to both a clinic and a hospital. For Waya-Waya West the nearest clinic was 5 km away and the nearest hospital was in Katima Mulilo about 21 km away. At Makaravan women were able to go to the hospital to deliver their babies, but this was a problem at the other four sites due to their remoteness. At Kyarecan, for example, discussion participants related the story of a woman who had struggled to give birth: there was no local ambulance, she couldn't find any other form of transport, and no one had cellphone credit to get assistance. It was said that the traditional knowledge of the older people had eventually helped the woman and her baby to survive.

Alcohol abuse

As in other regions, alcohol abuse was a common problem in eastern Caprivi, but the situation differed from site to site. The residents of Mulanga, Dam/Bito, Waya-Waya West and Kyarecan perceived alcohol abuse to be worst at the urban site, Makaravan informal settlement. There, reportedly, "hot stuff" (*katchipembe*) was available in addition to *otombo*. (In our workshop there on a Saturday morning, one participant was visibly drunk.) The Chief Clerk of Katima Urban Constituency also spoke about the extent of alcohol abuse at Makaravan, noting that some parents started drinking early in the morning.

A Khwe man at Kyarecan had started his own business selling *otombo* there within a month of his relocation from Makaravan. Some younger men left our workshop after lunch and it was said that they were going to drink. We asked if life would be better at Kyarecan without *otombo* around, and whether women in the community consumed as much alcohol as men did, and whether alcohol consumption ever led to domestic violence or fighting among community members. The responses to these questions are recorded in the following box.

"Some of the people are alcoholics, they start drinking early in the morning. Here, there was no drinking in the beginning. But some people went back to Makaravan because they realised life here is hell. They moved back because they were used to alcohol."

"Sometimes the man is going to drink earlier, but if nothing is at the house, the woman goes as well to drink later in the morning."

"Yes, they start fighting. You can hear it all over, the noise of fighting, it starts with insulting and ends in fights."

- Female participants at Kyarecan

Participants in Waya-Waya West said that alcohol abuse was not a specific problem there: residents drank *otombo* but did not waste all their income on alcoholic beverages.



11.4.7 Gender

As in other San communities (see Chapter 10 on the BNP for example), Khwe men and women in eastern Caprivi had specific roles in daily life. Women looked after the children and prepared food for the family, and if the family had a field, both women and men prepared it for cultivation: men did the clearing and women the hoeing. There was a similar division of labour in doing piecework: men cleared fields and women hoed and weeded them. Women were more involved than men in the harvesting of Devil's Claw and selling of the harvests.

At the sites visited there were no women in leadership positions. Each village/settlement had a headman and there was no evidence of San women occupying any post in the formal (non-San) traditional authority structures. Our discussions with the communities were generally dominated by the men; women were vocal at times.

Regarding health, women faced particular issues related to pregnancy and giving birth, mainly due to the distances from their homes to the nearest healthcare facilities and a lack of transport.

In most San societies, women play the major role in gathering veldfood; men do this occasionally. In eastern Caprivi, however, for a number of reasons cited elsewhere in this chapter, veldfoods have either been depleted or are difficult to access nowadays, thus for most women the gathering of veldfood was no longer an important daily activity. (For the same reasons, few men were hunters anymore.)

11.4.8 Political participation and representation

Traditional authority

The Khwe at the eastern Caprivi research sites said that they fell under the traditional authority (TA) of the Mafwe Chief Mamili, whose *khuta* (tribal court) is at Chinchimane. There were different levels of participation and representation in the *khutas* at the different sites. For the most part the Khwe did not have direct representation on the main *khuta* or local sub-*khuta*. In the past, however, Chief Mamili⁴ had appointed a Khwe *induna* (senior headman) to his *khuta* to represent the Khwe. At each research site the Khwe had their own headman, and all five were male elders.

⁴ There is a long line of chiefs named Mamili, which commenced in 1864. The present Chief Mamili is the seventh in this line.

The Khwe at each site had different experiences regarding representation in the Mafwe Traditional Authority. The Khwe of Mulanga village, for example, were represented by a Mafwe *induna* on the main *khuta* at Chinchimane. Despite not having their own representative on the *khuta*, the Khwe of Mulanga were positive about the Mafwe TA. They respected Chief Mamili and felt represented by him.

In Waya-Waya West an old Khwe man was the official headman. He attended sub-*khuta* meetings and reported back to the community. However, when he reported problems of the Khwe to the sub-*khuta*, the *indunas* allegedly listened but did not take any action.

In Dam/Bito the Khwe were part of the local sub-*khuta*, on which the Khwe village headman held the senior position of *natamoyo*. When the *ngambela* (leader of the sub-*khuta*) was not available, the *natamoyo* would take over. This meant that he had a degree of authority over the Mafwe in the area and provided the Khwe community with an unusual degree of representation in the TA. It was also unusual for a San person to be so integrated into the TA system of another group that he had authority over members of that other group, though it remained unclear how he exercised this power and the extent to which his authority was accepted.

In general the Khwe in Caprivi Region appeared to be more integrated into the TA system than the San groups in neighbouring Kavango Region.

Some Khwe expressed the desire to have their own chief and TA, but they recognised that this could cause problems because they were already under the TA of Chief Mamili. In the discussion at Kyarecan it was said that, "In Namibia, every nation should have its own chief," and the Councillor for Kongola Constituency echoed this sentiment in saying that the Khwe should be able to decide on their own chief and it would be much better if they had their own representation.

All in all though, unlike the Khwe in the BNP (i.e. the part in Kavango Region), the Khwe in eastern Caprivi did not consider a separate Khwe TA to be a necessity. This might be related to the fact that they did not face the same problems with neighbouring groups as the Khwe in the BNP faced with the Mbukushu and their TA (see Chapter 10).

Other forms of political participation and representation

The Khwe of Mulanga are affected by two other community-level institutions, namely the Mashi Conservancy and the Lubuta Community Forest. Discussion participants said that they were all members of the conservancy, and they had elected a person to represent them on the conservancy committee, but allegedly this representative did not give them feedback on conservancy activities. They did not provide much information about their involvement in the community forest. They did not seem to be directly represented in the management structure and their main involvement was discussing Devil's Claw harvesting and wildfire prevention when representatives visited them for this purpose.

Khwe at all five sites faced problems in participating fully in regional and national affairs as citizens of Namibia, due to constraints to their acquiring national documents. At Makaravan, for example, we observed problems with the information on several people's IDs.⁵ In some cases

⁵ For example, the place and date of birth were exactly the same on several people's IDs: Bwabwata, 1 January of a particular year.

residents believed that certain older persons were eligible for Old Age Pensions which they were not receiving because the dates of birth on their IDs were inaccurate. The Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency explained that this was largely due to the Khwe physique: officials who issued IDs in colonial times would try to guess a person's age, and many Khwe, being small and thin, were assessed as being younger than they really were.

At most sites participants stated that it was difficult to obtain birth certificates, IDs and other important documents because they had to travel far to reach government offices and could not afford the travel costs. In addition, older people could not read or write or speak other languages, so it was especially difficult for them to make themselves understood at government offices or to understand what procedures to follow.

11.4.9 Visions for the future

Participants at all five sites in eastern Caprivi were unsure what the future would bring and whether life would improve for them. In Dam/Bito residents didn't hold out much hope at all that things would change: "I don't know, the children are not going to school. Everything might get worse. I don't know the future, just the present," said the headman, and an elderly woman said, "No one is employed, no one is going to school. How should things change?"

Generally participants said that for life to improve, they needed to be employed and/or to be able to produce their own food.

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"How should there be development if we don't get employment?"
– Female participant in Waya-Waya West
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To cultivate on an appropriate scale, they needed oxen and ploughing equipment, but they could not afford to invest in either of these.

Participants in Dam/Bito said that they did not want to remain dependent on the government, but they needed the government to help them become independent. One participant there said that the government should also help learners to stay in school, but, as indicated in section 11.4.5 on education, the efforts already made in this regard did not achieve sustainable success.

"Government must help us in any other way to make us strong, so that we are not completely dependent on them, that we can do something for ourselves. We must do something for ourselves, not just depend on the government, for example we must plough."

- Male participant in Dam/Bito

Kyarecan and Mulanga residents wanted the government to provide support for income-generating projects such as a bakery and crop gardens.

Participants in Mulanga felt that the government provided a lot of support to Khwe in western Caprivi (BNP) but did not assist those in eastern Caprivi in the same way. Participants in Waya-Waya West also felt that the government did not give them the support needed: "We also tell other ministries our problems but nothing is happening. Government is not supporting us." At Kyarecan,

residents were waiting for the government to fulfil the promises made when the Khwe were moved there from Makaravan – in particular the promised permanent housing to replace the tents in which they were still living. (As mentioned earlier, the housing project supported by the OPM was started a few months later.)

11.4.10 Impact of external support

Apart from the normal government services provided to rural villages and government food aid, participants in Waya-Waya West and Dam/Bito did not report having received any specific support from the government or other external agencies. In Waya-Waya West, participants said that some of their neighbours in Waya-Waya East had received livestock from the government, but no one in Waya-Waya West received any. The Khwe residents of Makaravan had been assisted with a donor-funded garden project, which had worked well, but had ceased by the time of our visit because the project was due to be transferred to Kyarecan. The residents of Kyarecan had been moved there from Makaravan only about a month before our visit, and they were waiting for further government support (see Box 11.1 on page 408).

The residents of Mulanga had received indirect government and NGO support by virtue of their membership of the Mashi Conservancy: the conservancy provided employment for two young men of Mulanga, and the villagers sometimes received meat from trophy hunting, although discussion participants thought that members of other groups in the conservancy were receiving priority in the distribution of meat. As already noted, all of the participants in Mulanga were members of the conservancy and they were represented on the conservancy committee.

The wealth rankings and various other discussions at the five sites indicated that there was a belief that government and NGOs were providing strong support to Khwe living in the BNP but not to those living outside the park, which partly explains the belief among people in eastern Caprivi that life was better in the park than where they were living.

Although not mentioned by participants in discussing educational support, according to the Chief Clerk of Sibbinda Constituency, the government was trying to assist those who had failed only one subject in Grade 10: the OPM paid for them to rewrite the exam through the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). In addition, the government made bursaries available for those who passed Grade 12 to study to become teachers. Six San from his constituency had undertaken teaching courses supported by such a bursary but two had dropped out – one due to alcohol abuse and another due to pregnancy.



11.5 Regional conclusions and recommendations

The Khwe in the eastern part of Caprivi are among the poorest people in the region. The main determinants of their poverty are a lack of livestock, lack of cultivation equipment and lack of employment opportunities (which would enable them to buy livestock and cultivation equipment for self-sustainability). A lack of education was said to be the main reason for their not obtaining full-time jobs. (A few people who had obtained full-time jobs had left them after a while due to illness, or not getting on with the employer, or wanting to be with family.)

Unlike the situation in many other areas where San are living, access to land is currently not a factor contributing to the poverty of San (Khwe) in eastern Caprivi.⁶

Several discussion participants said that the provision of oxen and ploughing equipment would be the best way to help them as these would enable them to produce their own food. Current levels of food production are very low because most people can cultivate only small areas of land due to the costs of ploughing larger areas. The *Caprivi Regional Poverty Profile* report stated that the Khwe living at Omega III in the BNP were not agricultural producers and "have a San-type culture and should rather be seen as hunter-gatherers" (NPC 2006b: 27). This seems to be a common stereotype despite historical evidence (Boden 2003: 139; Fisch 2008) and reports from discussion participants strongly indicating that the Khwe have been agricultural producers for many decades. Many of the discussion participants knew how to cultivate crops but lacked the means.

Certainly the Khwe in eastern Caprivi were no longer hunter-gatherers and were well integrated into the cash economy. While hunting was perceived as culturally important, it was not practised much – partly because in most areas there was little to hunt, but also because people were scared of being arrested as poachers. Veldfood gathering was also important culturally, and in some areas did contribute to livelihoods, but did not provide the bulk of the food of any Khwe community, i.e. where gathering took place, it was only one among many livelihood strategies.

Therefore, government and NGO support strategies in the medium to long term should focus on the following activities:

- Helping Khwe children to stay in school so that they can gain sufficient qualifications for jobs.
- Helping those who have dropped out of school to gain skills that can help them to earn an income.
- Helping the Khwe to produce their own food instead of being reliant on food aid.
- Ensuring that the Khwe can obtain the national documents they need for full participation in regional and national affairs as citizens of Namibia.

To some extent the government is already implementing some of these recommendations. However, to have a real impact, existing activities need to be scaled up or implemented in a more systematic manner, and support activities must have a strong local basis. To achieve all this, the OPM and the regional council should carry out a comprehensive needs assessment in the region that enables the Khwe to articulate their own views as to how they wish to develop. Based on this needs assessment the OPM and regional council should work with Khwe representatives to design and implement a Regional San Development Plan that is adequately funded and ensures that sustainable livelihoods, education, health services, representation and land tenure are assured for all San in Caprivi Region.

⁶ As in Kavango Region at the time of the research, Khwe in eastern Caprivi lacked the necessary assets to cultivate large fields, therefore few were in need of land. This situation might change should more Khwe be in a position to ask the TA for larger areas of land for cultivation, i.e. access to land might become more of an issue in the future.

Chapter 12 San Farmworkers

By Maarit Thiem



12.1 Introduction

Since colonial times, a large proportion of Namibia's San population have worked in the agricultural sector. The primary reason for this is that they were dispossessed of their traditional land, first by incoming Bantu groups at the beginning of the 19th century, and then by the establishment of commercial farms at the beginning of the 20th century. As they could no longer hunt and gather veldfood, the San were forced to adapt their livelihood strategies, hence they took up work on the farms. A participant in our research discussions in Outjo summed up the changing situation this way: "Before Independence, when white farmers fenced off the land, the Hai||om became farmworkers."

Our research discussions revealed that work in the agricultural sector was still a very important source of income for the San in 2012, but the context of this work has changed dramatically since Independence. While acknowledging that farmworkers from other ethnic groups may face similar

problems today, the situation of the San is uniquely informed by their history; their being forced to work as cheap labourers on farms; their lack of alternative income opportunities; and the high levels of discrimination that San farmworkers face. In this chapter we look at San farmworkers' present living and working conditions and how they have changed since Independence. Our analyses are based on data drawn from our own research as well as surveys such as the national censuses, other academic sources and news articles.¹

The data extrapolated from our own research derives from discussions that we convened for this study in four regions: Otjozondjupa, Omaheke, Kunene and Oshikoto Regions. The research team visited one commercial farm in Otjozondjupa where we interviewed San farmworkers as well as the owners of the applicable farm. Visits to additional farms to gather more in-depth data on San farmworkers' living conditions were not possible simply because gaining access to farmworkers is very challenging and time consuming.² Due to this constraint, the team decided to rely on the data gathered in the above-mentioned four regions as well as existing literature. To complement this data, interviews were held in Windhoek with personnel of the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU), the Namibian National Farmers Union (NNFU) and the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI).³

In the next section of this chapter we provide background information on the history of farming in Namibia and the labour laws and minimum wage agreements introduced after Independence in 1990. Thereafter we consider the impacts of these laws on San farmworkers, examine their living and working conditions, briefly discuss the matter of access to land, and draw some conclusions.

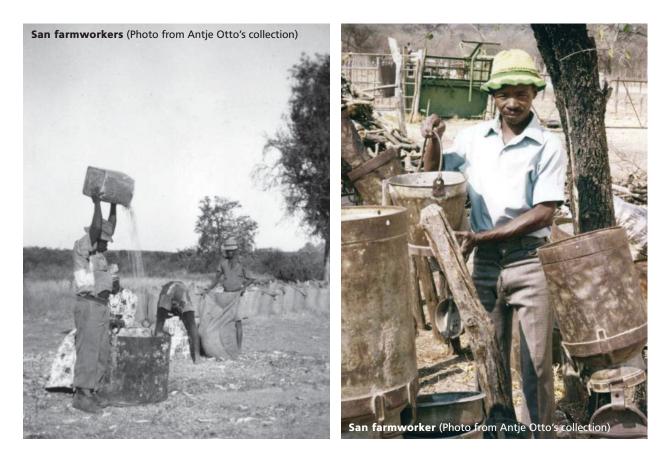
12.2 Background on farming in Namibia

Given Namibia's aridity and unpredictable rainfall, commercial farming is a challenging endeavour in this country. Before Independence, the state provided loans, subsidies and other forms of support to commercial farmers to help them to counteract the difficulties encountered. In addition to this financial support, cheap generational labour contributed substantially to the economic viability of the commercial farms, and existing laws gave the farmers far-reaching rights and powers over workers on their land (Suzman 2001b: 12). The Masters and Servants Proclamation of 1920, for example, allowed the farmers to exact penalties for "withholding effort, desertion and unauthorised absence from work", which were all deemed to constitute crimes (Gordon and Douglas 2000: 140). Due to the geographical isolation of many farms and an inadequate police presence, they could develop

¹ Various authors have written about San farmworkers, focusing predominantly on those in Omaheke Region. Some of these authors analysed different aspects of the livelihoods of San farmworkers: their general working conditions (Suzman 1995); indigenous identity among them (Averill 2010 and Sylvain 2002 and 2003); relationships between the farmworkers and the farmers employing them (Averill 2010; Sylvain 2001); gender aspects (Sylvain 1999); and the impact of alcohol consumption on social relations (Sylvain 2006). Other authors, e.g. Devereux et al. (1996) and Karamata (2006), dealt more generally with the living and working conditions of farmworkers in Namibia.

² Both Averill and Sylvain describe the difficulties and the lengthy process involved in gaining access to farms on which San work (Averill 2010: 21; Sylvain 2006: 134). The farm owner must grant permission for access to the farm before any interview can take place, thus a relationship of trust between the researcher and the farm owner is a prerequisite. For this study, making contact with farmworkers on communal farms proved extremely difficult as the research team could not build on existing contacts and networks to establish this trust.

³ The NAU, established in 1951, spearheads organised agriculture in Namibia. It represents the country's commercial farmers, and has established itself well as their mouthpiece and mediator. The NNFU is a national federation of regional farmers' unions, established in 1992 to serve as a mouthpiece for communal and emerging farmers. The Namibia Farm Workers Union (NAFWU), established in 1994, represents the country's farmworkers. This union was dysfunctional at the time of our field research, thus an interview was not possible.



relatively independently as "total institutions" with minimal state interference (Du Toit 1992, cited in Suzman 1995: 12). Furthermore, the Trespass Ordinance 3 of 1962 prohibited unauthorised access to farms, thereby hindering the political organisation of the farmworkers. All told, "Workers in the agricultural sector have ... always constituted a marginal and vulnerable section of the labour force." (Devereux et al. 1996: 1)

Today the agricultural sector is a significant contributor to the country's economy and a key means of survival for many Namibians, providing a livelihood to 27.4% of the Namibian labour force (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: 9). The 2008 Namibia Labour Force Survey found that the agricultural sector accommodated the highest number of workers who had never attended school (52.1%), followed by the highest number of workers who had attended primary school only (27.0%) (Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) 2008: 58).⁴ These figures indicate that the agricultural sector is the most important in the country in terms of providing work for people with no education or a very low level of education.

In November 1992, the Namibian Parliament passed the Labour Act 6 of 1992.⁵ This Act gave farmworkers the same rights as other workers had, for the first time, and it also defined additional rights for farmworkers, such as the right to adequate housing, the right to cultivate land and keep livestock under certain circumstances, and the right to protection against exploitation through farm shops (Devereux et al. 1996: 9). Nevertheless, a study conducted four years later found that, "The situation of farmworkers has not changed much since the Labour Act of 1992 was passed, as farmers still continue to exploit them." (Devereux et al. 1996: 1)

⁴ Unlike the 2008 survey report, the *Namibia Labour Force Survey 2012 Report* (NSA 2013b) does not provide a breakdown of the levels of education of the farm labour force specifically.

⁵ The Labour Act 11 of 2007 repeals both the Labour Act 6 of 1992 and the Labour Act 15 of 2004, which was brought into force only partially.

The first minimum wage for farmworkers was introduced in 2003, following an agreement between agricultural employers and the Namibia Farm Workers Union (NAFWU). The minimum wage was set at N\$2,20 per hour (amounting to N\$429 per month for a 45-hour working week). In addition to this cash wage, employers had to provide food and accommodation. In December 2009 the minimum wage was raised to N\$2,87 per hour (amounting to N\$560 per month), and workers were further entitled to "food or rations ... which value should not exceed the equivalent of 35% of the employee's basic wage" or "... an additional allowance of at least N\$300.00 per month".⁶ Karamata reported in 2006 that only 14.4% of all farmworkers in the country knew of the minimum wage, and only half of those who knew of it also knew the amount to which they were entitled (Karamata 2006: 31) - and it is likely that the number of San who knew was even lower due to their high level of illiteracy. Karamata further indicated that only 54.8% of all farm owners countrywide had implemented the minimum wage by that time. However, the situation varied greatly between farm categories: whereas almost all owners of commercial farms had implemented the minimum wage, only 14% of communal farmers had done so (Karamata 2006: 31). Over the years, most communal farmers and emerging commercial farm owners have complained that it is impossible for them to implement the minimum wage due to their low levels of income. In February 2010, NAFWU launched a wage campaign because a large number of farm owners had not complied with the new regulations (The Namibian, Jana-Mari Smith, 8 February 2010). The NNFU Executive Director revealed in our interview with him for this study that most of the communal farmers still found it difficult to adhere to the minimum wage agreement, and that some communal farmers still did not know about this agreement.

Box 12.1: Life history of a former San farmworker from Otjinene, Omaheke Region

Jan was born on a commercial farm at Epukiro RC^a in 1956. He grew up on the farm, and worked there as a farm boy looking after the calves. At that time he was paid N\$6 per month. When the farmer died, another farmer bought the farm, and in 1964 this new owner forced Jan's family - which included seven children – to move out. The family went to Otjinene^b where Jan started to work at farms in the area owned by Herero farmers, mainly fixing farm fences. The first of these farm owners "was not a good man" - reportedly he insulted and beat his workers regularly. "This was during the South West Africa time, before our independence. As you know people were beaten." Consequently Jan left that farm. One of the other farmers for whom he worked did not pay his salary: "I only worked for him for a year and he paid me nothing for that whole time, only eating food, so I left." He moved to another farm where he worked for six years. Here he looked after the cattle and goats, and was also responsible for milking the animals. He was paid N\$30 per month, but was not given any food rations; instead he ate with the farmer's family. Then he and the farmer had misunderstandings about money: "He did not want to pay me and he just wanted me to work without pay." Hence Jan started doing piecework such as building camps and kraals at different farms. He said that his life is not going well and he always has to wait for piecework: "If there is no piecework then I have nothing. Now we get some food from the government, but it is not enough."

^a "RC" stands for Roman Catholic. The settlement of Epukiro (120 km north-east of Gobabis), was established in 1902 when the Roman Catholic Church bought the 30 000 ha farm Epukiro, which today comprises a cluster of small settlements, at the centre of which is the Catholic mission station. Epukiro RC refers to the original settlement area. (http://en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/Epukiro)

^b Otjinene is a village located ±160 km north of Gobabis. The village is surrounded by communal land on which there are many other villages and many communal farms.

⁶ Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (2007), "Declaration of Extension of Collective Agreement: Agricultural Industry: Labour Act, 2007" (Government Notice, *Government Gazette* No. 4390, 14 December 2009).

12.3 Impacts of the introduction of labour laws and the minimum wage agreement on San farmworkers

Suzman reported in 2001 that nearly half of all San in Namibia were generational farmworkers or family members of farmworkers (Suzman 2001b).⁷ However, after the introduction of the Labour Act in 1992, farmers started to retrench their workers, and the introduction of the minimum wage in 2003 exacerbated this situation. There are no recent statistics on San farmworkers, but our analyses of the existing literature and the information obtained in our interviews for this study suggest that the retrenchments must have had a disproportionate effect on San farmworkers since farm owners had always tended to dismiss them first when jobs were cut. Thus the number of San employed as farmworkers has probably declined considerably since Suzman's report. The Chief Executive Officer of the Gobabis Town Council indicated in our interview that San farmworkers face a higher risk of being dismissed - on both commercial and communal farms: "Most farms are now owned by us. And if I move in, I rather have somebody from my own family working there. Your former boss left, he sold the farm so you can see what you do. This is also something that pushes people out of the farm." Many of the former San farmworkers were pushed onto the fringes of periurban areas around towns such as Outjo, Grootfontein and Gobabis, or into larger settlements or communal areas, or into the corridors between commercial farms. Towns like Gobabis and Outjo have subsequently struggled to cope with the high influx of homeless and jobless people.

"After Independence the wages were improved and the farmer could not afford to have a lot of workers on the farm, and they chased away the San people. Before Independence even the young San boys could make some income by opening gates for the farmer when he was visiting the camp posts, and at the end of the month he would buy him clothes and also give him money."

- Discussion participant in Epako (informal settlement in Gobabis)

Besides precipitating a reduction in the number of farmworkers, the new labour laws also formalised the relationship between the farm owners and their workers for the first time. Before these laws came into force, farmers generally regarded themselves as their workers' parent or *baas* (Afrikaans for 'boss'),⁸ thus they conceived their role as one that involved a responsibility for educating, training and assisting their workers financially and otherwise, but also a responsibility for disciplining and punishing them (Suzman 1999: 57). Later, many farmers reduced their financial and material support to levels that simply met the minimum requirements. The NNFU Executive Director explained in our interview that the introduction of the minimum wage negatively influenced the social relationship between the farmers and their labourers, specifically on communal farms:

"We need to treat the minimum wage policy very carefully because many communal farmers say that if they give them the minimum wages, why should they go an extra mile to give them better food and other social assistance. Before the introduction of the minimum wage limit, farmers considered the workers as part of their households. They would also go an extra mile to meet their social needs even if they could not pay them the salary in terms of money. You would find a worker getting clothes, food, bits of money and accommodation. This culture is fading away with the introduction of the minimum wage policy."

⁷ This finding was probably based on the 1999 census counts. It is likely that the real percentage was far lower since farmers had retrenched considerable numbers of their workers since Independence (see discussion further on).

⁸ This relationship has been described in the literature as the "*baasskap* principle" (see for example Silvain 2001) – literal translation 'boss-ship', i.e. 'domination', based on the principle that 'the white man must always be boss'.

San farmworkers – undoubtedly along with those from other ethnic groups – still face rights abuses by farm owners despite the laws in place. San participants in our research discussions mentioned non-payment of wages,⁹ unpaid annual leave, unpaid overtime work, deductions for sick leave, and farmers 'hiring' out workers to neighbouring farms without additional payment – abuses also reported by Averill (2010: 29, 31-37). In addition, some farmers failed to register their San employees with the Social Security Commission (SSC), which is in conflict with the labour law provision that all Namibian employees are entitled to SSC benefits (*New Era*, Surihe Gaomas, 4 July 2007). Reportedly this failure has been pervasive in Omaheke: "The exploitation of the minority San is prevalent in the Omaheke region, where hundreds of them are employed as farmworkers without being registered with the Social Security Commission (SSC)." (*New Era*, Staff Reporter, 10 March 2006)¹⁰

San, from the outset of their history as farmworkers, have had difficulties in accessing information about the labour laws, hence their knowledge of their rights remains sketchy today. The Director of the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) pointed out that NAFWU had allegedly neglected to educate farmworkers about their rights. The farms' remoteness, and the high illiteracy rates among farmworkers, make it difficult to implement measures to ensure farmworkers' awareness and comprehension of the laws governing the agricultural sector. Conversely, farm owners access legislation easily, and their higher levels of education and knowledge of administrative procedures place them in a much more powerful position than their workers (Averill 2010: 45).

All told, the introduction of the Labour Act 6 of 1992 and the first minimum wage agreement in 2003 brought mixed results for the farmworkers generally and for San farmworkers in particular. Wages and living and working conditions were improved on some farms, and physical coercion was prohibited, but the increased wage bill forced farmers to reduce their labour force in a way that had a disproportionate effect on San farmworkers.

San farmworkers tended to refrain from reporting rights abuses for three reasons essentially: the long distances to towns where complaints can be registered; the requirement of completing formal documentation; and the rumours about discrimination and bad treatment of San. San participants in our research discussions also alleged that farm owners bribed labour officers. Not only do these factors hinder the San in exercising the rights that the labour laws give them, but they also speak to a deep mistrust in the system and its players – which further constrains the San from approaching the labour inspectors. Ethnic affiliations and the associated skewed access to information play a major role in this apparent mistrust.¹¹ A discussion participant in Tsintsabis, Oshikoto Region, even questioned whether some ethnic groups were exempted from adhering to the labour laws.

"The problem with the labour law is that if you didn't agree on terms with the farmer and you left and then went to the labour inspector, the farmer would tell his neighbour not to employ you – he would say you are a thief or difficult. Word would travel so you wouldn't be able to get employment. Then you would come to Outjo and you would need to find an open space for your corrugated iron shack."

- Discussion participant in Outjo, Kunene Region

⁹ Averill notes that the Omaheke Labour Inspector stated in an interview that non-payment of wages was the most common complaint received from farmworkers (Averill 2010: 29). Dieckmann also reported on this issue (Dieckmann 2007b: 284-285).

¹⁰ The lack of an ID for registration might be one reason that so many San farmworkers are not registered for social security cover.

¹¹ Further complicating the situation is that there are only 56 labour inspectors for all sectors in Namibia (according to the Director of LaRRI), which affects the inspectors' ability to control the implementation of legislation on the farms adequately.



12.4 Living and working conditions of San farmworkers

Many San farmworkers in Namibia are the second, third or even fourth generation of farmworkers in their family, who learned their skills growing up on the farms where their parents and grandparents worked.¹² Their duties generally include erecting fences, herding cattle and small stock, welding, gardening and repairing vehicles. Averill reported that most of her interviewees had ties to the farms on which they worked: they were either born or raised on the farm, or had relatives working there (Averill 2010: 27). Other San farmworkers have been more mobile; some have worked on as many as 10 farms (Sylvain 2002: 1077). Since the outset of the San's history of working on farms, a certain level of itinerancy has prevailed as a coping strategy to counteract insecure working conditions. However, as employment became scarcer on commercial farms, and with the living and working conditions on communal farms proving insufficient to support livelihoods, many San exhibited an increasing degree of mobility as they moved about in search of better employment opportunities or assistance from family members. They usually visited farms where relatives worked, and asked for positions there, but sometimes they received only shelter and food from their kin before moving on, because farmers discouraged extended stays by relatives on the farms – thus usually farmworkers' relatives could stay for only a couple of days before they had to leave. A discussion participant in Epako (informal settlement in Gobabis) said, "Farmers do not allow people to go back and visit their relatives; they tell us [the San] that it is not place for us to come and relax." Some farmworkers live in the corridors between farms.¹³

¹² These could be white-owned commercial farms, Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farms or communal-area farms.

¹³ See also Sylvain 2002: 1078.

Living and working conditions for farmworkers are not homogenous but vary considerably across regions and according to the different farm categories (established commercial farms, emerging commercial farms and communal farms). The general picture that emerged from our research is as follows:

- Established commercial farmers offered the best housing conditions and the highest wages.
- Emerging commercial farmers offered somewhat lower wages and less-favourable material conditions than those offered on established commercial farms.
- Communal farmers offered the lowest wages and the least-favourable material conditions.¹⁴

The Special Advisor to the Omaheke Regional Governor confirmed in an interview that the living and working conditions are far more difficult for San farmworkers on communal farms than on commercial farms, given that communal farmers have far less in the way of financial capital.

The farm categorisation of farm owners outlined above was discussed at all of the sites visited for the research on San farmworkers, and all discussion participants agreed that the commercial farmers offered the best living and working conditions.

"Commercial workers may also treat San workers badly. There are differences among farmers. But generally the commercial farmers are better than communal farmers." - Special Advisor to the Omaheke Regional Governor "Black commercial farmers treat us worse than white farmers. Once a black farmer buys a farm, he dismisses all Hailom employers and brings in his own people." - Discussion participant in Outjo, Kunene Region

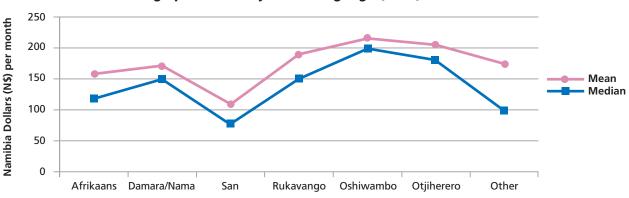
With regard to wages, the data compiled from the discussions suggests that San farmworkers generally still earn less than those from other ethnic groups. There are no recent figures available on differences in wage levels by ethnic group. However, in 1995 the Farmworkers Project of the Legal Assistance Centre collected data on the differences in wages according to ethnic group, and this data showed that the incomes of the San farmworkers were far lower than those of any other ethnic group (Katjiuanjo et al. 1997).

With the introduction of the minimum wage in 2003, this situation should have changed, but our research brought to light a number of individual cases of San farmworkers being paid less than their non-San colleagues. There are various reasons for San earning lower wages than others, but their high dependency on farm employment (due to a lack of alternatives) combined with a lack of knowledge of the relevant laws and their rights as farmworkers, place the San in an extremely weak bargaining position.¹⁵ For example, the NNFU Executive Director reported that San farmworkers

¹⁴ Karamata reports further on disparities in wage levels within the commercial farming areas. The wage ranges for farmworkers were lowest in Omaheke Region and Grootfontein District, and highest in Khomas Region and the Khomas Hochfeld. Karamata attributes the differences across the regions and the similarities within a single region to the fact that farmers influence one another as regards the payments and working/living conditions that they offer to their employees, and also to the fact that "the close proximity of Grootfontein and Gobabis to communal areas contributes to a high supply of farm labour to commercial farms as opposed to Khomas where farm labourers are scarce" (Karamata 2006: 27). Participants in our discussions did not refer to wage differences between regions – probably because they move from place to place within a single region and rarely move to a new region.

¹⁵ Devereux, Katjiuanjo and Van Rooy found that 92% of the San interviewed had not negotiated their terms of employment, with the result that they were paid less and received fewer benefits than the non-San farmworkers (Devereux et al. 1996: 76).

tend to get lower wages than farmworkers from other ethnic groups specifically because they are less informed about their rights as employees. Discussion participants stated that some farmers did not honour the verbal agreements made about payment or food rations: reportedly the farmers would generally agree to pay a worker a certain amount of money, but the amount actually paid would usually be less than the amount promised. Farmworkers from other ethnic groups also tended to have higher wages because farmers assumed that they would work better and harder than the San. This assumption stems from the persistent stereotyping of San as people who are unreliable, addicted to alcohol and physically weaker than other ethnic groups. This perception has not only led to ever-decreasing numbers of San farmworkers being employed, but also it has positioned them low down in the labour hierarchy.¹⁶ More and more, diminishing job opportunities on commercial farms compel the San to seek work in the communal areas, where wages and benefits are generally far less favourable than on commercial farms. The consequence of this combination of factors is that San farmworkers earn lower incomes than other farmworkers in Namibia.



Farmworkers' cash wage per month by home language (1995)

The rations to which farmworkers are entitled by virtue of the minimum wage agreement do not sustain the workers and their families for a full month, thus the farmworkers have to purchase food and other necessities at farm shops, at prices set by the farm owner. This system ties many San to the farmer through a "system of debt-bondage" (Sylvain 2002: 1077). In recent years farm owners have tended to reduce the rations for workers and increase their cash payments, and this has increased the workers' dependency on the purchases which they are forced to make at the farm shops, hence the debt-bondage system has become a widespread problem for San farmworkers.¹⁷ Often it is unclear to the farmworkers how much the different items cost, and how much is deducted from their wages as debt repayment, as their high level of illiteracy makes it difficult for them to monitor the calculations. A discussion participant in the village of Goreseb in Omaheke Region said, "Sometimes he shows me the credit balance in advance [and] sometimes he just tells you what remains." The Special Advisor to the Omaheke Regional Governor stated that although most commercial farmers adhered to the minimum wage, rations and purchases at the farm store would be deducted from the wages owing at the end of the month, often leaving their workers with little money. In Goreseb a discussion participant stressed that indebtedness due to purchases at the farm shop was a challenge that most of the San farmworkers had to grapple with; it left them with only a small percentage of their wages at month end.

Source: Katjiuanjo, Ndauendapo and Shipiki, Legal Assistance Centre, 1997: 6

¹⁶ Suzman reported in 1995 that Ju'|hoan and Damara were still the labourers of choice in Omaheke (Suzman 1995: 21), but this does not appear to be the case today. In our study, San and other interviewees reported that the opportunities for employment on farms have diminished considerably for San over the years. The large influx of San former farmworkers to Omaheke informal settlements is a clear indication of this change in the situation.

¹⁷ Averill describes that almost all interviewees mentioned debt as being an issue (Averill 2010: 29)

Housing of San farmworkers on a commercial farm in Otjozondjupa



"Life on the farm is more difficult because your wage is measured against the food you are eating on the farm and it will be deducted at the end of the month. Nowadays, people do not get free meat or milk. People are even buying firewood which they should collect for free on the farms."

- Discussion participant in Epako, Gobabis, Omaheke Region

Discussion participants' statements regarding the rations provided to them on the farms varied considerably, thus the quote in the box above does not exemplify the situation across the board. Some participants reported that life was actually easier on the farms because the workers received "free meat, milk and wood". The discrepancies in their statements suggests that the ration-distribution situation varied greatly from farm to farm.

Another problem raised by Sylvain (2002), and frequently reported on in the media, is that of San farmworkers being paid by way of alcohol, especially on communal farms. One newspaper quoted Chief Sofia Jakob of the !Xoo TA on this issue (*New Era*, Albertina Nakale, 11 October 2012): "San get booze for work The farmers here [in Omaheke] are paying with alcohol instead of money. They are paid with cheap wine or *tombo* [home-brewed alcohol]." Earlier, in 2010, *New Era* reported that the Omaheke Regional Governor had urged Namibians to stop further marginalising the San through enslavement and rights abuse (*New Era*, Surihe Gaomas, 4 July 2007). The Director of LaRRI noted that this practice originated in the apartheid era, when the so-called "dope system" of compensating workers with alcohol was common: "This happened mostly in times when the employer could not afford to pay the full amount of the salary agreed to."

The Labour Act 11 of 2007 makes provision for farmworkers to keep livestock on the farms where they work, but the regulations are not very specific; they leave it up to the farm owner to either allow the workers to keep livestock or to compensate them with food or allowances (Labour Act 11

of 2007, section 28). The regulations are implemented differently across the farms, depending on the availability of grazing and water as well as the farm owners' willingness to allow their workers to keep either small or large livestock. However, as San farmworkers do not have their own land, those who keep animals on the farm where they work depend on retaining their job to retain their livestock: moving to another farm might cause problems if the new farm owner has a different view about workers keeping livestock. Dieckmann describes a case in Outjo where a Hai||om farmworker had managed to accumulate a considerable number of livestock (donkeys and horses), but faced severe problems when he moved to another farm because the owner demanded grazing fees for the San workers' livestock. This Hai||om farmworker asserted that if he "... had owned a piece of land, [he] would have been able to make a living from them [the livestock]" (Dieckmann 2007a: 282).

It is important to note that farmworkers identify their livestock – specifically large animals such as cattle – as an important safety net: "If you have livestock and they multiply, when you struggle with finances maybe you can sell one cattle and pay for things like school fees and support your household." (Male farmworker, quoted in Averill 2010: 30)

12.5 Access to land

"Another worrying issue in the Omaheke Region and the entire country is the fact that many San workers were being chased away or dumped in nearby towns, especially when they became sick or were unable to work anymore due to old age. This leaves them in a worse predicament as they are dumped without any kind of payment or compensation for their day-to-day survival or medical care." (*New Era*, Surihe Gaomas, 4 July 2007)

San farmworkers are especially vulnerable as they do not a have the right to remain on the farms if they lose their jobs there, hence job loss begets homelessness. The phenomenon of 'landlessness' is widespread among former farmworkers, and is underlined by the fact that all of the participants in our research discussions in Epako, and most participants in the discussions in Otjinene, were former farmworkers. The participants in Epako listed various reasons for leaving the farms where they had worked and settling in Epako, such as farmers evicting them from the farm because they were too old or very sick (e.g. with TB), or because they had suffered major injuries.¹⁸ The younger participants had simply followed their parents to Epako.

The CEO of the Gobabis Town Council reported as follows in our interview with him:

"They [San living in the informal settlements in Gobabis] are coming from the surrounding farms; they were former farmworkers. The older these people get, the farm owners do not want them anymore, they are just dumped. They [farmworkers] feel it is better in Gobabis; there they are at least being allocated land they can call their own and they can construct their own facilities. So you find people who are open to come to town to also make use of hospitals and shops. It is also a possibility to get something through whatever means, whether it is begging on the streets."

He stressed that the influx of farmworkers from the rural areas to Gobabis had been accelerating over the past few years, and the informal settlements had been growing rapidly. This growth now poses enormous challenges for the Gobabis Municipality. Urban authorities and service providers

¹⁸ One respondent reported that he was expelled from the farm after a workplace accident that caused major injuries to his leg. The informant was born and raised on the farm and had always worked there. His children were still working on the farm, but he was not allowed to visit them.

consider the influx of elderly people – who had to leave the farms due to their age – to be a serious problem. Certain informal settlements are growing so fast due to the influx of farmworkers that the authorities and service providers cannot provide the necessary services to the newcomers. Many former farmworkers have moved onto resettlement farms instead. Those who have worked a lifetime under someone else's authority consider these farms to be 'safe havens'. However, relatively accessible resettlement projects such as Drimiopsis (quite close to Gobabis) have been suffering from the substantial influx of former farmworkers – so much so that the sustainability of such projects might be at risk.¹⁹

12.6 Conclusions

This chapter has clearly illustrated that more up-to-date data is needed to fully understand the current livelihoods of San farmworkers. In particular, data and analyses of their living and working conditions on communal farms are gravely lacking, even as employment on these farms has been gaining in importance as a survival strategy for San due to diminishing employment opportunities on commercial farms. Working on communal farms often fails to provide sufficiently for these farmworkers, with the result that many decide to migrate to peri-urban areas. The influx into these areas happens fast and in an unregulated manner, and the municipalities concerned are confronted with enormous challenges such as providing housing, sanitation, schools and other basic services for their rapidly growing populations. Meeting the accommodation needs of a growing population of homeless elderly people is one significant challenge that these municipalities face. Concerted strategies and efforts will be needed to make better provision for former farmworkers in peri-urban areas.

The high level of vulnerability of San farmworkers stems from their failure to secure legal rights to a decent place to live, and their lack of alternative income-generating opportunities – root causes that render them prone to exploitation and lead to extreme poverty. This situation has worsened in the last two decades as more and more farmworkers have been retrenched or otherwise have retired from the farms where they worked, losing their homes as a result. Access to housing is especially important for San farmworkers because they cannot normally seek refuge on farms where their relatives work if they lose their jobs. Instead they end up either living in peri-urban informal housing or overpopulating group resettlement farms (e.g. Drimiopsis, Donkerbos-Sonneblom and Skoonheid), hence the municipal services provided in the peri-urban settlements are no longer adequate, and the farms are not able to sustain their inhabitants.

The introduction of the minimum wage has had unintended and unfortunate consequences for certain groups of workers, and the San farmworkers have been the group most negatively affected. The minimum wage agreement has to be revisited, taking regional differences into account, but also differences between the various farm categories. A thorough implementation strategy will then have to include enforcement policies and an adequate evaluation and monitoring plan. Efforts to bring knowledge of the provisions of the labour laws and the minimum wage agreement to the various interest groups have to be intensified. This applies not only to farmworkers, but also to farm owners and labour inspectors. Procedures have to be transparent and applied consistently to overcome deep-rooted mistrust. A holistic approach is needed, i.e. one that addresses questions of decent housing and alternative income-generating opportunities, with more attention paid to the development of peri-urban areas, which should be able to offer adequate legal rights to housing, local income-generating opportunities, and access to services, not least education.

¹⁹ San interviewed at Farm Uitkoms in Omaheke reported that the initial plan was to resettle 300 people on this farm, but in 2012 around 700 people were living there, a high number of whom had come from the surrounding farms.

Part III National Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

Photo: Ms Sofia, a Ju'|hoan woman in Skoonheid, Omaheke Region (Photo by Velina Ninkova)

Cultural performance at the official handover of cattle by the Namibian-German Special Initiative Project (NGSIP), Skoonheid Resettlement Project, Omaheke Region, May 2009

Chapter 13 Access to Land

By Ute Dieckmann and Erik Dirkx



13.1 Introduction

The ancestors of contemporary San in Namibia were once the sole occupants of much of the land which is now Namibia. Today, landlessness is one of the major challenges for them in respect of poverty, marginalisation, identity, and last but not least, cultural persistence. Land use and culture are closely interlinked. Culture manifests itself in many forms, one of which is the particular way of life that is associated with land and the use of the natural resources to be found on that land. San cultures – formerly based on acquiring food and other resources through hunting and gathering – are closely linked to access to (ancestral) land and the use of its animals and plants. In the course of our research it became evident that those San who are still living on their ancestral land (e.g. the

Ju|'hoansi in the Nyae Nyae Conservancy and the Khwe in the Bwabwata National Park (BNP)¹) have a much stronger sense of identity and culture than the San groups living on land occupied by people from other ethnic groups or on land where traditional livelihood activities are no longer possible (e.g. resettlement projects).

Due to their history of land dispossession and the wholly inadequate response to dealing with the issues that arose from this dispossession (see below), the majority of San communities are at risk of becoming an underclass – or indeed have already become an underclass, e.g. in areas where San communities have little or no control over and/or access to land and are used by other ethnic groups as workers in return for payment in kind, or even alcohol. To a certain degree, assimilation of the San into neighbouring cultures has already taken place in some areas, e.g. in Omusati Region (see Chapter 8), but even so, the San remain an underclass within the cultures which are absorbing them, thus they are easy to exploit. This is because the San have not been *fully* integrated into the cultures of their neighbours, i.e. to the extent that they are allowed equal access to (customary) rights and resources (e.g. land). When addressing the issue of land and Namibian San communities, the connection between culture and access to land, and the importance of land in overcoming their current marginalisation, clearly have to be considered.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) reported as follows in its *Report* of the African Commission's Working Groups of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities: *Mission to the Republic of Namibia, 26 July – 5 August 2005*:

"Through land dispossession San communities have lost their food security; they have become economically dependent on other ethnic groups and government food aid, they have experienced a loss of dignity, disruption of their social fabric, and degradation of their environment by intruders with large cattle herds; and, in sum, they remain a marginalized population." (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 113)

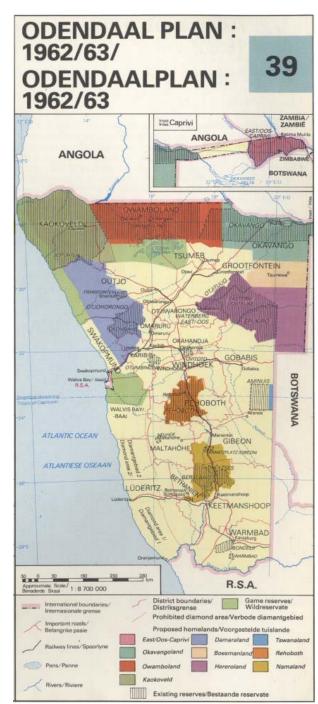
This statement encapsulates the consequences of land dispossession well: land dispossession was one of the main factors that contributed to the marginalisation (socially, culturally, economically and politically) of San communities during the colonial period. Many other ethnic groups – such as the Herero, Nama and Damara peoples – suffered the same fate and could not stay on the land on which they had lived prior to colonisation; but unlike the majority of San, these (and other) ethnic groups were granted 'homelands' following the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission (South Africa 1964).² With the exception of the remote and semi-desert area that comprised the homeland of Bushmanland, which was part of the area traditionally occupied by Ju|'hoansi, San were then left without any land of their own, and were pushed to the margins of their traditional territories. After Independence in 1990, the homelands were turned into communal land, i.e. areas now administered under the **Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002**, but the marginalised status of the overwhelming majority of the San has remained unchanged.³

¹ The few !Xun living in the BNP moved to the area because of the war for Namibia's independence (see Chapter 10, section 10.2.2).

² Prior to colonisation, land was not clearly divided up between ethnic groups, and land was used flexibly by members of overlapping communities. The German – and later the South African – colonial administration created reserves for specific ethnic groups in every principal farming district. These reserves provided a labour source for white settlers, but they were too small to accommodate an entire population. With the implementation of the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission, the number of existing native reserves was reduced and the overall size of those that remained was increased (Dieckmann 2007b: 124, 176).

³ In this context it should be noted that the San groups living in the communal areas of Ohangwena, Omusati, Kavango and Caprivi do not have a recognised separate Traditional Authority (TA); each of these San groups falls under the TA of a neighbouring ethnic group.

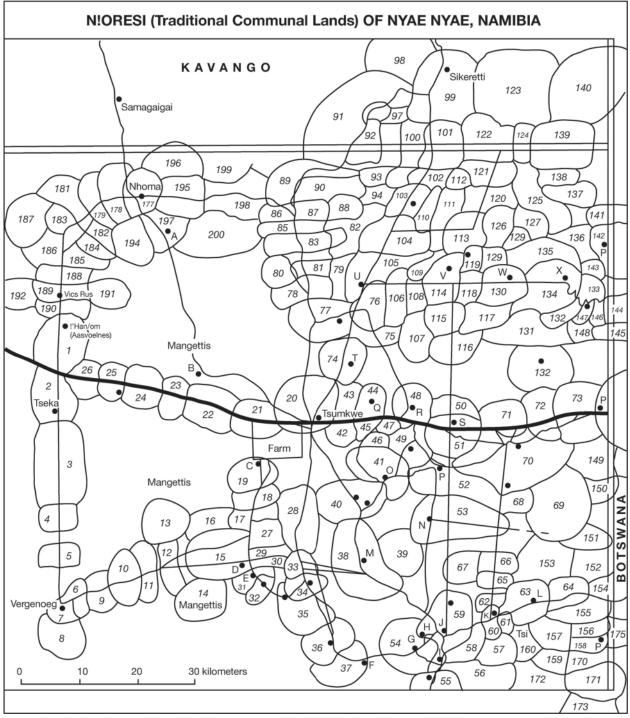
One of the factors that led to the large-scale land dispossession of the San during the precolonial and colonial eras was the erroneous belief that the San, due to their mobile lifestyle, never 'owned' land per se. Although it is true that the various San groups did not embrace the concept of private land ownership, they did have customary land rights, which regulated access to land and its resources. Due to their subsistence strategies - predominantly hunting and gathering – they needed large territories in order to access the resources necessary for their livelihoods, the availability of which would depend on the environmental circumstances in an area in any given season or year. Extended families formed co-residential units, led by a headman, usually occupying and 'owning' a specific territory (*n*!ore), and generally made up of a core of consanguineous kin (siblings and their parents) (Guenther 1999: 25). A headman - which the Jul'hoansi, for example, called the *nlore kxao* – oversaw the management and use of resources. The *n*!ore sizes varied according to the types and amounts of natural resources present, and these had to be sufficient to meet the needs of a group in an average year. In the Nyae Nyae area, for example, the original size of a *n*!ore was about 200 km² (Hitchcock 2013), and mobility depended on the seasonal availability of natural resources (game and veldfood). There was some aggregation and dispersal between different family units - again in tune with the seasons - and other San groups could usually enter and utilise the resources in the *n*!oresi (plural) claimed by other families, provided that the headman of the area granted permission. Guenther summarised the strategy as follows: "[It] is a rule that makes ecological sense, given



Source: J.H. Van der Merwe (ed.), National Atlas of South West Africa (Namibia), 1983.

the unevenness and unpredictability in the distribution of resources over space and time, and the consequent need for a flexible territorial 'policy'." (Guenther 1999: 26)

So, even though there were established and clear rules and customary land rights which were accepted and followed within San communities in the past, outsiders ignored these San land-use patterns and tenure systems because they were completely different from those of pastoralists and agriculturalists, and furthermore, the San's environmental footprint was far less evident than those of pastoralists and agriculturalists. Consequently, the San were perceived as nomadic (i.e. as having no territorial claims). These factors, combined with the lack of overall San leadership, resulted in weak resistance to encroachers (see further on), namely the Bantu-speaking groups in the pre-colonial era, and later the white settlers.



Source: Biesele and Hitchcock 2011

As a consequence, the land used and owned by San groups in the past was summarily taken over, and this process continues unabated today as other ethnic groups come to occupy land which the San have been using traditionally for eons. The impacts of this land dispossession are manifold: economic dependency; loss of food security; social and cultural breakdown and alienation; inability to cultivate; withdrawal into marginal zones; high mobility; and, in some cases, inability to accumulate wealth in the form of livestock capital (Suzman 2001b: 83).

Following Independence and the **National Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question** in 1991 – which served as an initial platform for developing the land reform programme, policies and legislation – the Namibian Government took measures to redistribute the country's land and facilitate land reform, beginning with the establishment of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR) (later renamed as the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR)). Other key measures include the **Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act 6 of 1995**, the **National Resettlement Policy** (MLRR 2001) and the **Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002**. The San are among the targeted beneficiary groups of the National Resettlement Policy of 2001.

The government has made some attempts to address the landlessness of the San, but these have not made a fundamental difference to their situation (as the next few sections of this chapter will make clear), hence the need for land remains a critical issue for most of the San communities in Namibia. Worse still, to date the government has failed to protect those San who do have de factor land rights from encroachment by other ethnic groups – e.g. in the Mangetti Block (i.e. Farm Six) and Tsintsabis in Oshikoto Region; at the Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Project in Omaheke Region; at Ekoka Resettlement Project in Ohangwena Region; in the Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies in Otjozondjupa Region; and in the BNP (i.e. West Caprivi) (see the respective regional chapters). Government-established San resettlement projects have also largely failed to provide San with secure land tenure, and the opportunities to develop sustainable livelihoods in these projects are few (see further on).

It is important to note that currently San people's access to land varies considerably from region to region and between different land tenure systems. The next few sections of this chapter provide meaningful data on San people's access to land in different land tenure systems in Namibia. This detailed information will facilitate comprehension of the recommendations put forward at the end of this chapter.

13.2 San in different tenure systems

13.2.1 San on the commercial or communal farms of other people

San who live and work on commercial farms have no rights to such land at all, and although there is no freehold title over communal land anywhere in Namibia, San working for communal farmers generally have no secure user rights over this land either. Therefore, San whose farm employment ceases – due to dismissal, retrenchment, retirement or own choice – have no land to call their own, and usually end up in informal settlements in towns in the vicinity, or with family on resettlement projects (many of which are already overpopulated). There is no quantitative data available on the mobility of farmworkers (San and other) in Namibia, but there are indications that this has increased over the last two decades, seemingly due to provisions of the **Labour Act 6 of 1992**⁴ and the introduction of the **minimum wage** for farmworkers in 2009:⁵ reportedly these have meant that many farmers can no longer afford the costs of keeping extended families on their farms, allowing retired farmworkers to stay on the farms for the rest of their lives, and employing the farmworkers' children. Thus many farmworkers are forced to move from farm to farm to find casual work.

A comprehensive study on the impact of the Namibian land reform programme on farmworkers (including the San) is still awaited – and is very necessary – however it is evident that different components of the programme are not sufficiently aligned with one another or are contradictory.

⁴ This initial Labour Act was repealed by Labour Act 15 of 2004, which was repealed by Labour Act 11 of 2007.

⁵ The minimum wage was introduced by way of the "Declaration of Extension of Collective Agreement: Agricultural Industry: Labour Act, 2007" (Government Notice, *Government Gazette* No. 4390, 14 December 2009).

Section 20(6) of the **Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act 6 of 1995**, for example, provides that if the minister decides to expropriate any agricultural land, then the Land Reform Advisory Commission –

"[should] consider the interests of any persons employed and lawfully residing on such land, and the families of such persons residing with them, and may make such recommendation to the Minister in relation to such employees and their families as it may consider fair and equitable in the circumstances." (MLRR 2001a)

On the other hand, the **National Resettlement Policy of 2001** (MLRR 2001) does not include farmworkers in the list of specific target groups for resettlement.⁶ The redistribution of commercial farms to previously disadvantaged Namibians under either the National Resettlement Policy or the **Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS)** has had a serious impact on former farmworkers: given that resettlement and AALS beneficiaries usually have fewer economic resources than the previous (overwhelmingly white) owners of commercial farms, there is reason to believe that the redistribution of commercial farms has led to the dismissal of many farmworkers. According to San participants in our research discussions (and other reports), AALS farmers and resettlement beneficiaries prefer to get family members to work on their farms rather than employ San farmworkers, because they cannot afford to comply with the minimum wage agreement and/or the Labour Act. This situation requires further investigation, and it is very likely that action will have to be taken to deal with negative impacts of the land reform programme on farmworkers.

13.2.2 San in urban informal settlements

Most of the San in urban areas have no tenure security, and are living in informal settlements where residents (San and other) are regularly threatened with eviction – an example being Makaravan in Katima Mulilo (see Chapter 11 on Caprivi Region). Due to the urgent need to address the tenure security of impoverished households in urban areas, the **Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS)** was developed as a framework for addressing the basic land needs of the poorest section of the urban population, by means of flexible land titles through which security of tenure can be formalised in an administratively straightforward and cost-effective manner. Because the FLTS targets residents of informal settlements, survey standards have had to be simplified to reduce the financial burden of informal settlers. Various drafts of the **Flexible Land Tenure Bill** were circulated as from the end of the 1990s, and the final draft was completed in 2004. The **Flexible Land Tenure Act 4 of 2012** was promulgated on 14 May 2012, but has yet to be enforced as its regulations are not yet in place,⁷ thus it remains to be seen whether this Act can indeed improve the tenure security of San in urban settlements.⁸ However, even if the San achieve more tenure security for their respective *erven*⁹ in urban areas in the long term, urban erven are usually too small to allow for small-scale gardening,

⁶ It is noteworthy that an earlier version of the resettlement policy (MLRR 1997) did include farmworkers in the list of beneficiaries.

⁷ More details can be found in Odendaal 2013.

⁸ Legislation alone will not suffice to achieve the objectives of this Act, which are: "(a) to create alternative forms of land title that are simpler and cheaper to administer than existing forms of land title; (b) to provide security of title for persons who live in informal settlements or who are provided with low income housing; (c) to empower the persons concerned economically by means of these rights" (Flexible Land Tenure Act 4 of 2012). Stronger political will to support the system is needed, and in addition, the various local authorities (such as town councils) would need substantial technical support to implement the system successfully. Finance to cover the initial startup costs of the system would also be crucial (Odendaal, personal communication, 7 October 2013).

⁹ *Erven* is the plural of *erf*, the Afrikaans word for 'plot', 'stand', 'allotment', 'yard' or 'premises' that is commonly used in Namibian policies, legislation and legal documents.

let alone animal husbandry. In any case, keeping livestock in urban settings is illegal, and irrigating gardens – even very small ones – with water from pre-paid metres may well be too expensive for poor urban residents. Hence the livelihood strategies of San residents in urban areas would remain limited to piecework and some (scarce) formal employment opportunities.

13.2.3 San in communal areas where the majority of residents belong to other ethnic groups

There are many San communities living on communal land where the majority of residents are from other ethnic groups, e.g. in Caprivi, Kavango, Omaheke, Ohangwena and Omusati Regions. San were the original occupants (i.e. in former times) of most if not all of the applicable land, but today this land falls under the traditional authorities (TAs) of other ethnic groups. Consequently, many San in these areas regard themselves as the first occupants of the land and the other ethnic groups as new (and often unwelcome) settlers. The aforementioned *Report of the African Commission's Working Groups of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities: Mission to the Republic of Namibia, 26 July – 5 August 2005* stated the following:

"Apart from dispossession, the San are very concerned about the activities of other ethnic groups on what they consider their ancestral land. The San are concerned by the massive influx of commercial farmers, in most cases cattle farmers, into territories on which the San depend for their meager livelihood. The pattern of other groups' livestock using San water sources, leaving insufficient amounts for game which consequently leave the area, destroying and diminishing the bushfoods on which San depend, and thereby creating total dependency on the intruders themselves, is all too well known to the San, who find themselves at a loss to prevent it recurring." (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 113)

In **Omusati Region**, the San participants in our research discussions reported that they had access to communal land like all other people in the region, and most of them actually had access to land for crop farming and building homesteads. Many of them had registered their land rights with the land board, but a few reported that they could not afford to pay the headman the N\$600 required for the land, therefore these people remained landless.¹⁰ Other landless San had not requested land because they lacked the necessary agricultural equipment and livestock to make proper use of it.

In **Ohangwena Region**, the San were living: (a) in group resettlement projects; (b) in schemes that serve as housing centres for San specifically; (c) on community forest/conservancy land; or (d) on communal land which village headmen allocated to them for building either group or individual homesteads. The San living in resettlement projects were confident that the land on which they were living was theirs, i.e. that they had full ownership of it. However, none of them could provide written documentation to this effect, and without such documentation, the resettled San farmers had no legal authority to claim the land, nor could they prohibit others from moving onto it. Concerns were raised that Kwanyama people were slowly moving onto the land allocated by the MLR to some San resettlement projects (e.g. Ekoka Resettlement Project).

In **Caprivi Region**, the Khwe participants in our research discussions said that the Khwe residents of the rural areas of Caprivi (outside the BNP) did not perceive security of land as a problem. The Mafwe TA had allocated the land to the Khwe specifically, hence the Khwe were of the opinion that other groups would not try to take over that land.

¹⁰ In Omusati, N\$600 is the amount paid to headmen 'by custom', despite this contravening the Communal Land Reform Act which requires only a N\$25 application fee and then a N\$50 fee for the certificate if the application is granted (LEAD (LAC) and NNFU Advocacy Unit 2009: 53).

In **Kavango Region** and **eastern Ohangwena Region**, the development of small-scale farms was an unresolved issue: land occupied by the San had been incorporated into small-scale farms allocated by the TA in each area, and this had led to conflicts between the incoming small-scale farmers and the San, although many of the new farm 'owners' had not yet applied to the relevant communal land board for a lease.

In **Oshikoto Region**, the situation of the Hai||om on Farm Six in the Mangetti Block needs urgent attention, beginning with their *legal* situation, which appears to be unique. This government-owned farm is leased to the Namibia Development Corporation (NDC), a parastatal, but recently the government allocated huge portions of the farm to Owambo people for cattle grazing, purportedly on a temporary basis only. Despite this 'temporary' allocation, the allocated portions were fenced off, and the fencing has restricted the San's access to veldfood, with dramatic consequences for their food security (see Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions). It remains to be seen whether land for the Owambo will be found elsewhere so that eventually they can be moved out of the Mangetti Block.

In **Omaheke Region**, the San population in the communal area (formerly Hereroland) increased significantly in the 1990s due to the dismissal of commercial farmworkers (Suzman 2001b: 35). Today the San in this area share the land with non-San farmers, who, as elsewhere in Namibia, are more powerful than the San and have better access to resources – above all livestock. Our research has confirmed that the San here do not have any formal arrangements with their neighbours as to land use and rights. Part of this communal area was traditionally Ju|'hoan land before it was declared a homeland for the Herero people – e.g. the area around Eiseb was originally Ju|'hoan land and the Herero arrived there with their cattle during the last few decades. Reportedly the Herero influx depleted veldfood, a major source of food for the Ju|'hoansi previously, and also a source of construction materials and firewood (Pratchett et al. 2012: 9). The San in this communal area also face the challenge that land which they use for gathering veldfood and/or grazing their livestock has increasingly been fenced off illegally – as reported at Goreseb during our field research.

The **Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002** was passed in 2002. The prior absence of any constitutional recognition of customary land tenure rights in communal areas meant that communal farmers and TAs had no statutory remedy in law to defend their rights. Now, by virtue of this Act, the TA of a particular community has the primary power to allocate any customary land right. In respect of communal land, a customary land right can be allocated for a farming unit, a residential unit, or "any other form of customary tenure that may be recognised and described by the Minister by notice in the Gazette for the purposes of this Act,"¹¹ but the size of any land parcel allocated may not exceed 20 ha (Regulation 3 of the Act). The application for a customary land right must be made in writing on the prescribed form, which must then be submitted to the chief of the traditional community within whose communal area the land in question is situated. If the application is approved, the relevant communal land board has to ratify the chief's decision and ensure that the right is registered in the name of the applicant in the correct register.¹²

As noted previously in this chapter and the relevant regional chapters herein, San participants in our FGDs in Omusati, Ohangwena, Kavango and Caprivi Regions felt that their land rights were secure because they were living on land which the applicable TAs had allocated to them. However,

¹¹ Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, section 21. At the moment only the rights to a farming unit and residential unit are recognised customary land rights.

¹² For comprehensive information on the provisions of the Act, see *Guide to the Communal Land Reform Act, 2002* (*No. 5 of 2002*) (*Second Edition*), LEAD Project (LAC) and NNFU Advocacy Unit, 2009.

in view of the official process that applicants for customary land rights must follow, and the need for literacy or assistance to fill in the prescribed form, it is doubtful that high numbers of San in these regions have formally applied for or registered customary land rights. Only in Omusati did FGD participants mention that their customary land rights had been registered with the communal land board. It should also be noted that the Act forbids payments by applicants to the headman or chief, as this could constitute bribery.¹³ Section 42(2) of the Act allows for charging prescribed fees for applications and the issuing of licences and other documents, but all such payments must be administered by the communal land board.¹⁴

All told, the *de jure* land rights of most San communities in communal areas in various regions are not as secure as the FGD participants perceived them to be.¹⁵ Furthermore, the fact that no more than 20 ha can be allocated to an individual (without the minister's additional approval)¹⁶ means that the Act fails to take into consideration the former land-use practices of the San, including the practice of managing the land collectively. The group rights initiative described in Box 13.1 (page 455) might be a promising step towards addressing this issue.

Illegal fencing is further exacerbating the tenuous situation of the San living on communal land. A number of powerful individuals (e.g. civil servants, political figures and businesspeople) have ignored customary land tenure rights by fencing off large tracts of communal land, to the detriment of subsistence communal farmers and other residents who use the natural resources on that land. Many of those who have fenced off land unlawfully have claimed that the relevant TAs authorised this action. Section 17(1) of the Communal Land Reform Act stipulates that "all communal land areas vest in the State in trust for the benefit of the traditional communities residing in those areas ... in particular the landless and those with insufficient access to land who are not in formal employment or engaged in non-agriculture business activities," and section 17(2) provides that no right of freehold ownership may be granted to any person in respect of communal land. The core principle is that individuals who wish to farm commercially – and thus require large tracts of land – should do so within the *commercial* farming areas, not the communal farming areas.¹⁷ This principle reflects the concept of a communal land 'safety net' for the poor and those who cannot find employment in the formal sector. For many years there seemed to be a lack of political will to take the necessary legal action to remove illegal fences, but in 2012, the MLR began to develop "Fencing Guidelines",¹⁸ and started instructing the communal land boards to remove illegal fences. In 2013, communal land boards have used their power to remove illegal fences in Ohangwena Region and Tsumkwe West, and it is anticipated that if some fences are forcibly removed (in accordance with the Act), then more people will voluntarily remove their illegal fences, and others will be deterred from erecting illegal fences in the first place, effectively halting the rapid increase in illegal fencing that has taken place in recent years.

¹³ See LEAD and NNFU 2009, p. 53, for an example of bribery.

¹⁴ See LEAD and NNFU 2009, p. 53, for examples of payments allowed.

¹⁵ The registration of customary land rights with the communal land boards in the communal areas of northern Namibia is underway, and the deadline for this registration is February 2014 (*The Namibian*, W. Menges, 20 November 2013). Many many members of other ethnic groups have also not registered their customary land rights as yet.

¹⁶ As set down in section 23 of the Act, "Limitation on size of land that may be held under customary land rights", and Regulation 3.

¹⁷ Alternatively, individuals who wish to farm commercially can apply for leasehold for the purpose of commercial livestock farming (Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, section 31, "Application for right of leasehold"), but again this requires the minister's written approval. (See LEAD and NNFU 2009, p. 36, for a fuller explanation of section 31 of the Act).

¹⁸ The "Fencing Guidelines" are the MLR's advice on the practical steps to be taken in implementing the provisions of the CLRA in relation to fencing and the removal of illegal fences.

13.2.4 San in national parks

Three San communities currently live in national parks, i.e. the Hai||om in Etosha National Park and the Khwe and !Xun in the BNP (see Chapters 6 and 10 respectively). Their situations differ considerably, but they have one critical feature in common: none of them have *de jure* land rights.

Bwabwata National Park (BNP)

Less than a decade ago, the Khwe and !Xun living in what was then the Caprivi Game Park in West Caprivi had no formal rights whatsoever. Gradually – with the support of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)¹⁹ – these groups have successfully negotiated a number of rights to benefit from resources in what is now the BNP.²⁰ The establishment of the Kyaramacan Association (KA), formally recognised by government in 2006 as a community-based organisation representing the interests of the residents of the BNP, was crucial in this regard.²¹

Despite the considerable improvement of the living conditions of the Khwe and !Xun in the BNP, living in a national park also has disadvantages. The livelihood options available to these particular groups are extremely limited compared to those of San living in other parts of northern Namibia. The status of national park poses several constraints: human-wildlife conflict and the destruction of crops by wildlife; restrictions on animal husbandry; and restrictions with regard to settlement options and the development of new infrastructure (which the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) discourages). Furthermore, in the BNP, land with the most agricultural potential (along the rivers) has been designated as a core conservation area, hence there are even stricter restrictions on its access and use. The recent creation of development options linked to wildlife use and tourism (supervised and coordinated by the MET) might improve livelihood options for some residents, but will not eradicate poverty within the park; other initiatives will be required to support the relatively high number of residents who are unable to derive a secure livelihood from these activities. The gardening initiatives introduced by various governmental bodies and NGOs have not proved very successful to date (see Chapter 10), and the KA is currently exploring more sustainable options. Undoubtedly, better prior consultation with the residents is needed, and the focus must shift from community projects which are entirely collective to individual garden plots, or alternatively a creative combination of collective and individual gardens, so that operational costs of the individual plots can be covered by revenue generated through collective initiatives which are managed by a local committee with the support of an NGO.²² Residents must also be provided with alternative means of ploughing, since the cattle that would otherwise be used as draught animals are not allowed in the BNP east of the veterinary fence (sometimes referred to as the Buffalo Veterinary Fence) that separates the Buffalo Core Area from the Multiple Use Area. The testing of conservation tillage (to be piloted in Mashambo) might also point the way forward.

¹⁹ See Chapter 10 on Bwabwata National Park, particularly "NGO support", page 395.

²⁰ The Caprivi Game Park was re-proclaimed as the Bwabwata National Park in 2007.

²¹ Since there are only around 150 !Xun living in the park (see Chapter 10, section 10.2.2, page 368), and since they felt that they were not adequately represented by the KA, the !Xun role in the negotiations for rights was presumably rather limited.

²² This recommendation is partially based on two experiences:

[•] the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) and Habitafrica Foundation experience of partitioning the collective gardens in resettlement projects in Omaheke Region in 2009, which proved to increase the yields of these gardens; and

[•] the Komeho Namibia experience in Bravo Resettlement Project in Kavango Region, where individual crop fields (i.e. fields allocated to and managed by individual households) were combined with a collective/communal crop cultivation project, whereby a portion of the proceeds of the collective project was used to cover the costs of inputs needed for both the collective field and the individual fields.

One of the next steps to be taken is KA negotiation with the MET for the KA to retain 100% of the income from trophy hunting, rather than just 50% as is currently the case, to enable the KA to invest in projects to increase household-level benefits and livelihood opportunities for the park residents, as well as to pay compensation for any financial losses due to human-wildlife conflict (Nuulimba 2012: 8). Furthermore, the MET and the park residents should work on a joint vision for the park's development (see the recommendations at the end of this chapter).

In addition, more effective monitoring of the influx of outsiders and their livestock into the park area is needed, and action is needed to prevent further movement of livestock, particularly east of the Buffalo Veterinary Fence. Apart from the veterinary implications, the failure to take measures to address the (reported) movement of Mbukushu cattle into the area east of the veterinary fence, particularly around Omega I, has naturally inflamed the Khwe, who were forced to divest themselves of their own cattle to comply with veterinary regulations (see Chapter 10). The official recognition of a Khwe (or Khwe and !Xun) TA would be a step towards addressing this problem.

Etosha National Park

The situation of the Hai||om living in the Etosha National Park is entirely different to that of the Khwe and !Xun in the BNP, for several reasons.

Etosha, which was proclaimed as a national park in the late 1960s, has a much longer and more straightforward history as a game reserve. There was much more political interest in establishing, promoting and conserving the Etosha area as a wildlife sanctuary with high tourism potential than was the case with the area that is now the BNP. Whereas the Khwe in West Caprivi remained in their former settlements within the park area until the South African Defence Force (SADF) declared it a military zone in the early 1970s, the Hai||om were prevented from living in their former settlements within the Etosha Game Reserve as from 1954 – the official justification for their removal being their unsustainable hunting of game (Dieckmann 2007b: 191). Officially, only those with jobs in the park (and their families) were allowed to stay in Etosha, hence many Hai||om residents were forced to become farmworkers on the surrounding commercial farms, which greatly limited their access to the natural resources on which they had always depended. Although hunting and gathering was still possible on the farms, their main livelihood option – in terms of both income and the sourcing of food – became farmwork. However, there was no lack of labour in the park initially, hence a number of Hai||om remained or returned to the park for employment.

Reportedly, before Independence in 1990 the Hai||om did not encounter any problems with getting formal employment in Etosha: women were employed as domestic workers for game wardens and police officers stationed there, or as cleaners in the restcamps, and men were employed in road construction or as cleaners, mechanics and assistants to game wardens or rangers, helping to build up and maintain the park infrastructure. According to participants in our FGDs (and respondents in previous studies), this employment situation gradually changed after Independence, and today, the children of the former Hai||om employees face increasing problems in getting employment in the park (Dieckmann 2007b: 199-200, 275). As reported in Chapter 10, the government has purchased resettlement farms in the Etosha area (south and more recently east of the park) on which to resettle the unemployed and retired Hai||om, but the livelihood options on these farms are minimal to date (Lawry et al. 2012). The policy of allowing only employees to reside in the park itself, coupled with the fact that incomers from other ethnic groups now tend to get the available jobs, implies that the Hai||om in Etosha face the threat of losing their residential rights on their ancestral land. Furthermore, the Hai||om outside the park and most other San communities in Namibia,

formal employment within the park is much more lucrative than life on a resettlement farm, thus the Etosha Hai||om on the whole now face the risk of becoming another impoverished San group, eking out a living on resettlement farms.

13.2.5 San on MLR group resettlement projects

The only way that the San have benefited from Namibia's (commercial) land reform programme to date has been in terms of the National Resettlement Policy (MLRR 2001a). (The San do not qualify for the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) – which is another component of redistributive land reform – as they do not have the means necessary to farm commercially.)²³ Most San beneficiaries of the national resettlement programme have been resettled on group resettlement farms. Some were placed by the MLR on the original resettlement farms in the 1990s, and others were moved from various places (e.g. Etosha) to resettlement farms that the MLR acquired relatively recently for the specific purpose of San resettlement – as requested by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Hardly any San individuals have been allocated a farm under the Farm Unit Resettlement Scheme (FURS), the favoured MLR resettlement approach.²⁴ The ACHPR found the following during its mission to Namibia in 2005:

"The process of applying for resettlement also often bypasses the San, one reason being that most San in Namibia live in remote areas and are not made aware of the resettlement projects planned in their areas until it is too late to apply, another reason being that many are illiterate and unable to submit a written application." (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 112)

By 2010, at least 55 group resettlement projects had been set up under the auspices of the MLR, and at least 23 of these have considerable numbers of San beneficiaries (see Table 13.1).

Six resettlement projects were research sites for this San Study: Omega I, Skoonheid, Blouberg, Tsintsabis, Mangetti Dune (i.e. N‡a Jaqna) and Ekoka. The situation at each of these sites is discussed in the applicable regional chapters herein. However, as the government is tackling San landlessness via group resettlement, it is worth presenting here some of the findings conveyed in the *Report on the Review of Post-Resettlement Support to Group Resettlement Projects/Farms 1991-2009* (GRN 2010).

For **Western Caprivi Project** (which is now the BNP), the review found that most of the resettled farmers (most being Khwe) had seen only a slight improvement in their standard of living. Poverty was still prevalent, especially among the San community, and the majority of San relied heavily on irregular supplies of drought relief food. Furthermore, the destruction of crops by wild animals was found to be a major concern, and food security was still threatened. (GRN 2010: 17)

Bravo Resettlement Project, situated 100 km north of Tsumeb, accommodated around 500 people at the time of the GRN review, mostly San. Komeho Namibia was the implementing agency. The review found good coordination and a strong spirit of teamwork among the beneficiaries. It was mentioned that food and income security seemed to have improved, with beneficiaries engaged in different activities such as bread baking, jam production, dry-crop cultivation, vegetable gardening and sewing. However, the review also found that water problems hampered development, housing

²³ The AALS, established in 1992, provides subsidised loans to previously disadvantaged Namibians to enable them to acquire large-scale commercial farms under freehold title (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 3).

²⁴ This approach entails purchasing large-scale commercial farms and subdividing them into units for allocation to individual beneficiaries in accordance with plans developed by land-use planners in the MLR (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 25).

was a challenge, and there was a serious shortage of basic facilities (e.g. a clinic and shops). The primary school was incomplete, and so was catering only for Grades 1-4; after finishing Grade 4, the children simply stayed at home. Furthermore, due to the area's remoteness, the maintenance of project equipment presented a major challenge. (GRN 2010: 21-22)

For Mangetti Dune Resettlement Project

(i.e. N‡a Jaqna Conservancy), the main challenges to food security were due to a lack of farming implements and supplies (tractors, animal-drawn ploughs, fences, seeds etc.) necessary to plough and plant the crop fields of all 25 villages in time to achieve satisfactory yields. Also, a lack of coordination between the project members was reportedly hindering progress. (GRN 2010: 24-25)

Queen Sofia Resettlement Project, 70 km north-east of Outjo, is made up of five commercial farms donated by a businessman in 1995 for resettlement. Fifty families (±430 people) were resettled there in 2000. The project received strong support from the MLR, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), but the GRN post-settlement review findings were far from positive:

Table 13.1: Group resettlement projects with high numbers of San beneficiaries (Adapted from GRN 2010: 12-13)

Region	Resettlement Project	Year established
Omaheke	Blouberg	1983*
	Donkerbos-Sonneblom	1995
	Drimiopsis	1993
	Skoonheid	1993
	Vergenoeg	1983*
	Tsjaka/Ben Hur	1983*
Ohangwena	Ekoka	1996
	Onamatadiva	1996
	Eendobe	1996
	Oshanashiwa	2006
Oshikoto	Excelsior	1998
	Oerwoud	1992
	Tsintsabis	1990
Kunene	Kleinhuis	1985
	Namatanga	1994
	Queen Sofia	2000
	Stilte	1995
Otjozondjupa	Mangetti Dune (in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy)	1996
Kavango	Bravo	1995/96
West Caprivi	Bagani, Chetto, Omega I and Omega III	1990/92

* The San were not actually resettled on these farms; they were simply allowed to stay on when the farms were purchased for resettlement purposes. Farms Blouberg and Vergenoeg were originally purchased by the Damara Second Tier Traditional Authority under the Odendaal Commission's guidelines, and Tsjaka/Ben Hur was originally purchased by the Tswana Legislative Authority. After Independence the new government took over all three farms. (See Chapter 4, Box 4.1 on pages 52-54 for further detail on resettlement projects in Omaheke.) The other resettlement farms established before 1990 probably have a similar history.

"The absence of a project coordinator has left the beneficiaries unable to coordinate the project on their own, leading to: ... mismanagement of farm rangeland, i.e. the beneficiaries got a permit to de-bush with the aim of improving grazing but engaged contractors who cut down big trees. Instead of getting their land improved beneficiaries were exploited as they were paid N\$ 50-70 per ton of charcoal produced in their camps. The contractor also brought in labourers who are residing on the farm and this could lead into illegal occupation of the farm should they refuse to go back after the charcoal making business contract lapses." (GRN 2010: 30)

Furthermore, despite considerable efforts and funds being pushed into the creation of incomegenerating projects at Queen Sofia, the GRN review report conveys that the sustainability of these projects was doubted. As in other projects, an acute shortage of water was hampering success, and the two vehicles donated by AECID had broken down and the beneficiaries could not afford to pay for the repairs (GRN 2010: 30). Fourteen families were resettled in 1998 on the **Excelsior Project**, a farm located 45 km north of Tsumeb, with joint support from the MLR and AECID. The GRN review stated that some beneficiaries were producing vegetables for sale, but they had no organised market or other appropriate place from which to sell their produce. The institutional structure of the project was reported to be weak; transport was a problem and the access road to the farm was impassable at times, especially during the rainy season. There were also concerns about the number of illegal occupants, and it was felt that if the influx was not controlled thenceforth, one section of the farm could develop into an informal settlement in the near future. (GRN 2010: 34)

As illustrated by these sample GRN findings and in the regional chapters of this report, many of the group resettlement projects established and/or run by the MLR have a number of challenges in common:

- 1) The group resettlement projects differ to more recent resettlement farms where one family or one farmer is resettled on a so-called 'economic unit' (FURS). In resettlement terms, an economic unit usually means a part of a former commercial farm which has been subdivided. According to the MLR, an economic unit in southern Namibia amounts to about 3000 ha, and about 1000 ha in central/northern Namibia (excluding the northern communal areas). In contrast, the group resettlement projects usually accommodate 40-70 households (or more) on farms ranging from 2 500 to 13 000 ha. This implies that some of the group resettlement projects are relatively densely populated and often overstocked, and hardly any acknowledged leadership or local planning structures are in place. As many beneficiaries are illiterate or semi-literate, this has created common property resource management problems on these farms, and in many cases these problems are exacerbated by the fact that the people resettled are not homogeneous groups, but rather hail from different ethnic and linguistic groups. The San at many projects feel dominated by beneficiaries of other ethnic groups, who usually own more assets (livestock, draught power etc.) than the San beneficiaries.
- 2) In addition, and despite several promises made over the years, hardly any of the resettled San beneficiaries have ever received any title deed in their individual names, either on group resettlement projects on freehold land or in communal areas. At best, their names appear on the list of initial beneficiaries of the project – hence the notion that they 'own' the farm or project as a group. The influx of family members, evicted farmworkers or other opportunistic incomers has been hard to control and regulate - in fact many resettlement projects are regarded as safe havens for anyone who has lost employment - and the growing numbers of people in these projects increase pressure on often over-utilised resources. San leaders sometimes contribute to this problem by allowing people to settle, yet it is not officially their mandate to rule over land in resettlement projects. Many, if not all, resettlement projects on communal land are yet to be registered as leaseholds with the respective land boards, and their boundaries are not yet well protected from encroachment by outsiders or communities living around them (e.g. Ekoka). Moreover, when the government starts providing services at remote resettlement projects, the entitlements of civil servants are not always clearly spelt out and regulated, and this can lead to civil servants using the (free) resources (as reported at Tsintsabis for example) which are meant to benefit the far more vulnerable resettled San.
- 3) Although the government expects the group resettlement project beneficiaries to become self-sufficient, it provided a lot of free services in the initial years of each project's existence, without a clear vision and strategy for enhancing the capacity of San and other beneficiaries to farm more independently. The free services included food rations (drought relief), fuel

and means to pump water, fencing material, tractors, trailers and other farming equipment. In some instances the support also included cattle or small stock. At many of these projects, this provision of services for free over a relatively long period has spawned a **high level of dependency** and a focus on continuous government support.

4) In an effort to improve the sustainable use of farm resources and to strengthen the livelihoods of resettlement beneficiaries, since 2006 the MLR has engaged a number of NGOs (e.g. DRFN, Komeho Namibia and NNF) to supply livelihood support services under 2- or 3-year contracts with the ministry, often with co-financing from donor agencies such as AECID or USAID. The MLR sought the services of NGOs because (a) it felt that it lacked capacity (human resources) to provide post-settlement support itself, and (b) it wanted to focus its own efforts on effective administration of the ongoing resettlement process and similar functions. Some of the post-settlement support programmes, such as Komeho's support at Bravo Resettlement Project in Kavango and the Livelihood Support Programme (LISUP II) in Omaheke, have contributed to improving food security and community organisation, and to some extent income diversification and effective management of farm resources and infrastructure (see Chapter 4 on Omaheke for example). However, for various reasons, the external support has not yet rendered the beneficiaries fully self-reliant. The beneficiaries are responsible for jointly managing farm resources, but, due to the large number of households involved, this usually begets common property resource management problems. The lack of education and high degree of illiteracy among beneficiaries further constrain efforts to strengthen local leadership capacity and beneficiaries' technical knowledge and skills. Cultural factors and different value systems may further compromise progress towards farming practices that sustain the resettled communities, in that, for example, beneficiaries pursue different income-generating strategies or seek a place to stay rather than an opportunity to make a living by farming. Taken together, these factors suggest that resettled communities and their leaders face challenges in taking charge of sustainable land management practices at their resettlement farms, and struggle to organise their communities to this effect. Often, the government, NGOs and donors must engage in time-consuming activities with resettled beneficiaries to define common goals and to strengthen the farmers' technical and organisational capacity accordingly, to enable them to manage the land and other farm resources independently. The questions arising are: when is it opportune to reduce or phase out the post-settlement support services in group resettlement projects, or, if the post-settlement support services must continue, what strategies should be pursued?

Overall, while there are a few positive signs of progress in some MLR group resettlement projects, most of them have yet to achieve self-sufficiency, and in some cases it is unlikely that this desirable status quo will be attained in the near future, due to the many challenges faced, such as: insufficient human capacity to provide the necessary support in areas such as strengthening local leadership and organisational capacity, housing, farming, and water infrastructure development; a lack of coordination between the stakeholders; the absence of *de jure* land rights, which has created the perception that resettlement land is open for all to use; and the increase in beneficiaries' dependency on outside resettlement support (GRN 2010: 5).

Against this background it is relevant to mention that the continuation of NGO post-settlement support to group resettlement projects – as implemented by different parties in collaboration with the MLR since 2006 – is not necessarily guaranteed, because the MLR is seeking new directions for land reform and post-settlement support. For example, post-settlement support is a topic on the agenda of the National Land Reform Forum, and the Land Reform Advisory Commission

has expressed the need for a social welfare approach to resettlement. Strategic decisions and the advancement of the decentralisation process in the MLR may also influence the way that post-settlement support for group resettlement projects is organised in future. For example, two years ago the MLR shared with its development partners its intention to hand over the responsibility for post-settlement support to regional councils by the beginning of the 2013/14 financial year. (At the time of writing, the MLR still seems to have this objective in mind, but has not achieved it in any region yet). Simultaneously, more staff members have been deployed to the regional offices of the MLR to advance the decentralisation process, which in some instances seems to imply that the ministry may resume its own efforts to provide post-settlement support to group resettlement projects (as presently seems to be the case in Ohangwena Region, for example).

Likewise, the NGOs partnering the MLR are seeking to develop new ideas and strategies for post-settlement support, based on their experiences with strengthening capacity and developing livelihoods in resettlement projects in recent years. All told, it is clear that post-settlement support to the San and other vulnerable people in MLR group resettlement projects is in flux, therefore proposals for the way forward are included in the recommendations section of this chapter.

13.2.6 Group resettlement under the Office of the Prime Minister

Despite the known shortcomings of the MLR group resettlement scheme, the San Development Programme (SDP) in the OPM is now employing this model to tackle the land dispossession of the San in Namibia. To this end, the OPM, in cooperation with the MET and the MLR, has purchased a number of farms for San resettlement under the SDP. The **seven resettlement farms south of Etosha** (Seringkop, Bellalaika, Mooiplaas, Werda, Nuchas, Toevlug and Koppies) are dealt with in Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions. **Farm Uitkoms** was allocated to the San in Omatako Constituency in Otjozondjupa Region in 2008,²⁵ and **Farm Ondera** in Guinas Constituency in Oshikoto Region was recently purchased for the Hai||om in Oshivelo, most of whom have already been resettled on the farm.

Initially 54 households (306 people) were resettled on **Farm Uitkoms**, but by July 2012 there were 110 households (700 people) on the farm. The 36 brick houses built for the original beneficiaries no longer sufficed, thus new informal housing structures were erected (slightly apart from the brick houses) to accommodate the influx. Various projects were implemented (e.g. crop production, animal husbandry, grass-cutting, bakery and sewing projects), but, during one of our visits to the farm in 2012, the project manager informed us that many of the projects had ceased, one reason being that the support for some of these projects consisted of just a once-off supply of materials and possibly a little training, but no ongoing support. An eco-tourism development plan has been developed for Farm Uitkoms (OPM 2012), but this farm is far from the main tourism routes, and with no other tourist attractions in the area, tourists are unlikely to visit. All told, the support for diversifying livelihood strategies has not yet reaped any sustainable success.

The project manager also mentioned that beneficiaries tended to lack motivation to work in the community gardens, preferring to garden in their own backyards (this being one of our findings at

²⁵ We include some information on Farm Uitkoms here because it was not appropriate to include it in Chapter 5 on Otjozondjupa Region, which deals specifically with Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies. Researchers visited Uitkoms twice, first for a full day and then for half a day. Due to time constraints, we were not able to apply all of our research tools there, but we did convene community meetings to discuss the most important issues, i.e. livelihoods and poverty, life on the farm compared to life before resettlement, education, external support and challenges.

many other resettlement sites).²⁶ Problematic water provision negatively impacted on cultivation activities as well. According to FGD participants at Farm Uitkoms, there were also problems with the quantities of the food aid delivered every second month: it was supplied per brick house rather than per household or individual (as at other sites), and since many people (usually two households) were living in each brick house, the supplies did not suffice. Reportedly the new settlers living in informal accommodation on the farm had not registered for food aid.

At the time of our field research, seven residents of Uitkoms had formal employment: one was a police officer in Okahandja, one was a cleaner at the government school, one was a nurse at the farm clinic, and four worked at the Otjozondu manganese mine. A few people engaged in casual work for neighbouring commercial farmers (e.g. harvesting onions), earning N\$45-50 per day for a couple of weeks/months of work, although the food which they consumed during the work period was deducted from their wages. Reportedly the farm residents were living mainly on government food aid (i.e. the San Feeding Programme) and casual work outside the farm.

The OPM is planning to relocate more San people in Omaheke to two other sites:

- About 300 residents of Epukiro Post 3 are to be resettled on a piece of land some 110 km northeast of their present home, and 20 households have already received 124 heifers and two bulls from the Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP) – although the cattle are currently quartered elsewhere due to the lack of boreholes at the new site.
- The San living on the outskirts of Otjinene are to be resettled at Otjiwamapeta, a piece of land some 160 km away from Otjinene (*New Era*, M. Tjituka, 28 May 2013).

Regarding San development generally, the OPM has placed a great deal of emphasis on providing land specifically for San, and housing, education and healthcare services in the new San resettlement projects. Initially the OPM did not pay similar attention to post-settlement support and developing sustainable farming livelihoods, but lately it has been paying more attention to supporting water infrastructure and livestock farming, with funding from NGSIP for example. A comprehensive strategy has yet to be formulated, and also, the challenge of mobilising the San for new livelihood activities in the SDP resettlement projects raises the issue of the need for greater engagement with them in developing the new projects, so as to avoid the risk of planning for, rather than with, the project beneficiaries. Such engagement should include exploring the implications of certain development initiatives so that the San can give their fully informed consent (see Chapter 19 on consultation, participation and representation); this would go a long way to precluding the pitfall of initiating activities which are not socially acceptable or wanted by beneficiaries, or in which only a few beneficiaries actively participate. In view of these challenges – and given the experiences of the original MLR group resettlement projects – it remains to be seen whether San people will eventually be able to develop sustainable livelihoods in these SDP resettlement projects in the absence of strong and coordinated external support.

Many of the SDP resettlement projects are located in very remote areas where infrastructure is inadequate, services are unavailable and casual work is scarce. Providing access to healthcare facilities, schools (especially secondary schools) and pension payout points will remain a challenge, and might involve considerable costs. The fact that many of the beneficiaries are pensioners (e.g. former farmworkers) who regularly need healthcare facilities exacerbates the problem. In short, it is not enough to give San people a place that they can call home; it is necessary to also ensure that

²⁶ This statement also supports practices of the LISUP II programme of the DRFN and Habitafrica Foundation in Omaheke, which entailed partitioning collective gardens into plots for families/individuals.

sustainable livelihood options are available, and to thoroughly think through the efforts to provide education, healthcare and other services in remote locations. As experience with the MLR group resettlement projects has shown, focused and capital-intensive long-term post-resettlement support may be necessary, and if the OPM does not develop an integrated strategy for such support soon, it will run the risk of further aggravating the dependency of the San on SDP resettlement farms, as they presently subsist mainly on the San Feeding Programme and a few other minor livelihood strategies (collecting veldfood, casual work or piecework, backyard gardening etc.). This pattern is already familiar from the earlier group resettlement projects, and the question is whether this is indeed the direction that the government and the OPM want to take.

13.2.7 San in conservancies

Only two of the 79 conservancies in Namibia are occupied predominantly by San:

- Nyae Nyae Conservancy, occupied by Ju/'hoansi; and
- N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, occupied by !Xun and a few Khwe, Ju|'hoansi and Hai||om.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, stated the following in his recent report titled *The situation of indigenous peoples in Namibia*:

"The conservancies are in a sense flagship programmes for the Namibian government and have been promoted as models for community-based resource management. Certainly the conservancies, especially Nyae Nyae, have allowed communities to have some measure of control over as well as derive benefits from the natural resources within the communal areas in which they live." (Anaya 2013: 9)²⁷

However, the land rights of residents are not secured through the gazetting of conservancies. It is a common misconception that land rights are automatically secured for a conservancy, since the mapping of the area's physical boundaries and the definition of conservancy membership are two of the requirements for conservancy registration. In reality, conservancy members have only some management and utilisation rights over the game in the conservancy area (Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996).

In recent years the San in both of the applicable conservancies have experienced insecurity of land rights, and have faced challenges to the control of their land and natural resources. The problem of the G|am farmers' intrusion into Nyae Nyae Conservancy is not yet resolved (see Chapter 5, pages 98-99), and N‡a Jaqna Conservancy residents have also encountered major threats to their land. The initiative of establishing small-scale farming units in N‡a Jaqna (see Box 5.6, pages 157-158), which has been put on hold, and the erection of illegal fences in this conservancy (see Box 5.7, page 159), could impose, or are imposing, serious limitations on the San's access to natural resources.

Despite the assumption that conservancies would 'save' the land for their communities, the **Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996** in fact gives the community only resident rights over the management and utilisation of game, not rights over the land itself, nor rights over other natural resources. For this reason, Nyae Nyae Conservancy applied in 2013 to be gazetted as a community forest, since the applicable legislation, i.e. the **Forest Act 12 of 2001**, is stronger, and gives the community rights over all forest products and grazing resources.

²⁷ In fact, as mentioned further on, conservancies allow communities only to manage and utilise game, in accordance with the Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996.

Box 13.1: Communal land group rights among the San By Adey Ogunmokun

A group right is a right held collectively by a group, rather than by its individual members. In Namibia, group rights are fairly common; various ethnic groups hold a wide array of group rights.

The San have historically used the resources and land commonly, and still do so today in their different living contexts. However, the **Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002** does not make provision for *de jure* group rights to communal land and communal resources (e.g. food, medicine and building materials). San communities, like other communities living on communal land in Namibia, possess only *de facto* rights to that land and the resources on that land. Consequently, it is difficult for San people to protect their commonage from herders of other ethnic groups who encroach illegally onto their communal land (LEAD (LAC) 2006: 24-27).

The need for a legal framework for group tenure did not arise only recently: both the **National Land Policy** (1998) and the **draft National Land Tenure Policy** (2008) reiterate the need for the legal protection and security of communal land group rights (Millennium Challenge Account Namibia (MCA-N) 2011), and efforts have been made to develop a certain measure of legal security in respect of communal land group rights.

In recognition of the shortcomings of the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 with regard to securing the commonage, a discussion around the concept of group rights and its significance for various groups in Namibia (including the San) gained momentum in 2012/13, and concerns relating to the protection of traditional commonage in the face of increasing illegal fencing have fuelled the debate. It is therefore pertinent to explore what 'group rights' might entail, and the different ongoing initiatives aimed at implementing group rights in Namibia.

The **Communal Land Support Project** (CLS) (a sub-activity of the MCA-N Agriculture Project) has conducted field research to determine the best ways to vest people residing in communal areas with individual and group rights to communal land. The CLS produced a draft report in October 2013, titled *Group Rights in Communal Land*. One of the CLS proposals which would apply to the San, is for a group ("village") to define its boundaries and be legally enabled to hold the land and manage the allocation of land rights within those boundaries. In its report, the CLS recommends amendments to the Act in the longer term, and more immediate changes through the promulgation of new regulations to make this possible (CLS and MCA-N, "Policy and Legal Memorandum: Group Rights in Communal Lands", in *Group Rights in Communal Land*, October 2013).

The German development bank, KfW, through its basket fund, aims to advance the development of communal land with the objectives of improving land productivity, securing tenure rights and alleviating land hunger. To achieve its aim and objectives, the KfW has partnered with the MLR to support the ministry's **Small Scale Commercial Farms (SSCF) Development Programme**. The SSCF programme has changed its original model of a grid of fenced leaseholds for livestock farming, so as to include infrastructure support to other productive activities on the land (which could include wildlife, crop farming, poultry etc.) (see Box 5.6 on SSCFs in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, pages 157-158). In addition, GIZ International Services and the Polytechnic of Namibia are working with the MLR to create a system for communal land registration and to introduce new methods of establishing communal land security.^a The LAC's LEAD Project has undertaken research to determine what group rights are currently enjoyed by Namibia's ethnic groups, and what would be the best way to confer *de jure* group rights in a manner that is not only specific and acceptable to each ethnic group, but is also implementable.

^a GIZ International Services Projects available at http://www.giz.de/themen/en/33258.htm.

13.3 Recommendations

The **UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** has recommended the following for state parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), which Namibia ratified in 1992:

"... recognize and protect the rights of indigenous peoples to own, develop, control and use their lands and territories. [The Committee] therefore encourages the State party, in consultation with the indigenous communities concerned, to demarcate or otherwise identify the lands which they traditionally occupy or use, and to establish adequate procedures to resolve land claims by indigenous communities within the domestic judicial system while taking due account of relevant indigenous customary laws." (UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2008: 5)

Although this principle should form the foundation on which all other recommendations regarding San access to land are built, its application is simply not feasible for every area traditionally occupied by the San over time, due to the long history of immigration by Bantu-speaking groups and colonial settlers. Furthermore, there is not enough land in Namibia to implement this recommendation in view of the fact that many other Namibians are also in dire need of land.

Therefore, any party that formulates recommendations should take into account the specific land tenure systems in which San communities presently live, and, very importantly, the principle of prior consultation (see Chapter 19 on consultation, participation and representation) should be applied to impart to outsiders a proper understanding of the circumstances and ambitions of a particular community: while some would like to continue their traditional lifestyles (or reactivate them in some modified form) in combination with additional livelihood strategies (e.g. in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies and the BNP), others might prefer to concentrate on other livelihood strategies such as crop farming or animal husbandry, and would therefore need land for such alternative purposes. Any solution reached should facilitate the strengthening of the San's cultural identity – which most of the other ethnic groups have failed to respect for centuries – since a positive appraisal of culture is strongly linked to self-confidence and thus empowerment.

San in communal areas

The **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** recommended the following in their *Report of the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities: Mission to the Republic of Namibia, 26 July to 5 August 2005:*

"The San should be provided with communal land they can call their own. Access to land and land security for the San population is the most critical element that should be addressed by the Namibian government. Land security would greatly facilitate efforts on the part of government, NGOs, and the communities themselves aimed at addressing their critical health issues, educational and political marginalisation, and numerous social problems. The protection and expansion of land rights is one of the most fundamental interventions that can be made on behalf of the San in Namibia to secure their sustainable livelihood." (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 130)

This San Study has reaffirmed this recommendation, but this recommendation is very generalised, and it is necessary to look into many specific aspects in more detail. These aspects include, at the very least, the following:

- Consider recognising San TAs in areas where the San wish to have such an institution in place, in order to give them a stronger voice regarding land rights.
- Look into the possibility of establishing further conservancies or community forests for the San (e.g. on Farm Six in Oshikoto Region).
- Raise awareness among the San regarding their customary land rights under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002.
- Raise awareness among the San regarding conservancy and community forest legislation (i.e. laws pertaining to game and forest products and grazing respectively) under the Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996 and the Forest Act 12 of 2001 (as amended).
- Capacitate the San to follow the procedures under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 to register their customary land rights.
- Ensure that the San are not discriminated against in the registration of customary land rights under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002.
- Investigate whether the group rights initiative could be applied to secure land rights for San in specific areas.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, also recommended that, "[efforts] be made to harmonize any inconsistent laws and policies regarding conservancy areas and communal lands or other actions that promote competing interests on those lands" (Anaya 2013: 20). This point is critical because the policy frameworks of the MLR and the MET (both of which address access to land and the benefits of such access) are not sufficiently coordinated.²⁸ On the one hand, the opportunities provided by the Communal Land Reform Act to apply for customary land titles (for a maximum of 20ha) in the communal areas could lead to a *de facto* privatisation of land, but on the other hand, efforts of the MET, which include the establishment and operation of conservancies and community forestry projects, are based mainly on increasing the mandate of local communities to access, regulate and manage the communal resources in their respective areas.

San in urban areas

- Enforce the Flexible Land Tenure Act 4 of 2012 to improve tenure security for the San and other impoverished residents in urban (informal) areas.
- Provide town councils with technical support to implement the Flexible Land Tenure Act.
- The OPM should support San in urban (informal) areas, because livelihood options are more diverse there than on resettlement farms.
- NGOs should provide more support to assist the San in urban (informal) areas.
- Undertake focused efforts to improve literacy among the San in urban areas, where the need to engage with bureaucratic procedures and fulfil their formal requirements is a feature of everyday life.

San in national parks

Looking at the current situation, especially in the Etosha National Park, the implementation of the recommendations in Box 13.2 on the next page would require a serious revision of the government's current approach, which is mainly to relocate Hai||om to group resettlement projects and provide the resettled Hai||om with a tourism concession – the benefits of which are not yet clear.

²⁸ For example, under the Communal Land Reform Act, the TA or communal land board can allocate land rights that could be in conflict with the game management and utilisation plan of a conservancy or community forest. Collaboration is therefore needed to avoid any potential conflicts.

Box 13.2: Recommendations by international bodies

The **UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** has encouraged state parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) to do the following:

"... [strengthen] laws and policies aimed at ensuring that national parks established on ancestral lands of indigenous communities allow for sustainable economic and social development compatible with the cultural characteristics and living conditions of those indigenous communities. In cases where indigenous communities have been deprived of their lands and territories traditionally owned, the Committee recommends that the State party take steps to return those lands and territories or to provide adequate reparation measures, in accordance with paragraph 5 of general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on the rights of indigenous peoples." (UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2008: 5-6)

The **UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, James Anaya, went even further in his recommendations based on his visit to Namibia in September 2012:

"Namibia should take measures to reform protected area laws and policies that now prohibit San people, especially the Khwe in the Bwabwata National Park and the Hai||om in the Etosha National Park, from securing rights to lands and resources that they have traditionally occupied and used within those parks. The Government should guarantee that San people currently living within the boundaries of national parks are allowed to stay, with secure rights over the lands they occupy. In addition, the Government should take steps to increase the participation of San people in the management of park lands, through concessions or other constructive arrangements, and should minimize any restrictions that prohibit San from carrying out traditional subsistence and cultural activities within these parks." (Anaya 2013: 19-20)

The government should fulfil its obligations and responsibilities under international conservation conventions to which Namibia is party, such as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which includes a code of ethics for parties to follow in their engagement with indigenous peoples, namely the Tkarihwaié:ri Code of Ethical Conduct to Ensure Respect for the Cultural and Intellectual Heritage of Indigenous and Local Communities, Article 19 of which states the following:

"Activities/interactions related to biological diversity, and the objectives of the Convention, such as conservation, ought not to cause indigenous and local communities to be removed from their lands and waters or lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by them, as applicable, by force or coercion and without their consent. Where they consent to removal they should be compensated. Whenever possible, these indigenous and local communities should have the right to return to their traditional lands. Such activities/interactions should not cause indigenous and local community members, especially the elderly, the disabled and children to be removed from their families by force or coercion."²⁹

In addition, the CBD has adopted a number of targets related to protected areas and indigenous peoples and local communities (Borrini-Feyarabend et al. 2004):

²⁹ Accessed at www.cbd.int/decision/cop/default.shtml?id=12308.

- **Target 2.1:** Establish by 2008 mechanisms for the equitable sharing of both costs and benefits arising from the establishment and management of protected areas.
- **Target 2.2:** Full and effective participation by 2008, of indigenous and local communities, in full respect of their rights and recognition of their responsibilities, consistent with national law and applicable international obligations, and the participation of relevant stakeholders in the management of existing, and the establishment and management of new, protected areas.

Following are site-specific recommendations based on our study findings.

Bwabwata National Park

- The MET and the park residents should develop a joint vision for the park's development, clearly setting out the development goals, and outlining options for development strategies that take into account the restrictions placed on people living in the park.
- To accompany this joint vision, set out a formal agreement between the MET and the residents that clearly identifies people's rights (particularly to land).
- The Kyaramacan Association (KA) should retain all income from trophy hunting in order to invest in projects to increase household-level benefits and livelihood opportunities for park residents, and to pay compensation for financial losses due to human-wildlife conflict.³⁰
- Look into alternatives to the collective garden schemes.
- Consider projects that will strengthen the cultural identity of the Khwe.
- Consider the possibility of issuing Special Game Licenses (subsistence hunting licences) to individuals.³¹
- Take and monitor measures to prevent the further influx of outsiders and their livestock into the park area.
- Formalise the recognition of a Khwe (or Khwe and !Xun) Traditional Authority (TA).

Etosha National Park

The government could argue that the resettlement farms and the tourist concession provided to the Hai||om of Etosha suffice to fulfil the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination's recommendation of "adequate reparation measures" (see Box 13.2), but this would be debatable. Livelihood options on the farms are minimal, a high level of dependency prevails, and the few available livelihood strategies are no substitute for the sustainable livelihoods of the Etosha San in the past, which were based on hunting and gathering (and were later temporarily combined with labour for the colonial administration). Furthermore, the Hai||om have not been consulted for the negotiations on the tourist concession, and many of those on the resettlement farms have no clear information about the development and content of the concession, let alone the potential benefits.³²

³⁰ The government argues that it should retain a portion of the income because it is responsible for managing the park, but it should be recognised that the KA, through its game guards and resource monitors, also plays an important role in park management. Furthermore, the KA should retain the full amount of income in view of the fact that other forms of economic development are restricted in national parks.

³¹ In the |Xai|Xai area in Ngamiland, Botswana, the Ju|'hoansi can apply for a Special Game License, the regulations being that: people must carry a license with them when hunting; transfers of licences are not allowed; and for a time, only traditional weapons could be used for hunting – the latter was amended so as to permit the use of guns as well. (Hitchcock et al. forthcoming: 8)

³² The Head Concession Contract for the Etosha South Activity Concession Etosha National Park (MET 2012) was signed between the MET (The Concessor) and "the Hai||om Community herein represented by the Chairperson of the !Gobaub Hai-||om Association (The Concessionaire)" on 27 September 2013 (see Chapter 6, section 6.3.2, page 205).

Stronger action is needed to enforce laws and policies, firstly to allow for sustainable economic and social developments which are attuned to the cultural characteristics and living conditions of the Hai||om still living within the park, and secondly it would provide adequate reparation measures for those who were forced to leave the park under the former South African Administration. The first step would be to develop a benefit-sharing plan so that the Hai||om can benefit from the park's income, as part of a reparation plan to compensate them for the fact that their ancestral land was taken from them. Such a plan should focus on flexible models for the development of San livelihoods within the park, in line with the international conventions on human rights, indigenous peoples' rights and conservation to which Namibia is party, rather than merely relocating San to resettlement farms. Innovative models from Namibia as well as other countries (e.g. the joint management approach adopted in Australia's Kakadu National Park³³) should be examined, and in this context, the government should strive to build on the positive outcomes of communal benefit sharing for San development in certain conservancies (Nyae Nyae) and national parks (BNP).³⁴ Other recommendations for a benefit sharing plan are as follows:

- Include the Hai||om of Etosha as members of the !Gobaub Community Association, to enable them to participate in developing the tourism concession.
- Review the MET's refusal to permit the Hailor to operate a tourist lodge within Etosha.³⁵
- Include the Hai||om of Etosha and not just those resettled on the farms in discussions on the tourism concession and further development of the park.
- Apply affirmative action policies to espouse employment of Hai||om within the park (see also Chapter 14 on livelihoods, food security and poverty).
- Explore options for integrating Hai||om culture into the tourist attractions in the park, not least for the purpose of creating additional employment opportunities.
- Learn from the experiences in the BNP with regard to employment opportunities.

San in conservancies and community forests

Firstly, the situation of San in conservancies and community forests where other groups form the majority, and thus dominate, is often overlooked. It is therefore necessary to ensure the participation and representation of the San in these places – examples being Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy in Ohangwena and Mashi Conservancy in Caprivi, but many conservancies which were not visited for this study also have San minorities, such as ‡Khoadi |Hôas Conservancy, ||Huab Conservancy and Sorris Sorris Conservancy, all in Kunene Region (see Mosimane 2007, and ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 116).

Secondly, in assessing the role and potential of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) models like community forests and conservancies, it is essential to consider not only the tangible economic benefits, but also the political and ideological benefits. San conservancies create and strengthen their members' sense of a collective identity, and promote the development

³³ Since the late 1970s, Kakadu's traditional owners have leased their land to the Director of National Parks to be jointly managed as a national park (see www.environment.gov.au/topics/national-parks/kakadu-national-park/ management-and-conservation/park-management).

³⁴ For example, all Onguma Game Reserve and Etosha Aoba lodges raise a levy of N\$10 per bed night sold to guests, and this levy is paid directly into the Namutoni Hai||om Trust's bank account on a monthly basis. The trust's main objectives are to, inter alia: undertake and assist community development and anti-poverty initiatives; provide opportunities and assistance in respect of house ownership, training and sustainable jobs; provide and assist with training and support to emerging micro-enterprises within the community; and promote community-based projects relating to self-empowerment and skills development. The Hai||om at Oshivelo are the target group (Onguma Private Game Reserve n.d.).

³⁵ This was also a recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Anaya 2013: 20).

of organisational capacity – by way of the conservancy committees as managing bodies. The two San conservancies, i.e. Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna, have also been able to secure support from external organisations over the years (e.g. the LAC, MCA-N, NNDFN and CRIAA SA-DC). These conservancies also give the San access to traditional veldfoods, and hence a diversified and much healthier diet than in places where people rely solely on government food aid and purchased processed foods. Conservancies also provide for more diversified livelihoods (e.g. tourism-related activities, gathering, employment, crop farming and animal husbandry), and very importantly, they are able to accommodate former communal land-use practices of San communities. Therefore, CBNRM models (in this context conservancies and community forests) may be a far better means to address San landlessness than creating and maintaining resettlement projects, and this should be considered for the San still living on communal land outside the two existing San conservancies in Otjozondjupa. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that the OPM SDP resettlement projects look at possible lessons to be learned from CBNRM approaches. In this regard it should be noted that there are a number of conservancies on *commercial* land as well, 21 of which are members of the Conservancies Association of Namibia (CANAM) established in 1996.³⁶ Also noteworthy is that the conservancy model was the initial plan for the Haillom resettlement farms in the commercial farming area south and east of Etosha (MET 2007: 2), but this plan was abandoned, for reasons unknown to the authors of this report.

On the other hand, despite the advantages of conservancies for San communities, the existing San conservancies still face a number of challenges, especially those posed by legislative restrictions on the management and utilisation of natural resources such as game (e.g. Conservation Amendment Act restrictions mentioned above in section 13.2.7). As already noted (section 13.2.7), the Forest Act gives community forests rights over all forest products and grazing resources, therefore San conservancies on communal land should also be registered as community forests – a step which Nyae Nyae Conservancy has already taken. Further, the San's rights of access to land and water should be protected by all possible means, one of which may be to provide more secure land rights by registering conservancies as leaseholds, and this possibility is currently being investigated.³⁷

San in resettlement projects

In the 1990s the government considered group resettlement to be the most appropriate solution for addressing San landlessness, and the OPM SDP appears to have taken this route repeatedly in recent years (since 2008). However, experiences with post-settlement support to group resettlement projects where most of the beneficiaries are San, have emphasised the need for the following points of attention and changes in direction for post-settlement support.

1) *De jure* land rights of the original beneficiaries of group resettlement farms (and their children and grandchildren) need to be secured and protected, since new people tend to settle in these projects without management or control by the authorities. The original beneficiaries should be provided with proof of settlement or a title deed, and in addition, the MLR should control the influx of new settlers. Specific attention should be given to the resettlement projects located in communal areas, as their boundaries are not always properly registered with the relevant communal land board, with the result that local headmen have tended to allocate land in these projects to farmers who are not officially project beneficiaries. This has created insecurity about the land rights of the official beneficiaries.

³⁶ See www.canam.iway.na/Who_is_CANAM/who_is_canam.html.

³⁷ Uda Nakamela (a lawyer assisting the MCA-N Conservancy Development Support Services Project), personal communication, 9 October 2013.

- 2) Notwithstanding the positive outcomes of post-settlement support in resettlement projects in Omaheke Region and at Bravo Resettlement Project in Kavango Region, the **policy objective of self-reliance** for the San and other vulnerable people resettled in group projects should be reviewed, as common property management on farms with 50 or more families is difficult to achieve with the current high levels of illiteracy, limited incomes, limited technical capacity, inadequate access to markets, and disparate needs and aspirations of the resettled households and individuals. Increasing agricultural output to levels that guarantee food security for 50+ households throughout the year requires more technical knowledge and expertise than most of the San beneficiaries possess. This implies that a significant amount of long-term support will be needed. But also, although most beneficiaries may eventually become relatively accomplished subsistence farmers if sufficient post-settlement support is rendered, it is very likely that they will still lack the capacity required to collectively manage the farms so as to realise market-orientated production (commercialisation). To overcome this lack, partnerships between the resettled communities and NGOs should be established. These would also serve to enhance access to markets an important condition for the sustainability of the farm livelihoods.
- 3) Further to the previous point, **alternatives to the original group resettlement model** should be explored before going on to repeatedly replicate a model which the MLR and other stakeholders have already deemed to be less successful than expected. Any new model(s) should not perpetuate dependence on external support, but rather should facilitate efforts/means to boost productive farming and income-generating projects. However, the new model(s) might also have to cater for the disparate needs and aspirations of the San and other vulnerable people, thus it might be necessary to design a range of post-settlement support models which differ in several respects. The following tentative distinctions could be made in this regard:
 - a) San people who have proved more successful at farming should be given the opportunity to participate in the FURS as other previously disadvantaged farmers may do. Similarly, if the San concerned are living on communal land in Namibia's northern regions, they should be able to apply for a customary land title for themselves.³⁸
 - b) For more vulnerable and elderly San, a welfare model for post-settlement support to group resettlement projects might be adequate, based on the notion that some people simply need a place to stay. Some of them might supplement their Old Age Pensions and other social grants through small-scale farming activities with a focus on household food security.³⁹
 - c) A variant of the welfare model that targets the urban San dweller could entail that these San be given opportunities to settle and erect dwellings in urban informal settlements. Support activities could be focused on housing initiatives and income-generating projects targeting the urban San specifically. The latter could exploit the unique opportunities presented by the urban environment, such as recycling of waste.
 - d) A fourth option should be considered for San who want to farm as a collective, but who also want to increase agricultural output beyond the objective of household food security, with the support of service providers. This model should explore options for (semi-) commercial production through partnerships between the San communities and NGOs or the private

³⁸ This is already possible under the current policy framework, but in practice it hardly ever happens. The government could consider actively pursuing and facilitating this option for San in the northern regions.

³⁹ As Werner and Odendaal have pointed out, it is necessary to assess the feasibility of establishing such group schemes adjacent to small rural settlements or villages, for people who are not in a position to pursue sustainable land-based livelihood strategies due to their age or a lack of skills (Werner and Odendaal 2010: 169).

sector, in much the same way as conservancies enter into agreements with third parties for tourism and hunting concessions, lodges and other such enterprises. Aspects of this model could be based on the experiences and lessons learnt from the DRFN and Habitafrica Foundation livelihood support in Omaheke, and the Komeho Namibia livelihood support in Kavango.

- 4) The communities currently resettled at group resettlement projects are very large and are not homogeneous, and these conditions have contributed to a lack of unity, common property management problems and a lack of agricultural progress. It is therefore recommended that any strategy adopted should entail working with smaller, more homogeneous communities on farms, i.e. groups based on kinship, and perhaps also skill levels and/or shared needs and/or unity of purpose. The issue of kinship is relevant because collaborative arrangements in San communities are still largely informed by kinship relations a fact only vaguely acknowledged, if at all, in the design of projects to date.
- 5) The allocation of **responsibility for maintaining water supply and sanitation infrastructure** in group resettlement projects should be revisited, as community-based maintenance presents the usual challenges of common property resource management. There is also a risk of a vacuum in the delivery of these critical services to group resettlement projects – especially in the fastgrowing ones, which are most in need of these services. Two government parties have a direct interest in the provision of water supply and sanitation services in resettlement projects: the MLR and the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC) in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry. Regional councils are also interested in proper service delivery in resettlement projects, but their involvement is generally limited to the servicing of land after projects are proclaimed as settlements. Since the MLR lacks capacity to render the services concerned, the DWSSC usually provides support for the maintenance of the watersupply infrastructure. Rural sanitation is a new remit for the DWSSC, for which its internal capacity is still being strengthened. As the DWSSC covers many communities in the communal areas, the maintenance of infrastructure in group resettlement projects does not always get the attention it needs to guarantee a healthy and clean living environment, implying that a more coordinated approach between agencies is needed. In particular, since the costs of maintaining pump installations and sewage facilities are beyond the means of most resettled beneficiaries, it seems that the MLR will have to budget for large-scale maintenance and repair of water and sanitation infrastructure, and that the DWSSC will have to provide the necessary technical support.
- 6) **Basic maintenance** such as repairing leaking taps, tanks and pipelines, cleaning blocked sewage systems and collecting refuse can be organised and managed by community members, provided that time and energy are invested in establishing appropriate local structures for such duties, and that mechanisms are found for beneficiaries to make financial contributions to cover the costs of the parts needed for basic maintenance. In relatively poor communities, where many people depend on pensions to survive, this can be a challenging process. The government has paid for the replacement of broken parts, but so far has not remunerated beneficiaries who undertake basic maintenance services in group resettlement projects, as these services, and any remuneration for those who undertake them, are considered to be responsibilities of the resettled communities. However, conflicts about water distribution or maintenance backlogs are often the order of the day, as the basic maintenance services are usually carried out by a small group of people on behalf of the larger community on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the government and development partners may need to reconsider whether or not it is appropriate

for them to remunerate those who undertake the maintenance role. This may be worthwhile also because it might ensure that the persons concerned dedicate adequate time and energy to this role, thereby reducing the costs of large-scale maintenance for the government over time.

7) **Sanitation** at larger and faster-growing group resettlement projects needs attention. The MLR has established formal housing blocks in a number of resettlement projects, some of which have flush toilets and showers connected to sewage systems. The resettled beneficiaries do not always have the financial means to maintain these facilities in their dwellings properly, and many do not have sufficient knowledge of the proper use of drainage and sewage systems. Furthermore, the MLR's maintenance of the systems is subject to administrative delays. This combination of factors leads to: (a) wastage of water; and (b) improper use of the sewage systems, incurring blockages which in turn spawn health hazards in built-up areas. In addition, the unregulated influx of new settlers and natural population growth in some resettlement projects lead to the establishment of new informal neighbourhoods in which sewage facilities are not available, and hence open defecation practices. Dry sanitation could be a cost-effective solution in such settings, but some authorities appear to have reservations about such innovations; they seem to favour conventional water-borne sanitation technology, irrespective of the above-mentioned challenges.

In conclusion, group resettlement projects face several challenges and should not be regarded as the all-encompassing panacea for the landless position of many San communities in Namibia. Further investigation into the feasibility of CBNRM models for specific San communities should become a focal point for government consideration – in particular for the OPM. Furthermore, innovative models for San groups living in national parks should be developed. First steps have been taken in the BNP to develop strategies to address the challenges there, but nothing has been done to date to address the challenges facing the Hai||om of Etosha. New approaches, especially that of integrating the Hai||om cultural heritage into the park's attractions and overall image, would certainly advance the socio-economic development of this San community, and Namibia as a whole could benefit from a modernised image of Etosha – paradoxically, one that features an age-old culture and history along with wildlife.

Chapter 14 Livelihoods, Food Security and Poverty

By Richard Kiaka, Ute Dieckmann and Erik Dirkx



14.1 Introduction

A common characteristic of San communities in pre-colonial and early colonial times was that hunting and gathering played a significant role in terms of livelihood strategies. San communities were increasingly deprived of access to natural resources – and thus saw their opportunities for hunting and gathering diminish – during the last century, although land dispossession had already

commenced much earlier (see section 3.2, pages 24-25). Circumstances and developments differed according to area, the impact of colonialism in the area, and San relationships with people of neighbouring ethnic groups. Many San became farmworkers on commercial farms (e.g. in Omaheke, Oshikoto, Kunene and Otjozondjupa Regions); some found their livelihoods increasingly linked to, and dependent on, neighbouring ethnic groups (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omusati and Omaheke Regions); and some continued hunting and gathering – at least for a while – on land that was not yet occupied by others (e.g. in Kavango, Ohangwena and Caprivi Regions), or land which had been designated as a protected area or game reserve (e.g. the Hai||om in Etosha until the 1950s). In the 1970s, a small number of San were granted a homeland – called "Bushmanland" – in the areas known today as Tsumkwe District West and Tsumkwe District East in Otjozondjupa Region.

After Namibia's Independence in 1990, San communities had to further adjust their livelihood strategies. For example, many San were dismissed as commercial farmworkers as a consequence of the introduction of the Labour Act 6 of 1992,¹ and they had to seek new livelihoods in nearby towns (e.g. Gobabis, Outjo and Tsumeb), or alternatively they went to communal areas occupied by other groups (e.g. in Omaheke Region). Others moved to group resettlement projects under the National Resettlement Programme implemented by the Namibian Government, or, more recently, to the resettlement farms planned for San communities by the San Development Programme (SDP) resorting under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). The competition for communal land as a resource for livelihoods (i.e. livestock grazing and agriculture) increased further in the communal areas (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa), and San communities found themselves even more restricted in their use of natural resources due to the increased exploitation of the land and the erection of illegal fences.

The Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Programme implemented by the government over the last 15 years has uplifted many rural communities, but only a limited number of San have actually benefited from it: those in former Bushmanland (where the San form the majority of inhabitants); and, to a more limited degree, those in the Bwabwata National Park (BNP) (Kavango/Caprivi), in the Mashi Conservancy (Caprivi) and in the Okongo Community Forest and Conservancy (Ohangwena) (see the applicable regional chapters). As discussed in more detail in Chapter 13 on access to land, the resettlement projects and farms where the San now live do not yet provide sustainable livelihoods for their beneficiaries, who are usually highly dependent on outside support (from both the government and NGOs).

In the following sections we present the San Study findings regarding the main livelihood strategies employed by the San in Namibia. Later, the results of the wealth-ranking exercises conducted during the field research are discussed, giving insight into participants' perceptions of poverty and the internal stratifications of San communities, and their perceptions of their situation as compared to that of other Namibian communities. Thereafter, based on our research findings, we assess San strategies for coping with food insecurity, and discuss the role of external support for San livelihoods. Finally, we draw conclusions and offer recommendations concerning San livelihoods.

14.2 Current livelihoods strategies

San in Namibia today generally survive through Old Age Pensions, food aid (mainly the San Feeding Programme under the OPM), and casual work and piecework (the difference between the latter two is explained on pages 468-469). Other livelihood strategies are pursued to varying

¹ Repealed and replaced by Labour Act 15 of 2004, which was then replaced by Labour Act 11 of 2007.

degrees, depending on the ecological, socio-economic and political circumstances of individual San communities, and on the extent and quality of external support initiatives.

14.2.1 Pensions and social welfare grants

Namibia is one of only six sub-Saharan countries that provide a monthly, non-contributory pension to its elderly citizens (Pelham 2007: 1). At the time of our research, every Namibian citizen aged 60 and older residing in the country was entitled to receive a monthly pension of N\$550.² Namibia inherited the concept of a non-contributory pension from the South African Government at Independence, but made substantial changes to it – by way of the National Pension Act 10 of 1992 which forms the regulatory framework under which the Old Age Pension is currently administered in Namibia.

The Old Age Pension was identified as a very significant livelihood strategy among the San across the regions, chiefly because it provides a regular income to the beneficiaries and their dependants. Indeed, in many San households at all of our research sites, this pension is the main regular source of household income, or even the only regular source. The Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) of 2009/2010 found that 20.1% of Khoisan speakers in Namibia rely on pensions³ as their main source of income, which is nearly double the national average of 11.1% (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2012: 57).⁴ The San use the Old Age Pension money to cover the costs of basic items such as food, clothing and school-related necessities. However, the financial support provided by a pension recipient to a San household is often eroded by an ongoing crippling debt burden; in fact most of the pension money is spent on settling household debts on the day of the pension payout, leaving very little to survive on for the next month – and resulting, of course, in new debt commitments.

In addition, a number of challenges were said to be limiting the San's access to Old Age Pensions. For example, inability to register for the pension was a common complaint at most sites in all of the study regions (see also National Planning Commission (NPC) 2012a: 65). The San explained that this was due to their lack of national documents (an ID and/or birth certificate being essential for registration) and their inability to afford transport to towns to register for a pension. The lack of national documents is most widespread in remote villages where a significant number of San live. These problems are compounded by a communication barrier between the San and civil servants (due to their differing languages), which was said to hinder the acquisition of national documents. In some areas - such as Xeidang village (Kavango Region), Farm Six settlement (Oshikoto), Okaukuejo restcamp (Etosha, Oshana), Makaravan settlement (Caprivi) and Skoonheid Resettlement Project (Omaheke) – San also cited a misrepresentation of their ages (i.e. under 60 rather than 60+) on their IDs as a reason for their not receiving an Old Age Pension. Namibia's Fourth National Development Plan 2012/13 to 2016/17 (NDP4) states that 91% of people aged 60+ receive an Old Age Pension (NPC 2012a: 65). Although quantitative data about Namibia's San population is missing (see section 1.2.9, page 13ff), based on our findings it can be reliably assumed that many of the 9% not receiving an Old Age Pension are San - others being members of other marginalised groups. Moreover, those San whose IDs wrongly reflect an age younger than 60 would not be covered in the NPC data.

² In April 2013 the amount was increased to N\$600 per month.

³ The NHIES 2009/2010 included "State old age pension" and "Pensions from employment" under "Pension" (NHIES 2012: 209).

⁴ See section 1.2.9 (page 13) for the need to treat these figures with some caution: although they must be regarded as only a rough reflection of the situation, they do give an indication of approximate tendencies in the absence of better data.

14.2.2 Food aid

Food aid is provided by the government and is often the only measure by which San are prevented from starving. The San benefit from a number of different types of food aid, including drought relief food, food for work, and the OPM San Feeding Programme (SFP). Drought relief food – which is an emergency response collated by the OPM's Directorate of Disaster Risk Management – is given to all Namibians who face hardship because of severe drought, irrespective of ethnicity or language group. Food for work is given on condition that people work on infrastructure projects that are of public benefit, such as road construction. The SFP, under the OPM's Division of San Development (DSD), targets the San as a group vulnerable to food shortages because of their marginalisation.⁵ Alarmingly, 19.5% of Khoisan speakers rely on drought relief assistance and in-kind receipts⁶ as their main source of income (NSA 2012: 57), compared with 1.6% of the national population on average.

Information provided by the San Study participants regarding the frequency, quality and quantity of food distributed to them reflected inconsistencies both within and across the regions.⁷ Moreover, the San were rarely sure of what kind of food aid they had been receiving (i.e. food received under the drought relief programme or food distributed under the SFP), making a detailed analysis of the support they receive difficult.⁸ In some areas food distribution appeared to be quite regular, while in many areas it was said to be sporadic. Just as the frequency of delivery varied considerably, so too the quantities of supplies under the SFP could be inconsistent, though they tended to include one or two 12.5 kg bags of mealie-meal and one or two 750 ml bottles of cooking oil per household per month, and possibly (very rarely) tinned fish or beans. However, those responsible for the distribution of food may determine the quantity given out according to the size of the household. Despite these irregularities, food aid proved to be an important source of food for the San in all regions surveyed in this study, with the exception of Omusati Region where the San reportedly received only the drought relief food that was also provided to members of other ethnic groups.

Reported inconsistencies in food-aid provision imply that the San communities which are regularly in urgent need of these supplies for their food security cannot bank on receiving it regularly. Also, the monthly rations fall far short for many households,⁹ and moreover, mealie-meal and oil alone – even if supplied in sufficient quantities, which was not often the case – cannot prevent malnutrition as they lack protein and other essential nutrients.

14.2.3 Casual work and piecework

Casual work and piecework are also important livelihood strategies for San households.¹⁰ 'Casual work' refers to the non-pensionable and informal work arrangement whereby an employer pays the worker a wage at the end of the month or a specified period (e.g. for herding livestock). 'Piecework',

⁵ See www.sandevelopment.gov.na/san-feeding-programme.htm.

⁶ In the case of Khoisan-speaking households, this would include the food received from the SFP under the OPM.

⁷ Despite several attempts, we were unable to schedule an interview with the OPM staff responsible.

⁸ This is further complicated by the fact that the programmes have changed over the years.

⁹ The *Emergency Food Security Assessment in Communal and Resettlement Areas of Namibia* (OPM 2013: 11) calculates, for example, 12 kg of cereal and 1.8 kg of pulses as an individual adult ration per month. Therefore it is obvious that 12.5 kg (or occasionally 25 kg) of mealie-meal per household does not suffice to support even a small household, and the average size of Khoisan-speaking households is 4.7 persons (NSA 2012: 27).

¹⁰ Overall, 47.2% of Khoisan-speaking households in Namibia rely on salaries and wages as their main source of income, compared to 49.2% of the population in general (NSA 2012: 57). However, given the high unemployment rate among the San, it is clear that most of these 'salaries and wages' derive from casual work and piecework.

on the other hand, is an informal labour arrangement whereby the employer pays a pre-agreed amount after a much shorter period (often just a few hours) for a smaller-scale task. Various kinds of casual work and piecework are available to the San, such as clearing crop fields, cultivation tasks, repairing houses, fetching water for shebeen operators, collecting firewood and herding livestock. These types of labour are remunerated with money, food items and/or non-food items, and where the medium of exchange is money, the rates vary from one site to another and according to the job done. For example, in parts of Ohangwena Region at the time of our field research, cultivation work paid between N\$20 and N\$50 per day, while in Kavango a similar form of piecework paid only up to N\$20 per day, from which N\$5 would be deducted for food provided by the employer. Payment also depends on the agreement reached between the employer and worker: the types of piecework done by San men usually differ to those done by San women, and specific cases in Ohangwena revealed that women earned less money than men for piecework in general. Furthermore, across the regions there was less piecework and casual work available for women than for men. San children might also do piecework to supplement the household income, and this appeared to be an accepted practice in most San households across the regions, even though it had the potential to compromise the children's access to education.

The availability of piecework and casual work depends on the location of the San communities. For example, in rural villages where the majority of residents are San (e.g. remote villages in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies in Otjozondjupa Region), such work is generally scarce. In rural areas where the majority of residents are members of other ethnic groups who engage in crop cultivation or animal husbandry (e.g. in Caprivi, Ohangwena and Omusati Regions), opportunities for piecework and casual work are better – in terms of both quantity and diversity. For residents of settlements (e.g. Oshivelo in Oshikoto Region) and resettlement projects in the vicinity of commercial farms (e.g. resettlement projects in Omaheke Region), piecework and casual work on these farms are available at certain times of year. In general, however, opportunities for remunerated work are most likely to be found in urban areas (e.g. Rundu, Katima Mulilo, Outjo and Gobabis).

In rural areas the availability of piecework and casual work is also always dependent on the seasons: in crop-farming regions such as Omusati, Ohangwena, Kavango and Caprivi, opportunities for piecework increase in times of tilling, planting and harvesting, and in general there are more opportunities for casual work in these northern crop-growing areas compared to the drier, eastern parts of the country.

Construction and maintenance activities can provide another source of income for San people, if and when San are hired for such work in their own communities or in communities in surrounding areas. Often, however, such work will only be available to the San if it is organised by NGOs with donor support. The government and the private sector (both working through public tender procedures) have very rarely organised employment projects of this nature specifically targeting the San as casual workers or temporary employees. There may be scope for more opportunities in construction and maintenance if the San can be brought together and organised. For example, between October 2012 and May 2013, the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) and the Habitafrica Foundation engaged local San people in the Drimiopsis and Skoonheid Resettlement Projects in brickmaking, the construction of dry sanitation units, and the upgrading of the water reticulation network and kindergarten facilities. About 50 temporary employment opportunities were created in the process, which generated a combined income of N\$289000 for the San workers concerned over a period of seven months.

14.2.4 Employment

The wealth-ranking exercises carried out in this study underscored that very few San are formally employed, especially in the skilled labour market, and this is substantiated by the Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2009/2010. According to the NHIES data (and our own calculations based on that data),¹¹ 50% of the Khoisan speakers who were considered to be 'economically active' were actually unemployed (NHIES data set, NSA), as compared with 34% of the Namibian population in general and 37% of the rural population (NSA 2012: 44).¹² This underlines that unemployment among the San is considerably higher than among other language groups in Namibia.

Of those Khoisan speakers whom the NHIES 2009/2010 categorised as "employed", 61% were engaged in "agriculture, forestry and hunting", but only 13% of the employed Khoisan speakers were engaged in "subsistence farming", since the majority (64%) stated that they were 'paid as an employee by private employers' and 11% 'by government' (NHIES data set, NSA). This implies that many of the San who engaged in "agriculture, forestry and hunting" did so on a remunerated or paid basis, but based on the findings of this San Study, the authors have concluded that, contrary to the NHIES categorisation, this work is usually undertaken as casual work or piecework rather than through formal employment contracts (see section 14.2.3). Moreover, San people's remuneration for agricultural work (casual or piecework) in the rural areas can take many forms: money, food (e.g. maize-meal or *mahangu* (millet) flour), and even alcohol (e.g. *otombo* – home-brewed beer).

Nevertheless, both our research (see section 14.3.3) and the NHIES 2009/2010 indicate that salaries and wages are important for the San; in fact 47% of the Khoisan-speaking households considered "salaries and wages" as their main source of income (NSA 2012: 57). In this sense San households are quite different from the average rural Namibian household, in that "salaries and wages" are the main source of income for only 30% of rural households in Namibia generally, and subsistence farming is normally more important as the main source of income (40% of households). On the other hand, only 4% of Khoisan-speaking households cited subsistence farming as their main source of income (NSA 2012: 57). The relative importance of salaries and wages for the San perhaps underscores the importance of immediate returns for work for a significant portion of the San population (see also Chapter 15 on culture, discrimination and development).

NGOs and community-based organisations working with the San do employ a number of San as staff members. For example, at the time of our field research, the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) had four San employees (including the Namibian San Council Coordinator),¹³ and most the employees of the Kyaramacan Association in the BNP were Khwe.¹⁴ In Otjozondjupa Region, the Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies offer employment

¹¹ The authors had to request access to the NHIES 2009/2010 data set to compute the unemployment rate among Khoisan speakers as the NSA had not disaggregated employment and unemployment by language group in its NHIES report.

¹² The NHIES 2009/2010 asked all persons aged eight years and older about their economic activity status during the seven days prior to the reference night. A person was regarded as having worked if he/she had worked for at least one hour for pay, profit or family gain during that period, or had a job or business or other economic or farming activity to return to. Thus, people who had worked for at least one hour but had not engaged in any other economic activity or paid work (e.g. students or homemakers) were considered to be 'economically active' and hence part of the labour force (NSA 2012: 40). To be considered 'unemployed' by the NHIES 2009/2010, a person had to meet three criteria, i.e. he/she had to be: (1) without work; (2) available for work; and (3) actively looking for work. For determining a broad unemployment rate, only the first two criteria are applied, and for a stricter rate, the third criterion is applied to exclude people who are not actively looking for work (NSA 2012: 44).

¹³ Information provided by Victoria Haraseb, WIMSA, 11 November 2013.

¹⁴ Information provided by Friedrich Alpers, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), 26 June 2013.

opportunities to a few Ju|'hoansi and !Xun, mostly as game rangers and tour guides. At the time of our field research, Nyae Nyae had 23 Ju|'hoan employees and N‡a Jaqna had a total of 12 !Xun and Ju|'hoan employees.¹⁵

14.2.5 Gathering veldfood and hunting

Our study found that veldfood remains a significant contributor to the San household diet, albeit to varying degrees. A number of tubers, berries, fruits and worms were identified as supplying relish for eating with the maize or *mahangu* obtained as food aid or from piecework and/or crop fields. Gathering such food is seen as both a cultural practice and a way of supplementing insufficient and irregular food supplies, and participants in the research discussions at most sites were able to list a number of veldfoods with which they were familiar. However, gathering activities today are restricted by people's limited access to land (see Chapter 13 on access to land). Most San groups now have very limited access to veldfood, as most of them live:

- in settlements and on resettlement farms on commercial land (e.g. in Omaheke, Otjozondjupa, Kunene and Oshikoto Regions); or
- in urban areas (e.g. Outjo, Gobabis, Katima Mulilo and Eenhana); or
- in areas adjacent to small-scale farms (e.g. Xeidang village in Kavango); or
- on communal land where land is shared with cattle farmers from other ethnic groups, and where access to land can be further impeded by the erection of illegal fences (e.g. in the area of Goreseb village in Omaheke and on Farm Six in Oshikoto); or
- in national parks (the core zone of the BNP and the whole of the Etosha National Park); or
- in areas used by other ethnic groups where an overexploitation of natural resources has taken place (e.g. in Caprivi and Ohangwena).

San groups living in conservancies, on the other hand, have fairly good access to veldfood, thus gathering still plays an important role in sustaining livelihoods and diversifying the inhabitants' diet.

A few San at a number of research sites across the country admitted that they still hunt small game occasionally – especially in times of hunger – but hunting was rarely reported to be a significant livelihood strategy today. This is partly attributable to hunting being strictly regulated in recent times – initially by the Nature Conservation Ordinance No. 4 of 1975, and since 1996 by the Nature Conservation Amendment Act 5 of 1996; indeed the latter has outlawed hunting in many areas. In addition – as in the case of veldfood gathering – population growth and the occupation of land by farmers from other ethnic groups have reduced San people's access to land, thereby limiting their opportunities to hunt, and privately owned land and parts of communal areas have become inaccessible to San who would otherwise hunt and gather there. Moreover in certain areas wildlife numbers have been considerably reduced or have disappeared altogether.

Nyae Nyae Conservancy is an exception in this regard because the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) explicitly accepts hunting in the traditional manner there, and the conservancy and the MET have agreed on guidelines to serve as regulations for "traditional hunting". These regulations restrict the hunting of certain species, and allow for the use of 'traditional' hunting tools only (e.g. bows, spears and traps), i.e. they forbid the use of guns, horses and dogs. Therefore, in the villages of Nyae Nyae Conservancy, and uniquely at our research sites in this conservancy, hunting was regarded as an important livelihood strategy.

¹⁵ Information provided by Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), on 19 October 2013.

14.2.6 Subsistence crop production

According to the NHIES 2009/2010 data, "subsistence farming" was the main source of income for 23.1% of all households in Namibia (NSA 2012: 57). (Although not explicitly stated in the NHIES report, this is assumed to include both animal husbandry and crop production.) Subsistence farming by the Khoisan-speaking population is significantly lower, with only 3.7% of all Khoisan speakers recorded as subsistence farmers.

The factors that generally limit the San's involvement in crop production are largely attributable to a lack of access to land, unfavourable climatic conditions, a lack of agricultural equipment and limited support in the provision of the required farm inputs. A shortage of fencing material or backlogs in the maintenance of fences to stop roaming livestock from destroying crops also play a role (see Omusati chapter, page 306). Another major factor is the pressure among the San to earn income to meet immediate household needs through working for direct gain. In certain areas (e.g. in Ohangwena Region), this practice has been further influenced by the missionary presence in the past (a factor which is discussed in detail in Chapter 15 on culture – see e.g. section 15.4.1 on page 513). However, none of these factors apply to all San groups in the same way: in Omusati and Caprivi (outside the BNP), for example, a lack of access to land was not observed as a hindrance to crop production, but the lack of fences and equipment for sustainable crop production did hinder this activity. Conversely, at research sites in Kavango and Oshikoto, a lack of access to land was identified as a major constraint to subsistence crop farming by the respective San groups, and a lack of fences also played a role (e.g. in Tsintsabis Resettlement Project in Oshikoto).

According to the NHIES 2009/2010 data, a mere 11.7% of Khoisan speakers own land for crop production, and only 18.6% have access to land for this purpose (NSA 2012: 112). In line with these statistics, crop production was rarely mentioned in our research discussions as one of the most important livelihood strategies for the San. Nevertheless, at certain sites agriculture was reported to contribute to the San livelihoods to considerable though varying degrees. Following is an overview of the importance of crop production for San livelihoods at various research sites:

- At some sites there was no crop production taking place. *Examples:* Wiwi village and Ndama neighbourhood (in Rundu) in Kavango Region; Mushangara village in the BNP; Corridor 13 settlement, Goreseb village and Blouberg Resettlement Project in Omaheke Region; Oshivelo settlement in Oshikoto Region; N‡animh village in Nyae Nyae Conservancy, Otjozondjupa Region; and Ouholamo neighbourhood, Omiishi neighbourhood, and Oshikoha and Onane villages in Ohangwena Region.
- Small-scale backyard gardening was taking place, providing small amounts of crops and fresh produce which was usually consumed by the household within a couple of days/weeks. *Examples:* Kanaan neighbourhood (in Epako, Gobabis) in Omaheke; Etosha Poort 'location' (in Outjo) in Kunene; Okaukuejo restcamp in Etosha National Park, Oshana; Tsintsabis Resettlement Project in Oshikoto; and Xeidang village in Kavango.
- Small-scale crop production with the produce lasting for a few weeks/months was taking place. *Examples:* Likwaterera village, Mushashane village and Omega I Resettlement Project in Kavango; Mulanga and Dam/Bito villages in Caprivi; and Mangetti Dune and Luhebo villages in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, Otjozondjupa.
- Small- to medium-scale crop production was undertaken at resettlement projects in Ohangwena and Omaheke through substantial amounts of external support from the Namibian Government, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the DRFN and the Habitafrica Foundation (see section 14.5.3 on external support for crop production, page 488).

• Significant crop production without major external support, and which contributed significantly to the San's livelihoods, was taking place at all sites in Omusati Region. Depending on rainfall patterns and amounts, the crop produce would last the San households from a couple of months to a year. A major factor in this regard is the fact that the San at the Omusati sites have access to residential and farming units on the communal lands which they inhabit.

14.2.7 Livestock

Although Namibia is a country known for its livestock production, animal husbandry does not contribute significantly to the household incomes and food supplies of any San group. Our study found that the majority of San either did not own any large or small stock, or owned very limited numbers, and the NHIES 2009/2010 data also reflects this finding (NSA 2012: 112).¹⁶ This does not mean that the San at the various research sites do not attach great value to large or small stock: a considerable proportion of the San in all regions surveyed, and especially those who had been employed as farmworkers on farms in the central regions of the country, aspire to farming with livestock to support their families. We did record some instances in different regions where a few San individuals owned cattle and/or goats. For example, in Xeidang village (Kavango), two young men had bought goats with money earned from casual work on commercial farms. (Accumulating some savings from the money earned from casual work generally takes a long time, and the period of accumulation depends largely on the size of the household.) In some cases remuneration for casual work had been in the form of an animal (e.g. in Xeidang and in Goreseb village in Omaheke. At many sites, most of the San households also kept free-range chickens, which they might sell or (occasionally) eat.

Nevertheless, our research underscored a number of factors that limit the San's opportunities to farm with livestock. First and foremost, the purchase of livestock requires money – which most San simply do not have. Secondly, access to grazing land must be secured.

Over the years, various stakeholders have sought to address these constraints by donating livestock to San communities, but these initiatives met with varying degrees of success. At a number of sites, government programmes such as the Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme (DAPAP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), and donor programmes such as the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme (RPRP) and the Namibia-German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP), have provided large or small stock with the aim of improving the San beneficiaries' livelihoods. For example, in Goreseb village (Omaheke) and at Tsintsabis Resettlement Project (Oshikoto), a few San owned some goats and cattle respectively through a project supported by the government (see Chapter 4 on Omaheke and Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana), and in 2009, Skoonheid Resettlement Project received approximately 240 livestock from the NGSIP under the overall coordination of the NPC Secretariat. In 2013 the NGSIP donated more livestock to various San communities around the country: in Omaheke, for example, the San communities of Corridor 17-b settlement, Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Project and Epukiro Post 3 settlement benefitted from livestock donations (see section 14.5.4 on external support for livestock projects, page 491, for a discussion of these donations).

¹⁶ According to the NHIES 2009/2010 data, 15.1% of Khoisan-speaking households own cattle and 11.2% own goats. (The only other language groups of African descent with little ownership of cattle and goats are the Nama and Damara at 15.2% and 25% respectively). By contrast, the numbers for other groups of African descent are much higher: Caprivians 58.7%; Herero 51.9%; Kavango 39.6%; Owambo 40.9%; and Tswana 38.6%. German- and Afrikaansspeaking households also exhibit low ownership of cattle and goats, but this can be attributed to the fact that the majority of these households rely primarily on formal employment for their household income (NSA 2012: 112).

However, our study has found that only a few San farmers manage to continue farming with the donated livestock over an extended period (see section 14.5), and although they benefit from milk for their own consumption, they rarely have excess animals to sell to generate a cash income.

14.2.8 Small businesses and trade-based income-generating activities

According to the NHIES 2009/2010, "business income" is the main source of income for only 2% of Khoisan-speaking households (NSA 2012: 57). This finding coincides with our finding that only a few San engage in 'small business' – meaning, in this context, the activity of buying items such as sugar and tea in larger quantities and then repackaging and selling them in smaller quantities, or producing and selling food items such as *vetkoek* (deep-fried dough/pastry) and home-made ice. San were observed operating cuca shops (a.k.a. shebeens¹⁷) at research sites in Omusati but nowhere else.

Although San at many sites had tried to earn additional income with small businesses in the past, none of the participants in our research discussions considered this to be an important incomegenerating or livelihood strategy. This relates to the fact that customers – mainly San in the same community, who are equally poor or even poorer than the person running the business – would often buy on credit, and the San businessperson would then feel uncomfortable asking them to pay off the accumulated debt. (This is related to the importance of sharing in traditional and current San cultures, which is discussed at length in Chapter 15 on culture.) The lack of both a cash income and commensurate purchasing power experienced in all San communities, and the San's very limited capacity to invest money in a small business operation, play a role in the failure of San to become businesspeople or to succeed in business. A third factor mentioned in many research discussions is the lack of experience and training in business activities such as accounting, which is linked to the generally high level of illiteracy among the San population.

14.2.9 Sale of natural products (informally)

The San Study found that San in different parts of the country tried to earn some additional income by selling natural products informally (i.e. without the technical support of NGOs, donor-funded programmes and/or private-sector intermediaries). These products include *omajova* (termite mushrooms) harvested during the rainy season in Oshikoto Region, grass for thatching houses (e.g. in Ohangwena and Omusati), firewood or wood for fencing and construction purposes (many regions), and Devil's Claw (e.g. in Caprivi outside the BNP). The income from informal sales is irregular and the amounts are often small – at times a daily income covers only the costs of provisions for the day, e.g. relish for mealie-pap, or *otombo* – hence the end result is similar to that of certain types of piecework (e.g. payment in kind for fetching water for shebeens). The sale of Devil's Claw, on the other hand, can generate an income of several hundred dollars per bag, however the harvest usually takes several weeks, and, as is the case with Old Age Pension money, this income is often spent immediately on essentials such as food, clothing, school hostel fees and paying off debts.

14.2.10 Sale of crafts (informally)

San women and men at many sites sold crafts – carvings, bows and arrows, knives, jewellery, baskets etc. – on a self-organised informal basis, without any external support (e.g. in Kunene, Oshana and Ohangwena), but several factors were limiting their success: limited access to materials, a lack of quality control, a lack of business and financial skills, and constrained access to markets.

¹⁷ See footnote 3 on page 48 for an explanation of these terms.

14.2.11 Income-generation activities (IGAs) with external support

A number of IGAs are supported by NGOs – often in partnership with one another – examples being the DRFN, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), the Centre for Research, Information and Action in Africa – Southern African Development and Consulting (CRIAA SA-DC), Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and the Omba Arts Trust.

The Sustainably Harvested Devil's Claw Project (SHDCP) financed by the **Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia** (MCA-N) and implemented by **CRIAA SA-DC** in partnership with the **NNDFN**, **DRFN** and **Habitafrica Foundation** is one IGA benefiting San. The Kyaramacan Association (KA) in the BNP and the Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies hold certificates from Ecocert (international certification organisation) for their Devil's Claw, meaning that the produce that they offer for sale is formally certified as organic. At present, no other organisation in Namibia can offer this certification for its harvested Devil's Claw, thus the KA, Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna are currently in an advantageous position with respect to the marketability of this product.

According to the MCA-N, the average annual production of Namibian Devil's Claw has increased from a meagre 46 metric tons from 830 producers in 2009 to 215 metric tons from 2254 producers in 2012. Accordingly, the income generated from Devil's Claw sales amounted to US\$67 000¹⁸ in 2009 and US\$482 000 in 2012. Thus far the primary importers of Devil's Claw have been Germany, Poland and France. Namibia is the world's largest supplier of Devil's Claw, gaining foreign exchange earnings of up to US\$2.8 million in 2012 (all figures from Cole et al. 2013: 17).

CRIAA SA-DC data conveys that this organisation was supporting 459 harvesters in the BNP, 479 harvesters in N‡a Jaqna and 68 harvesters in Nyae Nyae in 2012. Around 46% of all these harvesters were female. The average annual income per harvester was N\$1561 in the BNP, N\$1330 in N‡a



¹⁸ Cole et al. (2013) used the exchange rate of N\$8,8 to US\$1, though recognising that the rate could have been less in 2009.

Jaqna and N\$1361 in Nyae Nyae. Although these amounts do not suffice to meet individual and/ or household cash needs, they are important earnings given the scarce cash-earning opportunities available to San men and women generally.

The **Omba Arts Trust** (OAT) has been instrumental in promoting crafts as an IGA in Nyae Nyae Conservancy (Otjozondjupa Region), Ekoka Resettlement Project (Ohangwena), and Drimiopsis, Skoonheid and Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Projects (Omaheke) (see Box 14.1). Craft sales could earn an average of N\$60554 per annum for each of the five producer groups.¹⁹ Craft sales have become increasingly important for the livelihoods of the beneficiaries. For example, in Omaheke the number of San involved in OAT-supported craft production increased from approximately 30 women at Skoonheid in 2007 to a total of 91 women and men at the three resettlement projects in 2010, and currently over 100 women and men in the three projects are actively engaged in craft production. The combined income from sales for these three projects has increased from approximately N\$92000 in 2010 to N\$125000 in 2011 and N\$158000 in 2012 (DRFN and Habitafrica 2013: 76). This implies that the annual income per craft producer increased from approximately N\$1000 to N\$1580 in the period 2010-2012. This income helps San women (and to a lesser extent men) to meet some basic needs such as purchases of maize-meal, cooking oil, tea, sugar and soap, thus it contributes to improving the food security of households involved in craft production. Other benefits of the OAT-supported activities are described in Box 14.1.

Box 14.1: Supporting San livelihoods and culture through crafts and art: Omba Arts Trust

By Karin le Roux, Director, Omba Arts Trust

The Omba Arts Trust is a registered Namibian trust that aims to support the sustainable livelihoods of marginalised communities through the development, sales and marketing of quality Namibian products. Operational since 2004 as an independent trust, its work commenced in the early 1990s through the craft programme of the Rössing Foundation, one of the key players in the research and development of the craft sector in Namibia after Independence. Omba focuses on training and development, retail, wholesale, and the export of quality Namibian products. All of the products have been designed and developed either with rural producers or in conjunction with designers, and all are rooted in local culture, making them uniquely Namibian. Omba supports 13 groups (some 450 producers) in nine regions: 60% of producers are San from six communities in Omaheke, Otjozondjupa and Ohangwena Regions, and over 95% of all producers are women.

Omba and San craft

Omba collaborates with a number of partners working with San communities, including DRFN, IRDNC and NNDFN, and has been developing contemporary ranges of craft and art products for nearly 18 years. Omba's approach to San craft is market driven, so those products and materials that would appeal to Omba's niche markets – tourism and high-end galleries – are targeted. By far the largest market is for Omba's range of products (ostrich eggshell jewellery, textiles, paintings, sculpture and prints) that are rooted in San culture, and which utilise existing skills but have a contemporary twist. Product development is essential to meet market requirements, as is branding. We have branded the products coming from the resettlement projects in Omaheke and Ohangwena under the '**Art-i-San**' range, and these, together with the Nyae Nyae and West Caprivi products, are sold in the Art-i-San shop and the Namibia Craft Centre – both located in the Old Breweries Craft Market complex in Windhoek.

¹⁹ The N\$ amounts recorded in this paragraph are the chapter authors' calculations based on figures provided by OAT.



Nyae Nyae Conservancy

Crafting beads made from ostrich eggshell is a 40 000-year-old tradition among the San of southern Africa. In the 21st century, some San communities in Namibia – especially the Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae Conservancy – continue to make jewellery from sustainable supplies of ostrich egg shards. There are an estimated 250 producers in Nyae Nyae, mostly women.

The synergy between Omba's market and production in the field has resulted in an exciting new range of contemporary San-made products that has not only supported crafters in the conservancy, but around which a host of informal traders and other marketing operations in the region thrive today. A number of individuals and church-based organisations buy and sell Nyae Nyae products, but Omba remains the principal customer of **G!hunku Craft** (the conservancy's enterprise). Continual quality and design inputs from Omba have kept the products contemporary and marketable.

Okongo

A request from WIMSA and UNESCO in 2002 to develop a craft initiative at the San resettlement project of Ekoka, Ohangwena Region, led to a different approach. A field visit to the area revealed a desperately poor community with very few cultural or other resources that would make a craft programme viable. Instead, Omba decided to introduce art workshops and try to draw on the innate creativity of the San. It also facilitated a baseline survey. Several art workshops were conducted, and a group of artists emerged from those individuals who showed interest and perseverance. As a result, oil and watercolour paintings and lino prints have been exhibited regularly in Windhoek as well as in South Africa and overseas. Motifs have been used from the artworks in a textile range (Art-i-San) printed in South Africa, and each year artists receive a royalty on metres sold as well as money from the sale of the artworks themselves. This model has proved to be quite successful, despite its challenges. Omba continues to hold workshops with donor support, and has been able to sustain an annual income for a group of artists. In 2012 new artists were added, with the group now totalling 12 (7 men and 5 women).

A craft programme has also been implemented in partnership with DRFN since 2011, incorporating another resettlement project called Oshanashiva – however logistics in the field continue to be a challenge and progress has been slow.

West Caprivi (BNP)

IRDNC, and more recently the Kyaramacan Association, have been working with Khwe women in West Caprivi, and their products are marketed through **Mashie Craft**. Omba is the main wholesale customer for these products.

Achievements and benefits

- The income from craft and art sales remains the only cash income (other than pensions) that most of the Omba-supported San communities receive.
- Fifty-six percent of Omba's total purchases in 2012 went to San communities, with an average increase of 27% in income for San producers from the previous year.
- With larger amounts of money earned, artists and producers are able to invest their money more wisely (improving homesteads, investing in crop production, opening savings accounts etc.)
- The health and overall wellbeing of the Skoonheid community has improved as a direct result of the craft income (personal communication from Dr De Kok).
- Long-term and trusting relationships are being developed. Being socially connected enables individuals to get involved in opportunities that build their social networks and strengthen relationships among their peers and communities. Such activities support self-actualisation and reinforce people's self-esteem and identity, enabling individuals to develop a sense of belonging in their communities and the wherewithal to contribute to those communities.
- The craft and art initiatives build on the strengths and natural skills of the San, and the producers show improved self-esteem and confidence as well as a consciousness and pride in San culture.
- Leadership development in women through the skills they gain in attending workshops and interacting with their communities. Xoan||an Aliee, the first female chairperson of Nyae Nyae Conservancy, was the craft manager for a number of years. In other communities crafters/artists have been chosen to represent their communities at workshops, conferences, exhibitions and trade shows nationally and internationally.
- Omba invites leaders from all of the groups it supports for an annual peer review workshop. San leaders enthusiastically engage in the group discussions and present plans etc. to the participants. This has been an excellent vehicle for integrating San groups with crafters all over the country.
- Omba is growing a body of work of contemporary San art in Namibia. The San share a unique, common visual language, not only regionally (e.g. contemporary San art from Kuru, Botswana, and Smidtsdrift, South Africa) but also historically, with similarities in style and content (e.g. the Bleek and Lloyd collection of paintings and drawings produced by !Kung and Xam children in the 19th century).

Challenges

- The remoteness of most San communities results in many logistical and financial challenges in the supply chain.
- Lack of formal skills mean that projects require long-term support and mentoring in order for groups to manage systems on their own eventually.
- Group dynamics and community politics create problems for leaders. Regular interventions are required.
- Mismanagement of money by group leaders and/or intermediaries affects morale and sustainability.
- Materials need to be sourced locally or regionally and dispatched to groups. This requires additional administration, therefore operational costs are considerably higher.
- Most of the craft groups require long-term mentoring and support, and donors' short funding cycles makes this challenging. Stop/start interventions impact negatively on motivation.
- With rapidly changing culture and exposure to modern media and textbooks in schools, the innate and unique visual language of the San will gradually disappear. We have a moment in time to capture this for posterity.

14.2.12 Other tourism-related activities

In Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies, activities linked to living museums, tourism and trophy-hunting concessions also contribute to the income of the Ju|'hoansi and !Xun households. There are two popular living museums in N‡a Jaqna and Nyae Nyae, namely the Grashoek Living Museum and the Living Hunters Museum respectively.²⁰ The Ju|'hoansi and the !Xun in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna also earn dividends from conservancy-run income-generating activities.

To conclude, San in all regions lack self-sustaining livelihoods. They are extremely dependent on external support (chiefly pensions and food aid), and to make a living they pursue a range of activities (often in combination) on the fringes of society. Their incomes are small; mostly they cover only the daily needs of an individual or a household. This situation is unlikely to change in the near future unless the approaches to San development are better coordinated and are restructured to facilitate the long-term support that San communities clearly need to finally achieve livelihood sustainability.

14.3 Wealth and poverty among the San in Namibia

Namibia is currently classified as a middle-income country, based on its per capita annual income, which was US\$4876 in 2010 (one of the highest in sub-Saharan Africa). The country's economy grew at a rate of 3.8% in 2011 compared to 6.6% in 2010, representing a significant decline, but it was expected to stabilise at 4% in 2013 (African Development Bank (ADB) 2012: 3). Despite this upgrading to the 'middle-income' category, Namibia has one of the worst levels of inequality in the world. In 2012 the Gini coefficient for Namibia was estimated to be 0.59 (NSA 2012: 141). Although this is a slight improvement on previous figures, it implies that the richest 2% of households (1.1% of the national population) enjoy 16.8% of the national income, while the poorest 25% of households (36.8% of the population) contend with 7.2% of the national income (NSA 2012: 139). The *Human Development Report* of 2013 ranked Namibia at 120 out of 197 countries, with an HDI ranking of 0.63 (UNDP 2013: 154). According to the 'basic needs approach' used in the NHIES 2009/2010, 19% of Namibia's population are poor and 10% are severely poor (NSA 2012: xi-xii). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has noted that this poorest proportion receives a mere 0.6% of the national share of income and expenditure (UNDP 2009: 197).

The NHIES 2009/2010 found that 54.9% and 37.1% of Khoisan speakers suffer from poverty or severe poverty respectively (NSA 2012: 164; see also Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2009: 38).²¹ Jauch reports that Khoisan speakers comprise one of the language groups that are worst affected by poverty in Namibia (Jauch 2012: 4), and that they represent one of the lowest rates of per capita consumption in the country (Jauch 2012: 126). According to the NHIES 2009/2010, per capita income for the Khoisan-speaking households amounted to N\$6631 per annum, while the national average was N\$14559. With N\$5777, the Rukavango-speaking households registered a slightly lower annual per capita income than the Khoisan in 2009/10, which may be attributed to the fact that Rukavango households are larger than San households on average (NSA 2012: 135).

In this San Study we were interested to find out about the San's perceptions of poverty and the criteria they used to assess poverty levels both within their own communities and in comparison

²⁰ The average annual income of the living museum at Grashoek since 2008 has been estimated at N\$457720 based on figures from the NNDFN and the chapter authors' calculations.

²¹ 'Severely poor' implies a per capita income of less than N\$277,54 per month, whereas a household is classified as 'poor' if the per capita income is less than N\$377,96. The two categories overlap, meaning that a total of 54.9% of Khoisan-speaking households were classified as 'poor' or 'severely poor' (NSA 2012: 151, 164).

to neighbouring groups, and at times in comparison to other San groups living in differing socioeconomic situations. We used a wealth-ranking exercise at the research sites to assess the perceived socio-economic stratifications in each San community. This method was also used to determine the characteristics of different socio-economic groups within each community and the criteria for evaluating them, and to assess coping strategies of the poor and very poor San. In addition, the opportunities for moving up the social ladder and the risks of losing wealth and socio-economic status were reviewed.

At all research sites, the San perceived themselves to be the poorest population group compared to other ethnic groups in their respective neighbourhoods – although at some sites participants acknowledged that a few members of neighbouring ethnic groups were also poor. The participants at all sites categorised the majority of their community members as either 'extremely poor' or 'poor', but the perceptions of poverty and the criteria applied to distinguish between wealth categories differed somewhat from one region and site to the next. In the first place, some participant groups identified three categories of wealth (e.g. 'poor', 'middle' and 'rich'), whereas others identified five or even six categories.²² A key example of differing wealth-distinguishing criteria across regions is as follows: in Omusati, many of the poorest San had a crop field (albeit unfenced), whereas in the BNP and Omaheke, having or lacking access to a crop field or small garden distinguished the poor from the very poor, and in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana, access to a crop field or garden was not mentioned at all as a criterion for any wealth category.

In the following subsections we draw overall conclusions from the findings of the wealth-ranking exercise at each site, with a view to identifying general patterns.

14.3.1 San living in extreme poverty

In general, San people living in extreme poverty were characterised by the features listed below. The sites listed for each feature are *examples* of sites where the applicable feature was mentioned:

- Hunger Kanaan neighbourhood, Blouberg Resettlement Project and Corridor 13 settlement (all in Omaheke), Ndama neighbourhood (Kavango) and Etosha Poort 'location' (Kunene).
- **Being without family who can assist** Skoonheid Resettlement Project (Omaheke) and sites in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies (Otjozondjupa).
- **Depending on others** Oshivelo settlement (Oshikoto), Okaukuejo restcamp (Oshana) and Omega I Resettlement Project (BNP).
- Having disabled or physically weak household members Oshivelo and sites in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna.
- Lacking proper clothing Ndama and Xeidang village (Kavango), Oshivelo and Tsintsabis Resettlement Project (Oshikoto), and sites in Omusati.²³
- Excessive alcohol consumption Okaukuejo, Oshivelo, Tsintsabis, Corridor 13, Kanaan (regions cited above) and Makaravan settlement (Caprivi).
- Lack of adequate housing/dwellings Corridor 13, Okaukuejo, Etosha Poort, Oshivelo, Omega I and sites in Omusati.

²² The terminology varied. In the Bwabwata National Park (BNP), participants distinguished, for example, between 'very poor', 'poor', 'better off', 'lower rich', 'medium rich' and 'rich'. In Kunene Region the categories were 'very poor', 'not so poor', 'middle class', 'better off' and 'rich'. In Omusati Region the categories were 'very poor', 'poor', 'middle', rich' and 'very rich'. In Omaheke Region the categories were 'very poor', 'poor', 'halfway', 'better off' or 'moving forward', and finally 'wealthy' or 'wealthier'.

²³ The authors of the chapters on Ohangwena and Omusati did not provide an overview of the wealth-ranking exercise per site, but only a regional overview (see pages 252 and 307 in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively).

- Limited opportunities for piecework or casual work Oshivelo, Blouberg and sites in Omusati and Ohangwena; or the opportunities are limited to low-paid piecework only Xeidang, Ndama, Omega I, Mushashane and Mushangara villages (BNP), and sites in Ohangwena.
- Not having a household member with a pension Okaukuejo, Ndama and sites in Ohangwena; or many household members depending on just one pension Etosha Poort.
- Not having access to a garden, or having access to only a small garden Skoonheid, Luhebo and Mangetti Dune villages (Otjozondjupa), Xeidang and Wiwi village (Kavango), Omega I, and sites in Ohangwena; or not having fences around fields Omusati.
- Not owning any livestock and/or not being able to access or use livestock Skoonheid, Ndama, Likwaterera village (Kavango), Omega I, and sites in Omusati and Ohangwena.
- A general lack of assets and household items Likwaterera, Skoonheid, Blouberg, and sites in Omusati and Ohangwena.

At most sites, participants categorised between 50% and 80% of the San households as 'poor' or 'very poor'. Very few San were categorised as 'better off' (often the second wealthiest group) or 'wealthy' / 'rich' / 'very rich'. In Omusati and Ohangwena, the San who were receiving the War Veteran Pension (discussed in section 14.3.3) were explicitly categorised as much better off than the rest of the San. Otherwise, at most sites, formal employment was the determining factor for being categorised as better off or even rich, and at many sites, 'using the money wisely' (i.e. not wasting money on alcohol or unnecessary luxuries) was mentioned as an accompanying factor.

14.3.2 Food insecurity

The household food situation appeared to be a central distinguishing feature in the wealth rankings of the San, both among themselves and in comparison with members of other ethnic groups. At several sites in Kavango, Kunene and Omusati, it was said that the poorest San would beg for food, and conversely, 'being able to eat what one wants' (in terms of both quantity and frequency) was seen as symbol of wealth. However, as discussed in the next section of this chapter, at all the research sites the majority of San were found to be food insecure; these San had no more than two meals a day, and they depended on irregular and uncertain food supplies. There were also reports of instances and periods (e.g. during the dry season) of some San having to survive on only one meal per day, which was supplemented by drinking tea with sugar – hence the statement in Omaheke that "tea is the boss" (see Chapter 4, page 55). The very poor, such as households with elderly members who did not receive a pension and who were not strong enough to carry out any kind of work, would usually be vulnerable to food shortages in both quantity and quality; they might survive on one meal per day on a regular basis, usually consisting of *mahangu* or maize porridge (see Chapter 7 on Ohangwena Region, page 250).

The food consumed usually consisted of a porridge of *mahangu* (in northern regions specifically) or maize (all over the country). San who had access to gardens or crop fields might be in a position to supplement the staple diet of *mahangu* or maize with beans (cowpea) or fresh corn at certain times of year, although these secondary sources of food would be consumed less frequently. Other supplementary foods mentioned included veldfoods (e.g. berries, tubers and mopane worms) and milk or fat (not necessarily from livestock belonging to the San, but rather, most frequently, from other community members' livestock). Discussion participants at many sites across the regions stated that they rarely ate meat, although meat was generally considered to be an important source of food. Pensioners occasionally bought fresh vegetables, meat or fat on Old Age Pension payout day, and rice and macaroni were also listed among the food items which are less frequently bought and consumed (see for example Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana, page 197).

Across all research sites and regions, the San generally viewed themselves as more food insecure and thus poorer than members of other ethnic groups. However, there were isolated cases, such as at sites in Omusati where the San thought that some Owambo households were just as food insecure as they were, if not more so.

It has to be noted that gathering veldfood was not mentioned as an option for escaping extreme poverty; instead this was considered to be a coping strategy. This is due to the fact that in most areas, veldfood has become difficult to source due to the lack of access to land where it might be found. Thus it cannot be said that the veld provides sufficient food to overcome food shortages.

In the following section we describe in more detail the factors that discussion participants perceived as determinants of the socio-economic situation of San households. This information can provide important insights into potential development strategies that might be adopted in future to improve the livelihoods of the San.

14.3.3 Determinants of the socio-economic status of San households

Alcohol abuse

Discussion participants strongly associated excessive use of alcohol with poverty – however it was impossible to determine whether alcohol abuse was a cause or an effect of the impoverished circumstances of the people concerned. At various research sites across the regions (e.g. Oshivelo settlement and Tsintsabis Resettlement Project in Oshikoto and Skoonheid Resettlement Project in Omaheke), an improvement in a person's standard of living or socio-economic status was said to be possible only if he/she stopped drinking: a group of young Hai||om men in Oshivelo attributed their escape from extreme poverty to their decision to stop drinking alcohol; and at Tsintsabis, several people mentioned that they had been in the poorest category but had found that they could improve their standard of living by refraining from alcohol. Some San communities (e.g. that of Skoonheid) reported that they had tried to ban alcohol from their environment in an effort to ensure that the San could make progress in life, and the community of Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Project (Omaheke) had managed to keep alcohol out of the project site for several years until recently. Such efforts do not always enjoy the support of non-San people residing or working in the vicinity, some of whom want to continue selling alcohol to the San – often with devastating effects on the general wellbeing of more vulnerable members of the San community.

Casual work and piecework

Although piecework and casual work are major contributors of cash income for San households, very rarely were these forms of work mentioned as means to escape poverty; they were generally regarded merely as means to help San families to meet their basic daily needs. In fact, the very need to engage in such work was seen as an indication of poverty. This perception is due to the uncertain availability, unsafe conditions and poor remuneration associated with piecework and casual work, and possibly also the lack of awareness of the legal steps that might be taken to address these issues (see the recommendations at the end of this chapter).

Old Age Pensions, War Veteran Pensions and other social welfare grants

Discussion participants considered pensions and other social welfare grants (e.g. grants for orphans and vulnerable children and people with disabilities) as important means to avoid extreme poverty.

For this reason, households in which one or several members received a monthly pension or grant were rarely categorised in the wealth-ranking exercises as 'very poor' or 'extremely poor'. At some sites, however, it was stressed that the number of dependants living off one pension/ grant as the main source of household income affected the household's ability to address extreme poverty: if many dependants were supported by one pension or grant, the household might still be classified as extremely poor. Specific examples were reported at many sites (e.g. Okathakanguti village in Omusati) where San households with a recipient of a pension or grant were nonetheless categorised as extremely poor because they had many dependants (in some cases over 10). The perceptions of the San who participated in our research confirmed that the government has made some progress towards eradicating extreme poverty with non-contributory social grants such as the Old Age Pension, but a number of challenges have yet to be overcome, above all the backlog in registration (NPC 2012a: 63).

San in the Omusati and Ohangwena considered those who received a War Veteran Pension – a oneoff payment of N\$50 000 and N\$2 500 per month subsequently – as having succeeded in improving their standard of living, thus no recipient of this pension was considered to be very poor or poor. However, very few San are eligible for this payment.

Crop fields and agricultural equipment

Crop fields and agricultural implements were considered to be essential for poverty reduction. Generally, those San who owned or who had access to crop fields were regarded as better off than those without. This applied particularly to research sites in the northern regions where crop cultivation forms the basis of rural livelihoods, and also to some sites in the eastern and central regions. Having a crop field was dependent not only on access to land in the first place, but also on the availability of equipment (e.g. ploughs and oxen) to cultivate the field. (Crop fields were distinguished from gardens, which are usually located around people's houses and do not generate much food in comparison to crop fields).

Livestock and other animals

Those who owned cattle and goats were considered to be better off than those without, and owning large numbers of livestock (especially large stock) was seen as a way to avoid poverty, since a certain number could be sold off when in need of extra money. However, ownership of large herds of large stock appeared to be the exclusive preserve of members of other ethnic groups; our study found that just a handful of San across the sites owned large stock, and none of them owned a large number of stock. Many households kept chickens, and the flocks varied in size, but owning even a larger flock did not make a significant difference in wealth ranking due to the relatively low economic worth of poultry.

Employment

Formal employment was seen as a very important determinant of wealth, i.e. a key means to avoid being poor, because it offered a regular income in the form of a salary or wage that could also be used to invest in other assets (e.g. livestock and fencing material). San households with members who were formally employed – for example in the Namibian Defence Force, Namibian Police, Ministry of Education (teachers, cleaners and hostel matrons), Ministry of Health and Social Services (nurses), wildlife management or commercial farming – were generally ranked higher in the wealth-ranking exercises.

Physical assets

At many sites, discussion participants referred to assets (household assets, brick house, car, etc.) to characterise members of the wealthier categories. However, physical assets were outcomes rather than intrinsic features of wealth, in the sense that the opportunity to engage in formal employment was the chief determinant of whether or not a household was able to invest in such assets. Thus, in the absence of opportunities for regular employment, most San households were asset-poor: the extremely poor members of communities (including a few non-San groups at some sites) were described as lacking adequate dwellings, blankets, clothes and shoes, let alone assets.

Physical assets are central to coping with environmental or economic shocks (e.g. droughts, floods, loss of employment or a long-term economic downturn), and contribute to reducing household or community vulnerability to adverse circumstances. The recent Emergency Food Security Assessment in Communal and Resettlement Areas in Namibia (EFSA), for example, established a clear correlation between food security and ownership of physical assets in the applicable communities (OPM 2013: 19-20). San participants in our study shared similar notions. For example, participants in Etosha Poort 'location' in Outjo, Kunene Region, said that employed Hai||om who then lost their jobs would be able to sell off their furniture piece by piece when in need of cash.

Social networks

For San, social networks are important for alleviating the brunt of poverty only to the extent that they address immediate shortages, particularly in household food supply. This type of support finds expression in the practice of sharing that has characterised San culture throughout their history. (As already noted, this practice is discussed at length in Chapter 15 on culture.) Sharing – a meal, food aid, harvested food, rations from piecework, etc. – plays an important role in decreasing the effects of hunger among members of extended families, and has historically helped San to survive in times of desperation. However, in the longer term, sharing limits a household's ability to increase its wealth and improve its wellbeing. This is because generally the San are already eking out a living at best, thus their social networks have little to share. Remittance support is virtually absent in San households, and where it does exist, its impact is negligible if the household income is shared by numerous dependants. Of course, very few San are formally employed, and those with formal jobs in cities/towns find the necessities of life there (rent, food, transport, etc.) to be so expensive that they have very little to share in form of a remittance to their families back home. For this reason, remittances were not considered to be a potential route out of poverty.

14.4 Coping with food insecurity

14.4.1 General coping strategies

In section 14.3.2 we conveyed that food shortages and food insecurity are common phenomena in most San communities in Namibia, if not all – although there are differences between households in a single community and between research sites. A number of interlinked factors are responsible for the limited food security in San communities, and these are dealt with in the regional chapters. Overall, the lack of access to land limits subsistence crop production and animal husbandry as well as hunting and gathering, and a lack of education and possibly discrimination in the job market limit employment opportunities for San. Additionally, government food-aid supplies do not suffice to sustain entire households and are irregular in many places, and pensions (especially the Old Age Pension) and other social grants do not reach many San who are eligible to receive them.

Maxwell and Caldwell developed a Coping Strategy Index (CSI) as an indicator of household food security in order to increase understanding of food insecurity and the coping mechanisms that people in different countries and different contexts apply. The CSI is based on the question, "What do you do when you don't have adequate food, and don't have the money to buy food?" (Maxwell and Caldwell 2008: 2). The CSI has to be adapted to a specific given context, and the list of coping strategies below was used in the recent EFSA.

Box 14.2: Coping Strategy Index (CSI) (OPM 2013: 46) In the past 30 days, how frequently did your household resort to using one or more of the following strategies in order to have access to food? • Skip entire days without eating? • Limit portion size at mealtimes? • Reduce number of meals eaten per day? • Borrow food or rely on help from friends or relatives? • Rely on less expensive or less preferred foods? • Purchase/borrow food on credit? • Gather unusual types or amounts of wild food/hunt? • Harvest immature crops? • Send household members to eat elsewhere? • Send household members to beg? • Reduce adult consumption so children can eat? • Rely on casual labour for food? • Other? • Have you sold any household assets to buy food? • Have you sold any household assets to pay for health care/medical expenses?

The answers to the questions are weighted according to the frequency at which the behaviour has occurred. The higher the ranking in the index, the more food insecure the household is.

In the course of our research it became evident that most San households applied many of these strategies quite often. The poorest San households in many communities were said to skip eating for a whole day relatively often, and just a small fraction of San across the research sites could report that they regularly ate three meals per day. Most San households ate two meals per day on average, and there were indications that very poor San get by on one meal per day, at least for certain periods of the year. Many (if not most) households relied on less-expensive or less-preferred food (mostly mealie-meal), and most households purchased/borrowed food on credit (especially if food aid was irregular). Wild food was gathered to varying degrees,²⁴ and harvesting of immature crops was a coping strategy in areas where San engaged in crop farming – as in Xeidang village in Kavango, for example, where the Ju|'hoansi participants said that they sometimes harvested immature maize cobs to avoid starvation.

Across the research sites, the discussions on sharing revealed that household members would often go elsewhere to eat, and at many sites it was said that the poorest members of the San community would also beg for food – mostly from non-San households as they were considered to be better off. Reduced adult consumption of food to enable children to eat was also reported at many sites, and

²⁴ As gathering is a traditional livelihood strategy among San communities, it cannot be strictly classified as a 'coping strategy'.

a very common strategy at all sites was the practice of undertaking casual labour to earn a small income to buy food, or even in exchange for a supply of food. The last two questions, i.e. relating to selling household assets, are less relevant in the case of the San because few have assets to sell, but this was mentioned in Etosha Poort 'location' (Outjo) as a coping strategy that relatively better-off San might employ when in need of cash.

In addition to the coping strategies mentioned above, San households employ a number of other coping strategies to address continuous food shortages, two of which are discussed in the next two subsections.

14.4.2 Fostering children

Reportedly in Kavango, Ohangwena and Omaheke Regions it is common practice for San families unable to afford the costs of food, education and other basic needs to arrange for their children to be fostered by non-San families who would be better able to care for them. The child become part of the foster family, and it is far from unusual that the San parents never see their child again. Manja Stutzriemer's account of her case study in Nkurenkuru (Kavango) indicates that fostering of San children is very common there, but arrangements can be rather informal, and this often produces conflicts between the San and the foster households (Stutzriemer 2012).²⁵ One major problem is that San children living away from their families are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. For example, our research brought to light cases of fostered children who had never attended school, and instead worked for the foster families as herders and domestic workers – mostly in exchange for food and clothes – in clear violation of the children's rights (see also Stutzriemer 2012).

A feasibility study of livelihood support to San resettlement projects in Ohangwena conducted in 2007 revealed that the practice of fostering San children was not uncommon in the area (Dirkx and Ayisa 2007b: 13-14), with a total of 42 cases across three resettlement projects reported although some were historical cases and the children concerned had reached adulthood by 2007. For example, at one project four people reported that they themselves had been fostered by non-San families during childhood. Hunger was said to be one explanation for San children going to live with non-San families: it was claimed that San parents might be forced to give a child away when they realised that they could not feed the child properly. Allegedly they were "easily convincible" in times of dire need, when other people offered to take care of their children. Some of the children concerned still lived close by, so their parents could visit them, whereas other San parents had been unable to maintain regular contact with their children, either because the foster family lived far away or because the parents simply did not know to which village or town the child had been taken. Allegedly there were also cases of foster parents forbidding visits by the San parents. Some fostered children had been looked after well and were allowed to attend school, whereas others were prevented from continuing their schooling and were merely used for domestic work or agricultural labour. Community members consulted in the study in 2007 also raised the concern that foster parents were benefiting from the state Foster Care Grant, as opposed to the biological parents benefiting from child welfare grants that the state makes available for vulnerable children - because the San parents had not known about such grants, the differences between grants and how to apply for these grants (Dirkx and Ayisa, 2007a: 16, 22).²⁶

²⁵ Every San person interviewed by Stutzriemer had lived with a Kwangali family at some stage in his/her life (Stutzriemer 2012: 9).

²⁶ The child welfare grants are administered by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare – see www.mgecw. gov.na for details on the grants available. Some San parents might qualify for the Maintenance Grant at least.

It is therefore clear that the practice of fostering San children needs much more attention with a view to preventing it (if possible) or at least minimising potential abuses and exploitation.²⁷

14.4.3 Alcohol

In many San communities (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omusati and Kavango Regions), alcohol was reportedly used as a means to alleviate hunger (see also Nyang'ori et al. 2006: 1943). The low-priced local brews (e.g. *otombo* and *okanyatau*) sold for N\$2 per one-litre jug in parts of Ohangwena, for example, are more affordable for San than most types of food. Discussion participants in Ohangwena, Omusati and Kavango reported that they also gave their children alcohol as an alternative to food. Excessive use of alcohol has been identified as a serious challenge among the San (Nyang'ori et al. 2006: 1943), especially in Ohangwena (see Chapter 17 on health). The number of cuca shops around Ouholamo neighbourhood (Eenhana) and in three of the four resettlement projects in the vicinity of Okongo increased considerably between 2007 and 2013, but local headmen, traditional authorities (TAs) and regional councillors do not seem to be concerned about these developments.

14.5 The role of external support for San livelihoods

The San receive various forms of external support, ranging from food aid and livestock donations to comprehensive livelihood support programmes which, among other things, strengthen capacity in community development and local leadership, agricultural development, and income diversification through craft development, cultural tourism and wildlife tourism. In this section we present our findings regarding external support alongside the experiences of the research team members based on their long-term involvement in livelihood support projects, and we map these against the San perceptions of poverty and wealth in their communities. It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a comprehensive comparison of the various livelihood support initiatives and their impacts on San livelihoods, but we do provide some information on promising approaches, required preproject considerations, avoidable mistakes and the need for further investigation in specific areas.

14.5.1 The San Feeding Programme

The food supplies provided by the San Feeding Programme of the OPM are certainly needed in a number of San communities to prevent starvation. Nevertheless, this intervention must be viewed as an 'emergency' programme only, and one that does not help the San to escape extreme poverty. Furthermore it carries the risk of entrenching long-term dependency on food handouts, and for this reason, careful monitoring of the programme is needed (see also the recommendations at the end of this chapter).

14.5.2 Income-generating projects

No discussion participant at any site mentioned income-generating projects (e.g. craft production and Devil's Claw harvesting) as a means to significantly improve the lives of San, mainly because these support projects have generated relatively little income to date; most have generated only N\$1000-2000 per annum for the people involved (see pages 475-476). It should be emphasised,

²⁷ Certainly, transactional sex – which was mentioned at various sites in different contexts – can also be understood as a strategy for coping with poverty or food insecurity. However, since participants were hesitant to speak about transactional sex in more detail, we are not able to provide more data on this topic in the context of livelihoods.

however, that such projects do provide the producers with a cash income which is urgently needed to cover the costs of basic necessities such as food, clothes and soap, as well as the costs of health care and necessities for school and for agricultural activities. The projects supported by the Omba Arts Trust (see Box 14.1), for example, provide a number of other important benefits apart from enabling the crafters to purchase basic necessities: they increase the crafters' self-esteem, inculcate a work ethic and pride in their own culture, empower them (a benefit of particular importance for the women), improve their leadership skills, reduce their dependency on handouts, and help to improve their health and their access to health care – all benefits which in turn benefit the crafters' households and communities on the whole.

14.5.3 Crop-production projects

Box 14.3: Two crop-production projects supported by the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN)

Ohangwena Region

The Emergency Food Security Assessment in Communal and Resettlement Areas in Namibia (EFSA) (mentioned on page 484) found crop production to be the major source of livelihoods for 41% of Ohangwena's general population (OPM 2013: 18). Most San in this region do not have their own crop fields; the only San who do are those in the resettlement projects in Okongo Constituency (Onamatadiva, Ekoka, Oshanashiwa and Eendobe). These four San resettlement projects were supported by the Livelihood Support Programme for San (LIPROSAN) implemented by the DRFN with funding from the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) in the period January 2009 to July 2013.^a Crop production in these projects consists of rain-fed *mahangu* production combined with cowpea, groundnut, sorghum and watermelon cultivation. The yields depend largely on the amount of seasonal rainfall and the amount of attention given to the crops. If there is a good rainy season, the households can live off the harvests for periods ranging from two to four months, but in a poor rainy season the households tend to consume the produce harvested within one or two months. The amount of land available for cultivation is another critical factor that limits production in three of the four projects, and the beneficiaries do not usually manage to harvest as much as the neighbouring Kwanyama farmers do because the San fields are smaller.

Omaheke Region

San at the Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom Resettlement Projects have benefited from the Livelihood Support Programme II (LISUP II) of the DRFN and the Habitafrica Foundation, co-funded by the MLR and AECID (see Box 4.1 on page 52 for an overview of LISUP). LISUP II provides, inter alia, technical support for rain-fed and irrigated crop production. Between 2007 and 2013, households at Skoonheid and Drimiopsis experienced improvements in food security through a combination of rain-fed and irrigated production (Skoonheid), or irrigation alone (Drimiopsis). At Donkerbos-Sonneblom only rain-fed crop production is possible.

Irrigated crop production in Drimiopsis and Skoonheid tends to consist of two cultivations of maize along with cowpea (in spring and summer), followed by a short fallow period during the winter months. Alternatively, a combination of maize, cowpea, squash/pumpkin and butternut is planted in the summer months, and this is followed by the cultivation of winter vegetables such as beetroot, carrot, onion and spinach. Once matured, the produce is collected from the gardens on a daily basis and is eaten fresh. This contributes to improved food security for two to three months twice per annum. Individual beneficiaries also sell small amounts of surplus crops to generate some cash when it is needed.

Rain-fed crop production at Skoonheid and Donkerbos-Sonneblom consists mostly of maize and cowpea cultivation, with a combination of groundnut, butternut, squash/pumpkin and watermelon. The rain-fed yields of course depend on seasonal variations in rainfall. In the years 2008-2011 the yields were fairly good, but in 2012 and 2013 they were substantially smaller. In poor rainfall years the harvest may yield enough for consumption for three months at most. In years with better rains, the harvests improve household food security for more than three months. In 2011, for example, up to 45% of households at Skoonheid stored and consumed their rain-fed crops for up to five months after the harvest.

Regarding the **combined impact of irrigated and rain-fed crop production**, The LISUP II annual report for 2012 indicated that during the post-harvest season (i.e. the beginning of the dry season), 70% of the households at Drimiopsis and Skoonheid were able to consume three or more meals per day. Towards the end of the dry season, 45% of the households could consume three meals a day (DRFN and Habitafrica 2013: 76). It may therefore be concluded that the livelihood support contributed to advances in both the number of meals and the diversity of foods consumed by the beneficiary communities, especially over the difficult dry period of the year.

The examples of Skoonheid and Drimiopsis demonstrate that crop production (especially irrigated production) can provide a very important household food supply for the San. On the other hand, lessons from these projects make clear that considerable amounts of external support and intensive mentoring and monitoring are required for any meaningful long-term benefits to be realised.

^a The MLR took over the livelihood support from the DRFN on 26 July 2013, hence the DRFN is no longer responsible for these project communities.

Discussion participants at the resettlement projects and many other sites regarded crop production as an essential means to escape extreme poverty, and crop production projects have proved to have positive outcomes for household food security among the San, as described in Box 14.3. The general issues of long-term technical support, mentoring of farmers in technical and institutional aspects, facilitating active collaboration among farmers, and improving local leadership capacity to support collaborative crop-farming practices are all important, especially as San illiteracy levels are high and their capacity to learn new skills independently (e.g. crop and soil fertility management) is relatively weak. These issues are even more relevant in San communities which are not homogeneous, such as some resettlement projects in which San and non-San people, or San of different language groups and family backgrounds, are brought together as beneficiaries.

Other aspects pertinent to the success of crop-production practices with the San are as follows:

• Distinguishing appropriately and realistically between capacities that can be built and those that may be difficult to build within a designated period: Experience with livelihood support through LISUP II in Omaheke Region, for example, appears to provide evidence that the San can become relatively accomplished subsistence farmers if they are trained in basic and standardised crop-management practices. As far as the northern regions are concerned, this means that the San might learn to cultivate a crop field in the same manner as their non-San neighbours, following relatively standard cultivation methods and practices. However, on larger production units such as resettlement farms, strategic farm-management decisions concerning the regeneration of soil fertility, sustaining/improving rangeland quality and carrying capacity, producing enough food and/or generating enough income to sustain the number of resettled people, require advanced agricultural knowledge and skills – which the San do not necessarily possess, and which might be difficult to build up within the normally relatively short lifespans

of development projects. This is not due only to the generally low levels of education of the resettled San; it is also due to the fact that San farmers, like the majority of other beneficiaries of group resettlement projects, are not necessarily invested in the development of their farm as a production unit per se, as they are more concerned about the survival of their families and thus about issues linked to household food security. This posits an entirely different individual focus, which by implication precludes or excludes crop commercialisation or production for purposes of income generation. Consequently development partners such as NGOs may need to provide the necessary technical support on a long-term basis.

- **Provision of inputs:** In any part of the country where San are involved in crop production, whether rain-fed or irrigated, the provision of inputs such as seeds, organic manure or chemical fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural implements and fencing materials has to be thought through and organised. Most San communities reside in remote areas and lack means to collect/obtain farm inputs timeously, so their agricultural activities are often disrupted or delayed. A basic drawback of the agricultural support administered by the MAWF is that it renders agricultural extension services only, although recently it has been possible to obtain seeds and fertiliser from the MAWF on a subsidised basis but the availability of seeds such as drought-resistant millet fluctuates from year to year. As a result of strategic choices made after Independence, the main task of the MAWF Department of Extension and Engineering Services (DEES) has been to share information with farmers, and consequently it is not generally concerned with the timely supply of inputs required for crop production.
- Access to draught power: This access for San has to be thought through and promoted for example by increasing the scope of training for San beneficiaries in the MAWF Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme (DAPAP). This would imply that an entire San community, as opposed to just a handful of community members, would have access to, and would benefit from, the draught animals, ploughs and cultivators donated.
- Namibia Specific Conservation Agriculture (NSCA): This aspect is linked to the latter. Among San people interested in crop cultivation, sufficient means should also be made available to promote NSCA based on ripper furrowing, rather than traditional methods of ploughing, since tractor ploughing is expensive for most San, and also compacts the Namibian soils too much, thereby reducing crop output - especially in the northern regions which are characterised by relatively heavy rains. NSCA - more commonly known in Namibia as Conservation Tillage or Liwa Nawa - is based on the principle of in-field water harvesting in the rip furrow system, whereby 300 mm of rainfall is converted to an effective 520 mm available for plants in the base of the furrow. NSCA is not only based on the introduction of ripper furrow practices, but also it looks into crop-management practices, such as promoting increased root-depth penetration, weeding and the provision and application of kraal manure and fertiliser packages to boost crop yields. Trials undertaken between 2005 and 2013 in Omusati and Kavango (i.e. north-central regions), have proved that under proper NSCA management practices, yields of mahangu, maize and cowpea may be 200% to 600% larger than the average output of 300 kg/ha that traditional management practices produce (Namibia Resource Consultants 2013). Thus NSCA implies not only that agricultural output can be increased in Namibia's common crop-production regions, but also that regions which have thus far been considered marginal in terms of crop production, such as Omaheke, could potentially be transformed into rain-fed crop-producing areas for the purpose of ensuring household food security. Adequate technical support for introducing NSCA practices among the San would again be a basic requirement.

14.5.4 Livestock projects

As section 14.2.7 of this chapter conveys, San at certain research sites considered livestock to be an important means to strengthen their livelihoods. However, even though large and small stock could have positive benefits for the agricultural asset base of the San, and for food security and nutrition – since milk, fat and meat serve to diversify the food consumed by the families who own domestic animals – so far livestock husbandry has not emerged as an important way of supporting San livelihoods at most research sites.

Stakeholders involved in implementing the livestock projects mentioned in section 14.2.7 have done so on the understanding that many of the beneficiaries were previously employed as farmworkers on commercial and communal livestock farms, and thus would be knowledgeable enough to make a success of these initiatives from the outset. This has proved to be a somewhat faulty assumption, as very few San beneficiaries (in particular) have adequate financial means and assets with which to turn livestock farming into a successful operation, regardless of their technical expertise. Moreover, since the livestock projects are characterised by limited degrees of post-project support, the benefits of these projects are often short-lived: although some training in animal husbandry is usually provided initially, the medium- to long-term mentoring of San beneficiaries in terms of animal husbandry, vaccination programmes, rangeland management and livestock marketing is usually not provided for in a comprehensive manner. The lack of means, knowledge and skills on the part of the beneficiaries is therefore compounded by a lack of ongoing technical support and mentoring. This usually has negative effects on the reproduction and survival rates of the livestock donated, especially over the dry season and spring season, and during prolonged droughts. Acute food insecurity among the San is also a factor that limits the survival rates of the livestock donated. A further factor affecting the success of livestock-donation projects is a lack of in-depth feasibility studies that address the veterinary, rangeland/carrying capacity, water management, organisational and marketing issues before the projects are implemented.

14.5.5 Increasing San employment

The government has made some efforts to improve the employment situation of the San in Namibia. For example, the government included the following statement in replying to the recommendations of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in *Namibia: Third Periodic Report, 2002-2009*:

"Employment opportunities. The National Government has given directives to all Ministries and Regional Governments to apply affirmative action principles in terms of the law to employ the San people. Many of the Ministries including the Ministry of Defence, Safety and Security [sic] have relaxed the requirements for employment when employing the San people in the Defence and Police Forces." (ACHPR 2010: 7)

Also, the OPM Division of San Development (DSD) has reported that it helped qualified San to find employment by recommending them for vacancies in government agencies.²⁸ Further, the OPM supports San education with the aim of enhancing their chances of finding formal employment. However, DSD records show that most of the supported students are Hai||om and Khwe, especially at tertiary level (OPM-DSD 2011 and 2012),²⁹ which might mean that other San groups – such as

²⁸ See www.sandevelopment.gov.na/youth-skills-development-and-employment-opportunities.htm.

²⁹ "List of Learners and Students under the San Development Programme 2011" (OPM-DSD 2011) and "New Applicants for the year 2012" (OPM-DSD 2012).

the !Xun minorities in Kavango and Ohangwena Regions, the !Xun and Ju|'hoansi in Otjozondjupa and the Ju|'hoansi and !Xoon in Omaheke – will continue to be poorly represented in the formal labour market, especially in positions requiring tertiary education.

In general, most of the participants in our research discussions welcomed the livelihood support projects, but at the same time they were highly critical of many of them. In the workshop with San representatives held in Windhoek in January 2013, we asked the participants to identify strengths and challenges of projects supported by the government and NGOs. In response, participants cited examples of projects which they deemed successful, and key reasons for the successes. For instance, a particular livestock project in Omaheke was considered successful – as opposed to a subsequent one in that region which was said to have failed thus far – because proper training had been provided, as well as monitoring (by the newly established project committee). Conservancies were also considered to be successful projects, because, by virtue of their traditions, San communities have a genuine interest in, and profound knowledge of, working with wild animals and nature.

The workshop participants identified a number of reasons for project failure:

- inadequate consultation with the communities (or potential beneficiaries);
- insufficient opportunities for active, effective participation by potential beneficiaries/participants;
- a lack of transparency, and inadequate information provided on the project, its objectives and implications;
- a lack of cultural sensitivity;³⁰
- a limited sense of project ownership on the part of the San;
- suspicions relating to poor management of project finances in some projects;
- insufficient training (e.g. in farming projects);
- perceptions that donors sometimes dictate the planning, implementation and/or management of projects;
- language barriers;
- inadequate market research before project implementation (e.g. sewing and breadmaking projects);
- a frequent lack of adequate baseline studies, feasibility studies, scoping assessments and evaluations; and
- inadequate coordination among the stakeholders.

In sum, those short-term support efforts which lack consultation with the potential participants, and participation by the participants, and which also lack *a priori* research and *posteriori* support and coordination among the stakeholders, are doomed to failure.

14.6 Conclusions and recommendations

14.6.1 General conclusions and recommendations

The San Study found that despite many efforts to improve the livelihoods of San communities in Namibia in a sustainable manner, by and large most San households are still eking out a living through unsustainable livelihood strategies, and remain highly dependent on external support. Although the livelihoods of San groups in Namibia are manifestly constrained by abject poverty, not

³⁰ The workshop participants cited the example of the coffin-making project initiated by the OPM, which had failed, purportedly because of the 'cultural' perception among the San that building coffins for deceased people is a bad omen, in that the coffin builder will face the same fate as the deceased in the near future.

all San households are equally poor, and the levels of poverty of the different San groups vary on the basis of:

- access to natural resources, especially land;
- remoteness of the area, which has implications for access to education, availability of healthcare facilities and access to government grants such as the Old Age Pension;
- availability of income-generating opportunities (including piecework);
- the extent and quality of external support; and
- the existence and government recognition of a particular group's traditional authority (TA).

One of the immediate indicators of poverty recorded among the San groups throughout this study was **food insecurity**. With very little income, constrained access to natural resources and inability to engage in food-crop production, San households generally have a very meagre and inconsistent food supply. This situation stems from their historical displacements from prime land and its abundant natural resources, and the systematic injustices which they have suffered under colonial governments and at the hands of private farmers (Anaya 2013: 9). A consequence of all this is that San groups have faced **ever-increasing limitations of access to and/or ownership of land and its resources** (e.g. veldfoods) on which their traditional livelihood practices were based. Their attempts to adapt to other forms of production, including crop production and livestock farming, have been further frustrated, to a large extent, by the challenge of landlessness. But past land dispossession is not the only factor determining the poverty that most San in Namibia experience today. Their **lack of education, circumscribed capacity to assert their human rights**, the **prevailing stereotyping** of San, **internalised discrimination** and their **lack of a strong political voice** are other crucial factors contributing to their current situation. (These factors are discussed in detail in the other chapters in Part III of this report – including the concluding chapter.)

Unable to rely on hunting and gathering, or to engage in the crop production and livestock farming activities that sustain other rural communities in Namibia, for decades most San have resorted to **casual work and piecework** as a principal means of earning a living, supplemented by the food aid, pensions and grants provided by government. Informal piecework and casual work arrangements currently provide meagre incomes for San households, hence they can barely cover their basic needs, and consequently face a number of day-to-day challenges.

Casual work and piecework are generally exploitative and low-paid; most agreements are informal and verbal, and in every region covered, there were complaints of employers defaulting on payment agreements – in one of four ways: paying less than the amount initially agreed upon; paying late; not paying at all; or changing the payment method, i.e. the employer decides to pay in kind (e.g. with food or alcohol) instead of cash. Various kinds of impromptu 'contracts' are still common in rural areas, but the general power imbalances between the San and non-San people aggravate the situation greatly. At many research sites there were reports of San being routinely remunerated with food and alcohol instead of cash for informal labour undertaken for non-San people. Dishonouring labour agreements to the extent reported in the field is an egregious form of labour exploitation that requires a concrete response in terms of the Labour Act 11 of 2007 (see Box 14.4 on page 499 and the recommendations on piecework and casual work). Some of the very poorest San communities – prime examples being groups in urban townships, the !Xun in the BNP and many !Xun in Ohangwena and Kavango – rely to a very great extent on doing piecework and casual work for non-San neighbours, and external support for them is marginal if not absent. Most of these poorest groups have no recognised TA.

In areas where San communities have **access to land** (albeit limited), their livelihood strategies are more diversified. This is the case, for example, in Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies

(Otjozondjupa), in Caprivi, in the BNP and at the resettlement projects supported by LISUP II or LIPROSAN. Gathering – and in Nyae Nyae also hunting – crop farming, animal husbandry and tourism-related activities contribute to the livelihoods of the San in these places, though to varying degrees. However, as mentioned in Chapter 13 on access to land, secure land tenure is not guaranteed in these areas either, therefore securing land rights for all San groups should be a priority in the process of addressing San development in Namibia.

San in group resettlement projects elsewhere often lack **income-generating or food-producing opportunities** as a result of uncoordinated and insufficient post-resettlement support. The San Resettlement Programme under the OPM tends to relocate San to resettlement farms in remote areas, where there are few opportunities for piecework and casual work. For as long as the lack of development of sustainable livelihoods on resettlement farms continues, the project 'beneficiaries' will remain at risk of being forced into further destitution, given their previous dependence on piecework and casual work and the lack of replacement income-generating activities for them to pursue in their new communities.

Despite the many challenges that the **TA institution** faces in San communities (see Chapter 19 on consultation, participation and representation), the recognition of separate TAs for the San has reportedly helped the groups concerned to gain government attention and support, and our own research has borne out this perception.

We are left asking what stakeholders working in cooperation with the San can do to reduce the poverty of the San in Namibia in a sustainable manner. What are the preconditions for sustainable livelihood support, and what approaches should be treated with caution or abandoned altogether, based on poor success rates in the past?

Before we present our own analyses based on our field research as well as the long-term experience of research team members in San project support, we present inputs from the San representatives in the workshop held in Windhoek in January 2013.

The representatives recommended the following for improving projects:

- Ensure adequate dissemination of information on programmes and projects.
- Strengthen the monitoring of and by the San TAs. This was recommended because the OPM channels most of its support for San communities through their respective TAs, and purportedly the support did not always trickle down to all community members equally, and information about support opportunities (e.g. the OPM Student Support Programme and job opportunities at specific institutions) was not disseminated adequately throughout the communities.
- Ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of every project.
- Make use of the skills that project participants already possess to train others at all levels and thereby empower the whole project community:
 - Determine what skills the participants already possess.
 - Place skilled participants in positions which give them responsibility for the project, and have them train others, rather than merely employing people at random to do unskilled work for which no training is needed, or skilled work which they are already capable of doing;
- Change the approaches to projects:
 - Ensure sufficient time for training: as a rule it takes at least five years of assistance to ascertain whether or not participants can continue the project on their own.
 - Take a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach, e.g. ask the local San what projects they need rather than have consultants design projects from their desks in Windhoek.

In the following paragraphs we extend or add detail to the representatives' recommendations, based on the findings of our field research and the experiences of research team members in the implementation and management of San projects.

In general, livelihood projects must **aim to diversify the San livelihood strategies**. It is common knowledge that households with diversified livelihoods are less vulnerable and better equipped to cope with shocks. Chapter 19 on consultation, participation and representation spells out the consultation procedures that should be followed to ensure that livelihood support initiatives are designed to support San in their efforts to become self-reliant and less dependent on external support. In this regard it should be noted that requesting project participants to contribute in kind and/or in monetary terms to such initiatives instils in them a certain degree of responsibility or 'ownership' of their own development initiatives.

Long-term initiatives should be complemented by **short-term strategies** that help San to meet their immediate needs while they work towards long-term sustainable livelihoods. Any approach to San development has to be flexible and participatory, and must progress at the pace at which the participants feel comfortable, rather than being based on standard project implementation periods and project deadlines that participants and other stakeholders need to meet to comply with donor procedures or satisfy government's priorities and needs.

Developing livelihoods means that different actors and sectors have to provide certain **services**: health, education, water supply and sanitation services; income-generating projects; and habitat protection (e.g. forest conservation). Different stakeholders thus need to collaborate on a regular basis to ensure efficient support to communities. **Coordination between stakeholders** is crucial for the sustainability of interventions, and specific efforts are needed to create the platforms where such coordination can be organised in a constructive manner.

As far as working with San communities at local level is concerned, rather than organisations appointing clerks/bureaucrats who have no experience in community development, it is preferable that **qualified community development officers** be employed, as these people have the necessary expertise and are motivated to work with the San. The attitude, motivation and intercultural skills of the individual staff members involved are at least as important as, for example, technical knowhow in crop or craft production. Those locally based officers should act as project facilitators while the respective San communities drive the development on the ground. With the proviso that such development is executed *with* the San rather than *for* the San, full commitment from all stakeholders remains pertinent for successful development, and this commitment should also serve to increase the autonomy of the San. San people in different areas of the country have expressed the wish to be supported so that they can take charge of their own development rather than being guided by other groups and stakeholders on what direction their development should take.

Regarding the concerns raised about the strategic management capacity and technical capacity of San communities (section 14.5), civil society, development partners and government may need to start thinking in terms of **new types of partnerships** with San communities, i.e. partnerships that would allow for distinctions to be drawn between various support approaches, based on the disparate needs of different San communities.³¹ Generally speaking, development partners may need to formulate strategies that more comprehensively address the delivery of technical support services and farm inputs (equipment, etc.), and the marketing of farm outputs, based on more business-orientated collaborative partnerships. Last but not least, it is necessary to establish

³¹ See also the recommendations on San in resettlement projects at the end of Chapter 13 (page 461ff).

and promote continuous monitoring and action-orientated learning processes between the San communities and the development practitioners involved with them, to ensure that projects and programmes continually build the capacities of the San and keep addressing their needs and aspirations.

14.6.2 Specific recommendations

With regard to the various San livelihood strategies, the following is recommended:

Food aid

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) recommended the following after its mission to Namibia in July/August 2005 (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 131): "Food aid and drought relief should be monitored on a regular basis and local officials should be given adequate means to enable them to deliver food aid to the communities." Our study has found that this recommendation is still far from being realised. If the San could count on fixed quantities and qualities of food and deliveries at fixed times, this would certainly improve their food security and decrease their dependency, because they would know if and when they would need to find other sources of food, and would be free to engage in other activities instead of waiting for possible foodaid deliveries. Furthermore, it is strongly recommended that the OPM regularly conducts needs assessments in all San communities, taking into account seasonal variations in food availability, so that the supplies of food aid can be adjusted accordingly (e.g. to avoid supplying food when San are harvesting their own crops). The OPM should also develop a phase-out strategy for the San Feeding Programme, with a view to replacing it with sustainable livelihood projects implemented in consultation with the San communities. As a first measure in this regard - as also recommended by San representatives in the workshop in January 2013 - the government should undertake a costbenefit analysis of the San Feeding Programme, and determine whether or not livelihood projects would be more effective in the long run in terms of spending and positive outcomes for the San. If deemed more effective, community members must be included throughout the planning and implementation phases, and government would have recognise and fulfil the need for its longterm extensive and coordinated commitment to these projects.

Old Age Pensions and other social grants

Namibia's Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4) identifies the following, inter alia, as key challenges with regard to extreme poverty in the country (NPC 2012a: 68):

- Many extremely poor households do not access the social grants to which they are eligible.
- Civil registration is too slow, in large part because many people eligible for grants lack official documents.
- Research into the causes of extreme poverty in Namibia is lacking.

Our research has confirmed that these challenges apply to the San communities surveyed, thus we endorse the NDP4 recommendations for addressing them (NPC 2012a: 68) – recommendations which have particular relevance for the San (and other marginalised communities):

- Identify the households currently living in extreme poverty, and design support mechanisms to assist them in moving up the socio-economic ladder.
- Review legislation to address civil-registration blockages, and increase the number of registration points.
- Strengthen research capacities.

Our research provided some insights into the causes of extreme poverty, but it was beyond the scope of this study to undertake in-depth research in remote areas of Kavango, Ohangwena and Omaheke Regions (e.g. Eiseb in Omaheke) where some San communities are living under the very worst of conditions and yet receive the least external support.

Apart from the strategies recommended in NDP4, we recommend employing San of the relevant local language groups in offices as translators (on a part-time basis), to facilitate registration for pensions and other social grants. Likewise, San youth could be engaged part time in health outreach programmes so that illnesses such as TB can be more proactively addressed among the San.

Crop production

Discussion participants at most of our research sites viewed crop production as a means to escape (extreme) poverty, therefore special attention should be paid to encouraging and supporting crop production in San communities. For a start, feasibility studies should be carried out in the various regions in consultation with the applicable communities. As part of these studies, or as a separate undertaking, previous and current San crop-production initiatives should be compared, and their strengths and weaknesses identified and evaluated with a view to extrapolating best practices and lessons learnt. When the crops of San in a national park (i.e. the Khwe and !Xun in the BNP, Kavango and Caprivi) are damaged by wildlife, the people concerned should be entitled to compensation from the government - as the ACHPR recommended in reporting on its mission to Namibia in 2005 (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 130). These crop producers should also be provided with protected areas where wild animals cannot enter and destroy the crops. Furthermore, appropriate measures should be taken to minimise destruction of crop fields belonging to San by free-ranging animals belonging to non-San communal farmers. Lastly, as the ACHPR recommended (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 130): "The government should provide appropriate agricultural training to those San members who wish to engage in either crop or cattle farming, or both They should all be trained in farming techniques and provided with the necessary farming tools and equipment."

Finally with regard to crop production, experiences have shown that both long-term support and locally-based support are needed to make crop production sustainable and successful in terms of improved food security (see also section 14.5).

Livestock

Livestock projects have the potential to improve the rural livelihoods of San people, provided that they receive sufficient technical support on a medium- to long-term basis, and that the capacity of those engaged in the projects is sufficiently strengthened. This would require technical support and close mentoring in areas such as animal husbandry, water-demand management, rangeland management and livestock marketing. If stakeholders are serious about engaging San in livestock farming, then a comprehensive approach to supply- or value-chain development is called for – meaning that (a) the supply of farm inputs and services (e.g. veterinary services) that vulnerable groups such as the San would require to succeed in livestock farming, and (b) the off-take of their livestock, would have to be properly facilitated and technically supported.

In terms of the choice between large stock (cattle) and small stock (goats and sheep), various factors would have to be weighed. San generally tend to favour donations of cattle. Status may play a role in this regard, but the San reported that they would be more reluctant to eat cattle (as opposed to goats) – presumably because the parties who donate livestock would view the consumption of cattle

more unfavourably (probably because cattle have more monetary value than goats). On the other hand, the reproductive rate of small stock is considerably higher than that of cattle, and so, if the growth of the livestock population and income generation through livestock sales are to be specific objectives of any livestock support initiative in San communities, then the choice of small stock, and goats in particular, should be advocated and promoted.

In connection with animal husbandry and crop production - and in view of the challenges of building technical and strategic-management capacity for agricultural production among the San (described above and in Box 14.3 on crop production) - development partners and the government should provide resources for research to identify appropriate institutional partnerships between San communities and civil society for enabling higher agricultural output. This is especially pertinent to group resettlement projects: the latest thinking in this regard reverses previous models somewhat in promoting the establishment of business partnerships between stakeholders (e.g. NGOs) and beneficiary communities - much like the private-public partnerships that have been realised between private lodges and conservancies in recent years. Such partnerships would enable civil society or the private sector to lead farm production both strategically and technically so that higher agricultural outputs can be realised, with the aim of supporting the beneficiary communities in terms of food security, nutrition and income. This basically involves more market-orientated and business-like approaches to San communities' agricultural production, incorporating aspects of agricultural service delivery and delivery and management of farm inputs and equipment, as well as supplychain management and marketing of agricultural output. Given that such an approach to increasing agricultural output among resettled San involves close mentoring, and also, in all likelihood, the presence of a farm manager or agricultural extension officer on the farms concerned, the social and institutional aspects and risks of such arrangements would have to be covered in the research.

Income-generating activities

Income-generating activities are a crucial approach to providing San individuals and households with an all-important cash income. Therefore, NGOs and the government should make specific efforts (see also ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 131) to increase opportunities for the San to engage in income-generating projects and enterprises. In so doing, specific attention should be paid to:

- prior consultation with the proposed participants;
- prior research to ascertain whether there are markets for specific products or services; and
- cultural aspects, i.e. projects which exploit the cultural knowledge and skills of the beneficiaries should be prioritised.

Piecework and casual work

Piecework and casual work are also important means to provide San individuals and households with a necessary and relatively immediate cash income. Projects implemented by NGOs and the government often overlook the importance of piecework and/or casual work to the San, and focus on income-generating activities or subsistence farming, realising only later that in some cases the beneficiaries might have preferred to engage in piecework or casual work instead of working in their own fields, for example – not least because piecework and casual work provide a cash income more immediately. Our research has clearly revealed the importance of piecework and casual work for the majority of San households, but it has also revealed the exploitative nature of many of these informal arrangements. Yet, importantly – and until a specific situation proves the contrary – pieceworkers and casual workers are deemed to be 'employees' and are thus covered by the Labour Act 11 of 2007 (as amended – see Box 14.4).

Box 14.4: The implications of the Labour Act 11 of 2007 (as amended by the Labour Amendment Act 2 of 2012) for piecework and casual work

Recently, section 128 of the Labour Act 11 of 2007 was amended by the insertion in the Labour Amendment Act 2 of 2012 of section 128A dealing with **"Presumption as to who is an employee"**.

Act 11 of 2007 defines an "employee" as anyone who received remuneration for work done. Since the Act did not prohibit the employment of casual workers, it was not illegal for anyone with contractual capacity to agree to casual employment in terms of common law, although, significantly, the Act did not make explicit provision for casual workers as a discrete group. The definition of "employee" in the Act was therefore very wide, and a fixed-term employment contract could arguably include a person doing casual work from time to time. However, section 128A in Act 2 of 2012 deems a person to be an "employee" if certain conditions prevail, irrespective of the type of contract or arrangement between the parties. Thus the onus is shifted on the wage- or remuneration-paying person or entity to show he/she/it is not engaged in an employer/employee arrangement. Section 128A provides:

"For the purposes of this Act or any other employment law, until the contrary is proved, an individual who works for or renders services to any other person, is presumed to be an employee of that other person, regardless of the form of the contract or the designation of the individual, if any one or more of the following factors is present:

- a) the manner in which the individual works is subject to the control or direction of that other person;
- b) the individual's hours of work are subject to the control or direction of that other person;
- c) in the case of an individual who works for an organisation, the individual's work forms an integral part of the organisation;
- d) the individual has worked for that other person for an average of at least 20 hours per month over the past three months;
- e) the individual is economically dependent on that person for whom he or she works or renders services;
- f) the individual is provided with tools of trade or work equipment by that other person;
- g) the individual only works for or renders services to that other person; or
- h) any other prescribed factor."

Since only one of the listed factors has to be present for a worker to be presumed an employee, workers doing piecework or casual work for an individual or company are deemed employees in terms of this Act – at least until the contrary has been proven. Thus this provision has important implications for San doing piecework or casual work, whose labour situation could improve substantially as a result.

Campaigns targeting San communities and potential employers should be conducted to raise their awareness of this provision and other apposite legislation – notably Labour Act 11 of 2007 and the minimum wage agreement in the agricultural sector (see Chapter 12 on farmworkers, page 426) – and to provide insight into the relevant labour laws. Furthermore, San paralegals should be trained to assist the San – whose rights are vulnerable to violation in this regard – to take the necessary legal steps to assert their employment rights: a working knowledge of the legislation would give the San much more bargaining power in negotiating remuneration, working conditions, etc.

Formal employment

Participants in our research discussions viewed formal employment as the key route out of poverty. In the long term, education is the most important precondition for landing a formal job (see also Chapter 16 on education), but in the short term other measures can be taken to ensure that a certain number of San become employed.

In its report published half a decade ago, the ACHPR recommended the following (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 131): "The government should ... give priority to the employment of San members to fill vacancies. The government should ensure that labour laws are enforced so that proper working conditions are ensured for the San." As emphasised repeatedly in this San Study report, however, it remains the case that few San have formal employment.

At nearly all of our research sites, participants emphasised formal employment as a fundamental way for them to escape poverty. Our study findings suggest that the affirmative action approach could be utilised to address current imbalances in the workplace – as also recommended in the ACHPR's *Namibia: Third Periodic Report* (ACHPR 2010: 6). In responding to these ACHPR recommendations, the Namibian Government states that it "has given directives to all Ministries and Regional Governments to apply affirmative action principles in terms of the law to employ the San people," and reportedly ministries have relaxed their requirements when employing the San (ACHPR 2010: 7), but much more must be done in this regard (see Box 14.5).

Box 14.5: Affirmative action and socio-economic development opportunities for the San By Peter Watson

The San are disadvantaged relative to other Namibian ethnic or tribal groups, primarily due to the historical deprivation of resources and the lack of meaningful access to formal education which has placed them among the lowest wage earners in Namibia. As largely unskilled workers, they have limited employment opportunities outside the agricultural sector. Despite Article 20 of the Constitution of Namibia, which provides that all persons have the right to education, the persistent low level of education and lack of access to government support undermines any improvement of the socio-economic status of the San.

Article 23 of the Constitution makes provision for the implementation of affirmative action laws and policies to redress the imbalances created by past discriminatory laws and practices in Namibia.

Although much effort has been made to address the wrongdoings of Namibia's apartheid history through affirmative action laws and policies – such as the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act 29 of 1998 as amended by Act 6 of 2007, the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme and the resettlement programme – as well as various black economic empowerment (BEE) schemes, there has been no significant benefit for San communities. At present, many San are in the employ (or under the control) of farmers in communal and commercial areas, or are working for other types of employers, and are often subjected to unfair labour practices, forced labour and inadequate living conditions. As a result of their abject poverty generally, the San are trapped in an endless cycle of dependence and vulnerability.

The amended Affirmative Action (Employment) Act 29 of 1998 (AAA) has as its main purpose the implementation of measures to redress inequalities in employment and create equal employment opportunities in line with Articles 10 and 23 of the Constitution. The AAA establishes an Employment Equity Commission (EEC) and provides for the creation of affirmative action programmes that should redress the discrimination and disadvantages experienced by persons within three statutory designated groups because of past discriminatory laws. These groups are racially disadvantaged persons, women and persons with disabilities. Section 17(2) of the AAA describes certain policies that could fall under the affirmative action programme – such as the elimination of employment barriers, providing training programmes, and giving preferential treatment to people from the designated groups. Section 17(3) sets out guidelines according to which the EEC can evaluate whether

or not a specific group is equitably represented in a given workplace environment. Strict guidelines are set out under section 19 with regard to preferential treatment of designated groups. The Act also provides for a "relevant employer" to which the Act shall apply, and these are registered with the EEC. Article 22 provides for voluntary affirmative action in respect of employers who are not relevant for the purposes of the AAA.

It is a historical fact that the San people were marginalised by discriminatory practices even prior to colonialism and Independence, mostly as a result of their ethnic origins. Since the AAA section 18 defines "racially disadvantaged persons" as "all persons who belong to a racial or ethnic group which was or is, directly or indirectly, disadvantaged in the labour field as a consequence of social, economic, or educational imbalances arising out of racially discriminatory laws or practices before the Independence of Namibia …", it is clear that the San fall within the ambit of this legislation.

However, even though the legislation is in place to redress imbalances in the employment sector, it equally applies to the majority of Namibians who are not white men without disabilities. The AAA does not give the Minister or the Commission powers to add to a designated group. Section 18 is quite clear that it is only the three designated groupings that apply for the purpose of the Act, and this invariably means that there is no special treatment for marginalised San community members and that they must therefore compete with all other affirmative action candidates – and given that the San are the most uneducated and most poverty-stricken of citizens, and generally lack access to the affirmative action socio-economic development policies, they remain on the fringes with little prospect of socio-economic development.

Section 23 of the AAA requires relevant employers to create three-year affirmative action plans, essentially specifying the affirmative action measures to be implemented by them, and section 24 requires relevant employers to carry out consultations with the representatives of their employees in this regard. So it is feasible for relevant employers to make provisions to specifically allow preferential treatment of San people within their group of racially disadvantaged staff due to past discriminatory laws and practices as a result of their (San) ethnicity. Taking such measures implies implicit acknowledgement that there is a justifiable basis for discrimination between classes of racially disadvantaged people as a result of past ethnic discrimination and practices between people who fall within this group, for the same reasons that discrimination between unimpaired white males and racially disadvantaged people, for example, is justifiable (despite Article 10 of the Constitution). The same principle would apply – that ensuring equality between the groups requires levelling the playing field.

The register of relevant employers includes any office, ministry or agency in the public service identified as such. Thus government offices, parastatals and government-owned enterprises are relevant employers and subject to the provisions of the AAA. In view of this, it is also feasible for the government to issue specific directives regarding the employment of San as preferential, for the same reasons outlined above.

We therefore recommend that affirmative action specifically targeting the San as part of the designated group of "racially disadvantaged persons" should be applied by government and other "relevant employers" in accordance with the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act 29 of 1998.

Hunting and gathering

The government does not currently appear to consider gathering and traditional hunting as falling within the categorisation of 'livelihood strategies' insofar as land where such economic practices have been prevalent in the past may now be regarded by government as 'underutilised land'

(MLR and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) 2012: 5). Several projects (e.g. a small-scale farming scheme in Kavango Region) similarly overlook the fact that the San still use specific areas for gathering quantities of veldfoods that contribute to their livelihoods and food security, as they have traditionally done in the past. The situation in conservancies such as N‡a Jaqna and Nyae Nyae is different because the San are allowed to collect veldfood within designated areas of the conservancies (despite the various challenges dealt with in Chapter 5 on Otjozondjupa Region and Chapter 13 on access to land). To give the San the option of using gathering (and potentially hunting) as livelihood strategies, the government should consider establishing conservancies in areas where the San could be supported by experienced NGOs such as the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO), IRDNC, the NNDFN and the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF). Furthermore, when the future of communal land is discussed, the government and other stakeholders should investigate whether the area/s under consideration is/are used by the San (and others) for veldfood-gathering purposes (or had been used historically for this purpose), and formulate their decisions accordingly.

In addition, there should be an investigation into the possibility of issuing Special Game Licenses (see Chapter 13 on access to land). The exception made for Nyae Nyae Conservancy, where San are allowed to hunt with traditional weapons, should be extended to other San communities (e.g. in the BNP) (ACHPR and IWIGIA 2008: 131).

Chapter 15 **Culture, Discrimination** and **Development**

By Ute Dieckmann and Erik Dirkx





Nowadays San culture is mostly used as a commodity.

15.1 Introduction

"The protection of their distinct culture and language is a central element of indigenous peoples' survival. For these groups, language and culture are often interdependent and indivisible. Likewise, common beliefs and religion are often a significant attribute of culture, which can only be fully expressed and explained in the indigenous language of that community. To deny one of these aspects to a community will inevitably threaten the identity of that community. Moreover, as indigenous groups usually represent small minorities in their national populations, the denial of a right to language, culture or belief can also be manifested in the failure to actively protect and promote those rights. No other attributes of minority groups are as vulnerable to the 'tyranny of the majority' as culture and language. Apart from language, some important aspects of culture are its creative and scientific attributes. Respect for indigenous cultures will often depend on respect for their physical worlds, including the land on which they live and the natural resources on which their livelihood may depend."

- International Labour Organization (ILO) and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) 2009: 69

Respect for San cultures – and a concomitant commitment to protecting the values and mores enshrined in these cultures – remains woefully inadequate and neglected in contemporary Namibian society. The cultural characteristics of San groups are unfamiliar to most Namibians. Most might know that the San were once hunters and gatherers, but few know much more.¹ Only some might know that there are several distinct groups of people subsumed under the term 'San', and that these groups speak different languages. There is also a widespread notion that San are still 'roaming' around the whole country; few know that specific San groups live in particular parts of the country, or which San groups live in which part.

San are often perceived as lacking culture, because, on the one hand, outsiders are ignorant of their cultures, and on the other hand – from an evolutionist perspective – outsiders widely regard the San traditional way of life as belonging to the Stone Age, and thus consider the San to be on a lower rung of the evolutionary ladder than other ethnic groups in Namibia.

There are also those who perceive the San as 'noble savages' and/or skilled environmentalists who are fully in tune with the arid environment which they inhabit and traverse. This romantic notion of a culture that is fully adapted to the particularly unforgiving environments of southern Africa is informed by, inter alia, the literature of Laurens van der Post, who "described the Bushmen [of the Kalahari] as the original natives of southern Africa, outcast and persecuted by all other races and nationalities ... [and who] represented the 'lost soul' of all mankind, a type of noble savage myth."²

Both of these diametrically opposed perceptions of the San – i.e. that they represent an uncivilised Stone Age culture in need of development, or that they are environmentalists to be admired for their intimacy with nature – disregard, by and large, the historical developments that have affected the different San groups in different ways.

Although elements of the romantic vision of San culture have permeated outsider perceptions, the alternative notion – that the San traditional way of life is a 'primitive' way of life – is clearly the one that is more familiar to Namibians generally, including the government. This view is exemplified in the following response of the Namibian Government to recommendations of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), as recorded in *Namibia: 3rd Periodic Report, 2002-2009*:

¹ Many Namibians live in close proximity to San communities or have direct interaction with San individuals (e.g. farmworkers). However, most of the emerging relationships are not very close, and are not imbued with a mutual understanding of the other person's cultural background. Language differences might play a role in this regard.

² Extract from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laurens_van_der_Post.

"The Government has relocated and continues to relocate and settle the San and Ovatua people to permanent locations, usually with the intention of *civilizing* [chapter authors' emphasis] them and to provide schooling, running water and modern amenities. Unfortunately, and because the San People are hunter and gatherers [sic] and lived nomadic lives for thousands of years, this life-style of coercing them to live in settlement areas has not been very successful." (ACHPR 2010: 7)

The provision of infrastructure, livelihood assets and services for San and Ovatua communities might be laudable, but the terminology used in this response is revealing: "civilizing" is a word with clear evolutionist connotations; it suggests that human societies proceed through various stages of development of increasing sophistication over time, and in this particular context, this word implies that the contemporary San of Namibia have not evolved as far as the other ethnic groups, which in turn implies that they are looked upon as somehow inferior.

Box 15.1: The idea of civilisation

The idea of 'civilisation' stems from the social theory of unilinear evolutionism (or classical social evolution) that was prominent in the 19th century. Societies and cultures, in this line of thought, progressed in time from primitive stages towards civilisation. This theory later met with a great deal of criticism; it was argued that the postulated progression, typically ending with a stage of civilization identical to that of modern Europe, was ethnocentric, i.e. Eurocentric. Furthermore, as critics have since pointed out, there was little empirical evidence for the theory: so-called primitive contemporary societies have as much history, and are just as evolved, as so-called civilized societies. Moreover, unilinear evolutionism did not take the socio-economic and environmental differences between societies or communities into account, and ignored power relations and dependencies between different societies/communities. In academic circles nowadays, the theory of unilinear evolutionism is generally considered to be obsolete, but it is still a prominent theory in popular thinking all over the world, with the result that the San (and other former hunters and gatherers) are often still regarded as having remained in the first stage of human development.

Some of the stereotypes that the San in contemporary Namibia still have to confront seem to be informed by persisting pre-Independence paradigms, and so, for as long as the necessary change of attitude from paternalistic goodwill to respect remains in its early stages, most development efforts will work only to nullify San traditions and assimilate the San into the mainstream, while ignoring the rich culture that San communities have to offer to an independent, culturally diverse and relatively affluent Namibia. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, in his report on his visit to Namibia in September 2012, stressed the need to ensure that indigenous peoples are not discriminated against, and that cultural diversity is strengthened:

"The Government should strengthen and adopt affirmative measures to protect the rights of nondominant indigenous groups to retain and develop the various attributes of their distinctive cultural identities. Laws and Government programmes should be reviewed and reformed as needed to ensure that they do not discriminate against particular indigenous groups, and that they accommodate to and strengthen cultural diversity and adhere to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." (Anaya 2013: 19)

This San Study has made evident that San cultures have to be taken into account when planning and implementing development projects and activities, and that a prevailing ignorance of San cultures has contributed to the failure of many efforts aimed at San development. In the next section of this chapter, we will outline the cultural features that San participants in our research discussions identified as differences between San and other ethnic groups in Namibia, as well as the San

cultural characteristics that came to light in our field research. Thereafter, through an examination of anthropological literature, we take an analytical look at cultural characteristics of specific San groups, in order to provide a more profound and comprehensive understanding of certain aspects of the social systems of San communities and their interconnectedness. Finally, we discuss the implications of San cultural characteristics for development approaches.

Box 15.2: 'Developing' the San in Namibia

Examples from different regions in Namibia show that officials and practitioners involved in San development fall prey at times to unreconstructed ways of thinking about the San, just as much as members of the general public do. Under the auspices of the Office of the Prime Minister's (OPM's) San Development Programme, government activities since 2008 have focused on moving various San communities to resettlement projects (e.g. the projects in Kunene Region south of Etosha and in Oshikoto Region east of Etosha). More recent examples are the intended relocations of San from Epukiro Post 3 and Otjinene in Omaheke Region.

Regional officials involved in these relocations in **Omaheke Region** cited the following as reasons for these relocations: (a) the San were unemployed in their current communities; (b) they lived in informal settlements; and (c) their only daily activity was visiting the local bars or shebeens. The clear implications were that the San had lost their culture and heritage, and there was nothing to recommend their current living conditions, hence many officials believed that relocating them to a new resettlement project would render them better off. There, in a new environment, the San would have opportunities to make a living as subsistence farmers, since livestock and other assets, as well as healthcare and education services, would be provided. Thus it was expected that the San communities concerned should willingly move to the new projects en masse, and the idea was that they would be able to stay in the communities in which they currently lived only if they had a compelling reason to remain there, such as work.

Similarly, in **Ohangwena Region**, officials involved with San resettlement projects were often of the opinion that the San could not continue to live according to their own traditions as there was not enough land to support such lifestyles. Although this assertion may be true, the vision for the resettled San is one of integration into the cultures of the other local ethnic communities – notwithstanding the challenges faced in this regard by the Lutheran Church before Independence, and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) and NGOs after Independence. For most officials involved with San development, it remains imperative that once resettled, the San should learn to be subsistence farmers, just like most other people in this region.

As if to reinforce this supposition, reference was often made to the fact that the Owambo people had undergone various adjustments to their lifestyle during the last century. For example, whereas previous generations lived as subsistence farmers and did not necessarily attend school, nowadays Owambo children attend school, and some further their education, thus not only do they now make a living from subsistence farming, but also they run businesses or are employed in the private or public sector. Similarly, although Owambo people were not originally Christian, most Owambo are christened nowadays. Consequently it is believed that the San should follow a similar development trajectory, but even more so, because economic and environmental conditions are forcing them to abandon their previous way of life.

In this regard, some officials viewed the San resettlement projects around **Okongo** as learning centres where San could acquire crop cultivation skills, guided by the livelihood support programmes of the government or NGOs. Some officials felt that the San should not live in informal settlements in Okongo, where they would be at risk of living in squalor around the local shebeens, but should rather live in the resettlement projects and make a living from subsistence farming.^a It was also considered

important to construct 'proper accommodation' for the San, so that they need not continue living in the traditional half-open dwellings to which they were accustomed. It was envisaged that later, should they so wish, certain San could make the progression into communal-area farming activities, where they could obtain a field and a homestead, like any other Namibian farmer does.

These examples convey similarities in the perceptions of how San livelihoods and San culture should develop in each applicable region, key to which is the thinking that the San should be given a place of their own in which to live, so as to provide them with:

- an opportunity to develop alternative livelihoods as a means to support themselves, as they can no longer practise their traditional lifestyles;
- a place for themselves, away from the squalor, poverty and social evils associated with urban and rural informal settlements;
- opportunities to receive an education and become accustomed to different more sedentary and mainstream lifestyles/livelihoods; and
- 'proper accommodation', which would symbolise that the San no longer lived in poverty.

^a To this end, officials – with the assistance of the police – undertake efforts at recurrent intervals to collect San from the informal settlements and shebeens in places such as Okongo and take them back to their resettlement projects.

15.2 San perceptions of cultural differences and social exclusion

During our field research we asked San participants in the focus group discussions (FGDs) to identify the cultural characteristics of their respective communities, and at times we probed them to elaborate on differences between themselves as San and members of other ethnic groups. The participants did not explicitly describe a holistic system of social mores and traditions, but only mentioned certain aspects of their own culture.³ Their answers were informed partly by exposure to outsiders' perspectives of the San, and partly by tangible/physical differences rather than distinctions based on, for example, values and knowledge systems. Although references to these less tangible aspects of culture arose tangentially in discussions on other topics (e.g. livelihoods, poverty and education), the participants did not mention them directly when asked about culture and identity.

Common to all research sites – with one exception⁴ – was the fact that the FGD participants did not identify themselves as 'San'; instead, they invariably associated their cultures and traditions with **their language**, meaning that the individuals/communities who participated in the research identified themselves as Ju|'hoansi, Hai||om, !Xun, Naro, Khwe or !Xoon, not simply as 'San'. The following words of Chief Frederik Langman of the ‡Au||eisi Traditional Authority in Omaheke Region sheds light on the significance of language in the eyes of the San: "If you can't talk in your language, if you only speak other languages, you cannot know your tradition ...".

³ The San are no exception in this regard. Our own culture is generally so embedded in our lives and in our way of doing things that we are unaware of its defining characteristics, and only in comparing these characteristics with those of a different culture do we become aware of the contrasts between them, and their distinctiveness.

⁴ The exception was Omatako in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy. This might be attributed to the fact that different San groups are living together at this site, and they were routinely exposed to NGOs (e.g. the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA)), which usually refer to 'San' rather than to specific ethnic or language groups.

Secondly, the San at most sites stressed their **poverty**, and indicated that they felt **marginalised** and that members of neighbouring ethnic groups **discriminated** against them. FGD participants cited many examples of discriminatory practices, some of which are as follows:

- Stereotyping the San for example holding the view that they are lazy and/or are drunkards (cited in e.g. Kunene, Ohangwena and Omaheke).
- Exploitation for example paying San low wages for any job, or not paying them in accordance with verbal agreements, or merely paying them in kind, including with *otombo* (home-brewed beer) (cited in e.g. Kunene, Ohangwena and Omaheke).
- Land being given to or taken by others (cited in Oshikoto, Otjozondjupa, Kavango, Ohangwena, Omaheke and Bwabwata National Park (BNP)).
- Discrimination with regard to employment in any sector (cited in all regions).
- Improper treatment by civil servants and service providers, including paying scant attention to San, treating them rudely or simply turning them away.
- Use of derogatory terms in referring to San (cited in e.g. Omusati and Ohangwena).

In some areas (e.g. some sites in Omusati, Ohangwena, Omaheke and Kavango) the San had clearly become a separate underclass. In Ohangwena and Omusati, for example, members of other ethnic groups clearly identified the San as a distinct group, and referred to the San as Kwangara (a word connoting 'fecklessness'). Therefore the San were not fully integrated into Owambo society in these two regions, and this was despite the fact that, in Omusati for example, the San had long stopped speaking their own language and now spoke only Oshiwambo dialects, and had also adopted other aspects of the Owambo culture, such as clothing and housing. The underclass status was also clearly observable with farmworkers in Otjozondjupa and Omaheke, who pointed out that other people had more livestock and assets than them, and were more capable of operating a farm or business successfully. Otherwise, they found it difficult to define how their culture differed to those of other ethnic groups; they only said that the San were poorer than their neighbouring groups, and that these groups discriminated against the San. This identity as an underclass rather than a separate ethnic group within the wider socio-economic system had to do with the fact that the applicable San communities were living scattered among other ethnic groups who formed the majority. Furthermore, due to lacking access to their ancestral land, the San often found themselves limited in their ability to practise their traditional livelihoods (e.g. hunting and gathering) and to pass on their expertise to the next generation, so these aspects of their culture were being diluted and even lost. Nevertheless, even in the areas where the San have become an underclass, some less tangible cultural characteristics (e.g. egalitarianism) still play a role in their day-to-day life. These are dealt with in more detail later in this chapter.

In areas where San form the majority and have more access to land (e.g. the BNP and the two conservancies in Otjozondjupa), they exhibit more cultural consciousness, and practise some traditions (e.g. gathering) more extensively, and even pass traditions on to their children.

Table 15.1 summarises the characteristics of San culture that were mentioned in FGDs in the regions covered. In all regions except Omusati, language was perceived as a cultural marker; in Omusati the participants stated that they were no longer proficient in a San language. At all sites, participants stressed that their former subsistence strategies of hunting and gathering were culturally different to the subsistence strategies of other ethnic groups.⁵ Other features of San culture were mentioned only at some sites, e.g. traditional clothing, traditional dancing, initiation rituals, healing practices

⁵ The degree to which these strategies were still practised varied considerably across sites, as described in the regional chapters.

and cooking.⁶ The fact that these were not mentioned at *all* sites should not be taken as an indication that they were not relevant at the other sites, as they were just cited as examples to illustrate cultural differences, rather than being components of a fully comprehensive list.

Cultural characteristic	Omaheke	Otjozondjupa	Kunene, Oshikoto, Oshana	Ohangwena	Omusati	Kavango	BNP	Caprivi
Language								
Hunting and gathering								
Sharing								
Clothing								
Dancing								
Housing								
Cooking								
Traditional healers								
Initiation rituals								
Games								
Musical instruments								

Table 15.1: San cultural characteristics mentioned in the research discussions in each region*

* The cell shading indicates that the characteristic was mentioned in the applicable region.

Sharing among community members – an important feature of traditional San livelihoods – was mentioned in all regions except Omusati and Ohangwena, but it was mentioned only in contexts other than culture, i.e. mainly in discussions on livelihoods and poverty, thus it was not mentioned as a characteristic that distinguished the San from other ethnic groups. It could be that the San habit of sharing constitutes a behaviour that underlies many social interactions, rather than being a separate and palpable cultural activity such as hunting and gathering. Although sharing was not mentioned in any context in the FGDs in Omusati and Ohangwena, the research team observed the San sharing among themselves in Ohangwena at least.⁷

15.3 Similarities between San cultures

The preceding section conveys that the San living in different areas under different circumstances clearly perceive themselves as distinct from other ethnic groups, and without doubt, the principal distinction is the extent of social exclusion that the San experience. This social exclusion is partly linked to various cultural characteristics cited in the FGDs – e.g. language and former subsistence practices. Although San communities in different parts of Namibia have been subject to different historical developments over the last few centuries, and were affected by colonialism in different ways, and now live under diverse sets of circumstances, interacting with neighbouring ethnic groups to different degrees and in different ways, there are certain similarities between them. In this section

⁶ Physical appearance, though not a cultural difference, was mentioned in four research activities as a feature that distinguished the San from other ethnic groups (in Omaheke, Kunene and Caprivi Regions, and in the BNP).

⁷ This was confirmed by Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) staff members working at the resettlement projects in Ohangwena.

we shed some light on these similarities from an analytical perspective, as these similarities might have implications for the success of current and future development efforts.⁸ In the context of this study, the relevant similarities concern (former) modes of production, social organisation, values and land-use patterns.

In seeking to understand the differences between certain hunter-gatherer economies/cultures and other economies/cultures (i.e. agricultural, herding and capitalist), social anthropologist James Woodburn suggested distinguishing between **immediate-return and delayed-return systems**. This distinction is based on the argument that these two systems entail radically differing modes of organisation of labour (Endicott 1981: 2) – an idea based on data which had been empirically confirmed.

In **delayed-return societies**, people need to work for an extended period of time before a yield (e.g. a harvest, a monthly salary, meat from slaughtered livestock or income from selling livestock) is produced or consumed. The delay between the investment of labour and the eventual production/ consumption results in social inequality, as it becomes necessary to establish hierarchical structures of authority to distribute the labour and the yields, and to control vital assets. Most Namibian communities are delayed-return societies.⁹

Immediate-return societies are strongly orientated to present time, in that people usually obtain a direct and immediate return for their labour, and consumption is usually immediate (e.g. an animal killed in a hunt is eaten immediately or shortly after the hunt). Accumulation of resources or assets is strongly discouraged, while sharing is a moral obligation (Lewis 2008/2009: 12). The various San groups have been generally classified as societies which employ the immediate-return system (Woodburn 1982: 433; Widlok 1999: 13), and such societies also generally classified as egalitarian societies.

Box 15.3: Egalitarian societies

Social anthropologist James Woodburn summarised the basic differences between egalitarian societies and other societies in his classic article titled "Egalitarian Societies" (Woodburn 1982: 431):

"Greater equality of wealth, of power and of prestige has been achieved in *certain* hunting and gathering societies than in any other human societies. These societies, which have economies based on immediate rather than delayed return, are assertively egalitarian. Equality is achieved through direct, individual access to resources; through direct, individual access to means of coercion and means of mobility which limit the imposition of control; through procedures which prevent saving and accumulation and impose sharing; through mechanisms which allow goods to circulate without making people dependent on one another. People are systematically disengaged from property and therefore from the potentiality in property for creating dependency."

⁸ In academic circles, during a discussion (known as the "Kalahari debate") that persisted for almost 20 years, one point of contention was whether these similarities were based on ecological circumstances (i.e. barely affected by historical developments) or whether they originated in the San's marginality in the surrounding system – a system which included their dependency relationships with regional agropastoral societies and/or the colonialist and post-colonialist, and the system of the capitalist world (Guenther 2007: 375-376). However, an investigation into the possible causes of the similarities between the San and other groups is beyond the scope of this study.

⁹ Indeed, most of the world's societies are delayed-return societies.

To summarise, immediate-return systems may be characterised as egalitarian in nature: individual autonomy is highly valued, and food production does not depend on the control of other people. Delayed-return systems, by contrast, are characterised by the development of hierarchical structures and authority.

Egalitarianism also pertains to **gender relations**, thus immediate-return societies demonstrate a high degree of gender equality. Anthropologists have characterised the Ju|'hoansi, for example, as representing one of the least sexist societies (Endicott 1981: 1).¹⁰ We deal with this in more detail in Chapter 18 on gender.

Egalitarianism also has implications for the **upbringing of children**. San parents do not exert a great deal of authority over their children; the children are generally granted considerable autonomy, and are allowed to make their own decisions. Therefore, the view that San parents do not appreciate the value of education for their children must be understood in the light of egalitarian values and socialisation practices. We deal with this in Chapter 16 on education.

As mentioned previously, **sharing** is of great importance in immediate-return societies:

"The sharing systems we find are mainly focused on food. People who obtain more food than they can immediately consume are obliged to share it, to give it to other people and to do so without making the recipients indebted to them or dependent on them. Recipients are under no obligation to reciprocate, though they too must, of course, share when they in their turn obtain more food than they can immediately consume." (Barnard and Woodburn 1988: 21)

The (former) **land-use patterns** of San communities were connected to their subsistence practices and social organisation (dealt with in Chapter 13 on access to land). Extended families or bands formed co-residential units – usually occupying and 'owning' a specific territory – and customary law regulated the access to resources. These San groups were mobile in the past – their movements were dependent on the availability of natural resources at any given time – hence the accumulation of property was not feasible. Woodburn wrote:

"All these societies are nomadic ... They do not accumulate property but consume it, give it way, gamble it away or throw it away. Most of them have the knowledge of techniques of storing food but use them only occasionally to prevent food from getting rotten rather than to save it for some future occasion. They tend to use portable, utilitarian, easily acquired, replaceable artifacts – made with real skill but without hours of labour – and avoid those which are fixed in one place, heavy, elaborately decorated, require prolonged manufacture, regular maintenance, joint work by several people or any combination of these. The system is one in which people travel light, unencumbered, as they see it, by possessions and by commitments." (Woodburn 1980: 99, in Endicott 1981: 2)

Connected to these societies' egalitarianism are strong **mechanisms of levelling**. This 'levelling' does not mean that everyone is equal or that everyone has equal access to material goods; rather, it means that everyone has equal access to food, to the technology needed to acquire resources, and to the paths leading to prestige (McCall 2000: 140). Co-residential units are 'led' by headmen or headwomen, but these are not institutionalised authority roles based on inheritance, for example; rather, this leadership role is allocated on the strength of personal qualities – such as wisdom,

¹⁰ Gender equality does not mean that the activities carried out by men and women are identical – for example men were more likely to hunt and women were more likely to gather veldfood, but there was no strict division of labour. In this context, gender equality means that the activities of women are not controlled by men, and that the activities undertaken by men and women are considered to be of equal value (Endicott 1981: 1-2).

experience, charisma and persuasiveness (Endicott 1981: 4). Therefore, the type of person who might be accepted as leader is an individual possessing a certain degree of firmness of personality, as well as expertise in one field or another (e.g. hunting or locating plants), and who is able to listen and to reach decisions in a way that is fair and acceptable to the applicable community. However, the institution is situational and non-binding, and leaders can be replaced (Guenther 1999: 33). As Lorna Marshall reported of the Ju|'hoansi, headmen were "as thin as the rest"; they could wield little authority and did not possess any regalia of office, nor were any special honours conferred on them (Marshall 1976: 194); and moreover, "[a]ll you get is the blame if things go wrong" (Marshall 1976: 34).¹¹ Therefore it is not surprising that "a person generally does not seek out the position of headman or leader. The position held no rewards." (Guenther 1999: 34) In a way, by virtue of their position, San headmen and headwomen ought to be 'first among equals', but in effect, their situation is fraught with contradiction, given the nature of San societies: on the one hand these leaders are supposed to be generous, unassuming, unaggressive, modest and soft-spoken, and on the other hand their actions must be strong and decisive at times.

Although various San communities have experienced major changes in their subsistence practices over the last century, and hunting and gathering are now practised only to a very limited degree (gathering now being far more common than hunting), many aspects of the former way of life – which some refer to as a "foraging way of life" (McCall 2000: 140, 142) or the "foraging mode of thought" (Barnard 2002: 5) – are still maintained. Egalitarian levelling and sharing mechanisms still play an especially important role in food distribution mechanisms, but also come into play in new manifestations in contemporary life – for example the sharing of cash (e.g. Old Age Pension money). The mobility of many San today is perhaps a reflection of this "foraging mode of thought". Alternatively, the lack of land available to members of San communities may explain this mobility in Namibia. Widlok pointed out the following in respect of the Hai||om specifically:

"Immediate-return expectations continue to shape Hai||om strategies in their encounters with neighbours who engage in delayed-return activities. Thus, it may be more precise to talk about two modes of *social practices* [chapter authors' emphasis] rather than two seemingly unrelated polar types or systems." (Widlok 1999: 73)

In conclusion, much more research is needed to identify the ways in which the characteristics of these particular shared norms, values or social practices continue to be (or might become) relevant today, and in which particular circumstances. As conveyed in the next section, our research made evident that the critical aspects of the San peoples' cultural practices have to be taken into account when development initiatives are planned and implemented, and that ignorance of these practices might partly explain why many such initiatives have reaped little success to date.

15.4 Cultural considerations regarding development

Typologies defining immediate- versus delayed-return systems are never as clear-cut as they might initially appear to be from an idealised description. For one thing, an ethnic group, through contact with a neighbouring ethnic group, might adopt, in whole or in part, specific cultural characteristics of that group (e.g. inheritance practices, dress codes or names). Another consideration in this regard is the connection between values, social practices and mode of production – a subject of much debate. It could be argued that a change of subsistence practice (i.e. from hunting and gathering to sedentary agriculture or diversified livelihood strategies) should entail a change of values (i.e. from

¹¹ Ju|'hoansi at Skoonheid Resettlement Project (Omaheke Region) said the same to DRFN fieldworkers.

egalitarianism and the moral obligation of sharing to the accumulation of food, land and other assets) and hence a behavioural change. However, our study has found that many of the values and social practices connected to the (former) hunter-gatherer subsistence practices are still highly relevant in Namibia's San societies.

In the following subsections we reflect on six aspects of culture in terms of their implications for development. We are unable to present clear-cut answers to every challenge, but at the minimum, we stress the need for more awareness and consideration of a particular aspect of San culture in the planning and implementation of development programmes and projects. It is also relevant to stress that site-specific approaches are needed to accommodate regional and historical differences.

15.4.1 Immediate return

At some of our research sites (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omusati, Kavango and Caprivi Regions), the San preferred to do piecework for neighbouring farmers rather than invest labour in their own fields. At other sites, the San were engaged in other income-generating activities that provided immediate returns – mostly driven by the philosophy that "we need to zula to survive".¹² For example, San in Ohangwena made crafts which they sold to locals for direct gain – regardless of the often minimal monetary benefits. Such activities that bring immediate returns might be said to reinforce the common stereotyping of San as people who do not think about the future – because they are either incapable of doing so or unwilling to do so. However, there are many explanations for the San's preferences in this regard. One explanation is simply the reality of a life of poverty: a person who has nothing to eat now is not able to plant today and wait a couple of months to harvest and eat. Another explanation derives from the underlying structures of San societies (and a few other hunter-gatherer societies): their economies are based on immediate-return yields. Thirdly, other factors, not least the acculturation of nomadic traditions when the San came into contact with agricultural practices in northern Namibia, might have enhanced rather than diluted San preferences for immediate-return vields. A good example of this is their familiarisation with sedentary agriculture and Christianity which commenced in the 1960s when the San in what is now Ohangwena Region were brought together in projects implemented by Finnish missionaries of the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC - renamed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) in 1984).¹³ In these projects the San cultivated the church's fields in return for food rations and other fairly immediate benefits (e.g. tobacco and clothing) as well as basic healthcare.

More research is needed to determine whether the elimination of daily poverty would suffice to encourage San to engage in agriculture, or whether the immediate-return system is too deeply rooted in their social and economic structures, as Widlok (1999) has argued. Should the latter indeed be the case, the elimination of poverty alone would clearly not be sufficient reason for the San to involve themselves in agriculture.¹⁴ The case of the Ohangwena San, who have been brought together in resettlement projects around Okongo, seems to substantiate this point, as many of the San in these projects prefer to work in the fields of the neighbouring Kwanyama farmers rather than actively cultivate their own fields.¹⁵ It is also noteworthy that although some San communities

¹² The term *zula* means using any means necessary to make a living.

 ¹³ Some of these projects were converted into resettlement projects under the auspices of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR – now Ministry of Lands and Resettlement) a few years after Independence.
 ¹⁴ These reflections do not imply that agriculture is the only way forward for San development.

¹⁵ The San at Ekoka Resettlement Project, for example, preferred to give away the most fertile part of their crop land to neighbouring Kwanyama farmers, and then do piecework on that land, rather than keeping the land for themselves. The need for employment only partly explains this choice: limited capacity to protect their fields from wandering cattle, and insufficient capacity to work large tracts of land with household labour, are other explanatory

(e.g. the Khwe in West Caprivi) have engaged in agriculture for decades (if not centuries), many of the recently implemented garden projects in their area have not realised the desired results. On the other hand, San in Omaheke Region – many of whom were farmworkers on commercial or communal farms – have aspirations to become livestock (cattle or small-stock) farmers like their previous employers, and some, when given the opportunity to be trained and technically supported, have shown a sincere interest in rain-fed and irrigated crop production too. Therefore, a closer look into this matter and a comparison between the various San communities might be useful.

15.4.2 Sharing

The moral obligation to share is closely connected to the expectation of immediate return for labour. Woodburn provided an example based on the work of Lee with the Ju|'hoansi (Lee 1979: 409-414). Their difficulties in deriving a livelihood from agriculture and keeping domestic animals were not technical ones or related to know-how:

"[T]he overwhelming difficulties lie in the egalitarian levelling mechanisms: There is no way that farming can be carried on without some accumulation, without stores of grain and of agricultural tools, and the major difficulty for the few individual !Kung [i.e. Ju]'hoansi – chapter authors' note] who wish to make a real effort to farm is not that they themselves are unable to exercise self-restraint and to build up their stocks but that they are unable to restrain their kin and affines from coming to eat the harvested grain." (Woodburn 1982: 447)

In our research discussions, sharing was mentioned a great many times as an obstacle to escaping poverty. A young San woman studying in Windhoek with the assistance of the OPM made this clear by stating that she would never want to get employment close to home, because then she would be left without anything, since she would be obliged to care for her extended family. (This issue is not specific to the San; it also affects members of other ethnic groups in Namibia). Thus, since the practice of sharing makes accumulation difficult, San individuals would have to move out of their community should they wish to acquire some personal wealth. On the other hand, those who share can expect others to share with them in turn; indeed they can even *demand* that others reciprocate the habit of sharing – thereby guaranteeing access to resources when needed. Thus, instead of acquiring a personal safety net by means of individual accumulation, sharing ensures that a person will not be left without resources in the future, as others would be obligated to share with him/her.

It is important to note that the practice of sharing is usually applied only with members of the extended family or clan, or members of the same language group, rather than with the wider local community. This factor has tended to be overlooked in a number of group resettlement initiatives, but it should be taken into account when selecting beneficiaries of collective resettlement initiatives. In some regions of Namibia, San of different origin (e.g. Ju]'hoansi and Naro) or San and members

factors; and, against the backdrop of a value system based on immediate returns and sharing, this choice can also be attributed to reciprocal development needs, in the sense that, by cultivating the fields which they had given to Kwanyana farmers, the San community obtained the 'right' to claim support from these farmers during the dry season and in other times of dire need. DRFN project staff hailing from the same part of Ohangwena referred to this practice as "buying favours", and Berger and Ayisa (2001: 29) referred to it as a "symbiotic relationship". It may also be viewed as a type of informal insurance against economic, social and environmental shocks.

The livelihood support projects of the MLR and the DRFN between 2007 and 2013 provided further evidence that most of the San in these resettled communities took little interest in the cattle and draught animals donated to them through the Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF). This indifference might be due to the challenges of collective management, but it also seems to indicate that the time and energy needed to rear cattle represents an investment that is contrary to the value system of the Ohangwena San.

of other ethnic groups (e.g. Ju|'hoansi and Nama/Damara) have been brought together in certain resettlement projects, but they do not necessarily cooperate for the success of the whole community as they share (and collaborate) with their (extended) families only. Whereas one might attribute this simply to the common property management problems that might be expected to arise when 50 or more families are settled together, the cultural dimensions of this challenge should not be ignored in future development projects with the San.

Moreover, the obligation to share must be taken into consideration when introducing agricultural initiatives (e.g. livestock and crop cultivation schemes) in San communities, as certain losses that would not occur in other communities and traditions might have to be factored in. For example, San involved in gardening initiatives in Omaheke (e.g. Skoonheid Resettlement Project) and Kavango (e.g. Bravo Project) were sharing considerable amounts of their produce with relatives who lived in town or passed through for a visit, rather than storing it for their own use. Similarly, beneficiaries in Omaheke complained of children picking crops from their rain-fed fields and irrigated plots, to the extent that they wondered whether it was worthwhile to continue planting their fields. Although San participants in our research discussions referred to this as 'theft', in reality it may simply be another manifestation of the common practice of sharing.

The habit of sharing creates the following predicament for the San: on the one hand it provides a safety net for individuals in times of need; and on the other hand it prevents individuals from accumulating some personal wealth, because, instead of focusing on individual accumulation to save for the future (which is usually not possible for San anyway), San individuals engage in the social networks that would insulate them against the effects of dire circumstances, should these materialise.

In conclusion, our research has made clear that development efforts may not succeed if the San communities' moral obligation to share is ignored.

15.4.3 Leadership

Former leadership structures are another important factor that must be taken into account in future development efforts targeting the San, because where strong cultural levelling mechanisms prevent individuals from becoming assertive leaders, this has serious implications for the involvement of San in development initiatives and their capacity to represent their communities effectively.

The recognition of San traditional authorities (TAs) in certain parts of the country might indicate that the Namibian Government and society are increasingly valuing San culture and traditions. Nevertheless, there are still regions (e.g. Ohangwena, Kavango and Caprivi) where the San do not have their own TA, and where, as subjects of the TAs of other ethnic groups, the San naturally feel that their concerns are not necessarily adequately represented. Therefore, ensuring that the San in these areas are given the opportunity to be represented by their own formally recognised leaders should be a priority issue.

The formal recognition of San TAs should be effected on the understanding that the appointment of a chief as leader of a certain San community is merely a first step, and that the leadership functions ascribed to these new leaders by way of policies and legislation may differ from the characteristics and values attached to the concept of 'leadership' in various San traditions. Therefore, in addition to training on the formal roles and functions of the TA, dialogue and training may be needed on the very notion of leadership itself. Further issues related to San leadership are discussed in Chapter 19 on consultation, participation and representation.

15.4.4 Language

The fact that language was the feature that San participants in our research discussions mentioned most frequently as their primary cultural marker emphasises the need to give this feature greater attention. In particular, the languages spoken by the Jul'hoansi and the !Xun, which belong to the Ju language cluster, are completely different to other languages in the country, and are thus rarely understood by others. Combined with their low degree of proficiency in English, this entails a serious problem for the Jul'hoansi and !Xun – especially for the elderly – in communicating with the rest of Namibian society, and most importantly public servants. Many Jul'hoansi and !Xun can speak Afrikaans, but Afrikaans is no longer Namibia's official language, nor is it generally the second or even third language of other Namibians (especially in the north). This has serious implications for service delivery, and also, it reinforces the perception of some San that they are a marginalised people, since the language barriers encountered in public institutions all too often prevents their receiving the treatment or service to which they are entitled. The quality of certain services in the public sector is a national problem that affects all ethnic groups, not only the San, but their particular feeling of being socially excluded is certainly partly attributable to the challenge of communication.

Finally, San children encounter considerable challenges in the Namibian education system due to the fact that they cannot be educated in their mother tongue in the absence of curricula for different San languages, and teachers who are proficient in San languages. These issues are addressed in Chapter 16 on education.

15.4.5 Access to land

Issues relating to the various Namibian land tenure systems (communal land, commercial land, conservancies and national parks) have been dealt with in Chapter 13 on access to land (see especially Box 13.1 on page 455 in this regard), but it bears repeating here that the subsistence practices that characterise a semi-nomadic lifestyle have to be taken into account in the attempt to find solutions to the landlessness of the San in Namibia. The group rights tenure initiative of the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement and other stakeholders mentioned in Chapter 13 is a promising approach for some communities, but for others, individual plots might be a more viable alternative.

Importantly, the concept of 'underutilised land' also has to be revisited. Certain areas where the San formerly derived their livelihoods from hunting and gathering (e.g. parts of Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies and Kavango Region), which have been deemed 'underutilised', are due to be allocated – or have already been allocated – to Namibians from other ethnic groups. In this process, the authorities have failed to take into account the fact that traditionally, the !Xun and Ju|'hoansi living in these areas depended to a considerable extent on the land for their livelihoods through the non-intensive land-use strategies of hunting and harvesting natural resources for food security, medicine and income generation.

15.4.6 Mobility

Mobility is an aspect of San culture which outsiders have often referred to as characteristic of San traditions. People in hunter-gatherer societies have historically moved around in specific areas in search of natural resources, but in contemporary Namibia, San mobility is due primarily to their need to find employment (often temporary), and this need is exacerbated by the fact that so many San lack land which they can call 'home'. In relation to jobs, perhaps this 'roaming' tendency can also be understood in terms of the egalitarian nature of the San tradition, where a high value

is attached to individual autonomy: when a San worker is unhappy with his/her job or working conditions, the best option may be to move on, either to stay with relatives (and to rely on sharing obligations) or to return 'home' (if there is a place to call 'home'), with the aim of looking for new and more appealing employment opportunities. The high degree of mobility of former generations of San farmworkers in Omaheke Region has been captured in Hélène De Kok's novel titled *By The Roadside*, in which the author refers to the farmworkers who used to move around in donkey-carts as "*karretjies* people" (carts people) (De Kok 2009: vi, 1).

Since mobility is associated with both former subsistence practices and current circumstances, it has to be taken into account in planning and implementing San development initiatives.

Box 15.4: The need for mobility in modern Namibia and constraints experienced by San

The mobility of many San is relative and contingent. For many of the San living in remote areas, it is difficult to access services and institutions due simply to a lack of means of transport. Many San rely on 'catching a ride' with a vehicle on the main access roads, or alternatively donkeys/donkey-carts, horses or simply walking the considerable distances from where they live to the towns where they can shop and access various services. Where traffic is limited, as is common in remote areas, vehicle owners often charge the San (and other remote-area dwellers) considerable sums of money for taking them where they want to go. As the San have limited finances, this often means that they cannot travel when they need to, or cannot reach a destination as fast as they need/hope to.

The constraints associated with distance and mobility have serious implications for the delivery of services to the San, particularly health services and the provision of national documents, pensions and grants. The procedures/practices of government institutions and NGOs are not always designed in a way that is practicable for the San (and other people who have to travel far to access services), and for San who have to register for IDs and other national documents, and for grants and Old Age Pensions, these procedures/practices are very difficult to navigate. In addition to the difficulties of travelling, those lacking the necessary documentation may be refused the services and payments to which they are entitled for procedural reasons. Furthermore, San pensioners who must travel long distances are sometimes left stranded in towns due to payment delays, which often result in the loss of a pre-arranged ride home, or the absence of any form of transport home due to the late hour.

Similarly, the distance issue and the administrative practices of service providers often pose very serious problems for patients who need to acquire their medication on a regular basis. For example, patients being treated for chronic conditions (e.g. TB and HIV) are often compelled to collect their medication from different clinics: in one month they manage to find a ride to a certain clinic, but in the next month they can only find a ride to a different clinic. Furthermore, certain mobile clinics prescribe chronic medication for a maximum of four weeks, but then return to the same village or farm only six to eight weeks later. Such scheduling leads to patients defaulting on treatment regimes, which is particularly problematic for TB and HIV/AIDS treatment.^a

Some of these problems have been partially alleviated by the recently increased mobile phone coverage that resulted from government-led advocacy and private sector investment in the country's mobile networks. Although this does not eradicate the economic and time constraints that many San face in terms of transportation, it does allow for increased communication and coordination around access to transport to administrative centres and the scheduling of access to services. Similarly, increased radio coverage allows for transmitting messages about social services, mobile clinics, meetings and incidents to more rural audiences.

^a Dr Bell, N/a'an ku sê Lifeline Clinic, personal communication, 7 September 2013.

15.5 Recommendations

In summation, the characteristics that distinguish the cultures of the San from the cultures of their neighbouring ethnic groups are interlinked, and cannot be understood separately as they constitute a system of social operation. However, examining specific features separately can shed light on certain widely held perceptions that consolidate the stereotyping of the San to this day. For example, it is a commonly acknowledged truism that San people 'do not think about their future', but their egalitarian values and moral obligation to share make the individual accumulation of property virtually impossible, and bring about a situation that can easily be mistaken for a failure to invest in the future, with outsiders ignoring the fact that through kinship ties, the sharing mechanism ensures that a San person is not left helpless in times of need.

The central argument here is that cultural differences between San and more dominant agricultural traditions in Namibian society have to be taken into account in the process of development planning and implementation, especially in respect of the unique social traits of San communities that their cultures present. Since a one-size-fits-all approach is neither feasible nor sustainable, it is critical to develop site-specific approaches that take into consideration the circumstances specific to a given San community, and to elicit the active engagement of the project participants or beneficiaries. The following subsections provide some details of how these aims can be achieved.

15.5.1 Promoting intercultural sensitivity

It is important to recognise that Namibia needs to engender a better understanding of San cultures, – i.e. the culture of each San community in the country – as such an understanding could potentially beget more respect for the San and reduce the discrimination against them. There have already been some efforts (especially under the ILO PRO 169 programme mentioned in Chapter 3) to sensitise public servants and other stakeholders to the rights of indigenous peoples. The external evaluation of the ILO PRO 169 programme undertaken in 2012 found that the programme had raised awareness of indigenous peoples' rights within government and civil society, and had built capacity through training workshops and advanced courses that focused on these rights (Hays 2013: 5). The previous Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Libertina Amathila, is "widely considered to have made important strides towards improving the visibility of San issues and concerns in the public discourse" (Hays 2013: 30). However, being aware of the rights of indigenous peoples and acquiring knowledge about the relevant international instruments do not suffice to drive a change in Namibian society that would improve attitudes towards San communities and begin to eliminate the common practice of discrimination. What are the mechanisms and activities through which a better understanding, more respect and less discrimination can be achieved?

- Workshops and trainings on intercultural sensitivity. These would involve efforts by the San and development practitioners to understand their own perceptions of San culture, such as the issues of sharing and immediate returns, egalitarian values and leadership structures, as well as the implications of these perceptions for development initiatives.
- **Participatory community meetings** in which civil servants and San communities focus on the issues of discrimination and stereotyping.
- **Research and raising awareness** on the resilience of cultural characteristics and their impacts on development.
- **Participatory action research with each San community**, including a 'visioning' activity in which the participants examine their needs and aspirations in relation to their culture/heritage/ traditions. Such research should go beyond the mere formulation of wish-lists in preparation for new development projects, and should entail contextualising the transformative aspects of

development processes for the recipient communities, and the obligations involved in these – irrespective of whether the development initiatives are to be implemented now or later.

15.5.2 Language, remoteness, mobility and access to public institutions and services

With regard to language, we agree with the recommendations of the various countries taking part in the 2011 Universal Periodic Review on Namibia published in the *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Namibia* (United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2011b). These recommendations involve efforts to acknowledge language barriers faced by the San in the public domain, and measures to ensure that San people can properly access and enjoy quality services in public institutions, e.g. by providing translation services. To quote UNGA directly (2011b: 15-16):

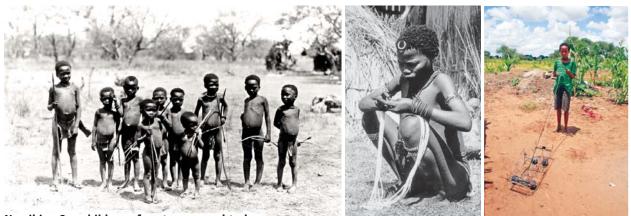
- Ensure that persons who only speak **non-official languages** used widely by the population are not denied access to public services (Austria); ...
- Take effective measures to enhance the access to public services concerning persons who do not speak the **official language** (Germany); ...
- Adopt measures to ensure access to public services for persons **who do not speak English** as they are a significant proportion of the Namibian population. This was recommended by the Human Rights Committee in 2004 (Spain).

Further recommendations on language are put forward in Chapter 16 on education.

Regarding remoteness and mobility, various efforts should be made to overcome the service-access challenges that the San and other illiterate or semi-literate remote-area dwellers experience. These efforts could include:

- more comprehensive healthcare outreach services, which are adequately resourced so that they can return to remote communities on a more regular basis;
- adjustments to administrative procedures and practices in various sectors to accommodate the needs of San communities as well as highly mobile San individuals, and to minimise the constraints associated with the distance to be covered by remote-area dwellers; and
- improved communications infrastructure, particularly mobile phone and radio coverage.

On the following pages we present an eye-opening case study of the value of San traditional skills in the contemporary world.



Namibian San children of yesteryear and today Left: Photo from the Denver-African Expedition 1925/26 collection housed in the National Archives of Namibia Centre: Photo from the collection of H. Kendzia

Box 15.5: CASE STUDY OF THE VALUE OF SAN TRADITIONAL SKILLS: Ju|'hoan trackers explore Ice Age caves in southern France By Dr Tilman Lenssen-Erz and Team

In June and July 2013, in a cooperative endeavour of African Archaeology at the University of Cologne, the Neanderthal Museum (Germany) and Namibia's Nyae Nyae Conservancy, and in consultation with the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN), the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), the National Museum of Namibia and the Archaeology Department of the University of Namibia (UNAM), a research project was carried out in which the indigenous knowledge of San hunters was called up to elucidate an old riddle in European prehistory:

In some caves in southern France, rock art from the Ice Age and human footprints of people dating back 17 000 years are preserved. These footprints received considerable western research attention, but were never inspected by contemporary experts in tracking.

Therefore, three trackers hailing from the Ju|'hoan community at Tsumkwe, namely |Ui Kxunta, |Ui Ga!o and Tsamkxao Ciqae, were invited by Dr Tilman Lenssen-Erz (University of Cologne) and Dr Andreas Pastoors (Neanderthal Museum) to explore some of the very few caves with prehistoric footprints. The basic idea of the project was: western science can count and measure these tracks very well, but only the San can read them, and without reading, there can be no understanding.

The German team members travelled to Nyae Nyae to meet the trackers and to prepare them for what they would experience in France. The San hunters demonstrated their tracking skills during several tracking trips in the Kalahari, at sites such as the Gautscha and Nyae Nyae pans. A visit to the baobabs near Tsumkwe served the purpose of tangibly getting into contact with something so very old that it transcends the individual imagination and experience of time. To acquaint the trackers with a cave environment, the team visited the deep dripstone cave on Farm Ghaub (40 km north-west of Grootfontein). The next stop was the World Heritage Site of Twyfelfontein, where prehistoric hunter-gatherer rock art depicts many animal tracks, which served to provide a rich repertoire of signs for the trackers to interpret. The last stop was the White Lady rock painting at the Brandberg/Daureb, which epitomises depictions of the age-old culture of hunting and tracking. Following a press conference in Windhoek, the group travelled to Europe.

In Germany, a visit to the zoo in Cologne was arranged to give the San hunters an opportunity to observe bears whose tracks they would encounter more often than human tracks in the caves. After another press conference, the group drove to the Pyrenees mountain range in southern France where the caves are located.

The visits to these European Ice Age caves were worth every second, and have yielded stunning new insights. Four caves were visited, and in a fifth cave the team inspected a replica of human tracks – viewing the originals would require some challenging scuba diving. The trackers exhibited a highly professional attitude, and rendered the strenuous cave visits extremely prolific.

In the cave of Niaux, a hitherto poorly understood patch of ground with some 24 footprints has now been identified as the result of a 12-year-old girl having stood there, as opposed to several people having performed a ritual dance there – as some archaeologists have believed. In the cave of Pech Merle, where archaeologists had identified footprints of just one or two people who had walked over the spot where human footprints are preserved, the Jul'hoan trackers identified the footprints of five people. In the cave of Fontanet, the footprints of 17 individuals were identified (distributed over three locations), and the one and only presumed Ice Age spoor of a shoe was also examined closely. In this imprint, the Jul'hoan trackers discerned clear marks of toes, thus this imprint does not in fact stand as proof that people wore shoes in the Ice Age.



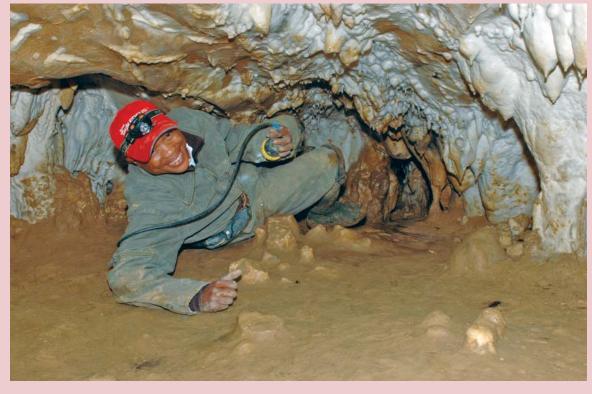


Above: |Ui Kxunta and |Ui Ga!o with a custodian in the cave named Niaux

Left: |Ui Kxunta and |Ui Ga!o in the cave named Tuc d'Audoubert

Below: |Ui Kxunta in Tuc d'Audoubert

(The third tracker, **Tsamkxao Ciqae**, is pictured on the next page along with the other members of the project team.)

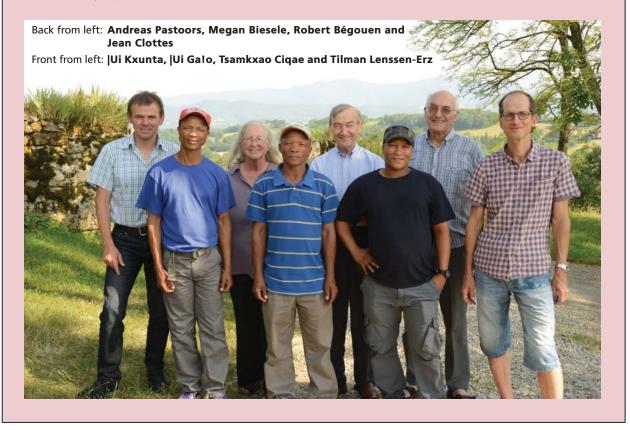


Finally, in the cave of Tuc d'Audoubert, there is an area with a puzzling array of dozens of footprints on the side of a small pit, which archaeologists have again interpreted as being the tracks of ritual dancers, but the San trackers have a different explanation: they identified the tracks of a man and a boy walking twice to and fro to the pit to extract clay, and in addition they discerned imprints revealing that the man and boy knelt down at the pit in this process.

All of the trackers' discussions and arguments about the tracks inspected were audio-recorded. The Jul'hoan Transcription Group in Tsumkwe will transcribe these recordings in Jul'hoansi, and then translate the transcriptions into English.

Now, for the first time, there are plausible explanations as to what occurred in some of the places where Ice Age footprints are preserved. For the trained western scientists involved in this project, the experience of witnessing the San trackers at work was enlightening: the San exhibited a thoroughly empirical attitude towards their 'data', never speculating but rather clinging to meaningful facts, and in this sense there is a profound methodological accordance between the western and the San approaches to interpreting tracks. Accordingly, the San were even able to detect the sex and age of those whose tracks they could clearly interpret. Henceforth, every scientist working with human tracks from the Ice Age will have to refer to the findings of these San experts, as never before has there been an equally competent inspection of such tracks.

A German television crew accompanied the group throughout the project period in Namibia and Europe. One outcome of this coverage will be a 90-minute documentary, scheduled for broadcast on the French-German channel Arte in 2014. Dr Tilman Lenssen-Erz (African Archaeology at the University of Cologne), Dr Andreas Pastoors (Neanderthal Museum, Mettmann, Germany) and Dr Megan Biesele (anthropologist in Namibia and authority on the San of the Kalahari) will produce an English version of the documentary, for screening in the participants' villages around Tsumkwe and elsewhere in Namibia. The project stirred huge media interest in Germany, with TV, radio and especially print-media coverage. (See also the project website, www.trackingincaves.com, which is continuously updated.)



Chapter 16 Education

By Maarit Thiem and Jennifer Hays

"San empowerment and education must be given first priority."

- Moses ||Khumub, member of the Namibian San Council, San Study National Feedback Workshop, April 2013



16.1 Introduction

In the San Study National Stakeholder Workshop held in Windhoek in April 2013, participants emphasised the critical importance of education for empowering the San and for enabling them to determine their own development. In his opening address to the workshop, Namibian San Council member Moses ||Khumub explained why the San Council regards education as a "first priority":

"Educated and empowered people can lead their own development, and San people are no exception. If San people are not empowered and do not take the initiative ... their current dependency will remain the same."

Similar sentiments were expressed over and over throughout our field research. Education – and whether or not one has access to it – plays a central role both in the current marginalisation of the San and in their hopes of gaining control over their own circumstances.

Namibia has some of the most progressive and most inclusive education policies in Africa. Yet, at virtually all of the research sites visited for this study, access to quality education was identified as one of the most pressing problems that the San communities face.

Both male and female San adults have very low levels of education. At most (not all) of the sites visited, we collected information on the level of education of individual participants and their children, including the reasons for their generally low level of education. The data collected is not representative due to certain factors being beyond our control, such as the inconsistent numbers of discussion participants per site – some groups were small and some were large – and the fact that many people, especially the elderly, did not know their own age nor their children's ages. We collected education-related information from 609 individuals in total. Although our multivariate data analysis does not provide a representative picture of school attendance due to the small sample of cases, some trends are worth presenting here in brief.

Approximately 50% of the participants overall had never attended school. Among those who had attended school, the gender disparity was minimal, and was linked primarily to age: among those aged 28 and older, more males than females had attended school, whereas among those younger than 28, more females than males had attended or were still attending school.¹ A large majority (about 90%) of those who had attended school had dropped out before receiving a certificate, and the average grade in which they had dropped out was lower among the group aged 28 and older.

Both San and non-San respondents perceived the low levels of school attendance as a major obstacle to improving San communities' economic situation, and to their achieving a social and political status equating to that of other Namibians. Focus group discussion (FGD) participants identified a range of barriers to education, chief among which were: a lack of schools nearby; mistreatment by teachers and other learners; a lack of food; a lack of money to pay school fees and other education-related costs; and language difficulties. Non-San respondents repeatedly confirmed these and other factors, and the low level of San participation in Namibia's formal education system is illustrated statistically in education-related data collected by the government.

In the following subsections we briefly discuss international standards and declarations pertaining to education, and Namibian education and language policies and their relevance to San learners, and then compare the ideals expressed in these international and national instruments to the San experience of education as reported by San at our research sites. Then, elaborating on the barriers cited above, we describe in detail the main barriers to participation in formal education faced by San individuals and communities. Finally, we draw conclusions and offer recommendations for improving the educational status of the San in Namibia.

¹ Those aged 28 and older attended school before Independence, and those younger than 28 attended school after Independence, so we have divided the San participants in our research discussions into these two categories.

16.1.1 Education as a right

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN General Assembly (UNGA) 1948) declares education to be a fundamental human right. Article 26 asserts that every person has the right to education, and that elementary education should be free and compulsory. Several other international declarations, conventions and documents invoke this fundamental right to education, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Article 17(1)) (Organisation of African Unity (OAU) 1981) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 11) (OAU 1990).

The **World Conference on Education for All**, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, laid the foundation for a global commitment to providing quality basic education for all children, youth and adults. The conference participants, including Namibia, "... endorsed an 'expanded vision of learning' and pledged to universalize primary education and massively reduce illiteracy by the end of the decade".² The **World Education Forum**, meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, reaffirmed this international initiative of "Education for All (EFA)".

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education (1998-2004), Katarina Tomaševski, defined the right to education as an 'enabling right', in addition to being a right in itself:

"If people have access to education they can develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights. Education gives people the ability to access information detailing the range of rights that they hold, and government's obligations. It supports people to develop the communication skills to demand these rights, the confidence to speak in a variety of forums, and the ability to negotiate with a wide range of government officials and power holders."³ (Also cited in Hays 2011: 131)

In addition to the international instruments that affirm *all people's* right to education, there are several international declarations, conventions and documents that recognise the education rights of *indigenous peoples* specifically. These include indigenous rights instruments – notably the **UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (UNGA 2007) and **International Labour Organization Convention No. 169** (ILO169) (1989) – and general rights instruments that refer to indigenous education, including the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (UNGA 1989), the **World Declaration on Education for All** (World Education Forum 1990) and the **Dakar Framework for Action** (World Education Forum 2000).⁴ All these instruments acknowledge that indigenous communities have suffered from exclusion from mainstream education systems, as well as from restricted participation in these systems.

At the core of indigenous education rights is the right to educational self-determination. Article 14 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples describes this as follows:

"Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."⁵

For San communities, this right is still very far from being fulfilled.

² United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "Education For All: History", accessed at www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/the-efa-movement/.

³ Right to Education Project, "Defining the right to education", accessed at www.right-to-education.org/node/233.

⁴ Namibia is a party to all of these agreements except the ILO Convention No. 169.

⁵ For a detailed discussion on education-related rights connected to indigenous rights in southern Africa, see Hays 2011.

16.1.2 Education and language policy in Namibia

Some of the problems that the San of Namibia experience in accessing education are rooted in the country's history. The colonial administration of the Territory of South West Africa (SWA – now the Republic of Namibia) fostered the view that formal education would be wasted on the San, hence very few schools were built in the areas where San lived, and little effort was made to encourage San children to acquire a formal education (Suzman 2001b: 124). Consequently, by 1984, only one in 20 San had received any formal education, and only one San learner in all of SWA had attended school for longer than seven years (Marais 1984: 62). With the deployment of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in West Caprivi and Bushmanland, the rate of enrolment of San in formal schools increased throughout the 1980s, but still remained lower than for other ethnic groups. This historical legacy is still evident today: the educational level of elderly San people is generally extremely low, the majority being unable to read or write at all.

After Namibia attained its independence in 1990, the new government introduced an education system aimed at overcoming racial segregation by offering equal education to all. Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution guarantees and defines the right to education. Furthermore, it stipulates that primary education should be compulsory, and charges the State with providing reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every Namibian resident. Article 9 guarantees the cultural rights of people, and Article 3 the right to use a language other than English as a medium of instruction. These constitutional rights laid the foundation for a range of national policies to secure equal access to education.

The Language Policy for Schools in Namibia, adopted in 1991 and revisited in 2003 (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC) 2003), calls for the learners' mother tongue to be the medium of instruction during the first three years of formal education, with a transition to English thereafter, and the teaching of the mother tongue as a subject throughout the remaining years of formal education (Davids 2011: 128). This policy also recognises the importance of minority languages and the pedagogical soundness of mother-tongue education, noting that "all national languages regardless of number of speakers or the level of development of a particular language" are equal, and that any given language is also "a means of transmitting culture and cultural identity" (MBESC 2003: 1; see also Hopson 2011 and Ninkova 2009).

Despite the increasing enrolment rate nationally in the years following independence, there was a growing 'enrolment gap' in specific sectors of society. In 1996, recognising that specific affirmative action efforts were required to reach educationally marginalised children and to ensure universal access to education as the Constitution prescribes, the MBESC established the Intersectoral Task Force for Educationally Marginalised Children, which functioned as a steering committee for overseeing the implementation of policies on education and addressing specific needs (Von Wietersheim 2002: 3).

In particular, the task force addressed the recommendations of the *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children* document which was drafted in the mid-to-late 1990s, finalised in 2000 and released as a full-fledged policy in 2001 (MBESC 2000). This remains Namibia's most progressive policy on education. It is extremely far-reaching, and is the most relevant policy for San learners. It identifies 13 educationally marginalised groups, including the San as an ethnic group,⁶ but San children are also part of other marginalised groups identified in the policy – especially

⁶ The San and the Himba are the only ethnic groups included in the 13 categories.

farmworkers, street children, working children, children in squatter areas and resettlement camps, children living in extreme poverty, and over-age children. The policy recognises that the San, as an educationally marginalised group, face difficulties in accessing basic education, drop out of school prematurely and/or are "pushed out of from the formal education system by the system itself" (MBESC 2000: 2).

This policy provides concrete directions for overcoming the two barriers identified as the main barriers: poverty and attitudes. For example, to reduce the financial difficulties that marginalised groups encounter, an exemption from school fees and the wearing of school uniforms is advised. (This issue was also taken up in the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children 2006-2010 – see subsection 16.2.1 on poverty.) In the years immediately following the adoption of the *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children* as a policy per se, the Intersectoral Task Force monitored efforts to implement the changes, and educational programmes targeting San and Himba children specifically. However, this task force has been dormant since 2004 when education was decentralised to the regional education offices.

In 2012, the Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a **Sector Policy on Inclusive Education**, which defines inclusive education (in line with UNESCO's description) as –

"... a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from the education system" (MoE 2012a: iii).

The policy of 2012 refers to the *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children* (MBESC 2000) in several places. Unlike the latter, the 2012 policy document makes no reference to the San or any other ethnic minority specifically, but its spirit is much the same, with the list of guiding principles including, inter alia: identifying and addressing challenges and/or barriers within the education system; inculcating flexible and differentiated teaching and learning approaches; engaging schools and communities on the issues of human and educational rights; diversifying the curriculum; and creating a positive climate for diversity.

Compared to education policies in other countries in southern Africa, Namibia's policies are the most progressive in terms of meeting the educational requirements of its minorities. Regrettably, however, not all of these policies are enforced, and the reality on the ground still reflects gross inequalities in access to education and the levels attained. The reasons for the lack of enforcement are not entirely clear, but this is a problem that affects the country in general. The Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4) highlights the fact that the education sector receives the largest portion of the national budget, but that educational achievements remain weak compared to international standards. NDP4 identifies two main challenges with regard to education: "… quality in the system across all layers and segments, and the mismatch between the demand for and supply of skills in the country" (National Planning Commission 2012a: 46).

However, despite the laudable efforts to increase the participation of all Namibian citizens in the formal education system, our research has consistently made clear that in this system, the San are by far the most disadvantaged of all ethnic groups. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) shows that San enrolment in formal education is far below the national average. Twenty-three years after Independence, the San enrolment figures are striking: 67% in the lower primary phase (Grades 1-3); 22% in the upper primary phase (Grades 4-7); 6% in the junior secondary phase (Grades 8-9); and less than 1% in the senior secondary phase (Grades 11-12) (MoE 2010: 40; see also Davids 2011: 127).

16.1.3 Overview of San Study findings

Our research has confirmed the statistical picture presented in the previous paragraph. We found that a majority of San children – though far from all – are enrolled in the lower primary grades, especially if there is a primary school in their vicinity. Our data also reaffirms the sharp decline in San enrolment in upper primary and higher grades revealed by the EMIS statistics (MoE 2010): 36% of our FGD participants' children had dropped out by Grade 4, and over half (55.2%) by Grade 6. The participants' explanations for these high and early dropout rates were manifold, and they reflect an interplay of economic, cultural and social factors. Nevertheless, a number of explanations were similar across the research sites, indicating that the applicable root causes (discussed below) are the same for all San groups. On the other hand, certain differences between sites could be identified, and these are revealing. The findings in Ohangwena Region, and at a particular school in Tsumkwe West in Otjozondjupa Region, represent the extremes found in our research, as described below.

Ohangwena Region: The situation of San learners in this region was said to be particularly difficult. Indeed, we found a much lower rate of participation in education here than the average across the sites, with a high number of San children not enrolled in school at all. FGD participants in this region attributed this low rate of participation to widespread alcoholism, teenage pregnancy and early marriage, and reports of bullying and threats in hostels. According to FGD participants, San parents in Ohangwena are very passive vis-à-vis supporting their children's school attendance. This whole situation is a reflection of the generally difficult living conditions of the San in Ohangwena, and the fact that they were living together with more dominant ethnic groups, into which they were assimilating as a sub-class, and were on the verge of losing their own identity. For example, it was very difficult to obtain information on the school fee exemption and other ways for San to access financial support for education, in part because the San in this region did not have their own traditional authority (TA) that could disseminate such information to them and assist them with the bureaucratic procedures involved.

Tsumkwe West (N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, Otjozondjupa Region): In the village of Mangetti Dune, the younger FGD participants showed a much higher degree of self-confidence than those at other sites. They participated actively in the discussions, articulated their own opinions, and most of them were able to understand English well and express themselves in English. There is a primary school catering for Grades 1-7 within this village, and the language of instruction is a mix of English (primarily) with some Afrikaans. The !Xun learners constitute the majority in the school, and discrimination was not mentioned as an issue. Two important factors stand out here in contrast to many other sites: (1) the close proximity of the school, which enables most learners – in Mangetti Dune and other local villages – to stay with their families; and (2) the San being the majority ethnic group at the school. This combination of factors has given the San learners space to develop a sense of pride and self-confidence. The contribution of the younger female FGD participants to the research in Mangetti Dune was particularly significant in comparison to other sites. They contributed actively and even expressed views that differed to those of the male participants.

16.1.4 Specific efforts targeting San learners

At the time of our field research there were several efforts underway to support San education (described in subsection 16.3.3 under the heading "External support for San education"). There were two notable projects focusing on providing mother-tongue education and inculcating respect for San culture and language in primary schools: Gqaina Primary School in Omaheke Region and the Nyae Village Schools Project in Otjozondjupa Region respectively. These are described in

more detail in the relevant chapters of this report (Box 4.2 on page 66 and Box 5.3 on page 123). Here we provide a brief description of these important examples of San-friendly education.

Gqaina Primary School (Omaheke Region): Gqaina Primary School (Grades 1-7) is a private, government-subsidised school established in 1991. It is considered to be a model school because it has an extremely low dropout rate (less than 5%) compared to other schools in San areas, and is the only school in Omaheke that uses a San language (Ju|'hoansi) as the medium of instruction – and a high percentage of former Gqaina learners reported still being able to read and write fluently in Ju|'hoansi long after their schooling. Gqaina Primary School has managed to facilitate positive relations between the different ethnic groups at the school; bullying is not tolerated and there is close supervision of the relationship between the learners and also between the school staff and the learners. The school employs Ju|'hoansi-speaking hostel and kitchen personnel, which further contributes to a positive learning environment for the Ju|'hoan learners (see Box 4.2 on page 66 as well as Hays and Siegrühn-Mars 2005 and Ninkova 2009). However, despite the school's success, many of the San learners drop out in their first year of secondary school. FGD participants' explanations for this situation correspond with those at other sites – described in section 16.2.

Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project (VSP) (Otjozondjupa Region): The VSP was developed in the early 1990s by NGOs in collaboration with the then Ministry of Education and Culture, with a view to increasing the participation of Jul'hoan children in Tsumkwe East. The project objectives were: to provide schooling in the vicinity of the children's community; to use the mother tongue as medium of instruction; and to include traditional knowledge and skills in the curriculum - all with the ultimate goal of increasing the Jul'hoan children's self-confidence and preparing them to attend government schools from Grade 4 onwards. In 2004, with support from the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS), the Ministry of Education (MoE) took over responsibility for the schools through its Regional Directorate of Education in Otjozondjupa. These schools are now known simply as the "Village Schools". There are six schools in total, but not all of them operate all the time; at the time of writing there are four schools operating. The enrolment rate is high in the villages where these schools are located. Some children from other villages travel daily to school if they are close to one of these schools, or otherwise board with relatives if that is an option. Overall, however, only about 10% of Jul'hoan children attend a Village School; the remaining 90% either attend a mainstream government school or do not attend school at all. Furthermore, for all Jul'hoan learners (at the Village Schools and government schools), attendance declines dramatically when moving on to the upper primary school in Tsumkwe in Grade 4.

16.2 Barriers to San participation in formal education

This section discusses the main barriers to San children's full participation in formal education – barriers identified in all regions visited. The three most significant barriers – which were also the reasons cited for dropping out of school – were poverty, discrimination/stigma and the remoteness of many villages. However, these and other barriers discussed in this section are interrelated and must be considered together. Although children of other ethnic groups also face some of these barriers (e.g. poverty and remoteness), San alone face the full range of barriers.

16.2.1 Poverty

The main reasons cited by San learners and parents for school dropout relate to finance. FGD participants reported difficulties in covering the costs of school and hostel fees, school uniforms, school materials, toiletries, and mattresses and bedding. Government has long recognised this,

and has made efforts to remove financial barriers to school attendance, in particular by exempting 'children in need', including San children, from paying school fees. The policy options document described above (MBESC 2000) states the following:

"A major reason for children not attending school or for dropping out of school is poverty. Thus, as a first step, the MBEC should insist on the implementation of its directives to schools regarding payment of school fund fees and the wearing of school uniforms. Neither of these are compulsory and school authorities should use their discretion in this case." (MBESC 2000: 25-26)

The exemption of school fees was also emphasised in the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children 2006-2010 (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) 2007), which urges parties to do the following:

"Ensure that OVC who cannot afford the costs of schooling are exempted from all such costs, by (a) disseminating accessible information nationwide on exemptions from school fees, hostel fees, examination fees, contributions to school development funds and other school-related expenses to children and their caregivers; (b) monitoring and enforcing implementation of the regulations on exemptions by schools nationwide; (c) activating the Education Development Fund to reimburse schools which provide exemptions from contributions to school development funds; and (d) putting in place a plan for exempting OVC from uniforms, or for providing uniforms to OVC free or at reduced cost." (MGECW 2008 reprint: 28).

The National Agenda for Children 2012-2016 (MGECW 2012) states the following in relation to the costs of schooling:

"The Education Act provides that, "*All tuition provided for primary and special education in state schools, including all school books, educational materials and other related requisites, must be provided free of charge to learners until the seventh grade, or until the age of 16 years, whichever occurs first.*" Therefore, the School Development Fund (SDF) system which has been in force since 2001 appears to be in contravention of the constitutional right to free primary education at state schools." (MGECW 2012: 19)

The National Agenda for Children lists priority strategies for attaining the desired education outcomes, the following being the first strategy listed for primary education:

"Address the private costs of education by investigating its affordability in view of the constitutional provision for free and compulsory primary education and making recommendations to Cabinet as to how government can adhere to this provision." (MGECW 2012: 20)

Therefore, as educationally marginalised and vulnerable children, San learners were (or should have been) exempted from paying school fees. However, according to FGD participants, the school fee exemption had not helped improve attendance much, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the policies had been implemented inconsistently, and many San children and parents reported that they were still expected to pay the fees at the time of our research. Parents in all regions made statements like "the principal makes us pay" or "they are requesting school fees from us" (and parents often avoided going to the schools simply to avoid such requests). The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, in reporting on his visit to Namibia in 2012, also stated that San learners described being "routinely turned away from schools for not paying development fund fees" (Anaya 2013: 16).

Secondly, even where the exemption policy was implemented, San were often hesitant to request the exemption due to their fear of being stigmatised by teachers and other learners. Ninkova, referring to

her research in Omaheke Region, described this phenomenon as the "dilemmas of special treatment" (Ninkova 2009: 76). FGD participants in our study reported that tensions arose when learners from other ethnic groups thought that the San received unwarranted preferential treatment.

Finally, financial difficulties for San learners go beyond the school fees themselves: school uniforms and other clothes are also considered necessary for school, as are toiletries and other products necessary for personal hygiene – and the difficulty of paying for toiletries was mentioned as a particular reason for dropping out of school, especially for girls. Many San learners reported that they faced bullying by other learners and teachers due to the fact that they could not afford toiletries and thus could not wash properly; learners reported being told by both school officials and other learners that they were "dirty" or "smelled bad".

Since January 2013, primary education has been 'free of charge' for all children in government schools, in that parents/guardians of learners in Grades 1-7 no longer have to contribute to the School Development Fund.⁷ If implemented in practice across the board, this could solve the problems associated with singling out the San (and OVC) for exemption from school fees – but it will not address the problem of the additional expenses for hostel fees, bedding, toiletries, uniforms and other necessary items. Furthermore, this exemption from paying school fees applies only to primary schools, and San learners in secondary schools report the same financial challenges.

The extreme poverty faced by most San also forces children to leave school in order to contribute to their meagre family incomes – a reason for school dropout cited at a number of our research sites. A recent ILO report assessing the extent to which San children are involved in child labour in Omaheke, Oshikoto, Otjozondjupa and Kunene Regions found that child labour was occurring in San communities with a prevalence described as often "high or very serious" (ILO 2012: 7). San children engaged in a range of economic activities, but mainly farmwork, domestic work, construction work and selling small items. The ILO found that some of the working children could be exposed to extreme hazards ranging from toxic substances and dangerous equipment to harsh weather conditions and sexual abuse, whereas others did not face such hazards; some dropped out of school simply to take over domestic work in their own households in order to free their parents from chores so that they could pursue piecework or paid work (ILO 2012: 62). The majority of the children who reported being engaged in productive work were still enrolled in school, although work certainly had the potential to affect their school attendance (ILO 2012: 7).

It is thus clear that poverty affects San children's ability to attend school in numerous ways.

16.2.2 Discrimination

Discrimination against San learners was still common 23 years after Independence. At our research sites in all regions, we heard narratives outlining the verbal and physical abuses that San children endured in schools and hostels. This discrimination experienced by the San has been described in many publications over the last 20 years (e.g. Le Roux 1999; Suzman 2001b; Hays 2002 and 2007; and Ninkova 2009), and apparently the situation has not improved. In its *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children*, the MBESC also acknowledged discriminatory attitudes as a major factor in learners' reluctance to attend school and in the high dropout rates (MBESC 2000: 23). More than a decade later, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

⁷ See, for example, Ministry of Education, "Latest News and Events: Free Primary Education from 2013", accessed at www.moe.gov.na/news_article.php?type=pressrelease&id=97&title=Free.

James Anaya, reported hearing from San communities: "... almost uniformly that discrimination, teasing, and negative stereotyping of San children characterises their educational experience" (Anaya 2013: 16).

FGD participants in our study revealed that many learners misrepresented their identity in order to hide being San and thereby escape mistreatment.

It was not only the children themselves who faced prejudice; San parents were also confronted with stereotypes perpetuated by school staff and parents from other ethnic groups. The most prominent bias expressed by others is the perception that San parents do not take an interest in their children's education. This misconception was often attributed to the fact that few San parents had attended school and were therefore unable to recognise the importance of education for their children. Our findings clearly contradict this stereotype: San parents at all sites emphasised the importance of formal education for their children's wellbeing. They further stressed that their children's formal education would improve their own wellbeing, as in later years the children would be employed in the formal sector and would thus be able to take care of their parents. FGD participants discussed the importance of a good education for their children as a precondition for any development of their communities.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities recommended the following, among other things, in 2005:

"Complaints about discrimination and stereotypical utterances against San learners should be thoroughly investigated and punished. The government should criminalize discrimination in all forms but in particular based on race or ethnicity in accordance with Article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and Article 2 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights." (ACHPR 2005: 129-130)

The discrimination experienced by most San learners and their families is often traumatising, and has deep and long-lasting effects. It leads to low self-esteem as well as mistrust of members of other ethnic groups and school staff. The psychological and emotional impacts of the mistreatment also severely reduce learners' motivation to attend school. The end result for most San learners is that they leave the formal education system prematurely – which, in the absence of other education and training and opportunities, has serious repercussions for their future economic options.

16.2.3 Remote location of villages

A third major barrier to education for most San has been the long distances between the learners' home villages and their schools. Such distances have several important ramifications. Firstly, San learners must travel far to attend school, and public transport is costly and rarely available, thus the majority of learners (except those living in towns like Outjo and Gobabis) have to leave their home villages to live either in hostels or with relatives or other families during the school year. Secondly, most San children have always lived in small family groups, close to their parents and extended family, thus moving to a hostel at an early age can be terrifying for them, and reports of bullying – often extreme – are common. Furthermore, the living conditions in government school hostels are often far from adequate. It was reported in *The Namibian* newspaper in 2013 that residents of the hostel at Donkerbos Primary School in Omaheke Region had to sleep on the bare floor, with no electricity at all, and an irregular supply of water (*The Namibian*, Charles Tjatini, 11 April 2013). Parents in our FGDs in other regions reported similar hostel conditions, and an additional

common complaint was that other children steal the San learners' few belongings. Lastly, San learners faced discriminatory practices by hostel staff on a regular basis.

Many learners who had the option of living at home while attending school still had to walk long distances to school. Parents worried that this was dangerous for their children.⁸ Long distances also meant that parents could not be sure – and could not ensure – that their children actually attended school, and cases of children skipping school were mentioned frequently in our FGDs at various research sites. Furthermore, the long distances meant that it was difficult for parents to interact with the schools; they rarely visited the schools due to the distances, and this contributed to the above-mentioned stereotypical misconception that San parents do not care about education. When there was a problem with a learner at school, it was often difficult for the teacher to get in touch with the parents, and this often led to misunderstandings, with the result that the children stayed at home.

San who lived together with non-San people (e.g. in communities in Omusati, Ohangwena and Kavango) frequently reported that their children went to live in host households of other ethnic groups. It was not always clear whether the children were expected to do domestic chores to pay their way, and some parents complained that their children were not treated well in these families.

Many children who had the option of attending lower primary school close to home then faced the need to travel further away to attend upper primary or secondary school. The disproportionately large decline in attendance numbers for San learners following the transition from lower to upper primary and then to secondary school can be attributed largely to the conditions described above.

16.2.4 Cultural mismatch

The cultural mismatch between school and home can be broken down into two general categories: language, and differences in cultural and social practices.

Language: Despite the progressive Language Policy for Schools in Namibia (see both MEC 1991 and MBESC 2003), efforts on the ground have not led to the expected results. The policy has not been implemented evenly across the country, and most San languages have been excluded. At present there are orthographies and dictionaries for only three San languages, namely Jul'hoansi, !Xun and Khwedam. Of these, only Jul'hoansi is recognised and used for formal education purposes, but only in the Gqaina Primary School in Omaheke and the Village Schools in Nyae Nyae, Otjozondjupa (described above and in the relevant chapters). Thus far only Jul'hoansi has a functional curriculum committee under the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED - a government body). The Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA – see Chapter 3) has established language committees for !Xun, Khwedam, Taa and Hai|om, which have developed some basic literary resources for these San languages, but a lack of financial resources has hindered publication of these. Furthermore, these language groups have not taken the first step of applying to the MoE for official recognition of their languages as languages of instruction, this being a prerequisite for their official use in schools (Davids 2011: 129). Funding is a major obstacle for these efforts: mother-tongue language development is mainly donor-driven and thus dependent to a very large extent on outside funding (Davids 2010).

⁸ For example, discussion participants Uitkoms Resettlement Farm cited a case of a schoolgirl being raped on her way to school, and parents in some rural places worried about wild animals possibly attacking their children.

Another significant obstacle to achieving mother-tongue education in San languages is a lack of qualified teachers able to teach in San languages and to use the materials developed. Even the Nyae Nyae Village Schools and Gqaina Primary School, both of which incorporated Jul'hoansi education (see below), had to reduce the number of classes taught in Jul'hoansi as there were not enough teachers available for this task. The Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project trained 12 teachers from the surrounding communities in the 1990s, but by 2011, none of these teachers were involved in the project any longer (Davids 2011: 130; Hays 2002). With support from NAMAS, other Jul'hoansi-speaking teachers are currently being trained, and some have already received certification. Most of these teachers are San, but a few of the San teachers are not Jul'hoansi (see Box 5.3 on the Village Schools, page 123).

The lack of teachers and the slow progress in the development of mother-tongue materials mean that the vast majority of San learners have to learn in a 'foreign' language which many of them only start to encounter when entering school.

Cultural and social practices: The traditional socialisation and educational practices of the San differ considerably from the Western models applied in formal education systems. A number of authors have discussed child-rearing and socialisation among San groups (e.g. Biesele 1992 and 1993; Draper 1976; Konner 1976; Katz et al. 1997; and Guenther 1999). Following is a summary of the ways in which these practices can conflict with formal schooling (from Hays 2007: 227-248). The list is not exhaustive, but the few examples provided suffice to explain the difficulties that San children face in schools:

- San cultures generally do not tolerate aggressive behaviour and competitiveness, whereas the mainstream schooling system promotes competition, which requires self-promotion, and the latter is strongly discouraged in most San cultures.
- In many San cultures, parents place little pressure on their children to work, and do not fully involve their children in performing daily chores until the children reach adolescence, whereas compulsory schooling demands children's full participation at all times.
- Most San cultures strongly emphasise personal autonomy and free will, whereas learners in formal schools have little freedom; there is a rigid schedule every day which leaves little room for individual choices (also as regards subjects of study).
- San children often accompany their parents and learn by observing, thereby gaining detailed and integrated knowledge about, for example, a large variety of plants and animal species, but this way of teaching and learning strongly contrasts with the formal schooling methods which are based on rote memorisation and hierarchical classification.
- Learning practices of the San generally emphasise the process rather than the result, with failure viewed as a normal part of the learning process (and sometimes as an acceptable and normal outcome), whereas in formal education, learners who do not meet the requirements according to schedule are viewed as 'failures'.
- San learning techniques are based on internal rather than external motivation, whereas formal schooling techniques generally rely on external forms of reward and punishment.

It has to be emphasised that the San on the whole have faced dramatic changes in their livelihood contexts, and these changes have resulted in transformations of their socialisation and educational practices (as described in several sections of this report). However, their deeply-rooted cultural beliefs are changing more slowly, and this slower transformation is "... creating a widening gap between what is needed to participate in mainstream society and its institutions, and the cultural belief systems and values" (Hays 2007: 248).

16.2.5 Inappropriate curricula

Namibian school curricula do not reflect the history and the social realities of San communities, which makes it difficult for San learners to relate the content of their learning to their own lives. Furthermore, their fellow learners do not learn about the specific history or living circumstances of San communities, or about their rich culture, in the course of their schooling.

This issue was discussed in detail during the San Study workshop with community representatives. Participants from Nyae Nyae Conservancy reported that on one occasion the San elders visited their schools to tell the learners about their past and their specific skills. Apparently the San learners appreciated this input; they had reported that the narratives had greatly motivated them, and had sensitised the other learners and the teachers. The workshop participants stressed the importance of a positive representation of San culture and history – one focusing not only on their history as hunter-gatherers, but also on other aspects of their rich culture. This example from Nyae Nyae is a positive example that could be followed elsewhere.

16.2.6 Lack of role models

In all regions it was repeatedly reported that the lack of role models further reduced the motivation of San learners. At each site, FGD participants indicated that they knew of hardly anyone in their own community who could serve as a role model. Although some San learners have succeeded in reaching Grade 12, in reality they are no more likely to find a job than those who dropped out of school early. In fact, at least one study has shown a negative correlation between education and employment (in Tsumkwe; Lee 2013).

The formal school curricula do not encourage visionary and innovative thinking about alternative career development paths for the San. Asked what professions they envisioned for themselves, most of the younger FGD participants restricted their responses to very conventional occupations, with teacher, police officer, nurse and lawyer cited most often. Many of the few San who made it through the education system had left their communities to undertake tertiary education or further training in Windhoek (see Box 16.1 on San in Windhoek further on), and because they were far away and returned to their home villages/towns only occasionally, they could not serve as role models.

Participants in the workshop for community representatives complained that the "Back to School and Stay at School" campaign run by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) used non-San promoters; they felt that it would have been more appropriate to use San people who had successfully completed their schooling so as to provide more realistic and inspiring models for San youth.

16.2.7 Teenage pregnancies

In all regions, teenage pregnancies and early marriages were cited as reasons for the high rates of early dropout among girls. At certain sites it was also reported that young San girls sometimes entered into sexual relationships with elderly men in exchange for money, which also led to their dropping out of school. It was also reported that San girls sometimes experienced domestic violence and sexual abuse (both linked to alcohol consumption). Lastly, it was reported that teenage mothers usually did not return to school after giving birth.⁹

⁹ This problem is not unique to the San. One main goal of the *Education Sector Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (MoE 2012b) is to increase the number of learner-parents who complete their education.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recorded complaints from San girls about sexual abuse by their teachers. He also reported that teenage San mothers who wanted to return to school had been turned away (Anaya 2013: 17). By no means are these experiences exclusive to San girls, but due to their extremely weak position in the social hierarchy at schools (as described throughout this report), San girls are especially vulnerable to such abuses.

16.3 Other educational issues

Most of the funding allocated to improving San education – through both governmental and nongovernmental approaches – is aimed at increasing participation from Grade 1 through Grade 12, and especially in the primary education phase (Grades 1-7). However, there is growing support for efforts to address both younger and older learners, including: early childhood education; tertiary education or further training for those who complete secondary school (or who reach a level that allows for entry into further programmes); and adult education for those who have little or no formal education. Some efforts in these areas are outlined in the following subsections.

16.3.1 Early Childhood Development

The Early Childhood Development (ECD) programme is run under the auspices of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), which is responsible for children aged 0-4, and the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for pre-primary education (ages 5-6). This means that the responsibility for ECD is split between two ministries. The government provides pre-schools in some areas, but the distribution of pre-schools remains uneven across the country. Despite efforts to prioritise rural and poor communities, hardly any pre-schools have been established in the vicinity of San communities, even though experiences have shown that San learners who participate in pre-primary education are more comfortable with the formal learning environment thereafter. Pre-schooling for the majority (if not all) San children would enhance their chances of success in primary school, and thus would reduce the high rates of dropout from school (Haraseb 2011: 136).

ECD is one component of WIMSA's education programme. This component is supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation (based in The Hague). Through its ECD programme, WIMSA has been involved in developing and opening ECD centres (for ages 0-4) and pre-schools (for ages 5-6) for San communities in five regions, i.e. Omaheke, Kunene, Oshikoto, Caprivi and Otjozondjupa. The initiative for this ECD programme flowed from WIMSA's establishment of community youth groups, members of which decided to focus on ECD activities. WIMSA offers these group members opportunities for training in ECD provided by the National Early Childhood Development-NGO Association (NECD-NGO Association). The main goal of WIMSA's ECD programme is to provide access to pre-school education that "... uses their mother tongue as a language of instruction, in learning centres managed by San communities, and using trained San teachers - and, in the process, to develop stronger cultural identity and pride" (Haraseb 2011: 139). In addition, this programme helps learners to proceed to the next phase of their education by, for example, programme staff assisting with their enrolment in primary schools. WIMSA's programme also links ECD with community development, in that the ECD centres and pre-schools are built by community members with government support (in the form of building materials or food for work), and teaching staff are recruited from the community (Haraseb 2011: 140).

The report on the final assessment of WIMSA's ECD programme (WIMSA 2010) concludes that the learners who had attended a WIMSA ECD centre or pre-school seemed to enrol in higher numbers in primary school, and managed relatively better than others in the primary school environment.

However, the report also identifies weaknesses in the programme. For example: the use of mother tongue was not always applied consistently; there were variations across facilities and in relation to equipment (e.g. some of these facilities were not able to provide basic amenities such as toilets and/or basins for handwashing); weak supervision and support of staff; and the lack of a system for monitoring the transition from pre-primary to primary school (WIMSA 2010: 17-18).

UNESCO Namibia is involved in supporting ECD policies and developments through its Education of Children in Need (2002-2013) project. The overall objective of this project is to contribute to the national goals of social justice and equity by advocating for, and promoting, every child's right to a sound foundation for life through contextually appropriate and inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), and by placing ECD in the forefront of policy formulation and effective programme implementation. The project's integrated approach entails viewing education in a holistic way, and integrating community participation, hygiene, health, nutrition, culture, citizenship and other correlated issues that affect children's development. Since 2002 the project has established five ECD centres in Ohangwena Region and three in West Caprivi. A training programme for ECD teachers provides ongoing training; a feeding scheme supports learners in the ECD centres as well as in primary schools; and basic toiletries, school uniforms and teaching materials are supplied through the project.

16.3.2 Tertiary education

Very few San learners have qualified for tertiary education, even though various institutions have provided support over the years for San learners' educational progress beyond secondary school. The OPM funds scholarships for San studying at either the University of Namibia (UNAM) or the Polytechnic of Namibia (see the subsection on external support for San education further on, and Box 16.1 on the next page), and WIMSA provides support for San learners who have qualified for further education. In addition, support is available for San youth who may not have completed secondary school but would like to receive practical training. For example, the Namibian Community Skills Development Foundation (COSDEF) is supporting and supervising community skills development centres (COSDECs) which provide competency-based skills training, some of which is directed at San youth specifically (see paragraph on COSDEF further on). UNESCO supported a leadership and skills training programme for underprivileged groups and a youth project in Ohangwena (2006-2012) which in turn sought to support local initiatives to generate sustainable livelihoods in non-agricultural activities, provide vocational skills development, and undertake training in leadership and organisational development as well as business and finance management.





Above: A San man who completed his tertiary education through WIMSA's Tertiary Student Support Programme for San, and went on to full-time formal employment in Windhoek.

See Box 16.1 on the next page for further detail on San living in Windhoek (i.e. students and graduates now working in the capital).

Box 16.1: The San in Windhoek By Richard Kiaka

Throughout our research, and during the feedback sessions conducted for the San Study, it emerged that there were a number of San people living in Windhoek, many of whom were here for further studies. As most tertiary education and training opportunities are found in the capital, those who manage to complete their formal schooling tend to end up here. Others whom we interviewed in Windhoek occupied a formal position (in a government office or an NGO) that required a certain level of formal education. Most of the San living in Windhoek fall into one of these two categories (or they have a family member who does). The San in Windhoek did not come from a particular community; they hailed from various San communities, and represented most of the San language families. As a group, they had higher levels of education than their fellow San at the regional research sites, higher income levels and generally a greater awareness of their identity as 'San'.

The research team conducted interviews with some of these Windhoek-based San individuals, with an emphasis on their educational career and experience.^a The aims were: to understand how they compared their existence in the city to living in their communities; to identify factors contributing to the success of San individuals in the formal education system; and to compare their experiences to those recounted at our research sites in the other regions.

The San interviewees in Windhoek considered their living conditions in this city to be better than in their home communities. This was at least partly due to the fact that they were either working and receiving a salary, or studying and receiving a stipend – in both cases benefiting from a regular income. At the same time, this income was necessary for them to be able to live in the city, and if there were problems and the income ceased or became irregular, it was far more difficult for them to get by than it was in their home communities. Some of the interviewees were residing with immediate family members in Windhoek, and others were alone, but all of them lacked the extensive social support networks which would have supported them in difficult circumstances back home. So, while appreciating the advantages of living in Windhoek, some interviewees also expressed a preference for being closer to their families and support networks. It was clear that an essential precondition for living in Windhoek was a dependable source of money.

The interviewees regarded formal education as the key to their current positions – all had attained a level of education that enabled them to move on to tertiary training or qualified them for government or administrative jobs. In the course of the interviews it became clear that those who had continued beyond primary school (i.e. Grade 7) had been able to do so because they received outside support. The most important kind of support was financial – all of the interviewees had received financial support for secondary and/or tertiary education.

The financial support that the interviewees received came from the Student Support Programme of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), or scholarship programmes offered by the Roads Authority (a Namibian parastatal), or the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) or the Forum for African Women Educationalists Namibia (FAWENA). The OPM Student Support Programme sponsors the highest number of San studying in Windhoek because it has a higher budget for this purpose than other organisations offering stipends for San. However, the interviewees who benefited from this OPM programme reported encountering some difficulties with this support. In particular, monthly stipends and tuition fees were often paid late – a situation which understandably caused complications for the students. Furthermore, communication about these problems and other concerns was an issue. They had also found it difficult to navigate the funding application process, and revealed that only a limited number of San are able to access information on funding opportunities for further education, primarily due to the remoteness of their home communities.

Such issues pose serious challenges for current and potential San students, and indicate a need for better coordination within and between the relevant institutions.

In addition to financial support, a number of the interviewees emphasised that they had received encouragement and moral support from key individuals – usually family members, teachers and other school staff – to do well in school. This kind of support included building self-confidence, following up on school performance, and in general motivating them to aspire to doing well. Some indicated that this kind of support could take the form of parents 'forcing' their children to go to school – something that San parents are frequently said *not* to do (as noted earlier in this chapter). It is not always clear what is meant by 'force' in this context, but for some it seemed to mean simply providing a strong incentive to continue going to school – which ultimately enabled them to obtain a Grade 10 or Grade 12 certificate. The narratives of the San in Windhoek showed that this kind of support and encouragement plays an important role in determining how long San learners continue with their schooling.

Most of the San interviewed in Windhoek saw themselves as achievers in education and/or their career, and as people who could serve as examples and role models for other San youth who desired take the same route of tertiary education/training in Windhoek. Most of them said that they would be willing to participate in the "Back to School and Stay at School" campaign run by the OPM, and in other existing (or planned) initiatives aimed at motivating and supporting San students to continue with their formal education.^b

The interviews with the San in Windhoek made clear that the two major factors that helped them to complete their formal education were financial support and an encouraging learning environment – two factors that were also identified in our research discussions and interviews at all sites in the other regions. Because financial support is crucial for San who want to access secondary and tertiary education, a comprehensive strategy is needed for effectively disseminating information to San who may be eligible for funding from existing sources (OPM, WIMSA, FAWENA etc.), and for supporting applicants with the funding application process – with special efforts directed to those in remote communities. In addition, timely payment of stipends is critical to preclude placing students in a difficult financial situation.

It is important that San have the same opportunities for education and employment as other ethnic groups, thus the efforts of the OPM and support organisations to assist San financially and otherwise to attain higher education levels and to access employment are very necessary. Without such support, it would be extremely difficult for any San to access such opportunities.

It is also important to recognise that the San interviewed in Windhoek were in this city because of jobs or education, thus they had opted to live in Windhoek to take advantage of these opportunities. However, not all San – indeed very few – express a desire to live in Windhoek or other urban areas. Some San individuals come to the city but then choose to return to their home communities where they have support networks in place. Therefore it is important that San also have such opportunities closer to home. This desire was also expressed by some interviewees in Windhoek, who envisaged returning to their communities after completing their studies, in the hope that they could serve as role models for younger members of their communities.

^a Potential interviewees were identified through a snowball system. Semi-structured interviews and group discussions were conducted with the San interviewees from February to April 2013. We interviewed nine people who were employed by different government agencies and NGOs, and 17 students. In total there were 10 female and 20 male interviewees. Most of the students hailed from the Khwe and Hai||om communities in Caprivi and Kunene Regions, and two were Ju|'hoan students from Gobabis (Omaheke) and Mangetti Dune (Tsumkwe West, Otjozondjupa). All of the students interviewed were studying with the support of the OPM Student Support Programme.

^b See section 16.2.6 on the lack of role models.

Box 16.2: A Khwe case study

The following case study describes the education and career trajectory of a Khwe man who successfully advanced through the formal education system and was then offered a job in government. He is one of the very few San people in such a position. Although his experience can hardly be said to be representative, and such opportunities seem far removed from the day-to-day realities of San villages and informal settlements in Namibia, participants in our discussions at all research sites expressed a desire to have more people from their communities attaining such positions.^a Thus it is important to recognise that this man's career trajectory, though rare, does represent the aspirations of a number of San today.

The research team interviewed a 29-year-old Khwe man living in Windhoek, whom we will call Petrus. He is currently an Assistant Human Resource Officer in the Office of the President.

Petrus began his education at Ndoro Memorial Primary School in Caprivi Region, where he completed Grade 7. He went on to Caprivi Senior Secondary School in Katima Mulilo, where he completed Grade 12. An exemption from paying school fees made it possible for him to finish both primary and secondary education, but Petrus also stressed the importance of the support that he had received from his parents – in particular he said that his father paid close attention to his performance in school and motivated him to continue with his studies.

With assistance from WIMSA, Petrus obtained a government loan from the Ministry of Education to finance his BA degree in Public Administration at the University of Namibia in Windhoek. He received further support from WIMSA to cover his living expenses in the first year of his studies, and in subsequent years he received full support through the University of Botswana/University of Tromsø Collaborative Programme for San Research and Capacity Building, which included support for San tertiary students as a major focus. Petrus finished his bachelor's degree in 2007, and in 2009 he worked part time for WIMSA helping students from indigenous communities to get education loans or school fees exemptions from the government. In 2010, WIMSA employed him on a full-time basis as Coordinator for the Namibian San Council. While working for WIMSA he continued to apply for government jobs, and in 2011 his job hunt reaped success in the form of a position as a clerk in the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement. Towards the end of 2011, Petrus accepted the offer of the position that he now occupies in the Office of the President. He hopes to move forward in his career, and is currently pursuing an MA in Public Administration at the University of Namibia.

16.3.3 Adult education

Several organisations (notably NAMAS, the Kalahari Peoples Fund and COSDEF) have initiated adult education programmes in order to respond to the very low levels of basic literacy and numeracy among San adults. FGD participants in Nyae Nyae Conservancy (Tsumkwe East, Otjozondjupa Region) reported that adult literacy classes there were supported by NAMAS, and they indicated that they greatly appreciated these classes. However, the adult literacy class teachers reported that it was difficult to maintain classes, because those whom they were attempting to teach tended to drop out after a short time, usually due to their having to engage in other activities (mainly chores such as getting food). WIMSA is also engaged in promoting adult education classes, but here too, efforts are often hampered by people dropping out of classes before they have learned to read and write.

^a As mentioned earlier, not all San desired such positions for themselves – but almost all of them see the value of having community members who "succeed" in national institutions.

16.4 Factors contributing to a successful formal education

San interviewees and FGD participants in Windhoek (see Box 16.1) cited several factors which had contributed to their success in the mainstream schooling system, and would therefore, in their opinion, contribute to other San succeeding in this system. First of all, moral support – from family members, school staff or peer groups – had been fundamental in motivating them to progress to Grade 12. Secondly, access to information on scholarships covering school expenses and all related costs enabled them to attend school. Our research brought to light that information dissemination on funding possibilities was erratic and did not reach all communities; it appears that information was transferred mainly through family or community members who knew of the existing options. Thirdly, a learner's own initiative and self-confidence, as well as willingness to leave his/her comfort zone (in this case the home environment), are important personal attributes that contribute to the successful pursuit of tertiary education and formal employment.

16.5 External support for San education

Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA): WIMSA's education programme focuses on coordinating different stakeholders to find regional solutions to issues impacting on San education. The activities include: monitoring the status of San education in southern Africa; documenting innovative approaches to San education; coordinating San language development; and providing platforms for regional exchange among policymakers. One focal area is mother-tongue development, with a special emphasis on ECD and the lower primary phase of education (Grades 1-3). WIMSA has developed mother-tongue teaching materials in San languages for mathematics and environmental sciences, as well as story books for pre-primary learners (ages 5-6). WIMSA also channels support to San attending tertiary education institutions.

Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS): NAMAS has been active in Namibia since 1980. In 2002, after experiencing success with the Ondao Mobile Schools Project targeting the Ovahimba and Ovazemba communities in Kunene Region, NAMAS decided to look into the situation of education for the San. A report produced by the then Norwegian Ambassador to Namibia, Bernt Lund, titled *Mainstreaming Through Affirmative Action* (2002), outlines the need for San education in the country. Following a consultative conference with government in 2003 to determine how best to implement the recommendations of Lund's report, NAMAS agreed to establish a community learning and development centre (CLDC) in Tsumkwe (Otjozondjupa Region), and to assist the newly-established Regional Directorate of Education in Otjozondjupa with administering the Nyae Nyae Village Schools (which the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN) transferred to the government in 2004). Over the past decade, NAMAS has played an important role in supporting San teachers and educational development in Tsumkwe East and West.

Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA): The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is a pan-African NGO that operates in over 34 African countries. The Namibian national chapter (FAWENA) opened its office in 1999 with the support of the MoE to help address the educational challenges faced by girls in this country. FAWENA's goal is to increase access, improve retention, and enhance the quality of education for girls and women in Namibia. Since 2004, part of the FAWENA support programme has specifically targeted San community members through various measures. Its scholarship programme supports San female *and* male learners by providing financial means to cover costs associated with education (costs of teaching materials, school uniforms, toiletries etc.). Between 2004 and 2012 it was also able to support 950

San learners. FAWENA has also established a mentoring programme to help learners to overcome problems that can affect their academic career, and the Science, Mathematics and Technology (SMT) programme aims to increase interest and participation in these subjects and assist girls to excel in SMT subjects at all levels. Lastly, FAWENA mobilises and sensitises San communities on the importance of education for San girls and boys.

United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO): UNESCO's office in Windhoek has been working with San communities since 2002, when, in collaboration with the regional authorities and communities, it established a number of ECD centres in Ohangwena and Caprivi Regions. The main objectives of these centres were to provide access to quality pre-primary education for San and other vulnerable children, and to improve access to, and retention in, primary schools. UNESCO Namibia also supports initiatives targeting San youth, which focus on generating sustainable livelihoods, and providing leadership and skills training. In 2012, UNESCO initiated and organised a sub-regional conference titled "Indigenous Education in a Changing World", in collaboration with WIMSA and UNAM, and in consultation with the MOE. This conference, held in Windhoek on 19-21 June 2012, built on previous meetings and coordinating efforts, including the first regional San Education Conference in 2001 and the Southern African San Education Forum (SASEF) Namibia Conference in Windhoek in 2009. The purpose of the conference in 2012 was to determine what efforts had been made to improve formal education for San communities, and to identify alternative learning options that could help them to meet their educational aspirations.

Community Skills Development Foundation (COSDEF): COSDEF has set up community skills development centres (COSDECs) in Namibia, which are administered by the MoE's Department of Vocational Training. These centres target unemployed youth who do not have the educational qualifications needed for tertiary education, but want to develop their existing vocational skills or new ones. The centres prepare them to start their own businesses, find jobs or move on to higher levels of vocational training. Programmes are tailored to the local environment following a needs assessment, and are community-based and community-driven. The COSDEC in Gobabis runs two programmes targeting San youth specifically: a bricklaying and plastering course focusing on San girls;¹⁰ and a carpentry course focusing on San boys. Participants are provided with accommodation and food for the duration of the training period. These San-focused programmes are sponsored by UNESCO, and funding is channelled through the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, which also supports the programme. During our field research we interviewed participants in the bricklaying and plastering programme, and they expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the training. In particular they expressed appreciation that this programme was for San trainees only, as they felt much more comfortable in a San-only learning environment.

Office of the Prime Minister (OPM): Since 2007 the OPM's San Development Programme (SDP) has been implementing a Student Support Programme, which has a Student Financial Assistance Fund to sponsor learners through the various stages of education from primary through tertiary. The fund has registered progress in respect of the number of learners sponsored over time: 66 in 2008; 69 in 2009; 76 in 2010; and 108 in 2011. It is possible that the growing interest in the Student Support Programme is linked to the "Back to School and Stay at School" Campaign run by the SDP. The beneficiaries in primary and secondary schools have been assisted by way of payments to the School Development Fund, hostel fees, toiletries, transport and a monthly allowance. Those at tertiary level are supported by way of payments that cover tuition fees, prescribed books, accommodation (especially for those studying outside their home areas), transport fares and a monthly allowance.¹¹ The programme has its constraints, however, which are discussed in Box 16.1 in this chapter.

¹⁰ Some of the trainees were boys, but most were girls – and all were San.

¹¹ However, the beneficiaries interviewed said that they did not receive money to buy the necessary books.

16.6 Conclusions

The generally low level of education of the San impacts severely on their economic situation. They cannot compete in the formal job market and are therefore highly dependent on menial work – thus a high level of vulnerability is increased by a low level of education. Difficulties in accessing information, dealing with official paperwork, and developing skills/capacities and the confidence to secure other rights persist. This leads to a vicious cycle that few San are able to escape. Improving both access to education and the quality of education is of key importance in discussing improving the situation of the San, not only in economic terms but equally in terms of empowerment.

Based on our study findings, there are three general areas where substantial improvement is needed in order to increase educational options for San communities. The three main recommendations, which are elaborated below, are as follows:

- 1) Improve the implementation of existing policies.
- 2) Create a welcoming learning environment for San in government schools.
- 3) Develop and strengthen alternative approaches to education.

16.6.1 Policies

Namibia has developed comprehensive and far-reaching policies pertaining to indigenous peoples' education. As noted throughout this chapter, however, the implementation of these policies is seriously deficient – as evidenced by the alarmingly low numbers of San children enrolled in formal education. An integrated policy is needed for coordinating the existing and future initiatives. The evaluation of past efforts, and the development of best-practice models, will help to improve the formulation and planning of future projects, and the involvement of the applicable communities must be an essential part of all future planning. Equally important is the development of thorough implementation strategies to preclude the inconsistent application that is currently occurring.

Efforts should be based on the existing document titled *Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children* (MBESC 2000), which is based on significant research and understanding of the problems in question. This document should also provide a basis for a new policy approach. The Intersectoral Task Force on Educationally Marginalised Children should be revived and adapted to the current situation in order to coordinate future efforts. Ideally the OPM's SDP should lead this body, but the MoE or NIED might also be well positioned to lead (or jointly lead) it. As different NGOs already spearhead an array of educational projects, it is necessary to establish a platform for government and civil society to come together to coordinate their activities.

16.6.2 Learning environment

The existing mainstream education system is not responsive to the culture, language and needs of the different San communities in Namibia. As a result, it usually undermines rather than enhances community development. The system has failed to create a welcoming learning environment in which local diversities are recognised and communities can initiate and control their education efforts. Furthermore, given the high number of San learners in hostels, attention must be paid to improving the hostel environment so as to make this more culturally compatible and friendly for San learners. Teachers need to be sensitised about the living conditions and cultural backgrounds of their San learners. Lastly, it is necessary to identify ways to empower San parents and integrate them into the school environment.

16.6.3 Alternative approaches

The last few decades have seen the development of a wide range of education projects targeting San, most of which have focused almost entirely on increasing the number of San in the formal education system, with little attention paid to the quality, relevance or appropriateness of this system for San.

A major finding of our study is that even if San learners make it through the formal education system, they still face enormous difficulties in obtaining formal employment. These will certainly persist in the coming years in view of the fact that the national economy is struggling with an unemployment rate of 27% (Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) 2013: viii). There is a clear need to strengthen existing approaches that build on the skills which San learners already possess, and to develop alternative new approaches to match the opportunities and aspirations of San individuals and communities.

This report has described a few alternative approaches to education – i.e. TEKOA, Nyae Nyae Village Schools, Gqaina Primary School and COSDECs¹² – and their achievements and challenges. These are potential models for similar projects elsewhere. However, some critical aspects have to be considered when developing new projects. First and most importantly, communities must be consulted and included in the project planning, and should drive the process. Any project must be based on a deep understanding of the local situation; it must be relevant to local livelihood options and provide access to skills that the community itself identifies as important. Moreover, it should ideally be built on local culture, knowledge and skills, and the local language should be used throughout the process, even when providing access to a language of wider communication (Hays 2012).

16.7 Recommendations

The recommendations are grouped according to the three categories detailed above – recognising that a clear distinction is not always possible due to linkages and overlap.

16.7.1 Policy level

- **Integrated policy on indigenous education:** Such a policy should be developed, with an assigned budget and timeline, to coordinate existing and future initiatives. Past endeavours should be evaluated as a basis for this integrated policy– in particular the policy document titled *National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children*.
- **Regional specifics:** While a national policy is necessary, each region should also strategise more effectively to address region-specific dynamics, and to ensure that the national policies are fully implemented.
- Task force: Such a body should be in place to coordinate future efforts within the framework of an integrated policy. Ideally the OPM San Development Programme should lead this body, but the MoE or NIED might also be well positioned to lead (or jointly lead) it.
- ECD: Cooperation between the MoE and the MGECW needs strengthening to facilitate the introduction of new ECD policies. Opportunities for employment of ECD teachers should be created. A full professional career path is needed; in this regard progress has been made by way of registering the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) ECD course in the National Qualifications Framework. Negotiations with the Public Service Commission might enable the employment of San educarers even before they are fully qualified.

¹² The Traditional Environmental Knowledge Outreach Academy (TEKOA) (see pages 382 and 395), the Nyae Nyae Village Schools (page 123), Gqaina Primary School (page 66) and the COSDECs (described in this chapter).

- **Coordinating platform:** A platform comprised of representatives of civil society bodies and government should be established to coordinate planning for San education initiatives. The San Support Organisations Association of Namibia (SSOAN) could play a leading role in representing civil society in this endeavour.
- **Regular dialogue mechanism:** Such a mechanism should be established for government, donors and beneficiaries to agree on priorities and financial allocations to initiatives launched under the new, integrated policy framework.
- **Poverty:** This key barrier to education should be addressed at policy level. School fee exemptions (applicable only in secondary schools as from January 2013) should be implemented uniformly. Policies need to be implemented to fund other costs such as those for uniforms, mattresses, toiletries and school books.
- **Tertiary education:** There is a need to revisit and strengthen programmes supporting San integration into tertiary education, as San participation at this level remains extremely low, with no significant improvement in recent years.
- **Hunger and nutrition:** It is necessary to expand and strengthen the school feeding programme so as to provide nutritious meals throughout the year.
- San teachers: The MoE should exercise flexibility in recruiting and appointing San teachers, offering them job opportunities even if they do not possess all of the required qualifications.
- **Teachers in San areas:** Government should make special efforts to encourage teachers to work in San communities, by means of specific provisions for accommodation, transportation and remuneration. Such teachers should also receive special preparation vis-à-vis cultural sensitivity.
- **Information dissemination:** The dissemination of information on funding opportunities and scholarship availability should be strengthened to overcome the current ignorance of existing support initiatives for San learners at tertiary level.
- San role models: Such individuals should be promoted and supported. Ongoing campaigns such as the OPM's "Back to School and Stay at School" Campaign should be run by San and staffed by San. Key positions in the OPM San Development Programme should be filled by San in order to make role models more visible.
- **OPM Scholarship Programme:** In view of the accelerating costs of living in Windhoek, this programme should be revisited and adjusted in line with existing policies pertaining to part-time work and levels of support.

16.7.2 Welcoming learning environment

Language

Mother-tongue education, which is emphasised in the various Namibian policies, needs reinforcing through the following approaches:

- Intensify efforts to have mother-tongue classes in all regions where San live, using whatever materials and personnel are available.
- Intensify efforts to produce mother-tongue teaching materials. International efforts to develop such materials for languages spoken across borders will help to reduce the production costs. The Southern Africa San Education Forum (SASEF) could assist in this regard.
- Representatives of language groups whose languages are not formally recognised as languages of education should apply for such formal recognition.
- Greatly enhance efforts to train San teachers, and have flexible entry requirements for teachertraining candidates.
- Where trained San teachers are not available, hire teaching aids who speak the language of the applicable San children, and who can translate and assist them in other ways.
- Mother-tongue education, particularly at pre-primary level, should be targeted more strongly as it has been demonstrated that the first years of education in the mother tongue are critical.

• Implement programmes with a clear bridging phase to prepare children to learn in English, so as to minimise the negative effects of changing into another medium of instruction.

Distance and access to school

- Develop a transport plan to secure regular transport to and from schools, and ensure its thorough implementation across the regions.
- Explore flexible school options for San learners. Possible models could include a version of the mobile schools for Ovahimba and Ovazemba learners in Kunene Region, to help address the problems that might arise when children in remote villages are forced to leave their families at an early age. Experiences with the mobile school and multi-grade farm school models (which have been proposed for Botswana) should be evaluated.
- Explore flexible school schedules with a view to accommodating the livelihood patterns of San families. These would vary by location and would have to be tailored to the specific living conditions of a given San community.
- Establish more schools in the vicinity of San communities. Schools with multi-grade classes could be established to accommodate small numbers of learners.

Validating San culture and overcoming stereotypes

- Take into consideration the culture of the San when planning national curricula. The inclusion of materials that explore the richness of San culture will help San children to develop more self-esteem, and will sensitise their schoolmates to the background of their fellow learners.
- Fully acknowledge in school curricula the history of the San, and dispel the notion that San did not contribute to the attainment of independence and cannot contribute to national development. The latter can be done by citing positive examples of their roles in modern Namibia.
- Implement mediation programmes that address stigma and bullying in all areas where San live. These would help to overcome the mistrust prevailing between San learners and their teachers and fellow learners – this is critical for creating a motivating learning environment.
- Specific mentoring programmes should be designed for San learners in order to provide support in coping with the numerous challenges they face, and minimise dropout rates.
- San parents/adults should be employed in the school environment (as matrons, teachers etc.) to help to create a welcoming and understanding learning environment.
- Establish control mechanisms in schools to counter ongoing discriminatory practices faced by San learners on a daily basis.
- Include and promote 'success stories' in government campaigns, to combat the stereotypical notion that San children cannot succeed in school.

16.7.3 Alternative approaches

- Conduct an assessment of the livelihood options, the skills required and the aspirations of the San communities in each geographical area, to design appropriate alternative education models that befit the circumstances of the San. Such models should not preclude participation in the formal education system, but should provide realistic alternatives.
- Direct more effort and resources to adult education, placing emphasis on developing projects that schedule classes in a flexible manner so as to make way for the other work in which participants might already be engaged.
- Set up vocational training centres that offer training based on assessments of realistic economic opportunities in all regions. The COSDEC model is an example of a successful effort in this regard.
- Prioritise an exploration of the potential to develop *culturally appropriate community-based education* models that combine adult and child education.

Chapter 17 Health

By Richard Kiaka



17.1 Introduction

Article 25 of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UDHR) recognises the right to health as an element of an adequate standard of living (United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 1948). A number of other international human rights instruments similarly enshrine the right to health. Of these, the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) of 1966 (UNGA 1966) is understood to be the most expressive and comprehensive (UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) and World Health Organization (WHO) 2008: 3). The key concepts relating to the right to health are broad; they include, inter alia, access to basic health services, safe drinking water, sanitation and adequate nutrition (OHCHR and WHO 2008: 3-4).

Since 1978, various international platforms have recognised the emphasis on access to primary healthcare as a key element in achieving "a level of health that permits individuals to live an economically and socially productive life" (OHCHR and WHO 2008: 8).¹ Healthcare also forms a central plank of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the context of the African continent, Article 16 of the **African (Banjul) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights** obligates state parties to take the necessary measures to promote and protect the health of their citizens (Organisation of African Unity (OAU) 1982: 5).²

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (UNGA 2008) and International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 (ILO 1989) (to which Namibia is not a signatory) are two of the main international instruments that address the health of indigenous peoples. Article 25 of ILO Convention No. 169 obligates States party to ensure that adequate health services are made available to indigenous peoples, taking into consideration their economic, social, cultural and geographic conditions, and UNDRIP emphasises the need to promote the general principles of health, including sanitation, nutrition and health facilities (UNGA 2008: 9). However, despite the widespread recognition of these rights, both internationally and regionally, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), in reporting on their mission to Namibia in 2005 (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008), conveyed that indigenous people in this country, as in so many other places in the world, were still facing poor health conditions. The conditions observed were characterised by inadequate nutrition, limited access to safe drinking water, difficult access to health facilities and increasing rates of HIV infection (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 118). There is very little doubt that significant numbers of indigenous communities globally are living in deplorable socio-economic conditions. There is a relationship between poverty, marginalisation and poor health (Gibson 2010: 54). As also noted in many study reports, including that of the ACHPR and IWGIA (2008: 118-119) and this San Study report (see Chapter 14 on livelihoods, food security and poverty), the general poverty, poor nutrition and unhygienic conditions found in most indigenous communities render them susceptible to preventable diseases and health risks and hazards. Additionally, many indigenous communities, especially in Africa, live in very remote areas which have only minimal healthcare and social service coverage, thus treatment of various ailments is frequently constrained by geographical location (IWGIA 2006: 204).

Namibia is a party/signatory to all of the international treaties cited above, except for ILO Convention No. 169. As such, it has an obligation to ensure that all of its citizens – including its marginalised indigenous peoples – have access to adequate healthcare coverage, including quality services. The **Constitution of the Republic of Namibia** asserts the following in Chapter 11 on "Principles of State Policy":

"Article 95: Promotion of the Welfare of the People

The state shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, *inter alia*, policies aimed at ... (j) consistent planning to raise and maintain an acceptable level of nutrition and standard of living of the Namibian people and to improve public health;"

The overarching emphasis of public healthcare in Namibia is on the provision of primary healthcare through the establishment of accessible and affordable health clinics. Namibia's **Third National Development Plan (NDP3), 2007-2012** (NPC 2008: 228) elaborated on this, placing emphasis on

¹ In 1978, the International Conference on Primary Health Care was held in Alma-Ata (then in the USSR) and led to the adoption of the **Declaration of Alma-Ata** (WHO 1978).

² The OAU was replaced by the African Union (AU) in 2002.

community participation in the healthcare system, equitable access to quality healthcare services, affordability of health services and cooperation with sectoral players. Namibia's fourth and current **National Development Plan (NDP4), 2012-2017** (NPC 2012: 57) captures the essence of the ICESCR, in that it focuses on making the healthcare system (including prevention, treatment and rehabilitation) work in the most affordable, accessible and culturally acceptable way. Both NDP3 and NDP4 recognise the need to reach out to the most disadvantaged Namibian communities by ensuring that the national healthcare system is affordable, accessible and culturally acceptable to them.

Notwithstanding the commendable efforts that the country has made in healthcare provision, the health conditions of the San remain a great challenge for the government. In the last decade, the San were reported to be the unhealthiest group of people in Namibia, with a life expectancy of 46 years, which was estimated to be 25% lower than the national average in 2005 (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 118). The Government of Namibia has indicated that the San have no specific priority health needs as compared with the rest of the population (Gibson 2010: 52), whereas Health Unlimited reported in 2003 that they were the only group in Namibia whose health conditions had been declining since Independence (Health Unlimited 2003). In his report to the UN Human Rights Council in April 2013, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, underscored that the San are increasingly facing a multiplicity of health-related problems, largely because of the underlying structural inequalities and recurrent injustices in which the livelihoods of the San are embedded (Anaya 2013: 17-18). This chapter of the San Study report describes the difficult health situation that the vast majority of the San of Namibia currently endure.

17.2 Common diseases among the San

Common diseases that affect the San are those that reflect national health challenges in Namibia generally. However, the situation is especially severe for the San because of the unfavourable socioeconomic, political and geographical conditions that they face (Suzman 2001b: 113). The most common diseases identified in our field research were HIV and AIDS (hereinafter "HIV/AIDS"), TB, malaria and gastro-intestinal diseases.

17.2.1 HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS has been a major health problem in Namibia since the 1990s, and Namibia has had one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world for a number of years. In 2010/11, Namibia's Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) estimated the HIV prevalence rate in the general population aged 15-49 to be 13.5% or 189 000 people (MoHSS 2012: 17). Compared to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimate of 20% for Namibia in the late 1990s (UNDP 1998: 18), the 2010/11 rate demonstrates a significant decline, but it remains much higher than the global and sub-Saharan African average rates of 0.8% and 4.9% respectively (United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 2012: 8).

In the 1990s, the risk of HIV infection in the various San groups in Namibia was not yet recognised as a critical issue, mainly because of their geographical remoteness and isolation. However, Suzman (2001b: 114-115) apprised that the effect of the pandemic among the San in subsequent years would be radical because of their various vulnerabilities. Subsequently, reports of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA 2006: 504; 2009: 563) and anecdotal evidence have attested to the fact that the HIV prevalence rate is increasing among indigenous groups in Namibia – especially among the San – and that the impacts of this are far-reaching. Currently there is no disaggregated

data on the increasing HIV prevalence rate among the San groups in Namibia, but a recent specific case report (IWGIA 2009: 563) estimated the rate among the Ju|'hoansi in Tsumkwe District to be between 10% and 12%. In all of the regions visited for this San Study, participants in our focus group discussions (FGDs) cited HIV/AIDS as a disease that is not only common but also severe. Awareness of how HIV is spread, prevented and treated, and the healthcare services available to those infected and affected, varied according to the remoteness of sites and the presence – or otherwise – of HIV/AIDS-related projects. A number of factors were identified as contributing to the vulnerability of the San with regard to HIV/AIDS and its ramifications.

The poor socio-economic conditions in which the San live have made them susceptible to sexual relationships with other people (who, at many of our research sites, were better off than the San at those sites), thereby increasing the San's risk of exposure to the virus. Settlements along highways (e.g. those in Oshivelo in Oshikoto Region and those in West Caprivi) and near urban areas (e.g. Outjo in Kunene Region) presented worrying scenarios whereby San women/girls were sexually exploited by 'sugar daddies', truck drivers or businessmen in exchange for material benefits such as money, soap and clothing. Similar cases have been identified and documented in other studies such as Lee and Susser (2006), and Suzman (2001b: 114). Lee and Susser, for example, link the spread of HIV among the Ju|'hoan San in eastern Namibia to the group's interaction with non-San, where "sex is the medium of transaction" (Lee and Susser 2006: 50).

The poor nutrition that we observed in all San communities may undermine appropriate care for those infected with the virus, who require, inter alia, an adequate and good-quality diet in order to remain as healthy as possible and/or to benefit fully from antiretroviral drugs. Stigmatisation associated with the disease was found to be high in most of the regions covered in our study, and this is highly likely to have far-reaching effects on uptake rates for counselling, testing and treatment. Reportedly a high number of San feared going for HIV testing, and of those who had done so and tested positive, many feared discussing their status, and consequently risked undermining their own access to treatment and healthcare services. By the time of our field research, the geographic isolation referred to above had constrained access to HIV/AIDS prevention, testing, treatment and healthcare services. In such areas – where clinics are largely absent (or if present, are poorly equipped) – FGD participants mentioned as issues the shortage of condoms, limited HIV education programmes, a lack of screening services and the unavailability of antiretroviral treatment (ART).

17.2.2 Tuberculosis

Recently the World Health Organization (WHO) ranked Namibia number four on the list of the world's worst-hit countries in terms of tuberculosis (TB) (Van Gorkom et al. 2013: 23). Nevertheless, remarkable improvements have been reported in the country since 2005 in terms of the case notification rate (CNR) and absolute numbers of cases. The MoHSS reported a major (10%) decrease in the CNR in 2007/08, and the WHO estimates reflect a gradual decreased from 1 287 cases per 100 000 in 1990 to 603 per 100 000 in 2010.³

TB remains a disease linked closely to poverty and its defining characteristics: "overcrowding, impoverishment, poor nutrition and being members of historically disadvantaged communities" (Gibson 2010: 52). Our research has confirmed that these are defining characteristics of the San communities in Namibia; they are accurate descriptions of their common circumstances. Their Human Development Index (HDI) ranking and their per capita income are the lowest compared

³ See www.aho.afro.who.int/profiles_information/index.php/Namibia:Analytical_summary_-_Tuberculosis.

with those of the other language groups in Namibia, and less than half of the national average in both respects (Gibson 2010: 52). Furthermore, our research has confirmed the findings of previous studies that the San of Namibia are affected by acute food insecurity, landlessness, poor access to education and constrained access to means of achieving a cash income. Paul Farmer (as cited in Gibson 2010: 52) argues that these are the factors that predispose people to active TB. It is therefore not surprising that a study in 2003 found the TB infection rate among the San of Namibia to be the highest in Namibia and one of the highest in the world, i.e. 1 500 cases per 100 000 people (Health Unlimited 2003). Furthermore, Wiessner (as cited in Gibson 2010: 52) estimated that by 2003, more than 50% of the adult deaths among the Ju]'hoansi were associated with TB.

FGD participants at all of our research sites identified TB as a severe disease among them. Likewise, health workers in each region covered unanimously stated that TB was one of the most common diseases among the San, and that its prevalence among San was higher than among the other ethnic groups in these regions. The high prevalence rate was linked to a number of factors. Poverty in San households (characterised by malnutrition, among other things) lowered people's immune systems and provided conditions for TB to thrive. The small and overcrowded shelters in which the San generally live have also contributed to the spread of TB. Gibson (2010: 52) emphasised that TB "is a disease that marks social inequalities, lack of power and poor or insufficient nutrition", so it is small wonder that its prevalence is reportedly higher among the San than among other ethnic groups. According to health workers whom we interviewed, tobacco smoking and alcohol abuse - common practices among the San - not only created conditions for the disease to thrive, but also lowered the effectiveness of treatment drugs, contributing to drug-resistant strains of TB. In many places, such as some of our research sites in Ohangwena Region, smoking pipes and drinking glasses are often shared, which may also contribute to the spread of this disease. Despite their dire need of TB treatment and healthcare services, a great many San individuals were deprived of these because of their geographic remoteness but also their mobility (see also Anaya 2013: 17; and Gibson 2010: 52). San participants in our FGDs found travelling from their homes to healthcare facilities problematic, due not only to the scarce and unreliable means of transport, but also the high costs involved. In areas where their mobility was high (e.g. Kavango, Ohangwena and parts of Omaheke), the treatment of those already diagnosed was often interrupted. Such realities may contribute to the development of multi-drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB), which is a major health problem and obstacle to effective treatment globally (Riks et al. 2012: 1). Geographical remoteness and mobility which constrains timely and regular treatment administration should be given significant consideration when planning for TB healthcare provision to the San. However, San individuals' failure to adhere to TB treatment regimens was more often than not blamed on 'the San culture' - perceptions of which have often led public healthcare workers to adopt an antagonistic attitude to San patients, as Gibson also observed in Tsumkwe District (Gibson 2010: 58-59). This adversarial attitude, and healthcare workers' tendency to deem the San patients culpable for the treatment failure based on their own notions of San culture, exacerbated the San's mistrust of healthcare workers.

17.2.3 Malaria

Malaria is a major public health problem in Namibia. The rate of transmission of malaria in this country is estimated to be 15% in low-risk areas (central, north-central and eastern Namibia) and 55% in high-risk areas (Caprivi and Kavango Regions).⁴ Most of the San of Namibia live in these high-risk areas. A national policy on malaria was introduced in 1991, but with time it was broadened to cover other vector-borne diseases. The Namibia Malaria Strategic Plan 2010-2016 targets five

⁴ See www.aho.afro.who.int/profiles_information/index.php/Namibia:Analytical_summary_-_Malaria

areas of intervention: programme and operations management; diagnosis and case management; surveillance, epidemic preparedness and response; integrated vector control; and behaviour change communication and community mobilisation (MoHSS 2010b). Participants in our FGDs identified malaria as a serious and common disease, i.e. to varying degrees, depending on the region or geographical location and the season. The San groups living in malaria-prone areas, for example the Khwe and !Xun in Caprivi and the !Xun in Kavango and other north-central areas, rated malaria as a high health risk, especially in the rainy season, whereas the !Xun and Ju|'hoansi in eastern and southern areas rated it as a low health risk. Knowledge about malaria (causes, spread, symptoms and treatment) was high at all of our research sites except Omundaungilo settlement and Onane village in Ohangwena Region. In Omundaungilo the cause and spread of malaria were linked to eating bad food and having "too much air in the stomach" rather than to mosquitoes as a vector, and participants in Onane did not know what causes and spreads malaria. In any case, the San in Onane and Omundaungilo had some of the worst school enrolment rates compared to those at the other research sites in Ohangwena.

San vulnerability to malaria was expected to be high, considering their prevailing socio-economic deprivation. For example, they had limited means of preventing transmission of the disease as most of them did not have access to treated mosquito nets. In Kavango and Ohangwena Regions, where the San lived in extreme poverty, we observed that many lived and slept in temporary shelters with porous walls and roofs that could not keep out mosquitoes and other insects. In Onane village in Ohangwena, some of the San even slept outside in the open, making exposure to mosquito bites unavoidable. At some sites (e.g. in Omusati Region), the San burned wild herbs to keep mosquitoes away – but this measure could pose the risk of exposure to respiratory health challenges, especially in infants and children. Malaria had devastating effects on those living in very remote areas where it was difficult and costly to access healthcare services for early diagnosis and timely treatment.

17.2.4 Gastro-intestinal diseases

Ailments such as diarrhoea and abdominal pains, and ailments related to unhygienic conditions specifically, were common health concerns at almost all of our research sites. Similarly, healthcare workers whom we interviewed in state hospitals and clinics deemed gastro-intestinal ailments to be more prevalent among the San than among people of other ethnic groups. These ailments are linked to the poor hygiene that stems from the poor living conditions of the San, their poor diets, and the untreated water which they used for domestic consumption. FGD participants and healthcare workers expected these conditions to be exacerbated by poverty, low levels of education and general marginalisation. Our findings at most of the sites corroborated Suzman's assertion that diarrhoea and other stomach ailments are some of the main causes of death among San children (Suzman 2001b: 115).

17.3 Government support and access to health services

Over the last two decades, the Namibian Government, through the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), has laboured to improve the highly unequal healthcare system that it inherited at Independence. By 2009 there were "46 hospitals (district, intermediate; including public, faith-based and private), 49 Health Centers, and approximately 350 clinics and other healthcare service points" (MoHSS and ICF Macro 2010: 11) – these figures may have changed subsequently. These facilities are distributed across all regions of the country, but specialised services are concentrated in hospitals in urban areas. Promoting healthcare is one aim of **Namibia's Vision 2030** (NPC 2004a),

and the government has put in place the **National Health Policy Framework (NHPF) 2010-2020** (MoHSS 2010c) to guide the healthcare-promotion process. The NHPF emphasises the need for the expansion, promotion and delivery of accessible, sustainable and equitable quality primary healthcare through community-based health services.

Healthcare in rural areas, where the majority of the poor live, is often overstretched and underresourced, despite the government's ambitions and its guiding policies and strategies. The San, who in general are the poorest of the rural poor (Arowolo et al. 2011: 52; and this report) face some challenges with access to health services.

17.3.1 Distance to healthcare services

The long distances to clinics and hospitals, albeit with considerable variation from place to place, are one of the main barriers to San access to healthcare. Those living near urban settlements such as Rundu (Kavango Region), Katima Mulilo (Caprivi Region), Oshivelo (Oshikoto Region), Oshikuku (Omusati Region), Outjo (Kunene Region) and Gobabis (Omaheke Region) had shorter distance to cover to reach healthcare facilities, but only a few San villages outside urban settlements had a healthcare facility nearby. The ACHPR/IWGIA mission to Namibia in 2005 established that 80% of the San in Namibia live at an average distance of 80 km away from health facilities (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 21). This overall figure may have changed marginally since 2005, but our study verified this figure at several research sites in 2012/13. Worryingly, some San settlements in Kavango and Ohangwena Regions are over 50 km away from the nearest clinic. The San found transportation to clinics largely unaffordable, always assuming that they could find a vehicle to take them there in the first place, thus they depended heavily on finding a ride when they needed to go to a healthcare facility, and spent a long time waiting for rides. Although the government mobile clinics visited many of the remote villages, in most cases the visits were irregular (see also Anaya 2013: 17). Also, at some sites it was said that the mobile clinics targeted only a particular segment of the populace (usually infants, children and/or old people), and/or provided only a couple of specific health services, such as immunisation and high blood pressure treatment. In areas where we found that the San are still mobile (e.g. Xeidang in Kavango Region and Onane in Ohangwena Region), mobile clinics were usually not an effective means by which to reach the San communities.

17.3.2 Costs of public healthcare services

Clinic or hospital costs were the same for everyone, but reportedly unaffordable for the majority of the San, considering the extremely limited availability of cash within their households and their general inability to earn cash (see Chapter 14 on livelihoods, food security and poverty). Government clinics and hospitals charged N\$4 and N\$8 respectively to attend to a patient on weekdays. It appears that these fees covered both the consultation plus a course of medicine/s. People with special needs, such as orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), pensioners and marginalised communities (e.g. the San), are supposedly exempted from paying the fees charged for clinic and hospital visits, however we found that the implemented in only a few areas – generally where the San had a strong traditional authority (TA) and/or community leaders (e.g. parts of Omaheke Region and in Tsumkwe East and West in Otjozondjupa Region), most likely because the TA/leaders negotiated for the exemption. Most of the San, however, reported that they did not get any exemption. In Omusati Region, for example, we found the application of the medical fee exemption for San to be virtually non-existent – a scenario that could be linked to the perceived high levels of integration between the San and the Owambo people in that region.

17.4 Discrimination and access to health

Ingrained discrimination against the San continues to blight their access to healthcare, and the San at all of our research sites expressed a perception of unfair treatment at the state health facilities. Across the study regions there were reports of verbal abuse of San patients by some healthcare workers. According to many FGD participants, a healthcare provider might refer to a San patient's poor economic status, relatively poor hygiene and/or alcoholism in a negative manner and in direct contravention of professional ethics (see also individual case studies in Gibson 2010: 49-50). Such behaviour naturally makes San people reluctant to visit clinics and hospitals, and it should be noted that similar complaints were received by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Namibia (Anaya 2013: 18).

Discrimination also arose due to San patients and healthcare workers speaking different languages: in clinics and hospitals in some areas, the healthcare workers could speak confidently only in a Bantu language and/or English, whereas the San could express themselves only in a San language or Afrikaans. This communication barrier often led to misunderstandings between patient and healthcare worker, and sometimes caused difficulties in administering the medication prescribed (Anaya 2013: 18). Allegedly there were instances of healthcare workers lacking patience with San patients and blaming them for misunderstanding treatment instructions. However, in areas where the San could speak the language of the ethnic majority, such as Omusati and Ohangwena where they could speak Oshiwambo, communication was not an impediment to accessing healthcare.

17.5 Traditional/indigenous medicine

The use of traditional/indigenous medicine was practised to a limited extent at most of the research sites in all the study regions except Omusati. The San employed traditional medicine either before seeking access to conventional treatment, or in tandem with conventional treatment. At the sites where traditional medicine was used, there seemed to be clear knowledge as to what diseases could be treated with these, and medicinal herbs were often cited as the means employed to cure diarrhoea, other stomach ailments and coughing (the latter especially among children). Although traditional medicine could be regarded as a cultural practice among the San, the FGDs at some sites (e.g. in Ohangwena Region) suggested that a poverty-driven inability to afford conventional treatments compelled the San to use medicinal herbs as alternatives. This was also an observation of Gibson (2010) in Tsumkwe, where the Jul'hoansi used traditional medicine to treat the symptoms of TB – even though they knew that they should not use traditional medicine together with their TB medication. A certain amount of knowledge of traditional medicine was still present among the San participants in our FGDs, especially the elderly. However, with limited access to natural resources in many areas following systematic injustices vis-à-vis land rights, it is expected that there will be an eventual decrease in the use of traditional medicine products and other resources, and that in turn this will reduce the building and sharing of indigenous knowledge regarding their use.

Reliance on traditional healers was limited and varied from region to region. Many San in Caprivi Region, and in areas around Outjo and Okaukuejo in Kunene and Oshana Regions respectively, reported visiting traditional healers in times of need, whereas at other sites there was hardly any mention of consultation of traditional healers, or no mention at all. Administering of traditional medicine by traditional healers also seemed to be on the wane, possibly because of a rising mistrust in the practice due to its commercialisation, as was noted in Oshivelo (see Chapter 6 on Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions, page 219).

17.6 Maternal health and teenage pregnancy

A number of reports show that maternal health has improved considerably in Namibia in recent years as compared with the 1990s. The Namibia Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2006-2007 found that skilled health personnel attended 81% of births in the survey period compared with 68% in 1992 (MoHSS 1993: 97; MoHSS 2007: 124). The number of pregnant women attending antenatal care (at least four visits in the pregnancy period) has also been increasing since the 1990s (MoHSS 1993: 93; MoHSS 2007: 116).⁵ Notwithstanding a positive national trend, our study found that the majority of San women across all regions studied gave birth at home, mostly under the care of unskilled health personnel or with no assistance at all. The socio-economic positioning of the San in society is a key reason for this state of affairs: the cost of transportation to a healthcare facility for delivery was prohibitively high in many cases, especially for those in remote areas, and many were also unable to pay the N\$20 charged for delivery at a healthcare facility. Although the San are in theory exempted from paying the delivery fee, it was a generally expressed concern that the exemption was not implemented at some healthcare facilities. In addition, there were reported cases of verbal mistreatment/abuse by the birth attendants in government clinics, health centres or hospitals - which understandably discouraged the San women from giving birth at these places. Consequently, it was not surprising to learn that even San women at sites closer to a health facility mostly preferred to give birth at home. Home births can be very risky, especially in cases of emergency or complications which increase the danger to the mother and baby. Furthermore, home births increase the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Accessing antenatal and postnatal care depended on the availability of a healthcare facility nearby, the implementation of the fee exemption, and the nature of the relationship between the San and the healthcare staff.

The rates of use of birth control among the San were generally low – this could be linked to their challenges in accessing healthcare services. However, in some areas (e.g. Kavango Region), cultural norms affected the use of birth control, i.e. people believed in having as many children as possible, and the use of contraceptives was regarded as a western cultural practice.

High teenage pregnancy rates are a national problem in Namibia. However, among the San, the impacts of teenage pregnancies tend to have more far-reaching effects than among other ethnic groups. Reportedly a significant number of San girls have dropped out of school due to pregnancy (see Chapter 16 on education). The government allows female learners who have fallen pregnant to continue with their education both prior to and after giving birth, but in spite of this authorisation,⁶ not many San girls have returned to school after giving birth. This could be attributed partly to the limited efforts made in respect of counselling and motivation. Children born to teenage mothers are often left with a grandmother who depends on a pension, and this situation can bring about the neglect of San children that was said to be a problem for some children at some of our research sites. Although this situation also arises in other ethnic groups because they have little or no financial support from social networks – usually there is very little to share within a San community. Reproductive health education efforts among the San thus need to be intensified and broadened to cover teenage pregnancy, in order to address this challenge which constrains girls' education, household income, and psychological wellbeing.

⁵ The fifth UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG5) aims at a minimum of four visits in the entire pregnancy – see for example http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Metadata.aspx?IndicatorId=0&SeriesId=763

⁶ As set down in the *Education Sector Policy on the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy* (MoE 2012b). One main goal of this policy is to increase the number of learner-parents who complete their education.

17.7 Water and sanitation

Poor water and sanitation conditions, and the spread of diseases that such conditions can cause, undermine people's inherent dignity and thus the realisation of the dignified life envisaged by the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR). The right to water and sanitation is explicitly recognised internationally through **UN General Assembly Resolution 64/292 of 2010, "The human right to water and sanitation**", which commits governments to put measures in place and to use the maximum resources available to ensure "safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all" (UNGA, A/RES/64/292, July 2010). Namibia has put great efforts into improving access to water and sanitation through government institutions such as NamWater, local authorities and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry's Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (DWSSC). Recent statistics show that 80% of all Namibians – 98% of the urban population and 63% of the rural population – have access to safe water. Those in rural areas who do not have access to a supply of safe water rely on rivers, streams and unprotected wells. These statistics also show that 74% of rural households have no access to toilet facilities, and where there is a pit latrine, there is a high share ratio (Namibia Statistics Agency 2012: 77). People living in urban informal settlements also have no access to sanitation facilities.

The rural areas where the majority of the San live are serviced by the DWSSC and most have at least a communal water supply – boreholes, closed and open wells, open canals, earth dams, and piped water (supplied by NamWater). Our study found that access to safe water varied from site to site, depending on a number of factors, but mainly the distance to the water point and the levies charged by the water point committee (WPC). Areas with external support (e.g. resettlement projects) had boreholes and treated closed wells, some of which were operated by a hand-pump and some by diesel-engine pumps, and most of these water points were within walking distance of the site, i.e. within 1 km. At some of our research sites, even though safe water was available from sources managed through community-based institutions, many San alleged that they could not afford the levy charged (which varies from one WPC to the next). In such areas they opted to use unsafe water sources such as open untreated wells and canals, which rendered them vulnerable to water-bourne diseases. San participants in our FGDs in Omundaungilo (Ohangwena Region) reported that they preferred to use the unsafe water in open earth ponds because it had a better taste than the NRCStreated water in the hand-pump-operated well.

Sanitation facilities were usually lacking in the areas where the San live – but this is a problem for many other rural and urban informal settlement populations. Ouholamu in Ohangwena Region had pit latrines, but these were in poor condition and thus were seldom used. The hygiene of the San households was generally poor compared to that of their neighbouring communities' households, except at sites in Omusati Region and a few other places. Overall, poor living conditions – marked by inadequate housing and overcrowding – are a key factor that undermines hygiene for the San. Poor hygiene was also attributed to the San's inability to buy soap and other cleaning products; the little cash income that San families managed to raise was spent instead on priority items such as food – and perhaps alcohol, which the San in some areas regarded as an alternative to food.

17.8 Malnutrition

On the whole, the San in Namibia frequently lack sufficient food (see Chapter 14), thus a high prevalence of malnutrition might be expected. It cannot be overemphasised that food insecurity among the San is closely linked to the social, economic and cultural disruption that resulted from their loss of land rights and access to land and related resources (Anaya 2013: 7).

San access to nutritious bushfood through traditional hunting and gathering is now virtually impossible in many areas, and the resultant changed livelihoods patterns have altered their dietary intake over time. Surviving in the mainstream economy has proved enormously difficult for the San, and the livelihood strategies available to them have proved incapable of meeting their nutritional needs (Suzman 2001b: 119). The government has made attempts to integrate the San into Namibia's food-crop production system, but the results of these attempts have been far below expectation due to structural and cultural challenges. In general, hunger and undernourishment have been significant distinguishing features of poverty among the San, as a consequence of their limited access to either a cash income or a regular source of food. Our study found the picture to be better only at sites in Omusati Region. The diets of the vast majority of our FGD participants were limited in both adequacy and variety. A study in Drimiopsis and Skoonheid (Omaheke Region) in 2009 also revealed a limited diet among both San communities, which arose from the limited variety of food consumed throughout the year (Bufford et al. 2009). Like Bufford et al. (2009: 36-37), we found the average San person's diet to be limited to maize-meal with just a few supplementary foodstuffs. As this diet does not provide essential nutrients, it renders the San susceptible to illness or a worsening of existing illnesses (e.g. TB and HIV/AIDS). We found that the frequency of food intake varied from one household to another, but most people ate only one or two meals a day.

Although we did not undertake epidemiological surveys as part of this study, we saw commonly recognised signs of malnutrition (e.g. pot bellies) at some sites, especially among children. As a short-term solution to the challenge of hunger and malnutrition, the government provides a laudable intervention in the form of food aid. However, as Anaya observed, "food aid [was] often unreliable and insufficient, leading to situations of persistent hunger among San communities, which compromises their immune systems and their ability to resist disease" (Anaya 2013: 17). Therefore, the San remain highly susceptible to health problems stemming from malnutrition or even starvation, such as stunted growth and the compromised neurological development of children. Addressing food sufficiency among the San is a fundamental public health concern that should move beyond the 'quick fix' of food subsidies.

17.9 Alcohol use

The issue of excessive use of alcohol among the San and its consequences in Namibia and other countries in southern Africa is widely documented. Nyang'ori et al. (2006: 1943) and Suzman (2001b: 116) related that induced poverty has led to extensive alcohol consumption (as is also seen in other displaced aboriginal communities elsewhere in the world). Excessive alcohol use by the San was observed and reported throughout our research, and especially in areas where livelihoods were extremely difficult to maintain (see also Suzman 2001b: 116). For example, !Xun living in parts of Ohangwena Region, and other San groups living on the peripheries of urban settlements (e.g. in Kanaan neighbourhood in Epako, Omaheke Region, and at Makaravan informal settlement in Katima Mulilo, Caprivi Region) were more addicted to alcohol than the San in Omusati Region, whose livelihood opportunities were better. In many extremely poverty-stricken San populations, alcohol was regarded as an alternative means to alleviate hunger in the absence of food (see also Nyang'ori et al. 2006: 1943). In general the San consumed locally brewed alcohol (otombo or okanyatau), which was cheap and generally made by non-San people (except in a few isolated cases in Omusati Region where San women also owned otombo and okanyatau shebeens). The impacts of alcohol among the San included bodily harm as well as social problems. Much as excessive alcohol consumption among the San has been influenced by poverty, it also creates conditions for deprivation, thus it locks many San into a poverty cycle, and indeed, at many research sites, alcohol consumption was identified as one of the factors that made 'poor' people 'very poor'. Household labour input into livelihood maintenance was adversely affected by alcohol consumption in many areas, but especially in Ohangwena Region. For example, people were reported and observed to be spending the better part of the day drinking in shebeens, and in some instances piecework was remunerated with alcohol, which deprived households of income. FGD participants also reported cases of deaths which were attributed to excessive alcohol consumption. Violence among the San was widely linked to alcohol abuse; this was reported at many of our research sites and also by Sylvain (2006). Domestic violence related to alcohol abuse was reported to be rampant at all of our research sites. Nyang'ori et al. (2006) linked alcohol-induced violence in San households to genderbased violence which in turn relates to marginalisation and historical injustice:

"Deprived of their traditional livelihoods and forced into resettlement camps, San women have gradually lost their traditionally equal status with men. Excessive alcohol consumption plays a major part in a rise in gender violence, a trend which ... is an increasing problem among young people." (Nyang'ori et al. 2006: 1943)

Many healthcare workers interviewed for our study contended that drinking and smoking elevated the risk of TB infection and curtailed its treatment efficacy among the San. This could have farreaching implications for the development of the multi-drug-resistant strain of TB, which is a health problem not only in Namibia but globally. Alcohol abuse among the San – and its probable effects on sexual behaviours – was also reportedly creating the social conditions for the spread of HIV/AIDS, which, as discussed earlier, has increased in the last decade among the San in Namibia. The San in Ohangwena Region were by and large observed to be the most affected by alcohol abuse, and a worrying development in this regard was the manner in which most of the San children were exposed to alcohol consumption. We observed at various research sites in all of the study regions, except Omusati, that many San parents took their children (including some under five years of age) to shebeens where they gave them alcohol 'to ward off hunger'. Thus for many San children, long-term damaging effects might be expected – not only impaired neurological development, but also negative social effects, such as low school enrolment and attendance, and the early development of addiction. In Omusati, reports and observations of children drinking alcohol were rare, if not altogether absent.

17.10 Support from NGOs and other external groups

The role that NGOs play in supplementing government (i.e. MoHSS) efforts to improve the health of the San is crucial, but varies across and within the regions. It should be noted that most NGOs support the entire population of the area(s) that they cover, providing a wide raft of support services: public health education on HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria; water and sanitation services; provision of equipment and supplies; and training of community health workers.

17.10.1 Namibia Red Cross Society (NRCS)

The NRCS works in the areas of HIV/AIDS, community TB care, malaria, first aid, water and sanitation, and hygiene promotion.⁷ Among the regions covered in this San Study, the NRCS runs projects in Kunene, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango, Caprivi, Otjozondjupa and (to a limited extent) Omusati. In selected areas the NRCS has trained volunteer community health promoters who assist TB patients with adhering to their treatment regimens. The NRCS also treated wells in selected areas in Ohangwena to increase the safety of the drinking water. Unfortunately most of the

⁷ See http://www.redcross.org.na/aboutus.php?id=22&title=Health%20and%20care

NRCS's work has been affected by declining funding, resulting in the cessation of certain activities such as community public health promotion and home-based care for people with HIV/AIDS.

17.10.2 Health Poverty Action (HPA) / Health Unlimited

Health Unlimited – known as Health Poverty Action (HPA) at the time of our field research – has run projects in Epako informal settlement in Gobabis, Omaheke Region, and in Tsumkwe District in Otjozondjupa Region. In the past, Health Unlimited – in partnership with the MoHSS – trained community-based resource persons (CBRPs) who handled home-based health care, and traditional birth attendants (TBAs), especially in Omaheke. The aims of the CBRPs project were to improve access to healthcare services in remote areas located far away from clinics, and to enhance communication between the local health service providers and the San communities. Since 2006, Health Unlimited has run a project aimed at improving San adolescent sexual and reproductive health in the remote areas of Omaheke and Otjozondjupa. This project trains village health committee representatives, teachers and peer counsellors to encourage discussion in the local community on adolescent health, HIV/AIDS and other STIs.⁸

17.10.3 Other NGOs

Other NGOs that provide health support to the San include Total Control of the Epidemic (TCE) and Catholic Aids Action (CAA). TCE provides support in respect of HIV testing and condom distribution. CAA trains community health workers to assist community members with various health matters, assists with referrals, and provides HIV counselling and testing services.

17.10.4 Volunteer groups and individuals

Apart from these NGOs, there are voluntary groups and individuals running health programmes in some areas where the San live. Most of these group and individual volunteers are qualified medical practitioners. Examples are Dr De Kok who runs a charitable private clinic at Skoonheid Resettlement Project in Omaheke Region under the San Alive crafts project, and the N/a'an ku sê Foundation which operates the Lifeline Clinic project at Epukiro in Omaheke. The Lifeline Clinic provides primary healthcare services to about 3 500 patients per year, 40% of whom are infants and children.⁹ This clinic also occasionally provides public health education to the San children at Skoonheid, and transports patients with serious medical conditions to Gobabis State Hospital (about 120 km from Epukiro).

Despite the fact that each of the NGOs and support groups and individuals provided much-needed assistance to the San communities – even though not specifically targeting the San in some cases – there appeared to be a woeful lack of coordination between them, and this situation undermined the formation of synergies and the sharing of experiences and resources. Furthermore, there was very little evidence that the NGOs and support groups sought to tap into the community members' knowledge of indigenous/traditional healthcare and medicine (where such knowledge existed). Dwindling donor funding opportunities are already hampering the crucial role that NGOs play in promoting the right to health among the San.

⁸ See www.healthpovertyaction.org/where-we-work/africa/namibia/treating-and-preventing-tb-in-remote-namibiancommunities.

⁹ See www.naankuse.com/naankuse-lifeline-clinic.html.

17.11 Conclusion and recommendations

The health status of the San is generally poorer than that of other communities in Namibia. The findings of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) mission to Namibia in 2005 affirmed that the San are the only ethnic group in Namibia whose health status has been declining since Independence (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 119). Our study, and others - e.g. those of Arowolo (2011: 26-30) and Gibson (2010: 52) – found the poor health of the San to be an indicator of the poverty prevailing across the San groups surveyed. There is also compelling evidence that this poverty is linked to the systematic injustices as regards land tenure, which for decades have been altering their livelihoods for the worse. Food production among the San was found to be unsustainable, and they depended mainly on government food aid to survive, thus the communities were very food insecure. The San were also constrained in terms of acquiring gainful employment, and their sources of cash income were restricted to piecework and social grants. As a result, there was a high prevalence of persistent levels of hunger that weakened their immune systems. Physical marginalisation also worsened the San's health conditions: most of them lived in remote rural areas that were badly served by health facilities. The MoHSS provides mobile clinics, but their visits are irregular and they are ill-equipped to handle most ailments. The discrimination and stigmatisation that the San generally experience at the hands of other ethnic groups in Namibia present social barriers to improving the health of the San.

The overarching inference to be drawn from all this is that the health challenges that the San face are interlinked and require tackling through an integrated approach that addresses poverty as a priority strategy for achieving success. Notwithstanding the interdependencies between health and other socio-economic factors, the following specific direct interventions to improve health are recommended:

- The government should ensure that basic healthcare services and facilities are made accessible to the San communities by establishing health facilities within walking distance of their homes. Where the option of mobile clinics is favoured, the government should ensure that they visit regularly, are well equipped, and meet national standards.
- 2) The exemption of San from the payment of healthcare fees should be clarified and implemented uniformly, and awareness of this exemption should be promoted among the San and within the healthcare community.
- 3) Measures should be taken to ensure that healthcare workers are sensitised to cultural differences. The government should take further measures to ensure that healthcare workers are culturally sensitive to the San, and that they adhere to professional healthcare ethics in their dealings with San.
- 4) Affirmative action should be extended to community healthcare in order to include the San in different categories of healthcare providers in the public health sector. This will ensure that there is someone at the relevant healthcare facilities who can communicate with the San in their own language, and will thus improve communication with San patients.
- 5) Efforts should be enhanced to extend reproductive health education to the San so as to provide information on teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.
- 6) Malnutrition and hunger should be addressed beyond the limits of food aid (as described in more detail in Chapter 14 on livelihoods, food security and poverty).
- 7) Coordination of institutions and organisations (governmental and non-governmental) that work on San-related issues should be improved so as to build synergies and enhance service delivery.
- 8) Concerted efforts should be made to enhance and ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of the programmes aimed at improving the health of the San.

Chapter 18 **Gender**

By Ute Dieckmann



18.1 Introduction

San women today – like many other indigenous women all over the world – face multiple forms of discrimination based on their gender, ethnicity and class. Many lack access to education, healthcare and their ancestral land, and face disproportionately high rates of poverty. Furthermore, they are subject to gender-based violence, both from their male San counterparts and from men of other ethnic groups (see United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues 2010: 1).

According to the anthropological literature, traditional Namibian San societies were characterised by gender egalitarianism. Historically, the status of women in these societies was high because of their enormous contribution to supporting their families; in many cases, women were the main

providers of food (Lee 1979; Marshall 1976).¹ Although meat – acquired mainly from the men's hunts - was highly valued, the veldfood that the women gathered in large quantities provided the bulk of the calories consumed by an extended family. Hence the man/men in the household had no comparable role as real or symbolic sole provider/s (Woodburn 1982: 440). San women were far more independent than they are today, and a husband and wife usually had equal decisionmaking powers. Before marriage, the prospective son-in-law was required to live with his future wife's family for some time (uxirolocal residence), to prove that he was a good hunter and could work hard (e.g. collecting wood and water), and thus could support his wife and her family - in the tradition of "bride service".² Temporary uxirolocal residence was a common feature across San communities, and post-marital residence patterns were flexible. Widlok reported that Haillom couples were expected to move to live with the husband's relatives only around the time when the first child could walk, but there were exceptions (Widlok 1999: 143). A similar pattern was reported for the Khwe: a newly married couple resided with the wife's parents until the first or second child was born, and then could move to live with the husband's relatives (Boden 2005: 152). Still, even if the couple moved to the husband's relatives, the husband was obliged to provide services to his parents-in-law for a lifetime (Boden 2005: 153). The Jul'hoan men in the Nyae Nyae area (today Nyae Nyae Conservancy) were supposed to stay even longer with the wife's family, as Marshall reported:

"!Kung [Ju|'hoan³] society, rigorously and without exception, requires that all men go to live with the parents of their brides and give them bride service. Should his bride's parents be dead, the man goes to whatever relative she lives with and serves them A man is responsible for the support of his parents and their dependants, and when he marries he becomes responsible as well for the support of his wife's parents and their dependants. Any or all of these relatives may choose to live with him, and if they do, he will hunt for them. If he moves from one band to another to give bride service, or for any other reasons, he takes with him those who need or want to accompany him The duration of bride service is indefinite. The people say it should be long enough for three children to be born. ... Nothing precluded the couple's visiting the husband's people during bride service. After his obligations are fulfilled, the man is considered to have the right to return to his own people, taking his wife and children and dependants. However, he is not required by social rule to return. The couple may stay on with his wife's people." (Marshall 1976: 169-170)

This temporary uxirolocal residence pattern has never been the norm in Namibia; here, residence is usually virilocal (home of the husband), or more and more neo-local (a new location), but generally a couple lives near the husband's natal home (GR&AP 2005a: 29). The tradition of bride service is also not the norm in Namibia, whereas the payment of a "bride price" is a common tradition: "Most traditional communities undertake to pay a bride price to the women's kinship group. This payment establishes a social relationship between the groups and, in the process, gives the man and his kinship group certain rights of control over the woman." (LeBeau et al. 2004: 37)

These differences in residence patterns undoubtedly had implications for the situation of women in these communities. Virilocal residency implies that a woman would get less support from her natal family when encountering marital disputes or domestic violence, whereas uxirolocal and flexible residency ensured that a woman would have immediate support from her natal family whenever needed, especially during the first years of motherhood.

¹ There is a considerable volume of anthropological literature on traditional gender relations in Ju|'hoan society, but a lack of literature on such relations in other San societies. Due to the fact that subsistence practices were comparable in the various San societies in pre-colonial times, there is reason to assume that the information on traditional gender relations in Ju|'hoan society is generally valid for other pre-colonial San societies (Sylvain 1999: 39).

For Jul'hoansi, see Marshall 1976 (p. 169) and Sylvain 2004 (p. 9); for Haillom, see Dieckmann 2012 (p. 41) and Widlok 1999 (p. 143); and for Khwe, see Boden 2008 (p. 120).

³ For a long time, both !Xun and Ju|'hoansi were called !Kung in the anthropological literature.

The egalitarian social structure of San communities was also reflected in their informal leadership structures: in Ju|'hoan and Hai||om communities, for example, both men and women could be the leaders of specific territories. The division of labour by gender was also not absolute in San societies generally: for subsistence, men were usually the hunters and women the gatherers, but women occasionally hunted and men often gathered; and though household chores were mainly the responsibility of women, men undertook such chores whenever necessary, and no stigma was attached to men doing so (Guenther 1999: 27). As no distinction was made between the 'domestic' and 'public/political' domains, there was no categorisation or demarcation of 'women's work' that would have placed such work in a separate – and subordinated – 'domestic' space.

Importantly, and as explored in Chapter 15 on culture, San societies in the past did not have elaborate systems of private ownership, and thus, as Sylvain has pointed out, women could not be perceived as a form of property (Sylvain 1999: 39). San societies were also among the few worldwide in which domestic violence was rare or non-existent (according to Levinson's literature-based cross-cultural comparative study of family violence – Levinson 1989: 102-103, cited in Becker 2003: 9).

Recent anthropological works focusing on the San's historical marginalisation rather than their traditional way of life (e.g. Wilmsen 1989 and Gordon and Douglas 2000) have paid little attention to gender. As Felton and Becker noted:

"It appears that the focus on the marginality of San life in contemporary southern Africa and its historical roots has precluded an evaluation of the internal differentiations and stratifications of San communities along the fault lines of gender or of other social categories such as generation, relative wealth or relative levels of education." (Felton and Becker 2001: 5)⁴

A few short-term studies commissioned in the context of development initiatives provided some information on gender issues in specific San communities (e.g. FAO 2009, *Enhancing the well-being of women and girls in Ohangwena, Oshana and Caprivi Regions through food security and livelihood improvement initiatives: Baseline Study Report*; and Feal 2011, *Gender diagnosis: Institutional strengthening and democratic governance contributing to improve life conditions* [sic] of urban and rural settlements of vulnerable communities in Namibia, commissioned by the Habitafrica Foundation), but, being site-specific studies, none of them provided a comprehensive nationwide overview of gender issues in San communities today. Likewise, Becker and Felton's report, *A Gender Perspective on the Status of the San in Southern Africa* (2001), in the series of reports on Suzman's *Regional Assessment of the Status of the San in Southern Africa* (2001), was informed by a literature review and visits to three sites in southern Africa, only one of which was in Namibia, i.e. Tsumkwe West (now N‡a Jaqna Conservancy).

18.2 The transition of San gender relations and gender values in Namibia

Gender relations in contemporary San communities present a very different picture to the gender equality recorded for traditional San societies outlined above, since political and economic factors during colonial and post-colonial times caused a profound restructuring of the gender roles of San men and women. In many aspects of their lives, San women today find themselves in positions of inequality which are a legacy of colonialism, and which position them disadvantageously compared

⁴ One exception is Sylvain's doctoral thesis and subsequent articles on the lives of Ju|'hoan women on commercial farms in Omaheke Region (Sylvain 1999).

with other, more dominant, ethnic groups – but of course the same is true of their menfolk. With regard to gender inequality, San women nowadays have much in common with other poor women in Namibia, and less in common with their forebears.

Most importantly, the role of women as household providers diminished tremendously in colonial times after the San were dispossessed of their land, which rendered them dependent on paid (wage) labour to sustain themselves. Generally it was the men, not the women, who engaged in paid labour (as was also the case in other Namibian communities, to varying degrees of dependency on such labour). The influence of colonialism differed considerably across the San communities, depending on where they lived in the country, thus we will briefly outline the differing developments later in this chapter. There is hardly any literature on the San in former Owamboland, but there is ample anthropological literature on the Jul'hoansi (see for example Marshall 1976, Lee 1979, Suzman 1999 and Sylvain 1999), some on the Haillom in the Etosha region (e.g. Widlok 1999, Dieckmann 2007b and Friedrich 2009) and some on the Khwe in West Caprivi (e.g. Boden 2005 and Taylor 2012).

18.2.1 Gender relations influenced by conservative Christian values

Christian values imported into Namibia in the colonial period largely reinforced gender roles that confined women to the domestic sphere and men to the productive sphere. Men were seen as the natural authorities in both the domestic and public spheres, and women were deemed to be subject to their fathers' and husbands' controlling power. Through a number of channels, San communities were influenced by Christian values vis-à-vis gender hierarchy and the division of labour. Certain San communities became the direct target of missionary activities. Others were exposed to these values through their interactions with neighbouring groups whose cultures were traditionally maledominated (unlike the San), and who had also been influenced by missionary activities from the 19th century onwards. These Christian values were also integrated into the culture of white farmers and into the South African Defence Force (SADF) whose members interacted directly with San communities (see further on). Last but not least, the 'new Christian churches' (e.g. the Pentecostal churches active in Namibia today) have many adherents within certain San communities (e.g. Hai||om and Ju|'hoan communities), and thus have been able to exert a strong influence in those communities in recent decades.

The direct influence of **missionary activities** on San was felt most intensively and enduringly in former Owamboland, where the Hai||om and !Xun in the western part of what is now Ohangwena Region were directly targeted by evangelical Lutheran missionaries over a period of at least 20 years.⁵ Once established in the north of the country in 1950, the Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church (ELOC – renamed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) in 1984) began to focus on the San, in cooperation with the Finnish Missionary Society. The missionaries founded a mission post in Okongo, and established San resettlement projects in Onamatadiva, Eendobe and Ekoka, in which the !Xun and Hai||om in the surrounding areas were invited to settle (Berger and Zimprich 2002). In addition to promoting their evangelism, the Finnish missionaries provided the San with basic healthcare, some degree of education, fees for labour, and food rations. They also attempted to promote agricultural production among the San. No specific information is available about the division of labour enforced by the missionaries, but almost certainly they promoted the patriarchal values described above, which were standard at the time.⁶

⁵ At times the missionaries targeted other San groups, but – to our knowledge – only for limited periods.

⁶ Missionary work was interrupted when the war for independence intensified and the SADF established a garrison at Okongo. ELCIN renewed its activities in 1993, focusing mainly on agriculture. In 1996, the Ministry of Lands, Rehabilitation and Resettlement took over ELCIN's post-resettlement support efforts.

After Independence, and especially over the last 15-20 years, **new Christian churches** – notably Pentecostal churches – rose to prominence in Namibia. They are particularly active and successful in towns with high concentrations of poor people, including San, and they recruit numerous disciples from these San communities. Most of these churches propagate a strict gender hierarchy, demanding the subordination of women to men through references to the teachings of the Bible. Statements from pastors and 'born-again' Christians⁷ collected by Gierse-Arsten from members of a Pentecostal church in Outjo clearly indicate that the church's ideology promotes the husband as the head of the household, who makes the decisions in a marriage and deals with the outside world, and the wife as the partner who follows his lead (Gierse-Arsten 2004: 43). The principles preached by Pentecostal churches and their influence over their members have proven to be more significant than the principles and influence of the mainline Protestant and Catholic churches. The work of Gierse-Arsten (2004) illustrates the profound effect that joining a Pentecostal church has in terms of changing an individual's belief system, behaviours and everyday life.

Apart from the strict gender hierarchy, it is important to also consider the following key aspects of the ideology of these Pentecostal churches: they strongly promote abstinence from alcohol and extramarital sex, and they strongly reject violence. As Maxwell points out apropos Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe, "For those living on the margins of poverty Pentecostalism's emphasis on renewing the family and protecting it from alcohol, drugs and sexual promiscuity at least stops them from slipping over the edge." (Maxwell 1998: 369) The churches thus form family-like institutions backed by strong social cohesion, and have mechanisms in place to sanction breaches of these rules (Gierse-Arsten 2004: 27-31).⁸ So, although female members of these churches tend to be assigned a subordinated role in their households, there is likely to be a much lower level of gender-based (and alcohol-fuelled) violence with 'born again' couples than is the case in non-Pentecostal households.

18.2.2 Gender relations influenced by work on farms

In the past, many Jul'hoansi, !Xoon, Naro, Hai||om and !Xun lived in areas that were allocated to white farmers for settlement during the German and South African colonial periods – today, these are the commercial farming areas of Namibia – and many of the men in these San communities were forced to become commercial farmworkers. As life on the white-owned farms was organised according to the farmer's gender ideologies and was thus separated into male and female zones, men worked in the productive world of paid labour while women were relegated to the domestic sphere. At times, San women were taken on as domestic workers in a farmer's household, but were usually paid very little, or were not paid any wages at all. Farmers often regarded the San women as mere appurtenances of their male kin, and San women were often not even allowed to set foot on the white-owned farms unless their husbands or fathers happened to be working there. Eventually this situation caused very clear gender inequalities among the San themselves (Sylvain 2004: 10).

Living on commercial farms also changed San marriage patterns: if a San man wished to retain his job on the farm, he could not perform bride service or move to be near his wife's family. Women thus had to move to the farms where their husbands worked – which were usually some distance away from their own families – and hence were dependent on their husbands' income and rations earned

⁷ The term 'born again' is commonly used to refer to a member of one of the new Christian churches.

⁸ When 'born-agains' break the rules of a Pentecostal church, they have to confess their sins not only in front of the pastor (as is the case in the traditional Catholic Church), but also in front of the whole congregation. These 'sinners' generally view this confession as a cathartic experience: "... if I have done something wrong and I go to my congregation, I feel very bad, because they are very seriously [sic]. You must be honest to yourself. You have to talk So you have to press yourself to change. You have to get a consciousness." (Key informant for Gierse-Arsten 2004: 28)

from farmwork. In the event that a San woman wished to split from her husband or to divorce, it was difficult for her to move back in with her own family since this depended on the goodwill of the farmer who owned the farm where her parents lived and her father worked. Farmers generally discouraged too many dependants from staying with their workers on the farms, especially after the introduction of labour legislation in the 1990s (Sylvain 2004: 10). Jul'hoan women living with their husbands on farms told Sylvain that they were "under" their husbands and that the husbands were their bosses.

18.2.3 Gender relations influenced by neighbouring ethnic groups

Over recent centuries, many San groups have come to live scattered among neighbouring ethnic groups: the Hai||om and !Xun lived among Owambo groups in former Owamboland; the !Xun lived among the Kavango people in the former Okavango Region; Ju|'hoansi lived among the Herero in former Hereroland; !Xoon lived among the Herero and Tswana in the Aminuis and Corridor areas in what is now Omaheke Region; and Khwe in the Caprivi were in contact with Mbukushu and other Caprivian groups. There is very little collated information available on the lives of the San communities living in the homelands created for other ethnic groups in the 1960s following the recommendations of the *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into South West African Affairs* (known as the "Odendaal Plan") (South Africa 1964). The following examples reflect the scattered nature of the information:

- In the 1920s, !Xoon worked for the Tswana in their fields, herding livestock and doing domestic work; they also hunted in the service of the Tswana. The relationship to the Tswana was portrayed as slave-like and humiliating (Boden 2011a: 18).
- Towards the end of the 19th century, San and Owambo coexisted relatively peaceably for some time (Suzman 2001b: 34). In the 1950s, the !Xun around Ekoka (in what is now Ohangwena Region) worked for Owambo people in different ways, whereas the Hai||om in the same area managed to remain separate from the Owambo, and still generally depended on hunting and gathering to sustain themselves rather than labouring for others (Takada 2007: 78).
- The Khwe who lived in close proximity to the Mbukushu in Caprivi were subservient to them, paying tribute to their chief and providing various services to their neighbours, such as assisting hunting parties. The Khwe living away from the rivers and Mbukushu settlements were more independent (Boden 2009: 50).

More research is needed to obtain a detailed picture of the historical relationships between San and other ethnic groups, especially given that these relationships have varied considerably according to the groups and time periods in question. Although we must resist the temptation to generalise (in view of all the differing sets of circumstances), by comparing anthropological studies among those San groups which have lived more or less autonomously with the circumstances of those which have lived among agricultural and pastoralist societies, we may conclude, as Becker has done, that: "... gender relations among the San changed with the adoption of distinctive maledominant features characteristic of southern African pastoralists ..." (Becker 2003: 16). Without doubt, the degree of influence has depended on the structure of the relationship between the San and the neighbouring groups, and the level of San integration into these groups. Where San groups have still been able to follow their hunting and gathering lifestyle to a considerable degree, the influence of neighbouring groups has been diluted and the adaptation of the San to a socioeconomic system based on a clear gender hierarchy appears to have been limited or minimal. In San groups which have become more integrated into the economic systems of other ethnic groups, especially as cheap labourers (herders, helpers in the fields, etc.), the influence and adaptation of a gender-stratified system has been far more significant.

18.2.4 Gender relations influenced by the South African army

In the 1970s, the South African Defence Force (SADF) started to employ !Xun and Khwe men as soldiers so as to access their tracking and bush skills.⁹ This was another development that had an enormous impact on gender relations in these San communities, as the women became increasingly confined to the domestic space while the men gained greater access to the outside world through their involvement with the army (see Becker 2003: 16). The army's gender ideology was similar to that of the white farmers, thus women's work came to be restricted to the domestic sphere – a change that effectively created San 'housewives' – while men were paid employees of the army and thus became their families' breadwinners. Women thenceforth experienced a considerably reduced status, in both the family and the wider community (Boden 2008: 116).

In conclusion, contemporary gender relations in San groups cannot be explained only – or even primarily – with reference to the (former) egalitarian gender relations of the traditional pre-colonial San societies, as two interconnected developments have had a far bigger influence on these relations:

- a) the transformation in San communities from hunter-gatherer economies to economies of dependence on wage labour entailing that men have become the main providers for their families; and
- b) the manifold influences of different neighbours and ideologies all of which are characterised by a reinforcement of more overtly patriarchal structures than those with which the San were hitherto familiar.¹⁰

18.3 Current gender and generational relations within San communities¹¹

Two standard ways to measure gender equality and women's empowerment are to assess women's access to, and control over, productive resources, and to investigate women's access to savings at the personal and family level (see e.g. FAO 2009: 105). The latter method has only limited relevance in the case of the San: as discussed in the chapter on livelihoods, except in the case of certain projects that specifically deal with the accrual of money (communally or individually) through income-generating initiatives such as craft production, the vast majority of San women – and, indeed, men – do not have any access to formal financial savings, firstly because they are not in a position to save any money, and secondly because many lack the documentation necessary to open transaction and savings accounts with commercial entities (see also FAO 2009: 66, 106). As the difference between men's and women's access to savings is minimal, no conclusions about women's equality or women's empowerment can be drawn by investigating their access to savings.

⁹ From the 1940s through to the 1970s, many Khwe men worked as migrant workers in the South African mines and hence become the cash providers for their families – a situation that probably had some repercussions for gender relations, especially in terms of subsistence roles. This work kept these men away from their families for extended periods, and life at home had to go on without them. When the SADF entered West Caprivi and the Khwe men were relocated to army bases, the impact on gender relations was much more direct and more significant than had been the case during the time of the men's contract labour in the mines.

¹⁰ Even in the pre-colonial era, San groups interacted with their neighbours in manifold ways, and an exchange of cultural influences must have taken place over the eons. In addition, 'traditions' are not immutable; they are subject to modification over time. Nevertheless, cultural change was unquestionably accelerated in colonial times.

¹¹ To supplement our field data for this chapter on gender, we conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with female Hai||om and Khwe students in Windhoek, and with Ju|'hoan women in Donkerbos-Sonneblom (Omaheke Region). This is in addition to consulting the available literature, and drawing also from the experiences and observations accruing from the chapter author's and chapter reviewers' long-term involvement with San groups in Namibia.

Although access to, and control of, resources remains an applicable indicator of women's equality and empowerment, it is insufficient. For the San, household arrangements, division of labour (i.e. the extent to which women carry the burden of household duties, child care, income generation and community duties), inheritance practices, access to healthcare and education, the extent to which gender-based violence occurs or is accepted, and women's participation in decision making, can provide further indications of the degree of gender equality and women's empowerment. These aspects are analysed in the next few subsections.

18.3.1 Household arrangements

We did not collect comprehensive household data for all participants in our research discussions, but the following general tendencies emerged - which are not unique to the San; they apply generally to poorer households in Namibia. Household composition in San communities is rather flexible, and tends to depend on income, availability of livelihood options (e.g. piecework) in the surrounding area, availability of work elsewhere, and infrastructure (e.g. schools and health facilities). If the household has a stable income - even if this often consists solely of the state Old Age Pension then members of the extended family who have no income at all might join the household for a while. During the school term, households in areas where schools are situated would often host the school-age children of family members living in areas where there are no schools nearby. Both of these factors lead to the situation in San communities (and in Namibia generally) of as many as 15 people residing in a single household, with, in many cases, grandparents (especially grandmothers) taking care of grandchildren because the mother works, often far from home. If such households are in remote areas, the children cared for by grandparents move to the homes of relatives living closer to schools once they are old enough to attend school. Extended families appear to have a network of households in different areas (e.g. different farms and towns, and even different regions in some cases) between which members move according to their specific needs (work, schooling, healthcare etc.) at any given time.

Participants in our research discussions said that usually the older members of a San household are regarded as the household heads, and if there is an elderly man in the household, then he is regarded as the *de facto* head. Remarkably, given the traditions of his people, Hon. Kxau Royal |Ui|o|oo, the only San (Ju|'hoansi) person ever to become a Namibian MP, stated the following in a parliamentary debate on domestic violence: "From an African perspective, the head of the household is the man and I hope this remains that way." (Hon. |Ui|o|oo, National Assembly, 22 November 2006, cited in GR&AP 2012: 30) Although Hon. |Ui|o|oo was in a unique position and not necessarily representative of his group, this statement perhaps indicates the extent to which gender mores can change in just a few decades, especially in view of anthropologists' earlier descriptions of Ju|'hoan society, which, to quote Draper, "may be the least sexist society of any we have experienced" (Draper 1975: 75).

Discussion participants also said that if men are absent in a San household, an (elderly) woman would be allocated the role of head of household – and indeed, many San households in Namibia today are headed by females. Apparently it is very rare for younger people to head a household, as most live with their parents or grandparents – perhaps in a separate dwelling (often a zinc 'house') in their yard, but still sharing meals with their seniors. Only once a young person had built a home *outside* the yard of his/her parents or grandparents was he/she considered to be heading a household, but this was said to be rare due to the lack of economic capacity to sustain a household.¹²

¹² More research is needed to ascertain whether households in which no member is in regular paid employment – this being the case in most San households, where the term 'breadwinner' is redundant because many people contribute in one way or the other to the household's survival – might have more of a tendency to centre around women. Our

Sexual relationships with partners from other ethnic groups are common in many areas, and these tend to follow specific patterns. For example: many Hai||om men and women have Damara spouses/ partners; some Hai||om and !Xun women in Ohangwena Region are involved with Owambo men; some San women and men in Omusati Region have Owambo spouses/partners; and some Khwe women were married to or had other types of relationships with Mbukushu and Caprivian men. According to discussion participants at different sites (e.g. in Ohangwena and Bwabwata National Park), and as described in the anthropological literature (e.g. Widlok 2005: 31), the relationships between San women and men from other ethnic groups would not fall under the customary law of the latter. Thus, for example, if a child is born to an Owambo man and a San woman out of wedlock, the man would not pay financial restitution or take care of the child. Khwe women who marry richer men from other ethnic groups reportedly remained in poverty because the men would not share their resources with them.

18.3.2 Livelihood strategies and the division of labour

To better understand gender relations in San societies, it is necessary to examine the division of labour: who is responsible for different kinds of work, and what are the implications for gender equality?

Reproductive and productive work

In traditional San societies there was no absolute gender division between reproductive work (i.e. household/domestic work) and productive work. For example, women contributed productively to the household through their veldfood gathering activities, which provided most of the food for the family, and men took part in the reproductive work of raising their children (e.g. minding small children and taking boys on hunting expeditions with the men to teach them hunting skills). As a result of changed livelihood strategies and the influence of neighbouring groups, the pattern has changed significantly in most San communities: as in other Namibian communities, reproductive work is now considered to be the responsibility of women mainly (Felton and Becker 2001: ix), and indeed, most domestic chores (cooking, laundry, taking care of the children etc.) are now carried out by women primarily. Our study has reconfirmed this general change in the division of labour in contemporary San communities, although in some regions the division seems to be more flexible than in others. In Omaheke, although women were said to be responsible for cleaning the house, doing laundry, cooking, caring for the children, watering plants around house and fetching water and firewood, these activities are not the exclusive domain of women: when women are busy, men assist with certain domestic chores (e.g. babysitting, cooking, fetching water or making a fire). It appears that the division of labour in Omaheke is influenced by the seasonal variations in agricultural practices and the availability of crops from gardens/fields. For example, discussion participants at Skoonheid Resettlement Project said that when there is a relative abundance of maize or cowpeas shortly after harvesting, anyone in the household might cook and eat these foods whenever he/she wants, whereas major renovations and repairs in and around the house are chores always reserved for men. In Ohangwena and Omusati, women are responsible for fetching water and firewood, cooking, cleaning and childcare. Similarly, in Kavango, the women fetch water, collect firewood, prepare food and care for the children, and this applied also to the Hailom in Kunene, Oshana and Oshikoto. In Nyae Nyae Conservancy, Jul'hoan women are chiefly responsible for childcare, cooking and gathering veldfood, but men can also be involved in these activities.

observations and statements from many discussion participants indicated that elderly women are often the focal persons in their households because the men were prone to mobility in terms of leaving the family home to look for work, or even because they had found another wife (as female Hai||om FGD participants stated).

Further investigation is needed to determine more accurately the varying extents to which San men in different communities take over reproductive duties when women are otherwise occupied. Our Nyae Nyae Conservancy data indicates – as does data from Felton and Becker (2001: 24) – that a strict separation between reproductive and productive work is less prevalent in San groups which are less exposed to outside influences, and which could still hunt and gather (in combination with other livelihood strategies). The Omaheke data similarly indicates that the separation of reproductive and productive work is less clear-cut in areas where wage labour plays a minor role in sustaining livelihoods. Both of these (linked) explanations would confirm what Felton and Becker found: "The more San men have been exposed to the experience of waged labour as a male prerogative and have had contact with neighbouring cultures with rigid gender perceptions and practices, the less likely they are to 'cross over'." (Felton and Becker 2001: 24-25)

Cash income

Most income in all of the San communities studied derives from Old Age Pensions, casual work or piecework.

The **Old Age Pension** provided by the Namibian Government for those over the age of 60 gives elderly women and men (and their households) a regular cash income, albeit a small one.¹³ The regular pension payout has placed elderly San women in a stronger position than before Independence due to the decrease in employment opportunities for San men after Independence (especially in respect of farm labour and the cessation of their employment in the SADF). Often, the elderly women are the only 'breadwinners' in the household. However, the pension amount is so small that it cannot meet the economic needs of an entire household, especially a large one.

In general, more **casual work** opportunities are available for San men than for women, and men's work is often better paid. For example, men across our research sites had undertaken the following forms of casual work: repairing houses with clay (e.g. in Caprivi); clearing fields; herding livestock (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omusati, Caprivi and Kavango); doing casual or seasonal work on commercial farms (e.g. in Kunene, Oshikoto and Omaheke) and farms in communal areas (e.g. in Omaheke); and doing temporary work for companies (e.g. construction, road construction and fencing in Oshikoto, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa). Women had done casual domestic work for households in neighbouring groups or had worked in crop fields (e.g. in Ohangwena, Omusati and Caprivi).

Piecework for men included offloading trucks (e.g. in Katima Mulilo and Oshivelo), rendering services at cuca shops (e.g. in Tsintsabis, Gobabis, Corridor 13 and Outjo) and fetching water (e.g. in Bwabwata National Park (BNP)). Women rendered services at cuca shops, styled other women's hair, mended clothes or did other people's laundry. Allegedly some San women also occasionally rendered sexual services to (mostly non-San) men in urban areas, in resettlement projects with beneficiaries of mixed ethnic backgrounds, and in small settlements in communal areas (see also Sylvain 2010: 97; and International Labour Organization (ILO) 2012). Reportedly there had also been cases of young men rendering sexual services to older women with financial means, i.e. 'sugar mummies' (e.g. in Corridor 13). Discussion participants were generally reluctant to talk about the prevalence of transactional sex in their communities due to the sensitivity of this topic.

Reportedly both men and women engaged in **small businesses**, selling small quantities of sugar, tea, home-made *vetkoek* (deep-fried dough/pastry), ice and other such basic items at home.

¹³ The amount was N\$550 per month at the time of our research. In April 2013 it was increased to N\$600 per month.

Both men and women were involved in the **sale of natural products** – work that is usually seasonal. For example, San men in Oshikoto sold *omajova* (termite mushrooms) during the rainy season, and women in Ohangwena and Omusati collected and sold grass for thatching houses. At many sites, both men and women sold firewood. In Caprivi Region, San women had engaged in the harvesting and informal and uncontrolled sale of Devil's Claw (i.e. without the external support of an NGO). Where harvesting of this product was managed through the Sustainably Harvested Devil's Claw (SHDC) Project supported by the Centre for Research, Information and Action in Africa – Southern Africa Development and Consulting (CRIAA SA-DC), i.e. in the BNP, Nyae Nyae Conservancy and N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, many more men were involved:

Table 18.1: Number of male and female Devil's Claw harvesters supported by CRIAA SA-DC in
Bwabwata National Park and the two conservancies in Otjozondjupa Region*

Year 2012	Number of harvesters			Percentage of
	Female	Male	Total	female harvesters
Bwabwata National Park	363	169	459	79%
N‡a Jaqna Conservancy	227	251	478	48%
Nyae Nyae Conservancy	45	23	68	66%

* Data provided by CRIAA SA-DC in October 2013

For the resettlement projects in Omaheke, i.e. Vergenoeg, Gemsbokfontein, Tsjaka/Ben Hur and Donkerbos-Sonneblom, where Devil's Claw harvesting was supported by CRIAA SA-DC, Rudd reported that most of the registered harvesters were male (Rudd 2012: 30). This was due to the SHDC Project's rule that only one person per household could register as a harvester, and only the registered person would receive payment directly from the buyer. Although female household members participated in the harvesting and primary processing, they were not formally registered and thus could not receive direct payments from the buyer.¹⁴ Therefore, the differences between regions, and the potential role of NGOs in influencing the gender division of labour and distribution of income generated from natural products, is a subject that clearly requires further investigation.

The **sale of crafts** was undertaken by San women and men at many research sites (e.g. in Nyae Nyae Conservancy and Omaheke, Ohangwena, Oshana and Kunene Regions). Men generally produced carvings and crafts made of wire (which require the handling of hand tools such as pliers, with which men are more familiar), and tools such as knives, bows and arrows. Women generally produced jewellery, baskets and clothing. When NGOs were not involved in the marketing of the crafts, access to markets tended to be a limiting factor. Although more women than men were involved in, for example, the craft projects run by the Omba Arts Trust in partnership with the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) and the Habitafrica Foundation (see Box 14.1 on page 476), men were not excluded from such initiatives, and in some of them, particular product lines (e.g. wood carvings and wire-craft products) had been developed specifically to engage men. However, for various reasons, but mainly due to competing income-generating opportunities, these initiatives targeting men met with highly fluctuating degrees of success.

Other **tourism-related activities** were more site-specific, and were undertaken mainly in the Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies and around Etosha. However, there is great potential for the development of tourism-related activities in other areas, and various efforts have been made to foster such activities – for example the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is trying to introduce

¹⁴ One reason for the dominance of men there might have been that craft projects were implemented at the same time, and women might have preferred to generate income from making and selling crafts (see Rudd 2012: 30).

game farming on its San resettlement farms. In this context it is therefore important to emphasise the conclusions reached by Felton and Becker in 2001:

"In principle both men and women, young and old, possess 'marketable' skills that could be put to use in demonstrations for or interactions with tourists. These skills include tracking, hunting, gathering bush foods and medicinal plants, preparing and cooking bush foods, healing, singing, dancing and manufacturing crafts. In practice, however, young men have benefited disproportionately from tourism enterprises, particularly in the commercial sector." (Felton and Becker 2001: 33)

More than a decade later, our study has made clear that this pattern continued to develop. Where private safari companies employ the San, it is the young men who are taken on as hunting guides and camp labourers – also because both San and tourists generally view hunting as a 'male' activity. These San men also tend to have higher levels of education than either San women or older men, and hence are more fluent in English and Afrikaans, and they have more experience in dealing with outsiders. It is likely that gender stereotypes vis-à-vis the 'natural' division of labour, and hence employers' preference of employing men for certain types of tourism-related work, have also contributed to women's absence in this sphere of work.

Community-based tourism models also risk contributing to the increasingly marked stratification of San communities along gender and generational lines: we found that those responsible for managing San community-based campsites were overwhelmingly young men proficient in English, and these were also the guides who accompanied tourists on 'bush walks' – despite the tradition of women being the main gatherers of veldfood.

In 2001, in both commercial and community-based tourism ventures, San women were employed mainly as cleaners, thus they earned far less than was paid for the types of tourism-related work dominated by men (Felton and Becker 2001: 33-34). This might have changed over the last 12 years with growing gender awareness and the recognition that Namibia's initial community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) programme was rather gender-insensitive (which was at least partly due to the lack of women's participation in consultative meetings). However, challenges still remain.

For example, today, women in the BNP and conservancies supported by Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) are also employed as community resource monitors (CRMs). However, they are paid less for this work than their male counterparts earn for their work as community game guards (CGGs),¹⁵ because the CRMs are not expected to work for as many hours as the CGGs work – as agreed when the first CRM positions were established in the early stages of the IRDNC programme in conservancies in Caprivi in the late 1990s. The traditional leaders had proposed making the CRM position both a part-time and flexi-time position for women, to allow for extending the benefits to more women instead of employing fewer women on similar salaries to those of the CGGs. Apparently this was also the women's preference, as it would better enable them to accommodate their household duties including child care.¹⁶ At the time of our research in Nyae Nyae Conservancy, only four of the 23 Jul'hoan employees of the conservancy were female, and in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy only two of the 12 San employees were female (i.e. 17% in both cases). This is because these conservancies offer ranger jobs primarily, and women are generally hesitant to work as rangers.¹⁷ Thus, despite efforts to integrate women into CBNRM activities, the gendered division of tasks continues, as does the associated tendency to pay men more regular and/or higher

¹⁵ For successes, challenges and constraints of the CBNRM programme see Flintan 2001.

¹⁶ Personal communication, Karine Nuulimba (IRDNC), 28.10.2013.

¹⁷ Personal communication, Lara Diez, (Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN)), 23.10.2013.

incomes. This situation poses the risk of further gender stratification in San communities, and this risk will have to be monitored and addressed when planning and implementing tourism-related activities in the future.

Animal husbandry

In general, where livestock was kept (e.g. in Omusati, Ohangwena, Otjozondjupa and Omaheke), it was said that the San men were responsible for husbandry (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 28). The few exceptions were due to the specific circumstances of the communities concerned – for example, Hai||om women on commercial farms in Outjo District (Kunene Region) were chiefly responsible for livestock management because the men were working as farm labourers.

Cultivation of crops

Both San men and women engage in the cultivation of crops in the northern regions of Namibia, where crop cultivation forms part of the agricultural production system (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 29), and the various tasks involved in the cultivation of crops were usually divided between men and women, the latter undertaking the tasks that are compatible with child care. We found this to be the case also on resettlement projects in Omaheke Region where irrigated and rain-fed crop cultivation is promoted by the MLR in partnership with civil society organisations. Here, however, the vast majority of those engaged in crop cultivation were middle-aged and elderly men and women; it appears that the San youth in this region – where livestock farming traditionally dominates – are considerably less interested in crop cultivation. This was cause for serious complaint on the part of the elders, as a significant proportion of the youth, for example in Drimiopsis and Skoonheid, refused to assist their parents in any activity associated with crop cultivation; the youth were more interested in doing piecework and casual work. (See Chapter 4, "Engagement of the youth in agricultural and communal activities", page 82.)

Hunting and gathering

As already mentioned in this chapter and others, in traditional San societies men predominated in hunting, and women predominated in gathering veldfood, although gathering was a less gender-specific task than hunting. Nowadays, hunting – in the few places where this practice is still allowed – is *exclusively* the preserve of men, and women are generally the gatherers, but men still do some gathering. In this regard it is important to consider San women's knowledge – and specifically that of the elderly women – with regard to the environment: this knowledge is a traditional intellectual resource that should be preserved and promoted; undoubtedly, if utilised in tourism-related and other economic ventures, it could prove extremely valuable.

Employment

Employment opportunities are rare for both men and women in San communities, due primarily to their low levels of education and the prevailing stereotypes of the San. Nevertheless, it appears that relatively more employment opportunities are open to men than to women (e.g. farmwork and construction work) (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 35), not least because men tend to be more mobile than women due to the latter's household and childcare obligations; this mobility makes it easier for men to look for employment opportunities.¹⁸

¹⁸ In the rare instances of San women finding formal employment, for childcare they rely on social networks – usually composed of female members of the extended family, and sometimes composed of neighbours, friends and others.

In sum, both men and women engage in a variety of income-generating activities, but it seems that men generally have more opportunities than women for such engagement. It must be stressed that most of these activities generate less income, and/or less regular income, than the Old Age Pension provides, hence elderly San women are often the most economically advantaged members of their households (at least in households with only one, female, recipient of this pension). Nevertheless, through certain income-generating activities such as craft-production projects, women are given the opportunity to earn some money, and this additional cash contributes significantly to their families' income - as exemplified in group resettlement projects in Omaheke and Ohangwena. Most of the income earned by women is used to buy maize-meal and other basic necessities such as sugar, tea, coffee and soap, thereby improving the household's food security and hygiene. Some is used to pay for healthcare services at clinics. Occasionally, when larger amounts are earned - through bigger craft orders for example - the extra income is invested in different pursuits: reportedly, for example, (male) artists at Ekoka Resettlement Project in Ohangwena invested their extra income in agriculture (e.g. paying for the hire of a tractor for ploughing), and women at Drimiopsis and Skoonheid Resettlement Projects in Omaheke put money aside for their children's education (e.g. to cover school and hostel fees, and to purchase essentials such as toiletries for the children residing in hostels).

Many men in San communities in the recent past and still today have faced difficulties engaging in regular income-generating activities, and thus are economically inactive for much of the time – at least in areas where subsistence agriculture, hunting and gathering play only minor roles. The gender ideology that some San communities adopted from dominant neighbouring groups (as outlined earlier in this chapter) has resulted in the belief that women are responsible for virtually all reproductive work in addition to pursuing work to obtain small amounts of income or food, and this is reflected in their day-to-day activities. By contrast, men in such communities are regularly confronted with the challenge of an absence of productive work opportunities, and hence a lack of opportunities to fulfil either the 'breadwinner' role allocated to men by patriarchal ideology, or the 'important contributor to household food security' role prescribed in the hunter-gatherer ethos.

Although this situation is not unique to San communities, the *de facto* responsibility of women for the domestic sphere has to be considered when planning development initiatives targeting women, as their engagement in household and childcare chores limits the time that women can dedicate to other activities. This applied, for example, in Nyae Nyae Conservancy where the Jul'hoan women said that they could not always attend the literacy classes on offer simply because their domestic chores took up so much time. In the *Gender diagnosis: Institutional strengthening and democratic governance contributing to improve life conditions* [sic] *of urban and rural settlements of vulnerable communities in Namibia*, commissioned by the Habitafrica Foundation, it was noted that at one of the San resettlement projects in Omaheke, namely Drimiopsis, single women found it difficult to attend to the cultivated plots due to their engagement in domestic chores and childcare, although it was also stated that they had established informal solidarity networks to share household and cultivation tasks (Feal 2011: 20).¹⁹

¹⁹ Overall, the burden of labour associated with productive and reproductive roles in Namibia will vary in accordance with specific circumstances: it differs between urban and rural areas, and depends on livelihood strategies and other factors, such as available infrastructure. In the semi-arid and arid regions of rural Namibia, where farming methods are relatively labour- and time-extensive (low labour and time input), both women and men, San and non-San, still have a considerable amount of spare time, partly due to rural unemployment. In resettlement projects with easy access to water, there is more time available than in places where water has to be fetched from some distance away. Furthermore, as mentioned above, in some areas San men are willing to take over some reproductive tasks, whereas this is not the case in other areas.

18.3.3 Access to, and control over, resources

Generally speaking, participants in our research discussions reported that their communities had very limited access to resources, and very little control over the resources to which they did have access (e.g. income, land and livestock). Nevertheless, in many cases, men and women had equal access to, and equal control over, the few resources available.

Cash income

According to discussion participants, cash income (primarily Old Age Pension money and money derived from piecework) tends to belong to the person to whom it is given or who earned it, but as already indicated, San men are more likely than women to have work opportunities (see also Feal 2011: 103; Felton and Becker 2001: 35; and FAO 2009: 79). At certain research sites, and depending on individual arrangements, a wife and husband might manage the household income jointly; but in most cases, the earners (both men and women) can decide for themselves how to use their earnings. For example, 10 of the 12 Ju|'hoan women who participated in the FGD at Donkerbos-Sonneblom (San resettlement project in Omaheke) had their own income: eight drew an income from the production and sale of crafts, and two were hostel matrons. All of these women stated that they had control over the income that they earned, although two, i.e. elderly women, decided together with their partners on how to use their income.

Significantly, it was often said in the research discussions that women tend to spend more money than men did on household necessities.

Food

Our study data conveys that in general – with site-to-site variations – it is the women who prepare, cook and serve food to the other household members, and at many sites men receive the biggest share of the food (see also Feal 2011: 15). There were also indications that some specific food items (e.g. meat) are accessed and controlled by men primarily.²⁰ At many sites, parents (mothers and fathers alike) indicated that they share their food with their children, but at some sites, such as the resettlement projects around Okongo in Ohangwena Region, it was clear that parents paid far less attention to their children's nutritional needs, as the adults were affected by their need to drink *tombo* on a near daily basis. Given this state of affairs, it is difficult to make general statements, and more research is needed to confirm the true situation with regard to women's access to food.

Livestock

Animal husbandry was not said to be an important livelihood activity at any of our research sites, although a few discussion participants in certain regions (e.g. Omaheke) aspired to being livestock farmers. When San individuals owned livestock, this tended to be small stock (mainly goats) rather than large stock (cattle), and our study data shows that when San owned animals, they tended to do so on an individual rather than a collective basis. Stock could be owned by men or women, and sometimes even children. This was explicitly said to be the case in Omaheke, Otjozondjupa,

²⁰ The recent FAO study found the consumption of meat to be more prevalent in male-headed households. Female-headed households at Ohoulamo (Ohangwena) had consumed an average of 2.5 different foodstuffs in the last 24 hours, while the average for male-headed households at the same site 3.57. Residents of Makaravan (Caprivi) consumed a greater variety of foodstuffs, possibly because their close proximity to the town of Katima Mulilo gave them better access to meat and fish (FAO 2009: 49-50).

Kunene, Oshikoto and Caprivi.²¹ Importantly, at no site was it said that livestock ownership and control would be restricted to men.²² However, due to their better employment opportunities, men were more likely than women to have invested in livestock (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 28).²³

Felton and Becker's research led them to conclude the following:

"... stock ownership has the potential to become a stratifying element in many San communities, with a clear bias towards male ownership and handling of animals, in particular cattle. This bias is further inherent in many governmental and non-governmental interventions. Both men and women have internalised gendered assumptions prevalent in other cultures according to which animals are regarded as the property of men and work involving animals is regarded as men's work." (Felton and Becker 2001: 29)

In 2007, civil society organisations and the government started paying attention to this matter of livestock ownership, and a number of San women (e.g. in Omaheke) have been registered as the primary beneficiaries of donations of small stock. Despite the absence of practical restrictions on San women owning livestock, the continued risk of gender stratification in San communities in terms of animal husbandry will require special attention whenever livestock donations are made or promoted – for example by the OPM, with funding from the Namibian-German Special Initiative Programme (NGSIP) which is managed by the National Planning Commission.

Land

As discussed in Chapter 13, formal land ownership or tenure security was found to be very rare among the San in general. Regarding gender in this regard, as Werner stated, "Giving women land rights equal to those of men remains a challenge in Namibia." (Werner 2008: 3; see also Ambunda 2008: 57).

Some San communities are living on communal land which traditional authorities (TAs) of other ethnic groups have allocated to them. San participants in our research discussions in Caprivi and Omusati explicitly stated that the headmen of their respective neighbouring communities had allocated land to them on behalf of the applicable TAs. Reportedly the San in Omusati, including 22 women, had registered their land rights with the communal land board.²⁴ If San elsewhere had done the same, there is no data confirming this.²⁵

With regard to the communal areas in Namibia, the FAO reported as follows in 2009:

²¹ The exception to this general pattern of individual livestock ownership is found in the resettlement projects in Ohangwena, where, through the government's Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme, cattle were donated to individual San trainees, the intention being that the cattle would benefit the entire San community. The San in these projects thus considered these animals to be their communal or collective property, and consequently, nobody in particular was appointed to look after them, and nobody volunteered to take up this responsibility, not even the trainees themselves. As the animals were often left unattended, they would wander off and get lost at times.

²² At most sites where livestock was evidently not important for the San livelihoods, we did not raise the question of who owned and controlled livestock.

²³ At one site in Omusati it was said that the cattle of a deceased man would be taken by his own relatives (i.e. his wife and children would not inherit them), which implies that cattle are regarded as the property of the corporate kinship group – see the following subsection on inheritance practices.

²⁴ Personal communication with the headman of Amarika on 18 October 2012.

²⁵ The land boards record only the name, sex, nationality and date of birth of the person to whom a customary land right is allocated (Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, regulation 5). As ethnicity or language group are not recorded, there is no way to ascertain how many San have registered their customary land rights.

"Not many women own land rights and women can only access land through their husbands or other male relatives. Under most customary systems in Namibia, widowed women do not inherit land but, depending on the goodwill of her husband's relatives, a widow is allowed to stay on her husband's land until death or remarriage." (FAO 2009: 73)²⁶

However, neither our own study data nor the available literature reflect this general assertion. To the contrary, Khwe, Hai||om and Ju|'hoan participants in our gender FGDs, for example, stated that women *can* own land, and we heard of only one case (reported by a young Khwe woman) of a widow (i.e. Khwe) having been forced to leave the land on which she had lived with her husband. (This woman moved back to her own family.)

As mentioned in Chapter 13 on access to land, and in certain regional chapters, land tenure in group resettlement projects remains insecure. However, a distinction has to be made between land tenure arrangements (including the formalisation of title deeds under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002) and the arrangements made by civil society organisations at certain projects. In Omaheke and Ohangwena, resettlement projects in which the Livelihood Programme²⁷ supports the establishment of sustainable livelihoods, garden plots and crop fields were allocated to individual households for cultivation. At Donkerbos-Sonneblom in Omaheke, for example, the Jul'hoan women who participated in the gender FGD reported that land ownership, i.e. the ownership of crop fields and gardens, tended to be shared equally between men and women, but for the annual distribution of seeds, these plots and fields were registered in one person's name, usually that of the acknowledged head of the household. This implies that both men and women were registered as 'owners' of crop fields and gardens, depending on the gender of the household head. Among married couples it was usually the husband who was registered as the owner, but the gender FGD participants nonetheless felt that control and ownership over the land was shared. This is not wholly unexpected, as the women were actively involved in the cultivation of these gardens and crop fields, and actively participated in making decision about their cultivation.

Since private land ownership is currently absent in San communities – as is formalised customary land allocation to individual households – it would be difficult to find evidence that San women are significantly specifically disadvantaged in this respect. However, the extent of gender equality in land-use practices and informal tenure rights at group resettlement schemes will require closer monitoring in the future, and data should be gathered on the allocation of plots to men and women on the resettlement farms handed over to San communities by the San Development Programme (SDP) run by the OPM, and the impacts of these allocation on gender relations.²⁸ Additionally,

²⁶ It should be noted that under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, the registered customary land of a deceased husband reverts to the TA for reallocation to the surviving wife (section 26), thus widows have the right to remain on the land in question, even if they remarry.

²⁷ This programme, called LISUP in Omaheke and LIPROSAN in Ohangwena, is implemented by the DRFN and the Habitafrica Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement and the applicable regional councils.

²⁸ Another issue requiring further investigation with regard to resettlement projects is related to the frequent lack of livelihood options in some of these projects: young and middle-aged San men residing on these farms frequently move to look for casual work or piecework in towns or on communal or commercial farms, leaving their wives and children behind. The same is true for young unmarried San women. Such job-seeking behaviour of younger men and women stems from a limited interest in agricultural activities, but is also due to the potential financial gains to be made from casual work and short- or long-term employment, which is usually more financially rewarding than any of the farming activities in the resettlement projects. Indeed, even if sufficient farm inputs and productive assets can be accessed, crop cultivation and animal husbandry tend merely to contribute in some small measure to household food security. This income-seeking or job-seeking behaviour of young resettled San mirrors the generally observed patterns of labour allocation among peasant farm households in rural southern Africa described by Low (1986). Low points out that the history of labour migration from the marginal arid environments of southern Africa to mines and urban areas where there is limited potential for increased agricultural output, means that it makes

gender-disaggregated data showing how many San have actually registered customary rights to land under the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 would be needed for assessing any gender discrepancies in land allocations in communal areas.

All told, it appears that in San communities, control of resources is not as manifestly disadvantageous to women as it is in some other Namibian communities, where resources are controlled by men primarily (see for example FAO 2009: 69). Nonetheless, certain resources – particularly cash incomes and livestock – are more accessible to San men than to San women, hence more San men than women are in control of these.

18.3.4 Inheritance practices

In traditional San societies, ownership of private property was very limited, therefore the quantities of items that might be inherited were small. As Widlok has pointed out, unlike many other groups in Namibia, San groups were more concerned about the exchange of items between living people, and less concerned about 'corporate property' in the form of the accumulation of property in a corporate kinship group based on descent rather than marriage (Widlok 1999: 29; see also GR&AP (LAC) 2005a and 2005b). In many regions (e.g. at most sites in Omusati, Ohangwena, Omaheke, Otjozondjupa, Kunene and Oshikoto) our research revealed that a deceased San man's wife and children inherit the biggest share of his property, but the distribution of that property depends on individual arrangements and negotiations. For example, if the man's relatives insist on receiving specific items, they might prevail, depending on the negotiating power of the widow and her close relatives.

Kavango and Caprivi were exceptions in this regard. In Kavango it was said that when a husband dies, his relatives/brother take the family's livestock, leaving just one or two animals for the widow and children.²⁹ The fields might be left to the widow, but the husband's brother can take her children if he so wishes. In Caprivi it was said that the biggest share of any inheritance goes to the deceased husband's relatives, and the widow is sometimes left with nothing, so she has to return to her own family. At one site in the BNP, discussion participants mentioned the custom of the deceased's brother possibly 'taking over' his widow – "if she was a good wife".³⁰ These examples suggest that the Khwe and !Xun in Kavango and Caprivi have adopted the inheritance practices of neighbouring ethnic groups, but further historical research would be needed to confirm this hypothesis.

18.3.5 Poverty

Our research data reconfirms that most members of San communities – both men and women – are living in abject poverty. The wealth-ranking exercises at our research sites made evident that the San perceive themselves as belonging to the poorest sections of Namibian society. Regarding gender, many of the factors that participants in these exercises considered to be characteristics of the relatively better off, and thus critical for upward mobility, remain more accessible for San men than for San women – examples being employment (including casual work) and livestock ownership in Ohangwena and Omusati, and education in Kunene and Omusati. Cultivation was

sound economic sense for a rural household to release from agricultural duties any family member who might obtain some income through employment elsewhere.

²⁹ Most San do not own livestock, and if they do, they own very few.

³⁰ For more information on the practice of widow inheritance (levirate) in non-San communities, see LeBeau 2005: 117-120. Namibia's Law Reform and Development Commission (LRDC) has proposed a new Intestate Succession Act which would outlaw this practice if applied without the widow's free consent (LRDC 2012).

another 'upward-mobility' factor mentioned at many sites, and although this was not regarded as a predominantly male activity, large-scale cultivation requires physical power and/or equipment and technology, both of which are – according to internalised gender values – more readily available to men than to women.

In the gender FGDs, participants explained that although both men and women were living in poverty, women were more affected by this state of affairs, for two reasons: firstly, women had fewer opportunities to find piecework or causal work; and secondly, women felt that they should shoulder the responsibility of care for the entire household.

"The women suffer more [from poverty], although the men also suffer. When there is no food or water in the family, it is the woman who struggles to get them. The women do a lot of domestic chores and therefore they feel more of the pain that poverty brings. They care for the sick, they care for children, they care for the husbands and they want their children to go to school."

- Female Khwe participant in the gender FGD in Windhoek

One strategy that some San women have employed to escape poverty (mentioned at a handful of our research sites only after careful probing) is that of engaging in relationships with non-San men whom the women perceived as being rich – despite the women's awareness that such relationships could eventually leave them worse off than they were before. This was also mentioned by Felton and Becker (2001: 62) and Sylvain (2010: 96). When we asked in the gender FGD in Windhoek whether San men employ the strategy of engaging in relationships with rich women of other ethnic groups, a Hai||om woman replied, "Which bushman will get a rich woman?" This statement captures in a nutshell the unequal power relations in Namibian society, in terms of both gender and ethnicity. Indeed, in their relationships with non-San men, San women are exposed to multiple forms of discrimination – gender, ethnic and (related to the latter) class – which are all interrelated. Sylvain called this "intersectional discrimination" in referring to the "ways that forms of discrimination compound each other and are inseparable" (Sylvain 2010: 89).

18.3.6 Health³¹

Access to health facilities: This is a matter of serious concern for San men and women alike, as noted in Chapter 17 on health. Distance, costs and discriminatory behaviour on the part of healthcare personnel make it difficult for San to access the healthcare that they need and are entitled to receive.

"More often than not, people from the San community, especially pregnant women, are sent back from health centres because they are told to first go and wash themselves because they allegedly stink and are smelly; many of these people who are told to go back are living below the poverty-line and in traditional huts with no access to water. For them, having a bar of soap is a luxury; are nurses not trained to deal with situations like these? This is degrading, disrespectful, insensitive and also amounts to indirect discrimination against the San because this mainly happens to people from the San community; many of these people will usually not return to the health centre and are thus left to deal with their health problems on their own; this is really sad."

> Moses ||Khumub, Namibian San Council, as quoted in Office of the Ombudsman, Baseline Study Report on Human Rights in Namibia, 2013, p. 89

³¹ We are grateful to Dr Tamsin Bell, a medical doctor working with San communities in Omaheke, who provided much of the information in this section.

Since women are usually the persons responsible for children and extended family members, it is probably the case that they are more familiar than their menfolk with the shortcomings of different aspects of the Namibian healthcare system as they relate specifically to the San.

Health-seeking behaviour: In Omaheke at least, this behaviour differs between men and women in San communities.³² For example, the rates of hypertension (high blood pressure) detected and treated at outreach clinics in Omaheke are significantly higher in San women than in San men. However, this may be due to the fact that far more San women than men attend the clinics for a check-up. Generally speaking, San men tend to wait until symptoms indicate that there is actually something wrong with them before consulting a doctor, i.e. they seem to place little value on preventative healthcare measures. Women also tend to be the health advocates for their families and communities, and normally, when healthcare personnel visit a village, it is the women who alert them to the presence of residents who may be in need of medical attention. It is also the more educated San women who request that their children or family members be tested for TB.

Antenatal care (ANC): In the *Namibia Standard Treatment Guidelines*, the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) recommends that ANC be provided to all pregnant women (MoHSS 2011: 707-710), but our study has found that many San women do not access ANC, whether regularly or at all.³³ This is due partly to the distances involved in travelling to healthcare facilities and the lack of transport options, and partly to a lack of awareness of primary healthcare options. Many San women do not recognise the importance of attending ANC appointments during pregnancy, and many do not have the means to do so even if they know that they should. Therefore, many go to healthcare facilities only when a problem arises and it is too late for preventative action. Also, many do not receive regular multivitamins and few complete a full course of tetanus immunisations. The risk of maternal mortality – mainly triggered by severe eclampsia (uncontrolled high blood pressure), post-partum haemorrhage or obstructed/prolonged labour – is significantly increased by the failure of San women to attend ANC appointments, as this means that blood pressure is not measured, low-lying placenta cannot be identified, and any malposition of the foetus (e.g. a breach or transverse lie) is not discovered. High-risk deliveries at home are thus more likely to occur in San communities than in other communities.

Giving birth at home: The attendance of a skilled healthcare professional at delivery has a direct influence on maternal mortality and morbidity, and yet, many San women at most of our research sites still give birth at home, either because this is their personal preference, or because they lack transport (or the means to pay for the available transport) to the nearest hospital or clinic. Hence obstetric conditions such as haemorrhage and obstruction may go unidentified or untreated until they have become emergencies. Such emergencies may then be compounded by the unavailability of transport or the distance being too great to facilitate rapid transfer of the patient to the nearest healthcare facility. Traditional birthing practices such as cutting the umbilical cord with a stick or (as often happens) an old pair of kitchen scissors or a knife increases the risk of infection for both mother and child. Traditional breastfeeding methods (which include disposing of colostrum and feeding the baby sugar water for the first few days) also compromise the health of both mother and child. All these practices continue in many of the San communities visited by Dr Bell in Omaheke.

Family planning: The use of reliable methods of contraception is low in San communities, and unplanned pregnancies are frequent, especially among teenagers. The most popular contraception

³² This was one of the observations of Dr Bell in working with San communities in Omaheke.

³³ This was confirmed by Dr Bell in respect of the San women in Omaheke.

method among San women who do choose to use contraception is the intramuscular (IM) injection of either depot progesterone every three months or norethistrone every two months. Obviously this requires regular attendance at a clinic or regular outreach visits from health professionals, and the most common reasons for cessation of IM injections are the long distances to clinics, poor access to transport and a lack of understanding of the need for regular injections. (Illiterate women are unable to read the information written in their health passports, and many do not keep track of the date of their follow-up appointment.) Unplanned pregnancies may have serious consequences for both maternal and child health: multiple pregnancies increase the incidence of anaemia and other nutritional deficiencies among women - indeed anaemia was often clinically apparent in the San women examined by Dr Bell. Multiple closely spaced pregnancies also increase the risk of post-partum haemorrhage, dysfunctional labour, uterine prolapse/rupture, eclampsia, pre-term delivery and low birth weight. Maternal age also has a direct correlation with mortality: the World Health Organization (WHO) advises that the highest risk of maternal mortality is in women under the age of 15. Teenage pregnancies are common among the San population. Although young San children are often cared for by the extended family, raising a large number of children naturally also has consequences for San women's economic status. Thus, unavailability of reliable contraception and health education may be a significant factor in the feminisation of poverty.

HIV/AIDS: San women are a highly vulnerable group in terms of HIV infection. As mentioned above and in Chapter 17, San women sometimes engage in sexual relationships with non-San men due to the relative wealth and higher social status of the latter. As reported in our discussions in various regions, San girls are known to enter into relationships with 'sugar daddies' from an early age. Also, according to Felton and Becker (2001: 52), non-San men often prefer San women as casual sex partners because allegedly they are "cleaner" (i.e. less likely to be carriers of sexually transmitted infections). These factors accelerate the spread of HIV in some San communities, especially among the women (as described by Lee and Susser 2006: 50). In any event the women carry the greatest burden in San households affected by HIV/AIDS, due to the fact that they are more likely than men to take responsibility for their children's health (see for example Feal 2011: 1; and Felton and Becker 2001: 47), and are also more likely to be the carers of other sick family members, As Feal found at Drimiopsis Resettlement Farm in Omaheke, "Women are the ones who suffer the most the consequences of AIDS [sic] from other people, as it represents an extra domestic burden for women and girls, who must assume the main load of attention to sick people at home, as well as support those families also affected." (Feal 2011: 8) It seems fair to say that Feal's findings can be generalised across most San communities in Namibia, as at most of our own research sites it was specifically said that 'women are responsible for sick people'.

18.3.7 Education

As outlined in the regional chapters and Chapter 16 on education, San men and women alike have very low levels of education.

Through interviews with individual residents at most of our research sites, we collected information about their own level of education, their children's levels of education, and the reasons for their generally low levels of education.³⁴ Particularly relevant in the context of gender is that more than a quarter of the female interviewees stated that they had dropped out of formal education for gender-related reasons, particularly **teenage pregnancy and early marriage** – the other main reason being

³⁴ As noted in Chapter 16 (page 524), the data collected on education is not representative as certain factors were beyond our control, but the data does allow for identifying general trends.

a **lack of financial resources**. In the BNP – where we convened an FGD on education – the main reason cited for girls dropping out of school was their engagement with 'sugar daddies': according to the participants, girls needed money to buy the soap and toiletries that would make them feel comfortable in the school environment, but ultimately they got pregnant and dropped out of school. Felton and Becker also found that sexual relationships had negative impacts on San girls' education (Felton and Becker 2001: 39).

In the FGDs with San students in Windhoek, it was confirmed that in comparison to San boys, San girls are seriously disadvantaged with regard to continuing and completing their primary and secondary education. Again pregnancy and early marriage were cited as the main reasons for this. Indeed, three of the 12 female participants got pregnant while in secondary school, but support from their parents enabled them to continue their education. Some of the female participants also remembered friends back home who got pregnant and dropped out of secondary school, some opting for marriage instead of completing school. It came to light in these FGDs that it takes great motivation and moral support for such girls to continue with their schooling, and such support is often lacking. The female participants confirmed that access to (and effective use of) contraceptives is an aspect of primary healthcare that requires greater attention in relation to San adolescent and sexually active girls.

The students in Windhoek cited two other primary reasons for San girls being disadvantaged in education relative to boys. One of these is **personal hygiene** – a reason cited often in the regional discussions as well. The students agreed that adolescent girls require more financial resources to meet their personal needs, not least because of menstruation. As one of the female students put it:

"You know boys have less personal needs than us. A boy can be given a piece of soap and he is told to go school. But girls need something more than a piece of soap. We need specific toiletries items ... and this costs money."

The other primary reason is **distance to school**. During school terms, learners in San communities located far away from schools are obliged to stay with family friends or other host households located close to schools. This situation arises primarily in areas where there are no school hostels or the hostel fees are unaffordable for San households (which is often the case). In one FGD, male students pointed out that for girls it is more risky than for boys to stay with other families away from their parents because of the possibility of sexual harassment. Often a girl's parents will keep her at home to help with domestic chores rather than expose her to this risk. It was also pointed out that girls are more likely than boys to risk sexual harassment or rape by walking long distances to school – not that they have much choice. As reported at some of our research sites, and as also mentioned by Felton and Becker (2001: 42), even the school hostels fail to provide safe sanctuary for female learners. Many hostels lack security infrastructure (e.g. perimeter fences and/or burglar bars), and their doors frequently remain unlocked overnight. Furthermore, the support and supervision that hostel matrons (most of whom are non-San) are tasked to provide is sometimes inadequate.³⁵

Apart from the above, two other reasons for the poor educational levels of San women, and their consequences, can be extrapolated from other findings of our study and from other literature.

Firstly, San girls have been described as having generally **lower self-esteem** than San boys, especially in the school environment. Felton and Becker noted the following:

³⁵ Although these problems are not unique to San girls, but may be experienced by any female learner in Namibia, for the San they are aggravated by poverty and the sexual stereotyping of San.

"Whereas both male and female San learners experienced verbal abuse in the form of being called dumb by other learners, girls seemed to have internalised such stereotypes more than boys, and in interviews themselves questioned their own learning capacity, something the boys did not do." (2001: 42-43).

Secondly, as noted in many chapters herein, **fewer elderly San women than elderly San men had attended school**, and these women also had fewer opportunities than men to become proficient in Afrikaans, English or the languages of neighbouring groups. Throughout their lives, these women were clearly disadvantaged wherever communication in a language other than a San language was required (e.g. in government offices or in community discussions with outsiders). Having some ability to communicate in one or more other languages enabled (elderly) San men to attain some measure of access to the outside world, whereas the social relations of (elderly) women had been much more confined to community level.

In sum, although education is a pressing issue for San of both genders and all ages, women and girls are still significantly disadvantaged relative to their male counterparts.

A number of organisations are providing support for San education in Namibia (see Chapter 16), but only one of them, namely the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia (FAWENA), has a specific gender focus. Significantly, the lists of learners and students supported by the OPM's SDP in 2011 and 2012 did not provide information on gender.³⁶ Given the abovementioned gender-specific problems for San education, a much stronger gender focus is needed to render San women and girls empowered and equal to others in Namibian society.

18.3.8 Gender-based violence

The Committee on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) defined gender-based violence as violence that is directed against a person on the basis of her or his gender or sex: "[Gender-based violence] includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, deprivations of liberty, denials of opportunities and services, selective malnourishment of female children, forced prostitution and several harmful traditional practices."

- FAO 2009: 87

The concept of gender-based violence (GBV) covers a wide range of acts and behaviours; it does not relate to physical abuse alone.³⁷ However, in our discussions with the San, the participants generally referred to GBV in terms of physical assault.

GBV (including domestic violence, which is a subset of GBV – see GR&AP (LAC) 2012: 11) is a serious problem in many San communities today, as in many other Namibian communities (see for example FAO 2009: 88; MoHSS 2008: 243-246; and GR&AP 2012: 63-238). Namibia has passed several pieces of legislation to combat GBV, chief among them the Combating of Rape Act 8 of 2000 and the Combating of Domestic Violence Act 4 of 2003. But, as noted in the *National*

³⁶ An informal analysis of the names of the learners and students suggested that far fewer than 50% were female, with the highest proportion of supported girls/women in secondary schools and in health training centres studying the (traditionally female) professions of nursing/midwifery. They appeared to be under-represented in other tertiary institutions such as the University of Namibia, the International University of Management and the Institute of Bankers.

³⁷ Namibia's Combating of Domestic Violence Act 4 of 2003 also recognises a broad spectrum of forms of 'domestic violence', including, inter alia, economic and psychological abuse (GR&AP 2012: 15).

Gender Policy (2010-2012), "effective implementation and consistent enforcement of these laws are lacking" (Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) 2010: 30).

The occurrence – or the acceptance – of GBV is a strong indicator of the degree of women's equality and empowerment, thus this indicator is invoked in a wide array of studies (for example FAO 2009: 87-93; and MoHSS 2008: 243-246).

The degree of acceptance of wife beating – which is high in Namibia – is one of three indicators of women's empowerment reflected in the *Namibia Demographic and Health Survey 2006-07* report: 35.2% of women and 40.8% of men agreed that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for one of four reasons – i.e. wife burns the food, wife argues with husband, wife neglects the children, and wife refuses to have sexual intercourse with husband) (MoHSS and Macro International 2008: 244, 246). Although we could not apply a similar quantitative methodology in our research, the extent to which domestic violence occurs in San communities can be regarded as an indication of the acceptance of it. At various research sites, discussion participants' explanations as to why domestic violence occurs in their communities imply that it is widely accepted – or that efforts to combat it have failed. For example, in a gender FDG in Windhoek, the Hai||om women estimated that domestic GBV occurred in half of the households in their community, and in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy it was reported that most men had beaten their wives at some time.

By contrast, anthropological literature on San has emphasised the fact that violence against women was rare in the past (Marshall 1976: 176-177), and traditional San communities were reported to be among the few groups worldwide in which domestic violence was absent or very rare. Acts of violence did occasionally occur in traditional San communities, but they were not necessarily gender-based: Lee reported that Ju|'hoan women had been actively involved in fights, and often fought back when attacked; they "often gave as good or better than they got" (Lee 1979: 377).

Since GBV was not common in traditional San communities, what are the reasons for its frequency today?

The FAO baseline study (2009) of Owambo and Caprivian households in Ohangwena, Oshana and Caprivi - including households in two San communities (in Ohangwena and Caprivi) - identified four causal factors for GBV at the level of the individual: alcohol abuse; women's low levels of economic empowerment; women's lack of property ownership; and women's lack of native family support. The contributing factors at community level were peer pressure and the lack of support services for abused women, and at societal level the underlying factors were cultural norms relating to appropriate roles and responsibilities of men and women, and the cultural acceptance of violence (FAO 2009: 88-89). In other studies, men's feelings of frustration and marginalisation due to unemployment and poverty were found to be causes of domestic violence (see for example Felton and Becker 2001: 58). It was beyond the scope of our study to investigate perceived causes and effects of GBV, as this sensitive topic would require the development of comprehensive research tools for in-depth research, as well as the building of mutual trust relations between San women and men and the researchers. Our FGD with San women in Omusati, for example, revealed that the women were reluctant to discuss the topic openly, even in the absence of their menfolk. Despite the limitations of our research in this regard, some direct causal factors were immediately obvious in the field and in our literature review, and other contributing factors are discernible from an analytical perspective.

Discussion participants across our research sites frequently linked **GBV to alcohol abuse**. In the gender FDG with women at Donkerbos-Sonneblom (Omaheke), for example, all participants agreed that there was a strong correlation between these two phenomena – although they stressed that GBV

was a very rare occurrence in their community. One elderly woman explained that the incidence of GBV had decreased significantly since their move to Donkerbos-Sonneblom because alcohol had been more readily available when they were living on commercial farms. At most research sites, in response to our question of whether alcohol abuse led to violence, discussion participants said that it led not only to violence between men, but also to GBV. However, it should be noted that despite the frequent mention of alcohol abuse in relation to GBV, from an analytical perspective, alcohol abuse is a trigger or contributing factor rather than a root cause.

Apart from alcohol abuse, significant causes of GBV identified by San in the course of our research were jealousy, disagreement about money, and men thinking that their wives are their property – a key underlying cause mentioned by a Hai||om woman in one gender FGD in Windhoek. In this FGD, another Hai||om women said that, "They [the men] believe that beating a woman is to detain a woman." Elfriede Gaeses conducted interviews with San women on the issue of violence, and her findings formed the basis of her paper titled "Violence against San women" delivered at The First African Indigenous Women's Conference in Morocco in 1998. The main reasons cited by her interviewees for the violence experienced by San women at the hands of their menfolk were alcohol abuse, men's jealousy, and men's fear of losing respect if women were better educated than them (Gaeses 1998: 96).

From an analytical perspective, and based on the empirical evidence presented in this chapter, several key underlying causes of the increased incidence of GBV in San societies can be identified.

Firstly, the relations between men and women have become more hierarchically organised as they have shifted towards **predominant gender ideologies** and prevailing constructions of masculinity and femininity in Namibia. San men, like some other Namibian men, have developed a sense of ownership over their wives, and hence believe that they have a right to punish their wives if they are not sufficiently compliant. For example, in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, male discussion participants said that it is acceptable to beat a woman if she is not fulfilling her duties (e.g. domestic chores), and according to Becker, reporting on the same area, "Changing masculinities may indeed feature strongly among the reasons behind the perceptible trend towards gender-based domestic violence in Tsumkwe West." (Becker 2003: 12). However, it should be noted that in our discussions at N‡a Jaqna, San females strongly and unanimously disagreed with the men on this issue – an indication that women are contesting this shift in gender relationships.

Still, our findings indicate that Becker's observation is generally valid, not only for Tsumkwe West (N‡a Jaqna) but for most of our research sites, if not all of them. The tropes of male strength and ownership of their female partners, and of female 'weakness' (i.e. being too weak to hit back), have permeated the gender ideologies of San societies in Namibia – though perhaps to differing degrees in different communities.³⁸ In our research discussions, the perception that women are physically weak came up frequently in various contexts, yet evidence (both past and present) suggests that San women are in fact physically strong: they carry children, heavy bags of veldfood and containers of water, and apparently they are well equipped to hit back should the need arise (Becker 2003: 12).

A second underlying cause is linked to the **extreme marginalisation** of the San, and the frustration experienced by men due to unemployment and poverty – as found also by Felton and Becker for other groups in Namibia, particularly in the marginalised southern regions (2001: 58). The San

³⁸ Again, more in-depth research would be needed to determine whether this shift in ideology is prevalent in all San communities, and whether exposure to other ethnic groups and/or a change of livelihood strategies can affect the degree of adaptation.

are at the bottom of the social ladder within the wider socio-political context of Namibia, and the men, in particular, experience frustration due to their powerlessness. One way for them to express their frustration might be violent or abusive behaviour – frequently exacerbated by alcohol abuse – against those who are even more vulnerable, namely San women, especially if the women are their partners.

Thirdly, changing gender roles combined with severe marginalisation and a loss of land and hunting rights mean that **San men in many areas have lost the opportunity to perform the 'male role'** – according either to their own traditions or the values that they have adopted from neighbouring and dominant cultures. In many cases, San men are not able to fulfil the role of household provider, and this situation might lead to frustration, alcohol abuse and GBV.³⁹

The high incidence of GBV in San societies can also be attributed to the fact that **the vast majority of San women take no further action** – such as leaving, or asking the police for assistance – when they are physically abused by their male partners or other male community members (|Khaxas and Frank 2012: 10, 14). In one gender FGD in Windhoek, Hai||om women said that women "are used to being beaten" and would not leave their husbands on the grounds that they are physically abusive. It was also said that women are economically dependent on men, thus a woman would be reluctant to go to the police to open a case against a man on whom she and her family members rely for financial or other support. This is despite the fact that – as our study has shown – the reality of the situation is often more complex. First of all, San men have limited opportunities to earn money, and even when they do so, the income is not always used to meet household needs. Secondly, the Old Age Pension, which is allocated to men and women alike, is often the most important income in a San household. Thirdly, women have extended social networks (mainly female) on which they can rely in times of need. Thus to us it seems that San women's belief that they are economically dependent on their partners is a further indication of the degree to which a dominant gender ideology has invaded San communities.

Although not pertaining only to GBV, two important points about seeking legal support must be noted. Firstly, there is a lack of knowledge in San communities about what legal steps can be taken in cases of GBV (e.g. getting a protection order), and many San are uninformed or misinformed about what constitutes an illegal act of GBV in the first place. For example, a young male discussion participant in N‡a Jaqna Conservancy said that it was legal for a man to beat his wife there (see also [Khaxas and Frank 2012: 6; and GR&AP 2006: 54). Secondly, even in situations where women have known their rights and have sought help, the police were not necessarily supportive. At many of our research sites (and in other contexts), it was reported that the police did not take the necessary actions against perpetrators of GBV, and in many places it was said that the police rarely interfere in cases of domestic violence as they regard this as an issue that should remain within the private sphere (see for example Feal 2011: 17; and GR&AP 2006: 54).

In summary, the increase of GBV in San communities can be ascribed to a combination of several issues which are interrelated: the uncomfortable economic position in which men find themselves, and the resulting feelings of powerlessness and frustration that they experience; a cultural shift

³⁹ It should be noted that domestic violence also occurred on commercial farms where San men, being farmworkers, were still able to fulfil their role as breadwinner. Sylvain reported that domestic violence on the commercial farms in Omaheke in the 1990s was associated mostly with a husband's drinking and a wife's 'disobedient' behaviour. For example, a San husband might become violent if his wife resisted his plans to quit his job and leave the farm – a move which San women often opposed because leaving the farm usually resulted in a loss of income and a dramatic decline in the family's standard of living (Sylvain 2004: 11).

towards the gender ideologies of dominant groups that view women as subordinate to (and ideally under the control of) men; San women's lack of awareness of their human rights and their capacity or power to take the necessary legal action; and a lack of action on the part of the police (see also Sylvain 2010: 99-102).

Our data and analysis illustrate that the primary causes of GBV among the San differ somewhat to those identified in the FAO baseline study (2009). As already discussed in this chapter, San men and women tend to control their resources individually, thus women are not significantly economically disempowered in comparison to their male counterparts, and, at least in theory, San women are allowed to own property such as land and livestock. Furthermore, women rely heavily on (female) family networks for support. Therefore, the lack of female economic empowerment, property ownership and family support identified in the FAO baseline study as causal factors in fact play only a limited role in San communities.

Men of other ethnic backgrounds also frequently commit acts of violence against San women (see GR&AP 2006: 54; and Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2008: 7). In the Namibian San Council's submission to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during his visit in September 2012, the rape and sexual abuse of San women by non-San men was mentioned as a serious concern, as was the lack of a police response (Nakuta 2012: 12). Violence perpetrated by non-San men against San women is linked to the beliefs that the San are collectively inferior and that San women are the weakest members of this community and thus are easily abused (Gaeses 1998: 92-98). Sylvain provided further details on the specific vulnerability of San women to sexual abuse at the hands of non-San men, based on her research in Epako (Gobabis, Omaheke Region): "San women are particularly vulnerable because of a widespread belief that 'Bushmen' women are highly promiscuous and generally sexually available – when they are assaulted, they don't 'feel' raped." (Sylvain 2004: 12) Here again it becomes evident that San women are confronted with intersectional discrimination and mutually reinforcing ethnic, class and gender inequalities (Sylvain 2010: 89).

18.3.9 Participation in decision making and representation

Box 18.1: Gender in Hailom society

- Q: What are the main challenges of Hailor women compared to Hailor men?
- A: According to tradition the women are not outspoken. They don't decide on big issues. They are not allowed to raise their opinions. The men are the ones who make the decisions.
- A: They are also not allowed to go out and look for jobs. They are supposed to take care of the kids because the men are the ones to provide.
- Q: Is that happening nowadays?
- A: We are now living in the 21st century and things are beginning to change. We try to go out and look for work. In the deep villages the women are still following that because they are illiterate and they do not know if they have rights. In towns such as Outjo and Tsumeb, women are looking for jobs because they want to provide for their families.

- Excerpt from gender FGD in Windhoek

The FGD excerpt above exemplifies some of the critical issues as regards the participation of San females in decision making. Firstly, it illustrates the extent to which San women have internalised hegemonic ideologies of women's subordination to men – ideologies which reportedly were not prevalent in San hunter-gatherer societies historically. Secondly, it shows that notions of 'tradition' or culture – even if these have emerged only recently in respect of San perceptions of gender roles

– underpin San women's inability to participate equally in decision making. Thirdly, San women's awareness of their human rights is associated with education – in most cases a lack of education.

Although this is the overarching discourse that emerged from our research, it is worth looking in more detail at the different levels of decision making: household, community, local, regional and national.

Household level: No consistent picture emerged in the course of our research, because female participation in decision making varies both between and within communities, and apparently depends mainly on individual arrangements between family members. Although an elderly male (when present) is considered to be the head of the household, it is often the case that a husband and wife take joint decisions, e.g. on spending household income (see also FAO 2009: 83-84). Also, as a high number of San households are headed by females, decisions to be made at household level revert to female heads. Furthermore, as most resources (e.g. income from piecework, pension money and livestock) are deemed to be owned individually in San communities, the owner (either male or female) has final say in decisions about the use of those resources.

Community level: The picture of female decision making at this level is more consistent than at household level. Felton and Becker stated that, "Community facilitators and trainers, development workers and researchers alike regularly report on their frustrations when trying to involve women in decision-making in public forums." (Felton and Becker 2001: 77) By and large, our field research has confirmed this (see also section 1.2.8, page 11): at most sites, the women sat separately from the men, and tended to participate in the discussions much less than men (e.g. at Skoonheid Resettlement Project, all sites in Kavango and Ohangwena, and at Omega I in the BNP). On the other hand, there were sites where the women sat separately from the men, but actively participated in the discussions (e.g. in Outjo in Kunene Region, and Corridors 13 and 17-b in Omaheke). Only at the sites in Omusati Region did the women and men sit together and participate equally. Our observations lead us to conclude that San women generally need to have even more self-esteem than their male counterparts before they feel free to be outspoken in community-level discussions. Factors constraining women's participation in community-level discussions might be the language barrier and the belief that women in general are less familiar with the 'outside world'. The presence of outsiders in such meetings is likely to be an additional constraining factor (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 77).40 Nevertheless, in our field research there were occasions when individual San women were very outspoken and very eloquent in voicing their opinions (e.g. in Mushashane in the BNP, Makaravan in Caprivi, Outjo and N‡a Jaqna Conservancy). Factors contributing to their more active participation might include personal characteristics (above all, self-confidence), their role or position in the community (e.g. sister of the headman, community facilitator, kindergarten teacher, TA councillor or committee member), and their level of education and proficiency in English or Afrikaans. Another factor favouring the participation of San women at community level is long-term exposure to, or involvement with, NGOs that make efforts to actively involve women in community meetings. Some women have also received training through these NGOs (e.g. WIMSA), which may have increased their self-confidence and their capacity to speak up. For example, a change in the participation of young and middle-aged women in local leadership and the management of activities in the resettlement projects in Omaheke has been observed in recent years as a result of capacity-building efforts there: increasingly, women in these projects have ensured that their concerns are heard in community meetings.

⁴⁰ Although San women are mostly hesitant to speak as openly as the men in community meetings, more research would be needed to determine the extent to which they participate in informal discussions before or after these meetings, and thereby have their voices heard and considered indirectly (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 77).

Local committees: San women are generally well represented in farm management development committees (FMDCs) and conservancy committees (established, in many cases, with the assistance of NGOs). Both of the current elected chairpersons of Nyae Nyae and N‡a Jaqna Conservancies are women, neither of whom was new to positions of authority. The Nyae Nyae chairperson, Xoa||an |Ai!ae, was formerly the coordinator of the Nyae Nyae Craft Project for several years, and served as a conservancy board member for the two years prior to her election as chairperson. The N‡a Jaqna chairperson, Sara Sungu, is a senior councillor in the !Xun Traditional Authority, and has been active in community matters for many years (Diez 2011: 1).

Local and regional government structures: San generally are very under-represented in bodies such as water point committees (WPCs), village development committees (VDCs), constituency development committees (CDCs) and regional development coordinating committees (RDCCs), and overall, the participation of San women is even more limited than that of San men – the exception being the only San person in Namibia currently holding the position of regional councillor, namely Fransina Ghauz, a Ju|'hoan woman who represents Tsumkwe Constituency in Otjozondjupa Region.

Traditional authorities (TAs): One of the five recognised San chiefs is a woman, namely Chief Sofia Jacob of the TA representing the !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha in Omaheke Region. Not surprisingly, in her area women were observed to be more outspoken than at most of our other research sites, which is probably and indication that the chief serves as a role model for other women. In each of the recognised San TAs, women are included in the TA structure, and five of the 14 members of the **Namibian San Council** are women.

Several issues should be stressed here with regard to the participation and representation of San women:

- a) In all San groups in Namibia, women at least one, and often more than one play an important role in both formal and informal leadership, through their positions as village leaders or in TA structures, or through their positions with community-based organisations and national NGOs.
- b) A gender balance in representative structures does not automatically lead to more extensive integration of gender issues in decision-making processes. Women in leadership positions – and this is a widespread phenomenon, not one that is unique to San communities – at times tend to adjust themselves to the dominant ethos without trying to change its structures and underlying values.
- c) San women in leadership positions sometimes face obstacles that their own communities create, because nowadays (unlike in the past), San males and females alike find it difficult to accept women in leadership positions. This is linked to the dominant constructions of gender relations which the San have adopted to varying degrees.

"It is challenging in our culture for a woman to lead men. We [women] are known to be people who should be under men and obey mainly what men say. In this case I find myself leading and making decisions for men, which is not accepted easily by many [men and women]. Some women perceive my personality to be unusual in our culture. A few more are beginning to accept female decision making after gender training and such, but many still seem to be finding it difficult to be led by a woman."

- Sara Sungu, chairperson of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy, quoted in Diez 2011: 1

18.4 Conclusions

Livelihood strategies and the division of labour in San communities

Subsistence patterns and the gendered division of labour in Namibian San communities have changed tremendously over the last century. Connected to this, San communities have incorporated many of the aspects of the patriarchal gender ideology that is dominant in most other communities in Namibia, where the men are (by and large) seen as the family providers and as being responsible for the productive tasks, while the women are seen as being responsible for most of the reproductive work in the domestic sphere. However, the degree of change in subsistence patterns, and the extent of the adoption of the patriarchal gender ideology have differed from one San community to the next; they vary considerably within and between regions, according to each community's exposure to neighbouring groups and the forms of change in their subsistence patterns.

Before Independence, San men were largely able to fulfil their role as major contributors to the household's income and/or food supply – even though the income was very meagre at times – especially relative to other household members. Those who were living on what is now communal land next to other ethnic groups (e.g. the !Xun and Hai||om in former Owamboland, and the Ju|'hoansi and !Xoon in what is now Omaheke Region) could still make a significant contribution to the household's income and/or food supply through hunting and doing piecework for their neighbours, and those living in commercial farming areas were able to undertake labour on the farms (Hai||om, !Xun, Ju|'hoansi, !Xoon). Khwe men were employed in mines in South Africa, and some San men (mainly !Xun and Khwe) were employed by the SADF.

"Before Independence women used to stay at home, and the men were responsible for income and food. However, since Independence, during 'Namibia time', both men and women need to work in order to support the household, but there is hardly any work for them."

- Female discussion participant at Blouberg Resettlement Farm, Omaheke Region

The quote above refers to the situation of the San in communities that formerly lived on commercial farms. The circumstances were different in areas where wage labour did not constitute the chief source of household income, and where veldfood gathering, and to a lesser extent subsistence agriculture, were central livelihood strategies (e.g. in specific areas in Caprivi, Kavango, Ohangwena and Omusati). In those areas before Independence, women did not stay at home but rather took an active part in productive work.

After Independence, the opportunities to function as provider decreased tremendously for San men: work on commercial farms became increasingly scarce because the farmers could no longer afford to employ as many workers once the new labour legislation was introduced; and San employment in the SADF of course collapsed at Independence when the SADF withdrew from Namibia. In addition, the chance to hunt occasionally in order to contribute to the household's food supply was removed by the increasing need for grazing for livestock owned by neighbouring groups, and this was aggravated by the fact that well-off communal farmers erected (illegal) fences on the land.

Today, Old Age Pensions are often the main source of income for entire households, thus elderly men and women become the main 'breadwinners' in the family. Although the pension amount does not suffice to sustain an entire household (unless it is a very small one, perhaps), compared to piecework the pension is at least a more regular source of income and often a more lucrative one.

Access to, and control over, resources, and inheritance patterns

Compared to most other Namibian communities, the San have very limited access to resources and control over the resources to which they have access (e.g. land, livestock and physical assets). However, San women are not as clearly disadvantaged in relation to their male counterparts as are the women of other Namibian communities where assets are controlled mainly by men (LeBeau et al. 2004). This is because many resources are controlled individually, and San widows (and their children) tend to inherit the biggest portion of their deceased husbands' property (which in most cases is very limited). Nevertheless, stakeholders aiming to increase San access to, and control over, resources should focus more strongly on gender, as efforts to improve resource availability for the San run the risk of further reinforcing internal gender stratification in San communities.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV), often triggered by alcohol abuse, is a major problem in most San communities. Shifting gender roles has undoubtedly added to the social disintegration experienced by the San in Namibia, and young men in particular find it difficult to play any significant role as contributors to their households' income and/or food supply because employment opportunities for them are so scarce in independent Namibia – although this is linked to the overall scarcity of employment opportunities as well as low education levels among the San, both male and female. As repeatedly noted throughout this report, job applicants from other ethnic groups tend to get preferential treatment due to widely held stereotypical notions about the San (e.g. that they are lazy, leave jobs very readily, and are prone to alcohol abuse). Hence the role that young men played as major provider of food/income has diminished, whereas young women can still fulfil their familiar reproductive responsibilities (household tasks and giving birth) assigned to them in the predominant gender ideology. Though not the only factor, this vacuum in respect of young men's productive activities has certainly increased the level of alcohol abuse and GBV among the San. It might also play a role in intergenerational conflicts, i.e. elders (e.g. in Omaheke) complain that young men and women have no interest in taking part in agricultural activities and are dependent on their elders – existing only by "eating their food".

The fact that San women take no further action when they suffer acts of GBV perpetuates the problem. Combating GBV in San communities thus requires a multi-layered approach that takes into account the situations of both the perpetrators and the victims.

Education

The completion of formal education is a challenge for San boys and San girls. However, girls are disadvantaged relative to boys. Firstly, girls in rural areas risk sexual harassment when walking long distances to school, and when staying in hostels or with host families. Secondly, girls need more financial resources to buy necessary toiletries and sanitary items. Thirdly, teenage pregnancy and early marriage result in higher dropout rates among girls. Fourthly, as girls tend to have lower self-esteem than boys, they are more affected by bullying and discriminatory behaviour in school, and consequently are more likely to drop out of school.

Health

As with education, San women are clearly in a more vulnerable position than San men. Firstly, they are not only responsible for their own health, but also tend to be the ones who see to the health needs of the children and other family members. Secondly, access to contraception services

is limited, and this poses additional health risks for women and especially teenagers, not to mention the socio-economic implications for their lives. Thirdly, all the issues around accessing healthcare facilities and trained personnel during pregnancy and childbirth place San women at a higher risk of complications and emergencies in this reproductive period of their lives. Fourthly, the women comprise a highly vulnerable group in terms of exposure to HIV infection, as some of them engage in exploitative sexual relationships with non-San men who are in a better economic position than themselves.

Participation and representation

With regard to the participation and representation of San women, in traditional hunter-gatherer societies women could and did occupy leadership positions, but during the colonial period, San women came to be excluded from decision-making processes at higher levels (i.e. outside their households) to varying degrees, and it became increasingly difficult for them to attain leadership positions. Currently there are a number of outspoken San women in leadership positions; Namibia's progressive gender policy (though not sufficiently implemented), the engagement of NGOs that strive for gender balance, and relatively higher levels of education in recent cohorts of San girls (coupled with an attendant increase in self-confidence), have proved to be essential in this regard. However, some of the women in leadership positions still experience alienation within their own communities, because female leadership is not yet socially acceptable.

External support

Stakeholders working with San communities are generally gender-sensitive and make efforts to promote gender equality in accordance with international and national legal instruments and guidelines – despite these contradicting many customary belief systems and practices in Namibia. For example, organisations:

- raise awareness on human rights and women's rights, and provide leadership training for women (e.g. the Legal Assistance Centre and the Women's Leadership Centre respectively);
- support capacity building and training for women in, for example, local leadership and community organisation (e.g. WIMSA and DRFN); and
- implement income-generating projects targeting women (e.g. the OPM, and the Omba Arts Trust in cooperation with IRDNC, the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia and the Habitafrica Foundation).

Most of these organisations, if not all of them, try to promote levels of female representation in established representative structures that are necessary in the development context for the successful implementation of projects (see also Felton and Becker 2001: 84). Although some headway has been made in terms of San women's empowerment and gender equality, evidence of a full commitment to gender mainstreaming is still lacking in many of these projects. For example, when planning and implementing projects, more attention has to be given to the logistical demands placed on women in representative or management roles who are already responsible for households, childcare, caring for the sick, and (sometimes) income generation. A stronger focus on the special educational and health needs of San women should also be prioritised.

Although some of the gender-related problems that San women face today are the same as those faced by women of other ethnic groups in Namibia, often the situation of San women is much worse due to the multidimensional inequality that they experience, i.e. in terms of gender, class and ethnicity.

18.5 Recommendations

The focus on women often tends to be the natural first step towards addressing gender inequalities. However, our study findings strongly suggest that what is needed is a holistic approach that targets all members of individual San communities as well as Namibian society generally and its stakeholders and office-bearers in particular. An effort to mainstream a gender perspective in all development initiatives targeting the San is urgently called for as well: it seems as if stakeholders, faced with the extreme poverty of San communities, tend to ignore the gender perspective as a mainstreaming methodology in their efforts to improve the overall livelihoods of San communities. This is not to say that their endeavours are wholly gender blind; they might try to encourage female participation in public meetings or raise awareness among women about their human rights, for example, but then they fail to apply the same approach in all of their initiatives (e.g. in relation to animal husbandry and land allocation). By failing to implement gender mainstreaming thoroughly, they risk furthering the stratification along gender lines in these communities.

First of all, and as a long-term strategy, it is necessary to challenge the dominant gender ideology's ingrained conceptualisations of masculinity and femininity, and the resultant gendered division of labour – of course this is as relevant for the whole of Namibia as it is for San specifically. Although this process has been underway in Namibia since Independence, mainly effected through law reform and awareness-raising campaigns, the progress to date is slow – which is not surprising given the pervasiveness of such deeply entrenched internalised attitudes.

In the *Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Namibia*,⁴¹ the Committee expressed its "concern about the persistence of strong patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society …" and called upon this State Party "to take measures to bring about change in the widely accepted stereotypical roles of men and women". Further, "Such efforts should include comprehensive awareness-raising and educational campaigns that address women and men and girls and boys, with a view to eliminating the stereotypes associated with traditional gender roles in the family and in society, in accordance with articles 2(f) and 5(a) of the Convention." (UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 2007: 3).

The efforts to run awareness-raising and educational campaigns in San communities will have to be innovative and creative. Conventional workshops on human rights and related issues will certainly not suffice to achieve a fundamental change in the attitudes and convictions that have been passed down through generations. Radio programmes in San languages and community theatre events, and techniques such as role-plays, are all communication methods that could be investigated with a view to expanding the repertoire of methods used. As with all development initiatives, long-term involvement with the communities, and effective monitoring and evaluation of successes and failures, will be required to achieve a sustainable change.

Although fundamental and wholesale change is the ultimate goal of all efforts to address gender inequality in its various manifestations – change that would eventually reveal itself through the altered gender relationships in all of Namibia's communities – in the meantime, the stratifications and differentiations in San communities require specific attention in project design and human rights advocacy (see also Becker 2003: 22). Gender mainstreaming therefore has to be integrated into all kinds of San support initiatives.

⁴¹ Namibia ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1992.

In particular, we recommend the following:

- Consider San women's multiple burdens (domestic work, childcare, income generation, and perhaps representative duties) when planning projects/activities that make further demands on their time (e.g. income-generating projects, adult education and representative positions).
- Investigate the potential for income-generating activities that utilise the environmental knowledge of (elderly) San women.
- Explore and support San women's social networks with a view to assisting those women who wish to engage in income-generating activities, educational activities or representative roles.
- Pay special attention to young San men while planning and implementing livelihood projects, so as to accord them meaningful roles which do not challenge too directly their notions of masculinity in the current domestic division of labour.
- At the same time, reflect on and sensitise San to gender convictions at local level. Trainings and communication on gender sensitivity (by means of community theatre, radio programmes etc.) should accompany any development effort. The trainings should involve San women, men, girls and boys, and should help them to understand and reflect on their respective perceptions of gender relations, the gendered division of labour and the control of community resources. These initiatives should also include the San elders, and should trigger discussion of traditional San gender roles and of evidence in the historical and anthropological literature, so as to generate an evaluation of the perceived differences between former and current gender relations.
- Implement initiatives to familiarise communities with the international and national guidelines and legal instruments that underpin women's rights and human rights generally. In this regard, the training of San women as community mobilisers or (specialised) paralegals is recommended.
- Continue to promote gender balance in San representative structures, and monitor the potential negative effects of women's involvement on the women themselves, including the extra burdens (in addition to reproductive work etc.) placed on them in terms of time and resources, and the challenges they might face from male community members.
- Target San women through specific programmes in order to increase their self-confidence and thereby enable them to overcome their resistance to public speaking and advocating. Strongly support the establishment of San women's organisations in consultation with San women and involving all San communities and establish linkages between San women and other indigenous women around the world within the international indigenous women's movement. San women's organisations in Namibia.
- Pay special attention to San girls in educational programmes, with the aim of addressing the factors that contribute to their high dropout rates (early pregnancy, early marriage, involvement in transactional sex etc.).
- Ensure that the Education Sector Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy is implemented in San communities.
- Target San women in health education outreach programmes, and integrate their special needs into health programmes.
- Take further action to reduce the high level of gender-based violence that San women face at the hands of both San and non-San men. Regarding the most extreme form of GBV, i.e. rape, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has recommended that Namibia "adopt all necessary measures to ensure prompt, thorough and independent investigations into all allegations of rape against San women ... increase its efforts aimed at combating prejudices against the San and ... promote tolerance and foster intercultural dialogue among the different ethnic groups of Namibia." (UN Committee on CERD 2008: 7). This recommendation should be extended to encompass all forms of GBV.

In sum, while this study has shown that coordinated and systematic efforts are needed to eradicate extreme poverty of San communities (including men, women and children), specific attention must be paid to gender issues so as to avoid a feminisation of (San) poverty.

Chapter 19 Consultation, Participation and Representation

By Ute Dieckmann and Ben Begbie-Clench



The San chiefs at the consultative workshop held in Windhoek in September 2008 in preparation for the permanent San Exhibition at the National Museum.

From left: the late **!Xun Chief John Arnold** of Tsumkwe West (N‡a Jaqna); **Ju|'hoan Chief Frederik Langman** of Omaheke; **Khwe Chief Ben Ngobara** of West Caprivi; **Ju|'hoan Chief Tsamkxao |Oma** ('**Chief Bobo**') of Tsumkwe East (Nyae Nyae); and **!Xoon Chief Sofia Jacob** who presides over the !Xoon, Naro and 'N|oha in southern Omaheke. Pictured in the inset photo is the sixth San chief, **Hai||om Chief David ||Khamuxab** who presides over the Hai||om in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions.



DRFN consultation at Skoonheid Resettlement Project, Omaheke



LAC consultation with Hai||om elders at Okaukuejo restcamp, Etosha



LAC consultation with Hai||om women at Oshivelo, Oshikoto

19.1 Introduction

Consultation, participation and representation are the principles ensuring that citizens have a say in decision-making processes in any democratic country, and these principles are also increasingly perceived as preconditions for successful project planning and implementation. Over the last 15 years - but mostly since the implementation of the San Development Programme (SDP) in 2005 - the Government of Namibia has increased its efforts to guarantee the consultation, participation and representation of the country's indigenous peoples, primarily through the recognition of their traditional authorities (TAs), this recognition being a necessary precondition for representative indigenous institutions to effectively consult with government on development issues. Yet, as this San Study has shown, there is much more still to be done to achieve the adequate consultation, participation and representation of San communities necessary for them to eventually guide their own development. This applies not only to what the government has yet to do, but also to what all other stakeholders in San development have yet to do (e.g. the NGOs supporting San communities). The most pertinent issue that arose in the study workshop held with San representatives in Windhoek in January 2013, in which we gave feedback on our research and discussed critical issues and recommendations, was that stakeholders still very often act on behalf of the San rather than in collaboration with them. The workshop participants stressed that they often felt left behind in project planning and implementation, and they reiterated that without proper consultation and participation, the San communities would never develop ownership of development projects, and hence responsibility for them, and consequently they would remain beneficiaries or recipients of support, instead of being agents of development. One participant made this very clear in saying, "Don't pull us, push us," clearly demanding that the San must stand in front and guide their own development, rather than stakeholders pulling them in directions in which they might not want to go, or are hesitant to go due the outcomes being unclear. The issue of consultation and participation was also raised as a topic in the Namibian San Council's submission to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, in September 2012. In expressing their "gravely concern" [sic] about several SDP-related issues, the Council held that there was "[n]o consultation and involvement of San communities in development project (many government official still have paternalistic attitudes towards San people)!!" [sic] (Nakuta 2012b: 9).

In this chapter we summarise our study findings on consultation, participation and representation. In doing so, we outline the challenges that emerged and provide suggestions for the way forward. It is clear, however, that the improvement of San consultation, participation and representation will be a problematic process that requires overcoming many obstacles.

19.2 Principles of consultation and participation

Box 19.1: UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

Article 18: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 19: States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

Namibia has voted in favour of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and has ratified various international treaties, for example the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and the SADC Protocol on Forestry, under the SADC treaty. It is thus bound, through a number of instruments, to the principles of consultation and participation.

Consultation and participation are the means that enable people (including indigenous peoples) to take decisions about their own destiny. The Ombudsman's *Guide to Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Namibia* states the following:

"The norms of consultation and participation are thus mechanisms aiming to correct the historical prejudiced view of indigenous peoples, as uncivilized and backwards who do not know what is good for them and for whom other [sic] should decide (assimilationist approach). They are means through which indigenous peoples are to gradually regain control over their destiny and secure their rights over lands, to education, employment and equality." (Office of the Ombudsman 2012: 16)

In the following subsection we provide some orientation to what consultation entails if undertaken in accordance with international standards.

19.2.1 Consultation procedures

'Consultation' is a broad concept without a single, clear definition – indeed it became clear during our research that different parties understand this concept differently. So how should consultation take place if it is to be a meaningful mechanism for including people in their own development?

The establishment of appropriate and effective mechanisms for the consultation of indigenous and tribal peoples on matters that concern them is the cornerstone of the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) Convention 169, and, as already mentioned, the necessity of consultation and cooperation with indigenous peoples is also expressed very explicitly in UNDRIP and other UN instruments – often characterised as "free, prior and informed consent" (FPIC).¹ The following are the essential principles on which consultation mechanisms must be based if they are to comply with international standards (Office of the Ombudsman 2012: 16):

- Prior consultation.
- Consultation must be done in good faith, through appropriate procedures, through representative institutions of indigenous peoples, and with enough time.
- Consultation must have the objective of agreement or consent, and not just deliver information.
- Consultation should allow the people affected to have their own views taken into account and to compel the authority to get their consent.

Regarding appropriate procedures, the ILO's Senior Specialist on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Issues (Working Conditions and Equality Department, ILO, Geneva), Dr Albert Barume, divided the consultation procedures into three interrelated stages, all of which must be ensured for the procedures to comply with ILO standards (Barume, PowerPoint presentation, 1 July 2013):²

¹ A number of comprehensive documents on FPIC guidelines are available on UN agency websites, the most recent example being the *Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent* published by the UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (UN-REDD) Programme, available at www.unredd.net/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=8717&Itemid=53.

² Although Barume referred to state duties specifically, in our context *all* stakeholders in San development should use this as a guideline.

- 1) Designing with the participation of indigenous peoples the consultation and participation framework and mechanism: methodologies, define issues to undertake consultation on, tools, participants, etc. (consultation on consultation).
- 2) Undertaking consultation and participation per se, in accordance with international standards and agreed upon framework.
- 3) Assessing, reviewing and evaluating consultation and participation mechanisms on a regular basis with a view to adjusting the process if necessary.

Thus clearly it does not suffice, for example, to visit a community and inform its members that they will be the recipients of a certain project from which they can generate some income, and then only seek the community's consent to what has already been decided on their behalf, and in their absence. If people have no choice other than to agree to or reject the implementation of a project with a certain potential to generate income or improve livelihoods, it is almost certain that they will agree to it being implemented. However, this approach has led to the failure of many projects.

Instead, it is preferable that:

- community members are able to suggest what kind of projects would be feasible in their given situation;
- economic feasibility studies, social impact assessments and market research are carried out for the suggested projects;
- community members are accurately informed about the possible benefits of a project;
- community members are accurately informed about potential risks of the project;
- information is provided in such a manner *and language* that the community members (some of whom may be illiterate) can understand it;
- community members are offered a choice between various options once they have been informed about the potential benefits and risks of each option; and
- once the community has chosen or agreed to a project, members participate at every stage of its implementation.

Defining who the parties to the consultation process should be is another area of concern: should these be limited to certain stakeholders such as TAs, community-based organisations (CBOs) and other community representatives, or should the whole community be involved?³ This might be the most difficult issue to tackle given the factors outlined in Chapter 15 on culture, discrimination and development, and challenges outlined in this chapter. Ideally, consultation activities would involve the entire community concerned, but in many cases in Namibia, particularly in very remote areas, this ideal is unrealistic due to time and cost constraints. It is debatable whether consultations with San TAs alone would constitute sufficient and satisfactory means to consult/communicate with the intended project beneficiaries/participants, even though the TAs are frequently the main channels for community consultation with the government and other stakeholders in large-scale development. Given the lack of community confidence that some San TAs face today, combined with the fact that the state remunerates them for their work (which causes jealousy), divergent views and conflicts of interest could well arise. Engagement with local representative structures or San CBOs can be undertaken as a compromise between discussions with the TA alone and consultations with the broader community, or can be included alongside TA consultations, to ensure that a wider range of views are represented, but presently many San communities lack representative structures and CBOs. Thus increased support and capacity building of organisational and representative structures is certainly required, first and foremost at local level, but also at regional level and national level.

³ Following the guidelines of Dr Albert Barume, one would need to decide on the consultation participants at the first stage of consultation.

Obviously, ensuring adequate consultation – carried out competently, including the requirements of providing sufficient project information and the beneficiaries' participation – is a time-consuming and costly endeavour, but there is no alternative: projects that fail due to a lack of relevance to the beneficiary community, and/or failure to develop awareness of the specifics of the community's situation and/or inability to generate a sense of ownership among community members, ultimately waste financial and human resources. Thus consultation has to be integrated into project planning and implementation at all levels, and there is still much for all stakeholders to learn in this regard.

19.3 Namibian San and the consultation process

Since the establishment of the SDP in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in 2005, the government has increased its efforts to consult with the San (and other indigenous peoples served by the SDP⁴), but there is still a long way to go to ensure proper and effective consultation of San communities concerning developments that may have an effect on their livelihoods and standards of living.

In the course of our research it became evident that effective consultation processes are generally lacking when it comes to the San. Many participants in our research discussions complained that they were never consulted about the design and implementation of initiatives affecting their lives. For example, allegedly there was no prior consultation of the Hai||om at Farm Six in Oshikoto Region regarding the relocation of Owambo herders into the area which they inhabit. According to the discussion participants at Farm Six, they were informed of this development only after the herders had moved in – and this relocation of the herders and their cattle had detrimental effects on the livelihoods of the Hai||om residents (see Chapter 6, page 209). Another example came from Oshana Region: Hai||om at Okaukuejo reported that they had not been consulted about their relocation to the resettlement farms which were purchased with the intention of moving them out of Etosha. Regarding the San in Kavango Region, it was difficult to determine how well they were consulted about the plans to resettle them at various places.

These are just few examples (some of them discussed in more detail in the regional chapters) of the evident lack of proper consultation with the San on development projects and other activities which have impacted on their lives. Another example is provided in Box 19.2 on the next page.

Although a lack of consultation was reported at many of our research sites, it should be mentioned that after further questioning of discussion participants – and also in the course of stakeholder interviews conducted for this study – it emerged that some of the complaints about the lack of consultation were inaccurate. However, even if San had indeed been consulted (as stakeholders said had been the case sometimes), their contradictory statements are perhaps an indication of the lack of clear communication between stakeholders and community members.⁵ It also has to be emphasised that in many cases, the government, especially representatives of the OPM Division of San Development, did consult with the relevant San TAs (in areas where a recognised TA exists). Thus it might also be the case that there is a lack of dialogue between representative structures, such as San TAs, and their respective communities. Additionally, due to the perception in certain San communities that the applicable TAs do not represent those communities' interests on the whole, at times members of these communities feel that their concerns are neither heard nor represented.

⁴ The Ovatue and Ovatjimba communities were included in the programme by Cabinet decision in 2007 – but the programme name remains the same.

⁵ This explanation takes into account that at times San tend to exaggerate the bad conditions in which they live, or the injustices done to them, in order to obtain more support.

Box 19.2: Relocation of elephants from Nyae Nyae Conservancy

Another example of the lack of consultation came to light in Nyae Nyae Conservancy after our field research there – although in this case the community was sufficiently organised to mobilise outside support to stop unwanted developments.

In July 2013, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) issued a permit to Erindi Private Game Reserve to remove 200 elephants from Nyae Nyae Conservancy and the Khaudum National Park and relocate them to the reserve. The permit was issued without any prior consultation of the Jul'hoan inhabitants of Nyae Nyae or their conservancy committee, and without their participation in the decision-making process. The elephants were to be leased to the reserve at an annual rental fee of N\$70000, but none of the proceeds would accrue to the conservancy. The Jul'hoansi of Nyae Nyae were concerned about the effects of the capture and transportation of 200 elephants and their departure from the conservancy: it was feared that not only would this action impact negatively on the remaining resident elephant population, but that the removal of the animals would also reduce the conservancy's income and directly affect the viability of future hunting operations there (Peter Watson, personal communication, 22 July 2013; see also *Allgemeine Zeitung*, D. Heinrich, 9 July 2013).

In an effort to prevent the proposed relocation, Nyae Nyae Conservancy – with the support of the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN) and the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) – cited the provisions of the amended Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1975 which extends rights over game to communal-area conservancies. This served firstly to assert property rights over the elephants, and secondly to support a course of action – protected by both common law and the Namibian Constitution (i.e. Article 16 on Property) – to halt the removal of the elephants. The MET and Erindi were notified of the proposed action, and at the time of writing, it appears that they will relocate elephants from Khaudum only.

On occasion during our field research, it was reported that adequate consultation did indeed take place. The construction of the desalination plant in Amarika village in Omusati Region was cited as an example of consultation taking place and resulting in a desired and successful development initiative. The Khwe residents of Makaravan informal settlement in Katima Mulilo, Caprivi Region, who were resettled at Kyarecan in Caprivi, were also consulted about where they wanted to settle.

Often, however, the recipients of San development projects were brought into agreement merely by means of government pledging many benefits to secure their support, and some of these benefits never materialised. In other cases, San reported that although they had been consulted, they felt that their inputs were not taken seriously (examples of this are provided in Chapter 8 on Omusati Region), or that they were informed but not consulted about forthcoming developments (examples are provided in the Ohangwena and Omaheke chapters).

In sum, although consultation takes place at times, generally Namibian San feel that they are not adequately consulted about developments that impact on them.

19.4 San participation and representation in mainstream politics

San participation and representation in mainstream politics are two further preconditions to ensure that San take part in decision making. Suzman reported in 2001 that, "Many San are apathetic in respect of mainstream politics, and generally feel that they have little or no real stake

and even less influence in the arena." (Suzman 2001b: 104) Our study has made clear that this remains the case 12 years later. Most of the San who participated in our research discussions reported that they do vote, but they do not feel that they can make any real difference in Namibian society; they do not see the value of the democratic system and they doubt its ability to protect their interests. Clearly, therefore, many San do not experience the feeling of participating as citizens in a democratic country.

19.4.1 National level

It came to light in our research discussions that many San had participated in national elections, but without any expectation of anything changing for them as a result. In the 1999 parliamentary elections, a single San individual, Kxau Royal |Ui|0|00, a Ju|'hoan SWAPO candidate, won a seat in parliament (1999-2010). Thereafter he became a special advisor in the Division of San Development in the OPM. At the time of writing there is no San representative in parliament.

Suzman commented in 2001 that it was unrealistic to hope that San representation in the National Assembly would ever be substantial due to their demographic status: San constitute a small minority group in Namibia, thus they cannot expect to have more than one or two representatives in this central body.⁶ The elected regional and local bodies in areas where San constitute more than a very small minority group represent far more realistic channels for San to achieve better representation (Suzman 2001b: 105). Currently, however, there is only one San regional councillor, namely Fransina Ghauz, a Ju]'hoan woman who represents Tsumkwe Constituency in Otjozondjupa Region.

In 2008, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) noted "with concern the low level of participation in political life and, in particular, the lack of representation in Parliament as well as regional and local public authorities of the indigenous communities, particularly the San community (art. 5(c))." In this regard:

"The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure the full participation of indigenous communities in public affairs at all levels. It encourages the State party to revise its electoral laws with a view to encouraging political parties to broaden their appeal to ethnic minorities and to include a minimum proportion of candidates from these groups." (CERD 2008: 6-7)

Potential improvements in the representation of the San and other indigenous (minority) groups are not limited to existing Namibian structures, and there are various possibilities with regard to ensuring their representation and/or their influence with regard to parliamentary decisions. In its *Final Study on Indigenous Peoples and the Right to Participate in Decision-making*, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) provided a number of examples of countries all over the world which have created mechanisms that guarantee the representation of indigenous peoples in state parliaments (UNGA 2011a: 12). These should be examined to determine the approach that is best suited to the Namibian context. In New Zealand, for example, the Maori have had guaranteed representation in parliament since 1867. Anyone of Maori descent can choose to be on either the Maori electoral roll or the general electoral roll. Since 1996, the number of Maori seats in the House has varied according to the proportions of Maori registered on the Maori electoral roll and the general electoral roll. In Burundi, the Batwa have permanent seats in the National Assembly, and there is guaranteed

⁶ The National Assembly is one of Namibia's two Houses of Parliament, the other being the National Council. The National Assembly is the principal legislative body. It consists of 72 voting members elected on the basis of proportional representation for a term of five years, plus six non-voting members appointed by the president for a term of five years. The National Council consists of two members of each of Namibia's regional councils.

Batwa representation in the National Land Commission. UNGA also indicates that proportional representation electoral systems can assist to get indigenous individuals elected to state parliaments (UNGA 2011a: 9-11). The creation of internal bodies to influence parliamentary decision making is another way to improve indigenous people's influence in national politics: "the ability of indigenous people to influence parliamentary decision-making is enhanced when parliaments create internal bodies to address matters of central concern to indigenous peoples, such as the Indigenous Affairs Commission in the Mexican Congress, which can influence the drafting of laws" (UNGA 2011a: 10).

Thus there are a number of ways to ensure San participation in parliament, or at least to ensure that the San can directly influence decisions taken by parliament.

19.4.2 Regional and local government

The participation and representation of San at regional and local levels is minimal in most regions and constituencies, as few San are ever elected to regional councils or town or village councils.

As mentioned in the previous subsection, currently only one San person is a regional councillor, namely Mrs Fransina Ghauz (Jul'hoansi), who replaced Mr Kxao Moses ‡Oma who died in 2012. Mrs Ghauz hails from the Tsumkwe area, where San are the majority population group, and have, compared to other areas, the most stable structures of participation and representation. (Former MP Kxau Royal |Ui|o|oo also hails from this area.) Although most community members had voted for the Jul'hoan candidate, participants in our research discussion on the applicable topic complained about the lack of feedback from the regional councillor (and from Hon. |Ui|o|oo during his term as MP), which implies that the community members were uncertain as to whether or not their interests were being properly represented.

In other areas there is no San representation in regional and local government structures. Research discussion participants at several sites (e.g. N‡a Jaqna Conservancy and Farm Six) said that their (non-San) regional councillors visited them only at election time, promising significant changes to get votes, but none of the pre-election promises materialised after the elections. The Namibian San Council wrote the following in its submission to the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, in September 2012 (Nakuta 2012b: 12): "The San community is still not adequately represented in political structures and decision-making processes; not in parliament. Yet, in the areas where San are[,] political parties used food and tobacco during elections times to campaign."

San participation and representation on village development committees (VDCs) and constituency development committees (CDCs) varied across the regions. In Omaheke, for example, the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) played a supporting role in facilitating communication between the San and local and regional government structures. The DRFN engaged the regional councillors representing Steinhausen, Kalahari and Otjombinde Constituencies to secure the acknowledgment of the farm management and development committees (FMDCs – composed of San and others elected by the communities) at the Skoonheid, Drimiopsis and Donkerbos-Sonneblom resettlement farms as VDCs within the decentralised structures of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development, i.e. the Regional Council. The DRFN also successfully negotiated to ensure that, in principle, two VDC members are allowed to attend CDC meetings. Thus opportunities have been created for San participation in local- and constituency-level decision making. It remains to be seen whether practical challenges (e.g. holding regular CDC meetings and transporting VDC members to the constituency office and back) can be overcome.

In Nyae Nyae and N⁺a Jaqua Conservancies, where San are the majority population group, San were represented on VDCs, and in Oshivelo (Oshikoto Region) there were two San representatives on the CDC – however most of the discussion participants were unaware of this body. At many sites, discussion participants did not report that there were any San members of the VDCs or CDCs. The Haillom in Outjo (Kunene Region) seemed to be more actively involved in community politics: there had been a Hailom candidate for municipal councillor (although he was not elected) and in 2013 there is a Hailor mayor. At some sites in Kavango Region, the San felt that the neighbouring ethnic groups did not want them being part of the VDCs, and at one site (i.e. Ndama), there was even a separate VDC for the San. In the Bwabwata National Park (BNP), where the San are the majority population group, the VDCs did have San members, but apparently these bodies were not functional at the time of our research. In Caprivi Region, discussion participants did not report any involvement in VDCs, but a Khwe man from Mulanga village was a member of the Mashi Conservancy Committee. In Amarika village in Omusati Region, where the majority of the residents are San, there were San on the VDC and the CDC. In Ohangwena Region, the only San member of any VDC was a !Xun man from Ekoka Resettlement Project. There was also an FMDC for the San at this project, consisting of Hailom and !Xun elected by the community. Selected members of this FMDC also represented the community at stakeholder meetings pertaining to San development at regional level.

In general, however, at the sites where the San were represented on decision-making bodies (e.g. VDCs and CDCs), they had little hope that their participation in these bodies would enable them to influence decisions about their development.

19.4.3 Political alienation

In general among the San at our research sites, there was a widespread perception that voting or active participation in political processes did/could not make any difference to their lives. Many San across the regions share the feeling that only via the 'right' social/political networks could a person achieve something (mainly individual improvement), and that the San, for the most part, have no access to such networks. However, some San try to make their voices heard through political parties (most often the ruling party); for example, a Hai||om man in Okaukuejo was a member of the SWAPO committee and thus could raise San community concerns about local politics and 'unfair' allocation of resources (i.e. jobs). In other cases, San had joined political parties specifically to increase San access to services or networks. However, even in these instances, the communities concerned expressed a considerable degree of scepticism as to whether the individuals associated with political parties would really bring any improvements for the community as a whole, or would just increase their individual benefits through these networks.⁷

Discussion participants at many sites characterised their status in Namibia in terms of exclusion from the mainstream, and stated that they felt left behind in national development. Many were very frank in expressing the perception that their lives under the apartheid administration were better than they are today.⁸ The reasons provided for this evaluation varied according to circumstances. In the commercial areas, for example, major factors were the former employment of San on the farms, the provision of rations, the possibility of gathering veldfood and hunting (although the latter was limited), and better access to government services. For many San in communal areas,

⁷ In this context it is important to reflect on the extent to which San traditional egalitarian structures and levelling mechanisms inform complaints that only individuals would benefit from their own initiatives.

⁸ The San in Ohangwena and Omusati regarded the period before Independence as worse for them in terms of their overall quality of life, mainly because of the various restrictions placed on people in the area due to the war between the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and the South African Defence Force (SADF).

better access to veldfood and game in former times was the main reason for their appraisal. San complaints about their lives today as compared to life before Independence should be understood in relation to their expectations and aspirations two decades after Independence, and not only relative to their status under the colonial administration. Indeed, though they still face numerous challenges, much as improved for the San (e.g. infrastructure and access to services).

Some overall challenges regarding the establishment of representative structures became evident In the course of our research, and these are analysed in the next section. This analysis provides the background for the subsequent section in which we analyse other representative structures and their specific challenges.

19.5 The challenges for representative structures outside mainstream politics in San communities

The development of representative structures for San communities at local, regional, national and sub-continental levels is imperative for San to have a proper voice in their own development and to determine the course of such development. In this regard, our study has identified three overall and interconnected challenges:

- 1) Former leadership structures.
- 2) The legacy of colonial politics chiefly the issues of land dispossession, low levels of education, and marginalisation.
- 3) The lack of a common San identity.

19.5.1 Internal leadership structures in the past

As discussed at length in Chapter 15 on culture, discrimination and development, San societies were strongly egalitarian in the past. Thus, until recently, the various San communities lacked a strong internal hierarchical structure with formal leadership roles, as such a model did not accord with their egalitarian values. Hays has pointed out the following in this regard:

"The full impact of such firmly embedded social ideals is often underestimated ... The ways in which a recent tradition of strict equality and related understandings of fairness express themselves in circumstances of increasing inequality, in which a few individuals are promoted above others, can create enormous difficulties as a whole, and in particular for those who are successful. Reactions to such individuals often include jealousy, expressed in resentment, as overt or subtle refusal to co-operate, or as increased pressure to share food or material wealth." (Hays 2004: 242-243)

In Chapter 15, in describing the nature of the former leadership structures in more detail, we noted that San headmen/women – who Lorna Marshall had observed to be "as thin as the rest" (see page 512) – were held to be 'first among equals', but this status was fraught with contradictions. For example, they were supposed to be generous, unassuming, unaggressive, modest and soft-spoken, yet at times their actions had to be strong and decisive. Nowadays, despite some changes in the leadership model (e.g. the introduction of government-recognised TAs), the egalitarian values live on, and still pose conflict in some San communities. For example, official leaders or community representatives may now receive various forms of remuneration (stipends, subsistence and travel (S&T) allowances, reimbursements of travel expenses, etc.) from the government, NGOs and other stakeholders. They therefore sometimes face allegations from their communities, which might believe that their representatives are supposed to share their remuneration with the rest of the community (or their extended kinship network); furthermore they are accused of a range of vices including

self-interest, bribery, corruption and nepotism. This pertains not only to TA office-bearers, but also to other San leaders and community representatives, such as those working for NGOs. In view of such allegations, it is hardly surprising that many San hesitate to become representatives of their communities. The general perception among our study participants was the same as that of the respondent quoted by Marshall in 1976: "all you get is the blame ..." (see Chapter 15 page 512).

A few San do present issues at higher levels such as international fora – for example via the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) – but some who undertake such efforts have had to move away from their communities to do be able to do so 'unfettered', and this situation brings its own set of challenges (see section 19.7.3, page 611).

19.5.2 The legacy of colonial politics, including land dispossession, social fragmentation, low levels of education, and marginalisation

Some of the challenges originating in former leadership structures were exacerbated by colonial politics, the key challenges being social fragmentation and low levels of education. In the colonial period, the loss of land and the need to provide labour in exchange for a livelihood resulted in the fragmentation of San societies at all levels of organisation, and the loss of freedom of movement and association aggravated this social fragmentation. Following are just three prime examples of what transpired for San in the colonial period:

- a) Many Hai||om, Ju|'hoansi, Naro and !Xoon became commercial farmworkers in what are now Oshikoto, Kunene, Otjozondjupa and Omaheke Regions, and the Hai||om lost their access to Etosha, which was the core area of their ancestral lands.
- b) The land in Ohangwena, Oshana and Omusati Regions (now communal land) where the !Xun and Hai||om used to live was proclaimed as 'Owamboland' under the Odendaal Commission, hence the San could not retain collective rights over land in that area (or at least, these were very rare).
- c) The war for independence brought major changes in settlement and subsistence practices for the !Xun, Hai||om and Khwe.

For the San who lived and worked on commercial farms (a), the paternalistic and authoritarian nature of farm life meant that all authority was vested in the white *baas* (boss). In San communities living in the homelands of other ethnic groups (b), egalitarianism and the concept of sharing were emphasised and strengthened. In both of these contrasting situations, individual leadership or advancement was impossible (Suzman 2001b: 108). In short, the various San groups faced significant socio-political change and were forced to confront the challenges of social fragmentation, and this situation did not encourage – indeed it utterly stifled – the establishment of formal representative structures.

Another legacy of colonialism is the prevailing extremely low levels of education among the San elders (discussed in Chapter 16 on education). The younger San have attained higher levels, but these are still relatively low. A certain measure of education facilitates participation and representation in the wider public sphere – in Namibia and in international contexts – but, as Chennells et al. recently observed, elected San leaders are often less charismatic than those assuming key roles in the daily management of the community (often referred to as 'natural leaders'). "Leaders at times are elected simply because of their high education levels or their membership to certain families." (Chennells et al. 2009: 184) This observation points to another problem: the (perceived) requirements of official leadership, such as being able to communicate with government officials, NGOs and international donor organisations, and/or being capable of presenting the plight of the San to international fora.

This reasoning regarding requirements for official leadership is clearly reflected in two Hai||om elders' explanation as to why the community elected one of their former chiefs, Mr Willem |Aib, in the 1990s – although the government never formally recognised him: he was proficient in English and knew "how to find offices" (Dieckmann 2007b: 324). Leaders have to be mediators between their communities and the wider public, therefore language and a lack of basic understanding of how Namibia operates in the international context might be obstacles for most San who wish to become official leaders, even if they possess personal charisma, wisdom and integrity. For example, Chief Langman, the recognised chief of the Ju|'hoansi in Omaheke, pointed out in our interview with him that language differences hamper interaction with high-level officials. This encapsulates a key dilemma for San communities: usually, the role of leader requires social skills and a certain degree of life experience, but in San communities it is often the case that those who possess these attributes lack the level of education deemed necessary for representative or leadership roles, whereas those who have a better level of education lack the life skills needed for effective leadership.

The task of liaising effectively between grassroots communities and international organisations such as the United Nations requires much more than simply being an accepted community leader or having a certain educational background; it requires a set of skills which are found only rarely in any average populace, and even more rarely in San communities due to their social and educational marginalisation. Begbie-Clench has pointed out the following in this regard:

"[Indigenous representative organisations have to possess the skills needed to ensure that representation is] translated from the international to the local, not just in language but also in concepts and culture. [They] must develop two 'interfaces', one between the organisation and the community and one between the organisation and third parties critical for representation, hence administering three, in some senses hierarchical, spheres of knowledge, culture and communication – the indigenous populous, external stakeholders holding political and economic resources and that within the organisation." (Begbie-Clench 2011: 13).

19.5.3 Lack of a common San identity

A third issue cannot be ignored as a challenge to the establishment of San representative structures: our research made evident that a common 'San identity' is missing at grassroots level. Community members identified themselves as belonging to a specific San language group in a defined area, rather than as simply 'San' (a term which many do not like), and the lack of a common language further complicates the issue of identity. However, due to the similarities in the languages, cultures and livelihoods of these different groups, their categorisation as a single group referred to as San, Saan, Bushmen or Basarwa has persisted for centuries. In a development conference in 1993, the San representatives agreed that 'San' was the most neutral term for political use (Suzman 2001a: 4), and this was reiterated at WIMSA's first Annual General Meetings in 1996. Organisations such as WIMSA have tried to foster a common San identity – or a kind of 'indigenous peoples' identity – in order to approach problems more effectively at national and international levels. Indeed, San individuals involved with NGOs (especially WIMSA), and those directly involved with the OPM's San Development Programme, are observed to identify strongly with being 'San' – more so than the average community member.

The OPM does not differentiate between the San groups, and in many instances employs a 'onesize-fits-all' approach to "integrate the San into the mainstream of economy",⁹ thereby disregarding the different aspirations and circumstances of the different communities. Still, a strong unifying

⁹ See www.sandevelopment.gov.na.

'San' or 'indigenous' identity can certainly help the San to find a common voice and to make it heard. An overall common identity does not evolve overnight, but it might develop over time if the members of the various communities come to recognise the opportunities and benefits connected with an 'indigenous' identity, and if they can acquire the capacity necessary for greater political organisation and find ways to achieve such organisation.

19.6 Representative structures

19.6.1 Traditional authorities (TAs)

Article 66 of the Constitution of Namibia acknowledges that customary law is an original source of Namibian law, thus all customary law institutions are implicitly recognised insofar as they are consistent with the Constitution generally. Article 102 deals with the "Structures of Regional and Local Government", and Article 102(5) provides for the establishment of a Council of Traditional Leaders, composed of chiefs, headmen and traditional councillors, to advise the President on the control and utilisation of communal land, and on all other matters that the President may refer to it for advice. The Council of Traditional Leaders Act 13 of 1997 was passed to give effect to this constitutional provision, and the Traditional Authorities Act 17 of 1995 (repealed and replaced by the Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000), made formal provision for the statutory establishment and recognition of Traditional Authorities (TAs) and chiefs, and specified their powers and duties.

To date the government has recognised five San TAs: the Hai||om TA in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions; the !Xun TA in Otjozondjupa Region; the Ju|'hoan TA in Otjozondjupa; the Ju|'hoan TA in northern Omaheke Region; and the !Xoon TA in southern Omaheke. The San in Kavango, Caprivi, Omusati and Ohangwena Regions are still under the jurisdiction of the TAs of other ethnic groups. The majority of the Khwe in West Caprivi (i.e. the part located in Kavango Region) have fought for over a decade for the recognition of their TA, but the Mbukushu chief insists that they fall under his authority – and he has integrated several Khwe men into his TA structure. In Caprivi Region, where the Khwe resort under the Mafwe TA, there have been fewer conflicts between Khwe and Mafwe as compared with the Khwe and Mbukushu in West Caprivi, and the Khwe in Caprivi have made fewer requests for their own TA. It appears that the Khwe in Caprivi have more confidence in the Mafwe TA than the Khwe in Kavango have in the Mbukushu TA, possibly due to historical ties between the Khwe and Mafwe. Some of the villages visited for the study in Omusati were headed by San headmen who were part of the respective Owambo TA structures. Similarly, in Ohangwena, some sites had San leaders who reported to the Kwanyama headman who was part of the Kwanyama TA structure.

Most of the San participants in our research discussions regarded the TA institution as an important instrument for making their voices heard, and as an institution that plays a crucial role as mediator between a community and the government. Since the recognition of San TAs – and especially since the establishment of the SDP in the OPM – the government has regularly consulted the San TAs on development-related issues in their communities. Some of the San TAs interviewed for this study underscored that the government's acknowledgement of them had made it easier for them to claim the delivery of government services or the support of government agencies.

Each TA consists of the chief and 10-12 councillors (junior and senior) – thus each chief has his/her own body of representatives. As the councillors are residents of villages and farms spread across the area of jurisdiction of the chief, they provide – or are meant to provide – regular opportunities for the consultation and participation of the communities in the TA area.

Nevertheless, as mentioned in various parts of this report (e.g. Chapter 3, page 35), three of the five recognised San TAs – i.e. the !Xoon TA in Omaheke, the !Xun TA of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy and the Hai||om TA in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana – have been facing serious challenges in respect of community support. Participants in our research discussions in the applicable regions complained that their respective TAs were disposed to one or more of the following: nepotism/ favouritism, a lack of transparency and communication, pursuing personal interests instead of community interests, and corruption. This situation is attributable to the following issues:

- 1) The former leadership model in traditional San societies made no provision for a single chief to have authority over a very large group. Conversely, the Traditional Authorities Act (TAA), in accordance with other customary systems in Namibia, requires the appointment of such a chief, who will have jurisdiction "over the members of a traditional community in respect of which it has been established". San chiefs thus lack internal or historic role models.
- 2) Under the South African colonial administration, the land dispossession to which the San were subjected, and their consequent social fragmentation, made the establishment of stable overall leadership structures virtually impossible.¹⁰
- 3) There is a lack of effective control mechanisms in place to monitor the performance of TAs on behalf of their communities, and more importantly, on behalf of the state.
- 4) The remuneration of the TAs by the state, and the state's provision of assets for their use (e.g. 4x4 vehicles and offices) carry the potential to incite disagreements between communities and the state.
- 5) The process of removing a chief in accordance with the TAA is very cumbersome and time-consuming.¹¹

These issues make clear that San TAs are 'neo-traditional' authorities as opposed to traditional authorities per se, and that this poses a number of challenges for them.¹² (It should be noted that these issues are not all specific to the San; some other TAs in Namibia also face some of these issues.)

Chennells et al. have reported that WIMSA has attempted to formulate 'terms of reference' for San leaders in southern Africa over the years. At a consultative workshop in November 2006, attended by over 30 San leaders, 'leadership' was identified as one of the ongoing problems that prevented the San from achieving their goals. In group discussions, the San leaders themselves listed the following issues that stood in their way: a lack of management training and skills; the lack of a work ethic; the lack of a proper support system; the abuse of power; and a lack of accountability to their communities (Chennells et al. 2009: 183-184). Our study has found that the problems are by and large the same seven years later, and it is evident that the TAs (as an institution) still have a long way to go in their efforts to serve effectively as representative structures for San communities.

There is another important issue to consider: the government deals mainly with the TAs of the San communities, whereas NGOs work mainly at grassroots level – either with CBOs or directly with community members (which is not to say that they ignore the TAs), and these differing approaches of the government and NGOs sometimes creates even more divisions within the communities: the TAs become government-orientated and occasionally unreceptive to NGOs, while the CBOs and grassroots community members tend to be critical of the TAs and more positive about the work of

¹⁰ One exception is the case of Martin Ndumba, a Khwe headman in the area now referred to as West Caprivi, i.e. Bwabwata National Park (BNP), whom the South African Administration installed as Paramount Chief of the Khwe in the 1950s (see Chapter 10 on the BNP).

¹¹ This point is based on the experience of staff of the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) who were approached in the past for legal advice and representation in a number of cases where non-San communities attempted to establish a new chief in accordance with the TAA.

¹² For an overview of academic discussions on neo-traditional authorities and the analysis of the establishment of one San chief, see Schwab 2012.

NGOs.¹³ This does not make for easier cooperation between the government and the NGO sector, despite their dependence on one another.

19.6.2 Namibian San Council

The Namibian San Council, established in 2006, is one of the main stakeholders in San development (see Chapter 3, page 36). This body presently has 14 members: one representative of each of the six TAs (Hai||om, !Xun, Ju|'hoansi of Nyae Nyae, Ju|'hoansi of northern Omaheke, !Xoon of southern Omaheke, and the unrecognised Khwe TA in West Caprivi); representatives of six San CBOs in the applicable areas; and two representatives of the San of Ohangwena (!Xun and Hai||om) who still have no TA. WIMSA provides the following overview of the work of San Councils:

"San Councils are elected representative bodies that work to conduct important advocacy work on behalf of national San communities. Composed of members elected by local communities and San organisations, [these bodies] bring together and strengthen existing leadership structures, putting communities in a better position to influence decision-making processes at different levels, and to link up with the international indigenous rights' movement."¹⁴

With support from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), WIMSA organised a series of training workshops for the council in 2012, the overall objective being to "capacitate members of the San Council and assist the Council into graduating into an action-driven and functional organisation" (Nakuta 2012a: 1). A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis was facilitated in the first workshop. The following, inter alia, were strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified:

- **Strengths:** the council members understand San issues; the council takes independent decisions; there is good communication between the members.
- Weaknesses: the council is not yet registered and not yet recognised; not all San groups in the country are represented on the council; there is a low level of education among the members; there are not enough outreach activities targeting the San communities; council meetings are not convened regularly; and capacity is low in terms of skills.
- **Opportunities:** close cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman; the existence of the OPM SDP; sympathetic organisations such as WIMSA, LAC, DRFN and ILO; and recognised TAs.
- Threats: too many other organisations are working on behalf of the San, due to the council's lack of capacity, the lack of San in the OPM Division of San Development, financial constraints and donor dependency (Nakuta 2012a: 1-2).

A number of workshops have taken place subsequently.¹⁵ Only recently, the position of San Council Coordinator has been filled by a young !Xun woman, namely Metha Goaseb.

None of the communities visited for this study mentioned the San Council as an important tool for San representation. Conversely, in the workshop with San representatives in Windhoek (January 2013) and in interviews with San in Windhoek, the council was said to be a potentially important organisation for the San. Three problematic issues were identified in the workshop and interviews: how council members are elected; the lack of funding; and the council's relationship with WIMSA. It remains to be seen whether the Namibian San Council can eventually become an important representative organisation nationally and internationally.

¹³ This merely summarises a general tendency; the alliances, hostilities and internal conflicts are much more complex on the ground.

¹⁴ See www.wim-sa.org/our-work/advocacy.

¹⁵ Despite several attempts via email, the research team was not able to access the reports on these subsequent workshops.

19.7 Participation and representation in other national and international bodies

19.7.1 Division of San Development in the Office of the Prime Minister

A priority matter is adequate San representation in the OPM's Division of San Development (DSD), as this institution is meant to be the driving force for San development in Namibia. San participants in the research discussions in the regions and in the workshop in Windhoek complained about the lack of San representatives in decision-making positions in the DSD. As noted earlier in this chapter, the Namibian San Council, in its submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, James Anaya, in September 2012, expressed dissatisfaction with the 'one-size-fits-all' approach employed by government through the DSD, and alleged that many senior government officials "still see and describe San people as useless, lazily [sic] and only awaiting for hand-hands [sic]" (Nakuta 2012b: 9). Indisputably, from the ideological perspective of international principles discussed earlier in this chapter, the government is obliged to ensure adequate San participation and representation in the DSD. Beyond this obligation, increased San participation and representation in the DSD would be an important step for practical purposes: it would increase the success of the projects implemented; and it would facilitate the establishment of mechanisms for the DSD to give feedback to the San communities, and to generally communicate with them.

19.7.2 Participation and representation within southern Africa

Various regional initiatives are underway among the San in Botswana, South Africa, Botswana, and increasingly Angola, with a view to establishing San representation at sub-continental level. One of these initiatives has been the establishment of San Councils in Namibia, South Africa and Botswana.¹⁶ Another initiative was WIMSA's consultative meetings with the San Councils and other San organisations in Botswana, South Africa and Namibia in 2012, the objective of which was to determine WIMSA's future mandate as a regional organisation.

Another initiative was the Southern Africa San Rights Conference held in Gobabis (Namibia) in November 2012, supported by Terre des Hommes and Help for Children in Distress, in which the Namibian San Council participated. The theme of the conference was: "Anything for us, without us, is against us!" During this conference, a *Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of the San People in Southern Africa* (WIMSA and OCADEC 2012) was developed, in which a number of challenges for San across southern Africa were identified, namely:

- a lack of education;
- a lack of access to documentation;
- a lack of access to basic services, including healthcare facilities;
- loss of cultural identity and heritage;
- a lack of political participation and representation;
- discrimination; and
- a lack of effective and meaningful government implementation of the rights of the San People within the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The SADC governments were therefore urged to do the following (WIMSA and OCADEC 2012 – no page numbers):

¹⁶ For more information on regional representative institutions, see Chennells et al. 2009.

- To enact laws and take special measures that are tailor-made for the advancement of the San Peoples' rights and development, in particular, to put in place pro-active legislation and policies for the development of the San Peoples in areas such as education, health, citizenship and the effective protection and perpetuation of their cultural heritage, spirituality and practices;
- To include the San Peoples in all development and other projects and government programmes that are initiated by the State;
- To criminalise discrimination of the San Peoples;
- To sign, ratify and domesticate international treaties for the protection of indigenous and minority groups; and to
- Forge partnerships with civil society, business, the donor and the international community for the effective promotion and protection of the San Peoples' Rights.

The declaration was handed over to the OPM, but to date there has been no official response from the government.

19.7.3 Participation in international fora and conferences

Based on what many Namibian San reported at local level, it would be reasonable to conclude that little has changed in the last two decades in respect of San participation and representation, but this perception does not accurately reflect the overall picture: the San presence in international fora and conferences, especially those concerning indigenous peoples, has increased significantly – particularly since the establishment of WIMSA. The evolution of the international indigenous peoples' rights discourse, and the increasing integration of indigenous peoples' inputs in a number of areas affecting them (the environment and climate change, youth, gender, academia, etc.), have also been significant. Through their participation in international conferences, often through the facilitation of WIMSA, a number of Namibian San individuals have had the opportunity to give their inputs, raise awareness and express their concerns about the status of the San. Examples of such conferences in the last 12 years are provided in Box 19.3 on the next page.



Box 19.3: Examples of International conferences attended by Namibian San over the last decade

This impressive (though not comprehensive) list is meant to convey the extent of San participation in international fora, and the multiplicity of issues in which Namibian San are engaged. The San presence in these conferences was facilitated mainly by/through WIMSA.

- First UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York, USA, May 2002.
- Second South-South Biopiracy Summit: "Biopiracy Ten Years Post Rio", Johannesburg, South Africa, 22-23 August 2002.
- Indigenous Rights in Commonwealth Africa Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa, 16-18 October 2002.
- Consultative Meeting of the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2003.
- International Workshop on Partnership on Indigenous Peoples and Sustainable Development, Copenhagen, Denmark, March 2003.
- San Hoodia Benefit Sharing Agreement Celebration, Molopo Lodge, Southern Kalahari, South Africa, 24 March 2003.
- Fifth World Archaeological Congress, Washington DC, USA, 21-26 June 2003.
- African Regional Conference on Early Childhood Care and Development among Nomadic Pastoralists and Hunter Gatherer Societies, Nairobi, Kenya, September 2003.
- Fifth World Parks Congress: "Benefits Beyond Boundaries", Durban, South Africa, September 2003.
- "Radiance an archaeology of southern Africa's interior", Archaeologists Conference, Kimberley, South Africa, April 2004.
- Third Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York, USA, May 2004.
- Conference of the African Indigenous Women's Organisation, Burkina Faso, June/July 2004.
- Youth, Development and Peace Conference, Sarajevo, Bosnia, 5-7 September 2004.
- "Homecoming of Rock Art" Conference, Windhoek, Namibia, 11-13 April 2005
- First Angolan San Conference, Lubango, Angola, 24-27 April 2007.
- World Indigenous Summit on Climate Change, Alaska, USA, April 2009.
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Meeting, Bonn, Germany, August 2009.
- UN Framework Convention Climate Change Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, September 2009:
- UN Framework Convention Climate Change Meeting, Barcelona, Spain, October 2009.
- UN Framework Convention Climate Change Meeting, Copenhagen, Denmark, November/ December 2009.
- Commission on the Status of Women Meeting, New York, USA, March 2010.
- Conference of Parties COP 17 Meeting on Climate Change, Durban, South Africa, November/ December 2011.
- Norwegian Church Aid Indigenous Peoples Consultative Dialogue, Windhoek, Namibia, 28-30 October 2012.
- Southern Africa San Rights Conference, Gobabis, Namibia, 26-28 November 2012.
- 13th Annual Meetings of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), New York, USA, 17-31 May 2013.

- Compiled with assistance from Magdalena Brörmann, Robert Hitchcock and Victoria Haraseb

The number of Namibian San contributing regularly at international level is very small (probably fewer than 10), as these individuals must be fluent in English, able to write their own contributions, and be prepared to talk in front of large audiences – skills notably absent from the repertoire of knowledge that San have been able to acquire thus far. Capacity building takes time. Ten years ago, Brörmann noted the following:

"While the San are pleased that their expertise on San and other indigenous cultures, current affairs and development issues are in high demand internationally, they also find this demand a heavy burden as only a few San possess the organizational, administrative, linguistic and representative skills required for participation in such events." (Brörmann 2003: 11-12)

Informal lists collated by WIMSA and others on conferences and attendees reflect that the number of San participants in international conferences has not increased over time, despite an ever-increasing number of conferences to be attended. Usually it is the same people who attend international conferences on all manner of pertinent issues, and they act as de facto representatives or 'cultural brokers' of Namibian San communities. As these people come to feel more at home on the international stage, network with representatives of other indigenous peoples around the world, and become accustomed to being accommodated in conference centres and hotels, their capacity and/or motivation to work at grassroots level may decrease. At local level they may thus face alienation; the egalitarian values (discussed in this chapter and in Chapter 15) could inculcate in some San a sceptical attitude towards these individuals - a disposition exacerbated by the lack of proper channels for the applicable individuals to communicate their findings and elicit feedback from those on whose behalf they work. This issue cannot be solved overnight, but it does need attention and specific action (capacity-building and institutionalised feedback mechanisms), as these few individuals could play an important role at local level - functioning as role models, helping communities to understand developments and discourses taking place at international level and how these could affect and advance San communities, etc. These cultural brokers could also play a spearheading role: instead of acting mostly in one direction (i.e. bringing the local to the attention of the global), they could work in the other direction too (i.e. communicating global developments to local level), thereby obviating, perhaps, the need for some of the local and national workshops that NGOs currently hold on indigenous peoples rights and other relevant issues.¹⁷

19.8 Recommendations

In this section we offer recommendations based on our assessment of the current state of affairs in respect of the following:

- 1) Consultation with San people.
- 2) San people's participation and representation in mainstream politics.
- 3) San people's representative structures at local, regional, national and international levels.

19.8.1 Consultation with San people

The following issues are pertinent with regard to consultation with the San on the planning and implementation of programmes and projects in their communities.

- Adequate time and resources should be allocated to integrating consultation mechanisms into the planning and implementation of programmes/projects that affect the San.
- Consultation mechanisms should accord with the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), and the stakeholders (including San representative institutions such as the TAs and the Namibian San Council) should develop and agree upon standardised procedures.
- During consultations and to facilitate adherence to the principle of FPIC information should be provided on the potential benefits and risks of the envisaged programme/project. Thus, appropriate feasibility studies, social impact assessments etc. should be conducted before

¹⁷ There might be exceptions where a global development is brought to local level, but the direction generally tends to be local to global.

programmes/projects are planned and implemented, and the findings of such evaluations should be discussed with the target beneficiaries before the programme/project commences.

- The concept of consultation based on the FPIC principle should be incorporated into integration policies and programmes, as recommended by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD 2008: 7).
- The OPM should broaden its consultation with San communities "in order to ensure that it is responding effectively to the needs of these groups", as recommended by the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Anaya 2013: 20).
- It is important to support the institutions that raise the voices of San communities in consultative processes, thus it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of San organisational and representational structures, first and foremost at local level, but also at regional and national levels.
- Finally, consultation mechanisms should lead to programme/project proposals that a beneficiary community can formally approve, e.g. by means of a memorandum of understanding (MoU). Thus, in consulting with the San communities, stakeholders such as the government and NGOs must apply the same principles that they apply in consulting with donors and other partners (as recommended in the San representative workshop in Windhoek).

19.8.2 San participation and representation in mainstream politics

As far as San participation and representation in the political arena is concerned, we recommend, firstly, an investigation of the mechanisms used in other countries to ensure the representation of indigenous peoples in parliament. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) has recommended the following in this regard:

"Government should legislate affirmative action measures to increase the representation of San and other indigenous communities in governance structures such as Parliament, the National Council and local government structures. A quota system could be adopted to give indigenous communities certain percentage representation in these structures." (ACHPR 2010: 6)

As far as participatory democracy at local and regional levels is concerned – a national ideal promoted by the "Decentralisation Policy" (MRLGH 1997) and the Decentralisation Enabling Act 33 of 2000 – a major role is ascribed to each region's VDCs, CDCs and regional development coordinating committee (RDCC). Participatory democracy is often subject to substantial challenges in a country where distances are vast and communities live far from their elected representatives, and where a substantial proportion of the population is concerned about issues of daily survival and sustaining their families. Thus, if these bodies are to comprise the mechanism for ensuring people's participation, then efforts and resources are needed to promote their active functioning, especially that of the VDCs and CDCs. As far as San participation is concerned, it would be important to implement the principle of affirmative action to give the San a voice in the VDCs, CDCs, RDCCs and other committees in the areas where they live. It would also be critical to provide the financial resources necessary to facilitate the transportation of the San representatives on such bodies, to ensure their presence in practice and not just in theory.

Participatory democracy relies on public monitoring systems to assess the performance of leaders in order to ensure their accountability to those whom they represent. Since provision is made for the participation of institutions such as the San TAs, the Namibian San Council and San CBOs, it would be relevant to establish institutionalised feedback processes between San representatives and their communities so that the San representatives are subject to the same social accountability mechanisms as other leaders. Training and raising awareness on human rights and the political system is needed to optimise San participation and representation at all levels, and to enable the involvement of San representatives in the above-mentioned social accountability mechanisms. In particular, San CBOs should be supported, and their representational capacity on issues such as indigenous people's rights should be strengthened. They should also be trained on means to ensure social accountability. Similarly, public servants should be trained and sensitised on indigenous peoples' rights and San issues.

19.8.3 Representative structures

Consultation, support and capacity-building activities that engage San CBOs should incorporate the application of traditional internal decision-making processes. The UN General Assembly stressed the following in its *Final Study on Indigenous Peoples and the Right to Participate in Decision-Making*:

"[M]any indigenous institutions have their own decision-making processes Many of these institutions continue to receive support from communities despite, in some cases, limited (if any) recognition by the State. The right to maintain such distinct decision-making processes and institutions is embodied, inter alia, in articles 5, 20 and 34 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Generally, the ongoing functioning of indigenous peoples' internal decision-making processes and associated institutions are positive in that they facilitate the participation of indigenous peoples and individuals in public affairs in ways that are philosophically and culturally consistent with indigenous peoples' understanding of governance." (UNGA 2011a: 5)

As far as the representation of the San at various decision-making levels is concerned, the previous point implies that it would be important to consult with the San communities on what kind of representative structures would be appropriate at local level and regional level, given their specific contexts and environments, so that the modalities developed are aligned with the distinctive needs of San in particular settings. An issue to consider in this regard is the relevance of egalitarian values and procedures for decision making in different San traditions in the past.

Although similar questions arise with respect to the representation of the San in decision-making processes at national level, the most effective strategy at this time would probably be to build on the efforts of WIMSA and the ILO to raise the profile of the San Council in Namibia. Thus it is strongly recommended that the government and development partners increase their support for the San Council as a national body, in terms of finance for operations and for strengthening capacity.

Traditional authorities

Experiences in various regions have indicated that the recognition of San TAs can be a major step forward in terms of ensuring a more level playing field for the San as a marginalised community in Namibian society, especially in areas where the control over communal land has thus far been in the hands of TAs of other language groups. Therefore, the official recognition of San TAs (and the establishment of associated structures) should be considered the *sine qua non* for enabling adequate San representation. We also concur with the following request of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination:

"The Committee requests the State party to provide ... information on the criteria used for the recognition of traditional leaders ... [and to] ensure that the criteria used for the recognition of traditional leaders under the Traditional Authorities Act of 2000 are objective and fair and that their application process is monitored by an independent body charged with assessing the legitimacy of applications for recognition by indigenous groups." (CERD 2008: 4-5)

Similarly, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has recommended that the government "review past decisions denying recognition of traditional authorities put forth by certain indigenous groups, with a view towards promoting the recognition of legitimate authorities selected in accordance with *traditional decision-making processes* [chapter authors' emphasis]" (Anaya 2013: 20). In particular, the Special Rapporteur recommended that the government confirm the TA of the Khwe in Caprivi Region as a matter of priority (Anaya 2013: 20). Further to this, we recommend that any requests for the removal of an existing chief and the election of a new representative in accordance with the Act be processed by the government without delay.

To address concerns about favouritism/nepotism in both old and newly established TAs, and also to address complaints about a lack of feedback between TAs and their communities, we recommend establishing mechanisms for monitoring TA performance, and more formal mechanisms for TA reporting. Recommendations of the San representative workshop in Windhoek (January 2013) in this regard included the following:

- Establish clear procedures or mechanisms for the fair and transparent elections of TAs.
- Improve communication and feedback processes between TAs and the communities they represent.
- Support the development of committees and CBOs that have the authority to monitor the performance of TA councillors and San chiefs, so that social accountability is enhanced.
- Produce a written record of the customary laws of the San traditions as a major in step in sharing customary knowledge in San communities and beyond. This may also contribute to strengthening San leadership and accountability as well as encouraging the engagement of communities.
- To keep the San TAs accountable, hold an annual general meeting of each traditional community.

In view of the many problems experienced by most of the San TAs, which are at least partly due to the lack of provision for San traditional leadership structures under the Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000, the government should consider amending the Act so as to formally accommodate traditional San leadership structures. This would accord with the above-quoted findings of the *Final Study on Indigenous Peoples and the Right to Participate in Decision-Making* (UNGA 2011a: 5).

Participation of the San at sub-continental and international levels

As we have seen, the San are represented on various bodies at sub-continental and international levels, and have a presence in fora that address issues relevant to them. As the organisations that represent the San are not always large, and since representation at international level may affect an organisation's ability to dedicate resources to support representation at local level, the allocation of time and resources is always a matter of weighing priorities. In this regard it would be relevant to consult with the San communities and the organisations representing them at sub-continental and international levels on the potential for representatives to become disconnected from their communities, with a view to finding ways to reaffirm and strengthen the bonds at all levels between San spokespersons and those whom they represent.

At the same time it is important to direct adequate resources to the training and staffing of the San organisations that represent the San at sub-continental and international levels, in order to increase the number of San with the skills needed to participate in international workshops, conferences and networks. This would go a long way to ensuring better representation of San issues in these fora.

In addition, it is relevant to ensure that San representatives work as role models in the communities from which they hail, and that they report back to their communities, describe sub-continental and international developments, and explain why these developments are important for their respective communities.

Chapter 20 Overall Conclusion

By Ute Dieckmann, Erik Dirkx and Jennifer Hays



The "Reassessment of the Current Status of the San of Namibia" (referred to herein as the "San Study") was initiated in 2010 to investigate the status of San in Namibia two decades after Independence, and 10 years after the last comprehensive study on the San was undertaken, namely the "Assessment of the Status of San in Namibia". The recommendations of the assessment in 2001 were comprehensive (see Suzman 2001b), and we refer to them (in Box 20.1 on the next page) as a reference point for this study conducted in 2011-2013.

Since 2001, a few of the recommendations (those *italicised* in Box 20.1) have been partly or fully realised, in particular through initiatives implemented with the aim of decreasing the marginal status of San communities in Namibia. Most important of these is the San Development Programme (SDP) in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), initiated in late 2005 (see pages 28-29).

Box 20.1: Conclusions and recommendations of the Assessment of the Status of the San of Namibia 2001

James Suzman recommended the establishment of a multi-sectoral programme targeting San as a development priority, as opposed to subsuming San rights issues in a simplistic economic framework. He identified four key areas for intervention: **development and empowerment**; **education**; **access to land**; and **leadership and representation**. His recommendations in these key areas are as follows (*the italicised areas are those in which some progress has been made*):

Development and empowerment

- Development initiatives for San must work on the principle that empowerment is development. Top-down development initiatives disempower San and ultimately render them more dependent on welfare.
- Programmes and initiatives muse be "culturally sensitive" and attempt to work with and through existing social and cultural structures rather than against them.
- Activities must aim to enable San to determine the direction and pace of their own development within reasonable parameters.

Education

- Develop educational resources for major San language groups.
- Continue the co-operation of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture with stakeholders in the Intersectoral Task Force on Educationally Marginalised Children
- Establish an education programme that is sufficiently flexible to cope with the socio-cultural and material problems faced by San learners.

Access to land

- *Prioritise (de facto) San and other landless Namibians under the Agricultural Land Reform Act (ALRA) in terms of resettlement policy.*
- Overhaul the resettlement application procedure to ensure that San and others are able to apply for resettlement more easily.
- Ensure adequate San representation on land boards in communal areas.
- Implement resettlement programmes for San in accordance with the letter of the law and stated policy.
- Abandon co-operative resettlement projects.

Leadership and representation

- Assess outstanding San traditional authority claims in terms of the requirements stipulated in the Traditional Authorities Act.
- Continue donor and NGO support for institutional development and capacity building in San CBOs and traditional authorities.
- Intensify encouragement of San participation in local and regional politics.
- *Continue donor and NGO support for cultural programmes.*

Suzman 2001b:144-145

In 2011, in a brochure entitled *Empowering Marginalised Communities in Namibia* (OPM 2011), the OPM expressed its dedication to:

- ensuring that the national laws and policies affecting marginalised peoples are effectively implemented across all national institutions;
- strengthening awareness campaign strategies on the plight of marginalised communities;
- improving the coordination of the different initiatives aimed at supporting the development of marginalised communities in Namibia; and
- ensuring that the adopted international legal frameworks on marginalised communities are effectively implemented at national level.

The existence of a specific government office dedicated to ameliorating the situation of San communities provides a promising framework for empowering San communities in Namibia. Furthermore, in Namibia's Fourth National Development Plan 2012/2013 to 2016/2017 (NDP4), the welfare of San communities falls under the eradication of extreme poverty (NPC 2012a: 62-69).¹

Despite these efforts, the perception of many San in Namibia in 2013 is that they are "left behind" or "scraping the pot" – as the title of this report reflects. Where is the discrepancy? How do we reconcile the existence of a comprehensive government programme specifically designed to address the needs of the San with the perception of the San themselves? During the course of our study we heard several explanations for this discrepancy, provided by various stakeholders – above all government officials and NGO representatives, but also San representatives. Essentially, three reasons were proffered: some San were just ignorant about what as been done for them; ingratitude on the part of the San; and a discursive strategy on the part of the San to ensure future support.

Our research has proved the contrary: the vast majority of the San do in fact experience serious marginalisation in Namibia, manifested in poverty and food insecurity, a lack of secure access to land and natural resources, a lack of education, a lack of access to services, discrimination and limited political representation. In the subsections of this chapter, we summarise the nature of the marginalisation described in detail in this report. Finally, we suggest an overall explanation for the ongoing marginalisation of the San in the face of so many efforts to help them, and offer overall recommendations based on our research.

Livelihoods and poverty

The San Study participants generally considered themselves to be "poor" or "very poor". At most research sites, the participants ranked between 50% and 80% of the San households in their respective communities in one of these two lowest wealth-ranking categories. Very few households were categorised as somewhat better off, and only *very* rarely was a household ranked in the wealthiest category. These self-evaluations match the findings of our livelihoods analysis (Chapter 14); the San's overall access to food and income is indeed highly insecure.

The majority of San households at most of the sites depend to a substantial degree on government support for their survival. The Old Age Pension (N\$600 per month at the time of writing) is the most common and most consistent source of income in Namibia's San communities, and for many of them, food aid is the most reliable source of food. Research participants reported a high degree of reliance on both of these sources for their survival. In addition, San communities and individuals employ a variety of strategies to secure small amounts of cash (or in some cases food), including casual work (often seasonal) and piecework for neighbouring groups, depending on circumstances and availability. The sale of natural products or crafts occasionally brings additional but minimal income. Some individuals attempt to gain extra income by engaging in business on a very small scale – for example, buying food items at a shop and selling them in smaller quantities at home, or producing and selling *vetkoek* ('fat cakes', consisting of deep-fried dough).

Other San livelihood strategies focus directly on gaining access to a food source. Our study found that the gathering of veldfood is still a very important livelihood strategy for San communities,

¹ NDP4 does not specifically mention San communities, but it acknowledges that households of "certain language groups" are "prone to extreme poverty", and presumably San households are included here. According to NDP4, the government will expand its social protection system to these households, which are currently excluded from this system, and yet are severely affected by poverty (NPC 2012a: 67).

but it is highly seasonal and limited in most areas by a lack of access to land. Despite various efforts by stakeholders - and the aspirations of the San themselves - to improve their livelihoods through animal husbandry, this livelihood strategy plays a minor role in most San communities. Some communities cultivate crops, but only on a relatively small scale, and this is dependent on environmental circumstances, access to land and external support. Harvests are usually consumed within a couple of days, weeks or months; they do not suffice to provide households with staple food for an entire year. NGOs support crop cultivation on a larger scale, and this has contributed to improving food security, but sustainability has yet to be achieved (see the subsection on limited post-settlement support, next page). Despite these limitations, however, the San participants in our research generally regarded access to crop fields and agricultural implements as essential for poverty reduction; generally they viewed community members with such access as better off than those without. Likewise, those who owned cattle and goats were considered to be better off than those without. Although owning large numbers of livestock (especially large stock) was seen as a way to avoid poverty, ownership of large herds was generally regarded as the exclusive preserve of members of other ethnic groups. Formal employment was viewed as a major determinant of security, mostly because it offers regular cash income in the form of a salary or wage that could also be used to invest in other assets (e.g. livestock and fencing material). However, again, research participants often reported that other ethnic groups were more likely to receive jobs. These are all relevant findings which should be taken into consideration in future programme planning and implementation.

Certainly, poverty is not unique to the San; many other Namibians are equally poor. However, no other ethnic group in Namibia has such a high proportion of poor and very poor members. This widespread poverty among the San is attributable to a combination of numerous factors which are interrelated and partly conditional upon each other. Our analyses of the study findings brought to light the key factors – which accord, by and large, with the key factors identified in the 2001 study:

- lack of access to land / lack of secure land tenure;
- limited post settlement support / lack of access to productive assets;
- very low levels of education;
- discrimination and culture; and
- limited political representation, participation and consultation.

In the following subsections we briefly describe each of these factors.

Lack of access to land/lack of secure land tenure

"The Government of Namibia should step up efforts to address the problem of landlessness of San groups and to carry out initiatives to secure for them rights to land and do so, to the extent compatible with the rights of others, in accordance with their historical or traditional land tenure patterns."

- James Anaya, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2013, p. 19

The vast majority of San households do not have secure land rights. As is the case for most of the other (rural) Namibian communities, access to land is critical for many San households, especially those in remote areas, but it is even more important for San communities because their educational qualifications are so low, which limits their employment opportunities. Securing land rights is one of the most urgent issues to address in respect of the San in Namibia.

Access to land has improved somewhat for a few of Namibia's San communities since 2001: N‡a Jaqna Conservancy in Otjozondjupa Region was gazetted in 2003; San and non-San residents in

Caprivi and Kavango Regions were granted user rights in the Bwabwata National Park (BNP – a.k.a. West Caprivi) as of 2006; and several resettlement farms have been purchased for some San communities under the OPM's SDP – in Kunene, Oshikoto and Otjozondjupa. However, as conveyed in the regional chapters, even the communities with access to land face serious threats at present: residents of N‡a Jaqna Conservancy are battling with illegal fencing; Nyae Nyae Conservancy residents are struggling with an influx of Herero farmers with cattle; an influx of Mbukushu people and their cattle in the BNP is compounded by the fact that the Khwe and !Xun have no *de jure* right to reside in the park; and on the San resettlement farms, none of the beneficiaries have received any title deed in their individual names, the influx of outsiders is not controlled, and there are few or no sustainable livelihood strategies available to the beneficiaries.

For many San communities, access to land and natural resources has been reduced or threatened since 2001: for the !Xun and Ju|'hoansi in Kavango, access to land is threatened by the development of small-scale farms; Hai||om on Farm Six in Oshikoto lost access to land and resources when a large part of "their" land was allocated to Owambo farmers and their cattle; many San communities in communal areas (especially in Ohangwena and Omaheke) lost access to land due to the (illegal) fencing of large tracks of land; and Hai||om in the Etosha National Park are being pressurised to leave the park by, inter alia, excluding them from benefiting as tourism concessionaires.

As San culture is very closely linked to (ancestral) land, the lack of land has a major impact on the respective cultures of the San groups. Our findings indicate that the few groups still living on their ancestral land without too much influx of outsiders – such as those in Nyae Nyae and the BNP, and to a limited degree the Hai||om on Farm Six – have maintained a much stronger sense of cultural identity than other groups. For example, the San in Omusati cannot speak a Khoisan language anymore, have adopted many of the cultural traits of their Oshiwambo-speaking neighbours, and have become a regional "underclass". Commercial farmworkers and San in townships have also lost their cultural identity to a large extent.

Limited post-settlement support / lack of access to productive assets

In 2001, resettlement was viewed as a promising step forward in helping to alleviate the problem of landlessness among the San (see Box 20.1, "Access to land"). However, the approach employed by the government was the **group resettlement scheme**, which, due to negative experiences as from the mid 1990s, was not recommended in the 2001 assessment report (Suzman 2001b). Our study has shown that San in group resettlement schemes face specific challenges associated with their high degrees of illiteracy, their cultural background and their recent history of marginalisation, and generally acknowledged constraints to common property resource management play an important role as well. These four challenges require comprehensive strategies for post-settlement support for San living in group resettlement projects, which take cognisance of the need to strengthen their technical and collaborative capacity for resource management. Instead, the post-settlement support rendered to San in these projects from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s focused mostly on improving access to farm assets, equipment and inputs, in the hope that the San would take charge of the management of such resources so that they could become self-reliant after a certain period of government support. Building technical management capacity received relatively little or inadequate attention initially, with the result that the provision of equipment and inputs spawned dependency on their continued and free supply. When capacity strengthening was eventually put on the agenda (circa 2005 or a little later), the organisations involved in providing such training encountered severe constraints relating to the high levels of illiteracy and the common property resource management problems. This has again been underscored by recent experiences in resettlement projects where some advances in food security have been made with the combined support of the government and NGOs – for example in projects supported by Komeho Namibia in Kavango Region, and by the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) in conjunction with the Habitafrica Foundation in Omaheke (in all these cases with financial support from the government and/or donors). In this regard, when 40 or more families have to share natural resources on a farm, it appears to remain difficult for the San to take charge of the joint management of the farm inputs, equipment, gardens and/or livestock, let alone the management of the supply chain and marketing processes. Thus, one can state that the government's continued focus on group resettlement schemes – in recent years again promoted by the OPM for the San – and the strategies employed in these projects, have not necessarily paid adequate attention to:

- technical and collaborative management capacity, which is needed to turn vulnerable farmers like the San into productive farmers; and
- structural constraints associated with high levels of illiteracy, common property management problems, remoteness and market inaccessibility.

Similarly, agricultural extension services rendered to San farmers on communal land seem to yield few positive results. Generally the extension services focus mainly on the sharing of knowledge of traditional methods of crop production and animal husbandry, but hardly address the widespread lack of access to draught power, the requisite access to markets and/or the timely delivery of farm inputs (e.g. seeds, manure/fertiliser, pesticides for crop cultivation, and vaccines, dips and veterinary services for animal husbandry) to resource-poor farmers. San, like other farmers in remote areas, basically have to acquire these farm inputs from the private sector and are responsible for accessing markets themselves. In more recent years, seeking to improve access to farm inputs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) has subsidised ploughing and weeding on farms in the northern communal areas, and has also provided drought-resistant pearl millet (i.e. the variety known in Namibia as Okashana 2) and fertiliser packages on a partially subsidised basis. Similarly, to overcome the ploughing constraints facing poor rural farmers, the MAWF implemented its Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme (DAPAP) serving poor farmers, including San, in the northern communal areas. But, despite some San in these areas gaining access to draught power and drought-resistant pearl millet as a result of these MAWF efforts, the costs associated with the fertiliser packages and ploughing, even though subsidised, have often proved prohibitive for most of the San, and thus have greatly impeded their potential gains in agricultural output.^{2, 3} The impact of the DAPAP has also been piecemeal for the San, as relatively few San were trained, and the San beneficiaries were expected to share the donated ploughs, cultivators and oxen with fellow community members, which often resulted in limited ownership of these productive assets, and consequently neglect of the animals and equipment donated.

In short, the strategies thus far deployed by different roleplayers in support of San farmers in group resettlement projects and in the northern and eastern communal areas have not yet managed to adequately address structural constraints associated with high levels of illiteracy among the San, their cultural background and their history of marginalisation. Likewise, the roleplayers have not yet found comprehensive strategies or solutions that would sustainably address San farmers'

² Limited government attention to the promotion of Namibia Specific Conservation Agriculture (NSCA), which is better adapted to the variable climatic conditions in Namibia, has also implied that many farmers in the northern communal areas, including San, have been excluded from valuable extension services that could have increased their crop output (see also the recommendations in this chapter).

³ The free provision of fully subsidised millet seeds for the San occasionally creates its own backlash. In Ohangwena Region there have been accounts of neighbouring farmers attempting to convince San farmers who had received fully subsidised pearl millet seeds that it was better to plant traditional varieties of pearl millet. Clearly this was an attempt to convince the San to exchange part of the subsidised drought-resistant millet seeds for the traditional variety that takes longer to grow and is less adaptable to dry spells and drought.

limited access to farm inputs and/or draught power, or which would strengthen their joint resource management capacity and/or their capacity to manage supply chains and market access. Thus, the near absence of adequate and comprehensive agricultural support services for San living on remote group resettlement farms or in remote parts of the northern and eastern communal areas implies that those San interested in improving their living conditions through farming are forced to rely on their own often limited means, which generally results in a low-input-and-low-output type of farming, with very meagre returns.

Discrimination and culture

Most San participants in our research reported experiencing discrimination at the hands of 'others' in Namibian society, including public servants, and they cited many examples (e.g. in the education and health sectors, other public services and the formal job market) to illustrate how discrimination contributes to San poverty and marginalisation. Discrimination against San in the past and today stems in part from the fact that they are still often perceived as lacking culture; as 'primitive' or 'uncivilised.' Many outsiders are ignorant about San cultures and traditions, and this ignorance leads many to perceive the San way of life as 'backwards' and thus something to be overcome, rather than as a resource to be incorporated and built upon. This discrimination clearly has a negative impact on their self-esteem, their access to public services, their political participation and representation, their educational achievements and their employment opportunities.

This study has found that the lack of information and consequent widespread lack of knowledge about certain lesser-known but fundamental aspects of all San cultures are posing obstacles to San development:

- Subsistence practices and land-use patterns: San communities in Namibia have experienced major changes in their subsistence practices over the last century, and hunting and gathering are practised to a very limited extent today (as described throughout this report), but many aspects of their former way of life such as their "foraging mode of thought" (see, inter alia, Barnard 2002: 5) are still maintained and even enhanced.
- **Moral obligation to share:** Egalitarian levelling and sharing mechanisms still play an especially important role in food-distribution mechanisms, and come into play in new manifestations in contemporary life, such as the sharing of cash (including Old Age Pension money).
- Strong mechanisms of levelling: This 'egalitarian' aspect of San culture was always present in their former leadership structures, but today it poses a struggle for the San in developing strong and widely recognised *hierarchical* leadership structures (discussed in more detail further on).

It is crucially important that these fundamental aspects of San culture are taken into account in the planning and implementation of any San development initiative. In addition, it is critical to develop site-specific approaches that take into account the specific circumstances of the San community concerned, and to elicit the active engagement of the participants/beneficiaries.

Low levels of education

Their extremely low levels of education is a factor that feeds into the cycle of poverty in which San communities find themselves. Namibia's education policies are progressive in terms of meeting the educational requirements of its minorities, but not all of these policies are enforced, and the reality on the ground still reflects gross inequalities in educational access and attainment. Recent quantitative research consistently shows that San communities are by far the most disadvantaged ethnic groups in the system. This statistical picture is confirmed by the data gathered in this San

Study, which found that although the majority of San children (but far from all) attend school in the lower-primary grades (Grades 1-3) – especially if there is a school in close proximity to their homes – there is a sharp decline in the enrolment of San in upper-primary and secondary school grades. The reasons that research participants cited for the high and early dropout rates among San learners are manifold, and reflect an interplay of economic, cultural and social factors. Overall, a number of reasons cited in similar ways across the research sites indicate that for all San groups the root causes are the same:

- poverty;
- discrimination;
- village remoteness;
- cultural mismatch (language and differences in cultural and social practices);
- inappropriate curricula;
- a lack of role models; and
- teenage pregnancy.

Their generally low level of education severely affects the economic situation of the San. They cannot compete in the formal job market and hence are highly dependent on menial work. Difficulties persist in accessing information, dealing with official paperwork, and developing skills, capacities and the confidence to secure other rights. This situation begets a vicious cycle of poverty that very few San are able to escape.

In 2013, the compulsory contribution to the School Development Fund (SDF) was abolished in all public primary schools, thereby rendering primary education free of charge (in principle) for all learners in these schools. Although the San were already exempt from paying school fees by virtue of being a marginalised ethnic group, this exemption did not go far enough for many of them, due to their inability to cover other school-related costs (transport, clothing, toiletries, etc.), but also due to a lack of implementation of the exemption by local school officials (e.g. some children were still being sent home because their parents could not contribute to the SDF or could not afford to buy a school uniform). In addition, the stigma attached to being exempt from payment led to discrimination against San learners and parents in many cases. Although the abolition of school fees will help in general, many San families will still be financially incapable of covering other school-related costs. In addition, free primary education will not have much impact on the pattern of dropout at the start of secondary school, and on the extremely low levels of San enrolment in tertiary education.

Further, improvement in the educational and economic situations of the San is not only about access to existing mainstream education. Appropriate education would be tuned in to the needs of San children and their communities. This includes education that is rooted in their cultural values, and which recognises and builds on their own knowledge foundations, and provides a comfortable and protected living environment while at school – rather than the hostile environments of hostels at many schools, especially secondary schools. Furthermore, the issue of mother-tongue education is a critical one; San children are extremely disadvantaged in this regard in Namibia's schools today. A quality education for San children and communities will be one that takes all of these elements into consideration, and which – most importantly – responds to the specific needs, aspirations, cultures and realities of the respective communities served.

Limited political representation, participation and consultation

Political representation is a major principle underlying any democratic system; one that ensures the participation of citizens in decision-making processes. The San are seriously under-represented in most such structures in Namibia. At the time of writing, no San individual is a Member of

Parliament, and only one San person is a regional councillor (a Ju|'hoan woman in Tsumkwe). The San are under-represented in local structures including community development committees, water point committees, regional development committees and school boards, and where they do participate, they often feel that they are not listened to and are not respected. According to our research participants, the majority of the San do vote, but most feel that they are not able to make any real difference in Namibian society, and most do not see the value of the democratic system and doubt its ability to protect their interests. Clearly, therefore, many San do not experience the feeling of participating as citizens in a democratic country.

The first San traditional authorities (TAs) were recognised in 1998. During the last 15 years – especially since the implementation of the SDP in 2005 – the government has increased its efforts to guarantee the representation, consultation and participation of the country's San, primarily through the recognition of five San TAs: the Hai||om TA in Kunene, Oshikoto and Oshana Regions; the !Xun and Ju|'hoan TAs in Otjozondjupa; the Ju|'hoan TA in northern Omaheke; and the !Xoon TA in southern Omaheke. This recognition is a precondition for San representative institutions to effectively consult with government on issues relating to San development. In general, the participants in our research said that they regard the TA institution as an important instrument for making their voices heard. Indeed, the government has regularly consulted the officially recognised San TAs on development issues in their respective communities.

Nevertheless, simply having a TA does not guarantee political representation, for many reasons. One reason is that some San communities do not fully accept their TAs: three of the five recognised TAs face serious challenges in respect of community support. Common complaints that participants at the relevant research sites levelled at their respective TAs were: nepotism; a lack of transparency and communication; pursuing personal interests instead of community development; and corruption. These issues of conflict between communities and their TAs are at least partly due to the fact that the TA institution⁴ does not accommodate the traditional leadership structures of San societies. Until recently these societies were founded on egalitarian values, and they lacked a strong internal hierarchical structure with formal leadership roles – as such a model did not accord with their way of life. Nowadays they need to adapt to this new institution to attain some level of political participation, and it is not surprising that conflicts between communities and their new 'authorities' arise.

Furthermore, San in Kavango, Caprivi, Omusati and Ohangwena Regions do not have their own government-recognised TAs, but instead fall under the jurisdiction of other TAs, depending on where they reside in a given region. The majority of the Khwe in West Caprivi (Kavango Region) have fought for more than a decade for the recognition of their TA, but the Mbukushu chief claims that they fall under his authority – and some Khwe men have been integrated into his TA structure. The Khwe in Caprivi Region are under the authority of the Mafwe TA. Therefore, at least a third of all San in Namibia have no recognised TA representing their interests as San at national level.

Aware of the shortcomings of the TA system for San representation, the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA) facilitated the establishment of the Namibian San Council in 2006, in order to create a second representative body to conduct advocacy work on behalf of the Namibian San communities. Currently this body is composed of 14 members, representing the San in areas with recognised San TAs, and the San in West Caprivi and Ohangwena. In 2012/13 the council members underwent a series of capacity-building workshops. It remains to be seen whether this body can eventually become an effective San representative body at both national and international levels.

⁴ As provided for in the Traditional Authorities Act (TAA) 25 of 2000, which repealed and replaced the Traditional Authorities Act 17 of 1995.

Ultimately, the issue of leadership is connected to all of the issues described above. Effective and culturally appropriate representative leadership structures would allow the San to have a stronger voice in the issues that affect them, including the allocation of land and educational issues, and it would also enable San communities to address issues of discrimination more effectively. Several issues have to be considered in efforts to support San and build the capacity of San representatives, and these issues have bearing not only on leadership but also on development in general.

Currently there are very few San who are both qualified and willing to act as representatives of their communities in their negotiations with 'others' (including government, bi- or multilateral organisations, and sometimes NGOs), or even to become part of these institutions. The reasons for this are numerous, but key reasons are: extreme marginalisation; discrimination by other groups, leading to a lack of confidence; very low levels of education; and former egalitarian values which discourage placing oneself in a position of authority. Taking on a leadership position can place one in an uncomfortable situation if one's community is uncomfortable with the hierarchical nature of representative leadership. Allegations of misconduct and demands to share the perceived benefits of a prestigious position can be difficult, even for good leaders. Often the benefits of becoming a community representative are perceived to be less than the costs. These dynamics complicate San participation in decision-making processes, and thwart the proper representation of San interests.

Another major challenge to the establishment of San representative structures is the lack of a common 'San identity' at grassroots level. The broader categorisation of San (a.k.a. Saan, Bushmen and, in Botswana, Basarwa) was imposed by outsiders and has persisted for centuries due to perceived similarities in language, culture and livelihoods – despite the great variation within the category of 'San'. In general, participants in our research identified themselves as belonging to a specific San language group in a defined area, rather than as 'San' – a term which many reportedly do not like to use. The lack of a shared language further complicates the issue of a common identity. Nevertheless, a strong unifying San or 'indigenous' identity would certainly help the San to find a common voice to address the problems that they face, and to make this voice heard. An overall common identity does not evolve overnight, but it might develop over time if the members of the various communities come to recognise the opportunities and benefits connected to this overall 'San' or 'indigenous peoples' identity, and if they find ways to achieve the necessary political organisation.

Although a few San TAs have been recognised and the Namibian San Council has been established in the years since 2001, adequate political representation, participation and consultation is still a long way off. This is a pressing matter which has to be addressed to achieve long-term results in respect of San empowerment and development. The representation and leadership issue is intertwined with all of the other issues and concerns that San communities face, in particular those of securing access to land, reducing discrimination, improving access to relevant educational opportunities and attaining educational qualifications.

Gender

Another major and overarching concern is that a full commitment to gender mainstreaming is still lacking in many of the programmes and projects targeting San communities. Faced with the extreme poverty of San communities, stakeholders often ignore the gender issue in their efforts to improve the livelihoods of all members of a given community. However, this San Study has shown that gender inequality in San communities has increased tremendously over the last century, with the following corresponding problems arising and escalating over time:

- Gender-based violence (GBV): Often triggered by alcohol abuse, GBV is a major problem in most San communities today, and is attributable to a number of interrelated prior problems. Changes in gender ideologies as communities shift towards a hierarchical model in which men are 'superior' to women, and men's frustration with unemployment and poverty, are major causes of the increased violence. The lack of law enforcement compounds the problem of GBV.
- Formal education: Completion of formal education is a challenge for both boys and girls in San communities, but girls are more disadvantaged than boys in the sphere of formal education, the key factors being sexual harassment, the need for more financial resources to buy toiletries (including sanitary items), teenage pregnancy and early marriage, and lower self-esteem.
- Health: San women are in a more vulnerable position than San men with regard to health, not least because women tend to be the ones who take care of the health of other family members. In addition, all the issues around accessing healthcare facilities and trained personnel during pregnancy and childbirth place women at a higher risk of complications and emergencies in the reproductive period of their lives. Those San women who engage in exploitative sexual relationships with (economically better-off) non-San men are also highly vulnerable to exposure to HIV infection.
- **Participation and representation:** Today there are several outspoken San women in leadership positions. This can be attributed to Namibia's progressive gender policy framework (although insufficiently implemented as yet), the engagement of NGOs that strive for gender balance, and relatively higher levels of education, with an attendant increase in self-confidence, in recent cohorts of San girls.

Some of the gender-related problems that San women face are the same as those faced by many women of other ethnic groups in Namibia, but the situation confronting San women is compounded by the multi-dimensional inequality that they experience when class and ethnicity enter the fray – an experience which they share with many other indigenous women around the world (Sylvain 2010).

Our research has made evident that a concerted effort to mainstream a gender perspective in all San development initiatives is urgently needed. By failing to implement gender mainstreaming thoroughly, stakeholders in San empowerment and development risk broadening the stratification along gender lines in San communities.

Recommendations on the way forward

This San Study has brought to light the manifold and interrelated factors causing and maintaining the marginalisation and poverty of the San communities in Namibia. It has also made possible the formulation of region- and topic-specific recommendations. Further, the participatory approach employed in the study enabled us to identify many reasons for the lack of success of government and NGO initiatives aimed at reducing the levels of San marginalisation and poverty.

Major cross-cutting issues (i.e. issues relevant to all regions and all topics) are the lack of:

- an integrated strategy;
- a focus on empowerment;
- coordination between stakeholders;
- participatory involvement and consultation in all stages of project implementation;
- cultural sensitivity in the design and implementation of projects;
- long-term initiatives and commitment, including a local presence at grassroots level;
- adequate monitoring and evaluation of projects; and
- organisational capacity building.

In the following subsections we offer specific recommendations on these cross-cutting issues.

Developing an integrated strategy

Currently, different stakeholders, taking different approaches, are imposing different development strategies on San communities. Some of these strategies are more effective and more appropriate than others, but in any case, this lack of coordination is generally problematic. Without an integrated strategy, initiatives supporting San will remain patchy and rather ineffective, and stakeholders will continue to risk impeding each other's efforts – see the regional chapters for specific examples of how this can happen.

A major step towards addressing this concern would be the development and adoption of a **specific policy on indigenous peoples/marginalised communities in Namibia**. This would give stakeholders a common set of guidelines to direct their development efforts, and would inculcate a *rights-based* approach to development. The UN has already recommended such a policy in its *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Namibia*:

"Formulate a white paper in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and [in this process, take into consideration] recommendations from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities ..." (United Nations General Assembly 2011b: 18).

Namibia accepted this recommendation along with all others in the review report, and the Office of the Ombudsman is in the process of developing a first draft of this white paper. It is recommended that the findings of this San Study be taken into account in this process.

Further, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has recommended that Namibia **ratify ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples** (ILO169) (ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 26). This would be a major step forward, and could go hand in hand with the policy recommended above. Along with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), ILO169 would reinforce the protection and recognition of indigenous minorities at national level (see also ACHPR and IWGIA 2008: 26). Furthermore, ILO169 and UNDRIP provide frameworks for Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), which could go a long way to addressing the shortcomings in consultation, empowerment, cultural sensitivity and organisational capacity described above.

Improving coordination

Coordination among all stakeholders is a precondition for successful development. This study has shown that uncoordinated efforts by various stakeholders are counterproductive for development initiatives. In this regard, a **National Coordinating Forum on Indigenous Peoples/Marginalised Communities** should be formed to ensure integrated, multi-sectoral, coordinated and systematic development, in line with the recommended integrated strategy. This National Coordinating Forum should be composed of representatives of the San TAs, the Namibian San Council, the SDP in the OPM, the relevant line ministries, national NGOs (i.e. members of the San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia) and international development partners.

Furthermore, **Regional Coordinating Committees on Indigenous Peoples/Marginalised Communities** could be established, which could deal in more detail with the specific problems of San in each region. Such committees should include representatives of the OPM, regional councils, line ministries, NGOs working with the San in each region, San TAs and/or other TAs under whose jurisdiction the San live, regional representatives of the Namibian San Council and representatives of San CBOs. Regional coordination could also be strengthened through improved information exchange among the existing Regional Development Coordinating Committees.

To ensure San participation, funds would have to be allocated for transporting and accommodating the San who attend the meetings of the coordinating bodies, at both national and regional level.

Improving monitoring and evaluation

Quantitative data is essential for adequately evaluating, in detail, poverty reduction and other development efforts. Quantitative data would also be a means to compare the wellbeing of San communities with that of other Namibian communities. Undeniably, 23 years after Independence, ethnic affiliations still play a role in the redistribution of wealth and resources in Namibia (see also Daniels 2004: 44). Quantitative data on the basis of language categories as provided by the National Planning Commission or the Namibia Statistics Agency do not reliably capture socio-economic differences between the country's ethnic groups, e.g. the various San groups and the Himba (another marginalised indigenous group in Namibia). Only the government can provide comprehensive and reliable quantitative data, and we urge the government to (a) include in the census and various survey questionnaires one question on ethnic affiliation, and (b) analyse specific data accordingly, or otherwise make the data accessible to others for analysis. This recommendation is in line with a recommendation of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in 2008:

"... that the State party conduct studies with a view to assessing and evaluating the level of enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by the different ethnic groups in the State party, based on which the State party should strengthen its efforts in combating poverty among marginalized groups as well as its measures aimed at promoting equal opportunities for all persons." (CERD 2008: 6)

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) made a similar recommendation in 2007:

"The Committee calls upon the State party to enhance its collection of data in all areas covered by the Convention, disaggregated by sex **as well as by ethnicity** [chapter authors' emphasis], age and by urban and rural areas, as applicable, in order to assess the actual situation of women and their enjoyment of human rights and to track trends over time." (CEDAW 2007: 2)

Attention to San communities with little external support

Perhaps the most difficult issue to address is that of the high number of San communities and individuals who are 'falling through the cracks' and receiving very little or no attention and external support. These communities and individuals are, inter alia, San living in extreme geographical marginalisation (e.g. those on Farm Six in Oshikoto Region and in the Eiseb Block in Omaheke Region), San living in townships (e.g. Epako in Gobabis, Omaheke), San working on commercial farms and San living in communal areas where other ethnic groups are the majority populations (e.g. in certain parts of Omaheke, Ohangwena and Kavango Regions). Our study has found these communities and individuals to be among the poorest San in Namibia.

These communities and individuals need urgent attention and support. Better access to public services, improved infrastructure, organisational capacity building and awareness campaigns on human rights and the channels to be followed to secure these rights would be first steps, and just these steps would have a considerable impact on improving the current living conditions of the people concerned.

Closing remarks

The aim of this study was to provide a solid basis for future policies, programmes and projects for and with San communities in Namibia, in order to finally ensure that San communities have equal opportunities and enjoy equal rights in Namibian society. The study has shown that the situation is complex, and that factors influencing the current marginalisation of the San are interrelated and conditional upon each other. It has also made it clear that concerted efforts are needed.

All told, improving the situation will depend on the political will and commitment of the Government of Namibia, the commitment and capacity of civil society, and last but not least, the initiative and advocacy of the San themselves.



Annex

Annex A: Sites visited for the field research

Region	# of sites	Sites	Date
Caprivi (eastern)	5	Marakavan, Bito, Waya Waya, Kyarecan and Mulanga	5-12 August 2012
Caprivi (western – i.e. Bwabwata National Park)	4	Omega 1, Mushashane and Mushangara	23-31 October 2011
		Mashambo	31 May 2012
Kavango	4	Likwaterera and Wiwi	10-18 April 2012
		Xeidang and Ndama	1-9 May 2012
Oshana	1	Okaukuejo	8-12 December 2011
Kunene	1	Outjo (Etosha Poort)	6-9 February 2012
Oshikoto	3	Oshivelo	16-20 July 2012
		Tsintsabis and Farm Six (both visited twice)	16-18 April 2012 and 28-30 June 2012
Ohangwena	6	Ekoka and Ouholamo	22-29 April 2012
		Oshikoha and Onane	21-28 May 2012
		Omukukutu and Omiishi	18-25 June 2012
Omaheke	6	Skoonheid	October 2011
		Gobabis (Epako)	14-17 February 2012
		Blouberg	2-5 April 2012
		Corridors 13 and 17	3-9 June 2012
		Otjinene	9-12 September 2012
Omusati	4	Okatseidhi and Amarika	3-10 July 2012
		Okathakanguti and Okapya	18-26 September 2012
Otjozondjupa	8	Tsumkwe and Nyae Nyae Conservancy (Xa hoba and N‡animh)	7-15 November 2011
		N‡a Jaqna Conservancy (Mangetti Dune, Luhebo and Omatako)	30 January to 5 February 2012
		Vergenoeg	21-23 July 2012
		Uitkoms	22 July 2012
Total	42	Field research period: 23 October 2011 to 26 September 2012	

Annex B: Stakeholder interviews

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

	Affirmative Action Loan Scheme
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
AGDT	Acacia Grassroots Development Trust
AGS	Africa Groups of Sweden
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	antenatal care
ARI	acute respiratory infection
ART	anti-retroviral therapy
BfdW	Brot für die Welt
BNP	Bwabwata National Park
CAA	Catholic AIDS Action
CBD	Convention on Biodiversity
	community-based natural resource management
СВО	community-based organisation
CBRP	community-based resource person
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CCN	Council of Churches in Namibia
CDC	Constituency Development Committee
CESCR	Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CGG	community game guard
CIM	Center for International Immigration and Development
CLB	Communal Land Board
CLS	Communal Lands Support (Project)
CNR	case notification rate
CoHeNa	Advanced Community Health Care Services Namibia
COSDEC	Community Skills Development Centre
COSDEF	Community Skills Development Foundation
	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRIAA SA-DC	Centre for Research-Information-Action in Africa – Southern Africa Development and Consulting
CRM	community resource monitor
DAPAP	Draught Animal Power Acceleration Programme
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
DEES	Department of Extension and Emergency Services
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DOT	directly observed treatment
DSD	Division of San Development
DRC	Divundu Rehabilitation Centre

DPM	Deputy Prime Minister	
DWSSC	Directorate of Water Supply and Sanitation Coordination (MAWF)	
DRFN	Desert Research Foundation of Namibia	
ECD	early childhood development	
ELCIN	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia	
EMIS	Education Management Information System (MoE)	
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)	
FAWENA	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Namibia	
	focus group discussion	
FLTS	Flexible Land Tenure System	
FMC	Forest Management Committee	
FMDC	Farm Management and Development Committee	
FURS	Farm Unit Resettlement Scheme	
GIPF	Government Institutions Pension Fund	
GIS	Geographic Information System	
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	
GR&AP	Gender Research and Advocacy Project (LAC)	
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia	
	Human Development Index	
	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	
	Human Poverty Index	
	Human Rights Committee	
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	
	Icelandic International Development Agency	
ICEMA	integrated community-based ecosystem management	
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	
IGA	income-generating activity	
	International Labour Organization	
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation	
IWGIA	International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs	
KA	Kyaramacan Association	
KaZa	Kavango-Zambezi Project	
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau	
КОМЕНО	Komeho Namibia Development Agency	
	Kalahari Peoples Fund	
LAC	Legal Assistance Centre	

LaRRI	Labour Resource and Research Institute
LEAD	Land, Environment and Development Project (LAC)
LIPROSAN	
LISUP	
MAWF	11 0
MBESC	, , ,
MCA-N	Millennium Challenge Account Namibia
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDR	multi-drug resistant
MET	
MGECW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
MLR	Ministry of Lands and Resettlement
MLRR	Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (former name of the MLR)
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MRLGHRD	Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development
MWCT	Ministry of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism (former name of the MET)
MYNSSC	Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture
NACSO	Namibia Association of CBNRM Organisations
NAFWU	Namibia Farm Workers Union
NAMAS	Namibia Association of Norway
NAMCOL	Namibian College of Open Learning
NAMPOL	Namibian Police
NAU	8
NDC	
	Namibian Defence Force
NDP	
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NGSIP NHIES	- I - O
	Survey
NHPF	National Health Policy Framework
	National Human Rights Institution
	Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey
NIED	
	Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia
NNF	
NNFU	
NPC	0
	National Planning Commission Secretariat
	Namibia Red Cross Society
	National Resettlement Programme
	Namibia Statistics Agency Namibia Wildlife Resorts
	Omba Arts Trust
	Organisation of African Unity
	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
	or the z ep ut/ r thine trinibuter

OPM	Office of the Prime Minister	
OSISA	Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa	
OST	Omaheke San Trust	
OVC	orphans and vulnerable children	
PLAN	People's Liberation Army of Namibia	
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment	
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal	
RCC	Roads Contractor Company	
RDCC	Regional Development Coordinating Committee	
RPP	Regional Poverty Profile	
RPRP	Rural Poverty Reduction Programme	
RSC	Regional Selection Committee	
SADF	South African Defence Force	
SDP	San Development Programme	
SFP	San Feeding Programme	
SIAPAC	Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Corporation	
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences	
SSC	Social Security Commission	
SSOAN	San Support Organisations' Association of Namibia	
STD	sexually transmitted disease	
STI	sexually transmitted infection	
SWA	South West Africa	
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation	
TA	traditional authority	
ТВ	tuberculosis	
TBA	traditional birth attendant	
TEKOA	Traditional Environmental Knowledge Outreach Academy	
TCE	Total Control of the Epidemic	
UN	United Nations	
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	
	United Nations Development Programme	
	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	
	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights	
	United Nations General Assembly	
	United Nations High Commission for Human Rights	
	United Nations Transitional Assistance Group	
	Universal Periodic Review	
	United States Agency for International Development	
	Village Development Committee	
	Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa	
WATSAN	Water Supply and Sanitation in Namibia (DRFN project)	
WHO	World Health Organization	
WPC	Water Point Committee	
WWF	World Wildlife Fund	







