

NAMIBIA

Capital : Windhoek



Area : 824 290 sqkm
 Population : 2 030 000 inhabts
 Density : 2,5 ctzns/km²
 Average growth : 1,4%

FOCUS

Independent since 1990, with a view of decentralisation, and the restructuration of its public service, Namibia has committed itself to the administrative and territorial reform through establishment of Regional council Act and local Authorities Act. In 1996 central government approved a program of decentralisation ratify by the National Assembly in 1997. Decentralisation constitute with the fight against Aids, one of the priority of the second National Development Plan. However, it remains to implement the process, to reinforce the capacity of the local structure by providing them with technical tools, financial, and human resources. The Ministry of Regional and local government and housing (MRLGH) is responsible for the implementation of decentralisation. It advocates to the support of international development partners.

Although, one can notice the advanced, coordination and structuring of spatial planning program in the objective of harmonising the overall social and economic development process, Regional LGs have not yet benefited from significant financial back up and seem as marginalize link of the decentralisation. MRLGH exercises its coordination and supervision prerogatives aimed at keeping LG activities under the rule of law. This is a threat to local autonomy. LGs have also to enhance their effort to mobilise locally generate resources to complement central government transfers where they exist.

GENERAL INDICATORS

Human Development	HDI	0,607	
	Total GDP (millions \$US)	13 354	
	GDP/per capita (units of \$ US)	6 449	
	Annual Growth	4,4	
	Life Expectancy	48,6	
	Literacy (%)	Men	83,8
		Women	82,8
	Access Internet/1000 ctzn)	33,78	

Decentralization	Communalized Population		
	Average Communal area		
	Urban Population	32,4	
	Number and Tiers of local governments	Regions	13
		Depart.	x
Local govt.		17	

I-The Decentralisation policy

Evaluation:

The local governance system has been set up as part of the government programme in the early independence days. Consistent legislation were thus adopted which led to establishing decentralisation administrative and political structures.

Indicators:

- 1.1. Establishment of the LG system : ↑↑
- 1.2. Consistency of the legal framework: ↑↑
- 1.3. Consistency of administrative arrangements: ↑↑

Establishment of the Local Governance system

“From the constitutional commitment, to the legislation, and from the discussion within government, and among local leadership, the preferred decentralization model in Namibia is that of devolution of power to lower tiers within the context and the overall authority on a unitary state. It is accepted that to get this state could be a long process, and that given the historical background of colonial over-centralisation of power, the Bantustan policies, and the necessary consolidation of nationhood during the first years of independence, such a process might have to pass through the other two stages of

decentralization, i.e. deconcentration and delegation”.

Decentralisation in Namibia was a SWAPO party initiative later included in the national constitution as Chapter 12 to serve as a device to guide the process to achieve the objectives of the concept. The task to spearhead the decentralization process was given to the Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing (MRLGH). Its mandate is “to facilitate the establishment of an effective, decentralized regional and Local Government system capable of delivering services, housing and physical planning, to the satisfaction of all communities.

Legal framework for decentralisation

The following five pieces of legislation collectively articulate Namibia's decentralization legal framework.

- The Constitution of The Republic of Namibia: Promulgated in 1990, Chapters three, nine and twelve constitute the key elements of decentralization in the country.

- The Regional Councils Act, 1992 (Act 22 of 1992)
- Local Authority Act 23, 1992 (Act 23 of 1992)
- Electoral Act, 1992 (Act 24 of 1992):
- The Decentralisation Enabling Act, 2000 (Act 33 of 2000).

The Administrative Organisation

There are two categories of local governance: the region (13) and the municipality. Municipalities are of 2 types: Part I (3) and Part II (12). There are also Twn councils (14) and Village councils (18). There is no hierarchy between Local governments. There is no upper or lower

level of LG. A part from the 13 regions which covers all the country, there are in total 48 entities with the statute of local government.

Local administration is the primary responsibility of councils. The sizes of councils differ according to the

classification of each council's administrative territory as defined by the Acts. To that end each region has

between 6 and 12 councillors; Part I and Part II municipalities have between 7 and 12 each; and each village council has 7.

Table 1 : Administrative and territorial organisation

Territorial Division		Local Govt..	Constituency	Delib. Organ	Executive Organ	Decent Organ/Super-Vision
Name.	No					
Regions	13	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Municipalities P.I	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Municipalities P.II	12	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Town councils	14	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Village councils	18	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No

Source: Ministry of Local government and regional development, 2006

II- The implementation strategy

Evaluation:

The decentralization process is implemented according to legislation provisions and the transfer of competences is effective under the monitoring of the Ministry of regional and local government and housing. Local and national planning are articulated to each other.

Indicators:

- 2.1. Implementation planning : ↑↑
- 2.2. Transfer of competencies and sector-based policies: ↑↑
- 2.3. Structuring of decentralization and spatial planning: ↑↑
- 2.4. Technical support and M&E of the process: ↑↑

The Decentralisation implementation planning

The decentralization programme focuses on how best to split into regional responsibilities / budgets the competences and functions that the line Ministries have already identified [there is room for addition] as opposed to the current situation where the country is split into operational regions that do not necessarily coincide with the statutory political boundaries, for example in the areas of health and education. To that end, implementation of the decentralization policy seeks to rectify the administrative problem caused by overlapping boundaries. Hence, line ministries are requested to indicate the numbers and levels of staff to be seconded to the councils and where possible give the date. The plan focuses on the feasibility of transferring extra skills that exist in different ministries to councils, and to empower the councils to hire needed skills if they cannot be obtained from line Ministries. At present all regions, Part 1 and Part 2 municipalities, towns and villages have full council complement. Therefore, the government aims to achieve decentralization by phasing in the

necessary functions, skills and material strategically, and at the same time ensuring that the relationship between regional and local authorities is based on the principle of non-subordination. A broad policy that empowers regional and local councils to hire personnel supports both the government and local authorities in their effort to identify and engage qualified persons in all areas of social, political, and economic activities.

The 1989 SWAPO party congress that charted the organisation's election campaign provided the stimulus for the decentralisation political process. Decentralization was a vision that was translated into chapter 12 of the national constitution upon attainment of independence, and aimed to take the government to the people through regional and local authorities. Article 102 of the document explicitly articulates the structural aspects of the decentralization concept. Once the concept had been integrated into the constitution, other modes of politically sensitizing the regional and local political systems were later used. These included open-air political meetings

at which the concept was discussed; workshops attended by representatives of regional and local administrations to tackle political issues viewed to be central to the implementation of the decentralization policy; and conferences involving politicians and academicians during which challenges of decentralization were addressed. The effort enjoyed national consensus as all political parties and organizations keenly involved themselves in the vibrant exchange of ideas, and in proffering opinions on the best way to engage the ordinary citizens in the decentralization process. The establishment of the 'Electoral Commission' in 1992 provided yet another boost for the decentralization process politically. The Commission ensured the implementation of a universal political right

that in Namibia "all people who are entitled to vote for the President, the National Assembly, a Regional Council or Local Authority are entitled to register in the constituency or local authority or local authority ward". It was a call on the citizens of Namibia to practice their political right in all the thirteen regions and ninety four constituencies in the country. The political process is thus, an on-going activity manifesting through public political meetings, the print media, television and radio informational programmes, and other forms of interaction in which discussing issues of national governance upstages socio-economic debates that always take concrete shape in parliament. The Namibian parliament provides the forum for legislative processes.

Transfer of competencies and sector based policies

Local Government Participation in Sector-Based Developmental Policies: Although the transferring of resources as stipulated by the system in place appear simple, disparities in terms of levels of development and demographic population outlay as well as social push and pull factors heavily impacted on the system. Given the fact that decentralization in a unitary state entails regional integration without compromising statutory identities, sectoral and regional views on developmental priorities underpin the administrative difficulties. To that end, key aspects are identifiable. At local authority level coping with rural-urban migration in the face of limited resources to provide

economic infrastructure and jobs, housing, health and other social facilities is a big challenge. At regional level identification and exploitation of the limited economic resources without having appropriate know how, not to mention lack of administrative skills greatly undermines quality delivery of goods and services to the citizens; and at national level regional integration means achieving sector-developmental policy aligned with national sector policies from which realistic developmental strategies and programmes can be drawn. This has not been achieved yet, hence the concerted and indeed successful effort by government to streamline developmental planning.

Institutions in charge of technical support and monitoring

The Ministry of Local government and regional development is in responsible for guiding, supervising and controlling regional and local government. Regional councils are also vested with the power to advising the central government on matters related to the regions.

Decentralisation and spatial planning

Having observed early that strong sectoral and regional views on developmental priorities posed challenges to planning, government has since embarked on integrated planning. As a result regional specifics and global national priorities are being combined. Regional Councils are

thus, compelled to formulate regional sector policies and at the same time articulate national sector plans. The exercise provides for addressing both regional and national needs and priorities at same time.

III- The local government structures and management

Evaluation :

The local management organs are in place and functioning quite well. The technical staffs bear sufficient skills in urban centre whilst the remote LG are in need of capacity building. The MRLGH exercises a supervision power over Local governments' activities.

Indicators:

3.1. Functioning of the political organs : ↑↑

3.2. Quality of the technical organs: ⇒

3.3. The level of the State control: ↑↑

The political organs

The Council

Operationally every council is a manifestation of a political organ at its level. The Council comprises not few than seven councillors, and not more than fifteen. Each councillor represents a constituency of his/her own. Local authority councils therefore seek to address problems and issues that were topical before and during elections, and those that emerge thereafter. Administrative and managerial effectiveness is also provided for by the Act in that at regional level the council

must meet not less than 10 times a year, and at intervals of not more than 10 weeks.

The Mayor:

The Mayor is elected [through a secret ballot] by fellow councillors during the first meeting after elections. There is always a Deputy Mayor who is also elected by a full council. The mayor thus, voices institutional political aspirations representative of consensual agreement of political policy issues initiated by councillors as individual members of different political parties.

The technical organs

At both regional and local authority levels the respective Acts that established the bodies, namely the Regional Councils Act 22 of 1992 and the Local Authorities Act 23 of 1992 provide for the establishment of council, an executive body responsible for administration, and identification and hiring of technical officers. From these three layers of administration, different committees to manage the affairs of the council are established each with responsibility over a specific area of managerial duties. The duties are stipulated by the Act.

The Strategic Executive of each section/department is largely responsible for planning and identifying the quantity and levels of required expertise, as well as the experience before hiring is done.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): the CEO works with nine 'Strategic Executives' each charged with specific responsibilities: police; economic development and community services; electricity, finance; human resources management; infrastructure, water and waste management; information, communication and technology; planning urbanization and environment; and transportation. He (the CEO) is accountable for all major operational decisions and actions of the council. The two Act also provide for clearly defined processes of organizational structuring and hiring of personnel, as well as the organization of the management of the council's affairs focusing on decision making, service provision, and contracting procedures.

Control of Local government by the central government

The central government, in particular the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing, plays an oversight and supervisory role in terms of administration of the local governance.

However, it can veto actions seen to be outside the parameters provided for by the Acts. Articles 30 and 32 of the Act, which articulate the powers of local authorities, and the administrative relationship

between local authorities and central government, provide for the expected delivery of quality services. It is the responsibility of the MRLGH to monitor

and supervise the overall fiscal management by both regional and local authorities, and to take appropriate action should it be found necessary.

Structures and functioning of the municipal services

Structures of local government are provided for by the above-mentioned legal documents that created local government bodies in the form of councils (Regional Council and Local Authorities Acts, sub items 18 and 21 respectively). At Regional level each Council has four key administrative divisions, namely

- Directorate of Human Resources, Finance and Administration,

- Directorate of Planning and Development Services,
- Directorate of Education,
- Directorate of Community Health.

At Local Authority level several departments exist due to the multiplicity of responsibilities local authorities have in terms of providing goods and services to the communities.

IV- The Human Resources

Evaluation :

Due to the legal requirement of a minimum standard education to qualify for a position in LGs, staff technical levels has improved over recent years. There is no systematic policy of HR resource transfer from central government to LGs. The latter bear full contracting power in managing their affairs.

Indicators:

- 4.1. The qualifications of local agents : ⇒
- 4.2. The transfer of the human resources: ⇓
- 4.3. The LG contracting power: ⇒

The existence and qualification level of local agents

Whereas differences exist in terms either of number of positions filled in each local authority, or acceptable qualifications for a

position, equivalences are used in order to achieve uniformity.

Table 2: Levels and Qualification of Agents:

Grade At: Regional Level Gr.:	Post Designation	Functional Level:	Post Level
5A	Chief Regional Officer	Operational	
4AL1	Director	Operational	
4AL2	Deputy Director	Operational	
3AL 1/ & SP 2/3	Clerk/Personnel Officer /Planner/ and Training Officer	Operational	
3AL2	Clerk	Operational	
3BL1/2	Development Planner / Clerk /System Admin.	Operational	
2AL2/3	Personnel Officer /Accountant	Operational	
2BL3	Clerk / Accountant	Operational	
1AL1	Labourer / Assistant	Operational	
1BL1	Labourer /Cleaner / Switchboard Operator	Operational	
1BL2/3	Artisan A / Handyman /Operator / Driver	Operational	
1CL2	Clerk / Typist	Operational	
SP2	Development Planner / Statistician	Operational	
Within Ministry of Regional Local Govt. & Rural Development:			
4AL2(M)	Deputy Director	Occupational Mgmt.	3 rd Promotion
3BL2	Chief [e.g. HRM]	Overhead Supervisory	2 nd Promotion
3AL2	Senior Practitioner	Supervisory	1 st Promotion

2CL2	Practitioner	Operational	2 nd Entry post
2AL3	Assistant Practitioner	Operational	1 st Entry post

It should be further explained that the ministry is working on a possible uniform structure through the Public Service in an effort to harmonise the Public Service Acts of 1980 and 1995. Although there could be exceptions based on the number of years one has been practicing a particular profession, decentralization policy insists on tertiary qualifications as the minimum requirement for administrative leadership positions at both regional and local authority levels. That requirement has prompted many of the personnel to take

The local government contracting power

The local council lacks the regulatory capacity to enforce the contract and to conduct a study on social dialogue institutions. Municipalities are confronted by serious constraints. These include:

- lack of capacity and experience;
- the failure of communities to pay for services;
- the poor quality and lack of sustainability for some of the projects.

The new demarcation of 1995 also expanded the responsibilities of municipalities without increasing their budgets. Faced with these constraints, government is determined to implement the municipal service partnership as an

V- The Local democracy

Evaluation :

Local elections are held regularly, competitive and fair. The real participation of women is going up especially in decision-making bodies. Civil society involvement and State supervision insure transparency and accountability of local authorities. The latter have forms associations according to their belonging for the promotion of their respective interests, advocacy and capacity building.

Indicators:

- 5.1. Fairness of the electoral system: ↑
- 5.2. Level of citizen political participation: ⇒
- 5.3. Transparency and accountability of local authorities and management: ⇒
- 5.4. Sustainability of the municipal movement: ⇒

The electoral system

The government sought to democratize its institutions through decentralization, and involve the citizens in various ways in its effort to achieve maximum citizen's

up further studies [such as Executive Masters of Business Administration, Masters of Public Administration, or Masters in Public Policy Administration] either with the University of Namibia or with other tertiary institutions worldwide. As a result, personnel management at regional and local authority levels in Namibia currently puts emphasis on academic qualifications and skills – advertised positions specify these and the positions get filled within very short time.

alternative form of service delivery. This would see the government becoming the insurer of service delivery, rather than directly providing services. Government and others argue that the private sector is better able to generate capital for municipalities and bring in new skills. They also say that the public sector is incapable of delivering alone, and that partnerships would assist in releasing resources from the private sector to implement major development objectives. Privatisation, it is argued, will lead to the reduction of costs, improved delivery, a stimulus to the private sector and better managerial practices associated with private corporations.

participation in decision making, policy formulation and implementation.

At local level, the Local Authorities Act 23 of 1992 determines the structure and operational parameters of local authority

councils as well as the required qualifications, duties, and tenure of office for the councillors. The Regional Councils Act 22 of 1992 does the same for the regions and the regional councillors. As representatives of constituents, the councillors are elected into office. Their role in the governance of the regions or local authorities is first and foremost to consult the electorate in an effort to find out the needs of the constituents, and to articulate them in the council meetings for redress in the form of policies that should be translated into programmes designed to sustainably provide goods and services to the residents.

Emerging from the whole phenomenon, indeed a connectivity of consciously designed activities carried out by residents or citizens with specific skills and commitment are policy outputs that define local democracy in Namibia.

The first in the chain of the activities is the voting process, which is provided for by the Electoral Act 24 of 1992. The Act defines 'voting' as every Namibian's democratic right, and provides conditions for facilitation, management, control, and corrective measures before, during, and after every electoral process. It is on record that complaints about irregularities have been addressed, and votes recounted in some cases (Namibia, 2004 General Elections). There can be no better democracy in practice in which accountability, transparency, and responsiveness than the seriousness with which the Namibian government conducts elections at all levels.

The second is the extent to which the governing party encourages opposition parties to work hard in order to get more votes and better representation at all levels of government. This is an unexpected phenomenon in Africa.

The representativeness of the local authorities and the local participation

Representativeness of the councils is largely determined by the popularity and effectiveness of each political party during electioneering. Currently seven political parties are represented at one level or another. These are the Congress of Democrats (COD), Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), Monitor Action Group

The democratic nature of elections at regional and local authority levels in Namibia is embedded in the constitution (Chapters 3, 9, 10 and 12), and Regional and Local Authority Acts 22 and 23 respectively. The documents clearly and collaboratively state the rights and qualifications of both voters and candidates. The 2004 general elections in which 815637 voters participated in the elections demonstrated the people's willingness to exercise their right (EISA, 2004. Namibia.11). The following seven facts attest to the credibility of election in Namibia: introduction of electronic voter's role at approximately 300 polling stations in an effort to speed up the process and thereby prevent tampering with the votes cast; the independent Electoral Commission taking charge of guaranteeing the integrity of the voting process by ensuring that each voter exercises his/her vote in secrecy; use of Braille tactile folder as a mechanism to enable visually impaired voters to exercise their political right; continuous consultation between the Electoral commission and representatives of all political parties taking part in the elections on any issue; counting of votes at a central point in each constituency in the presence of party representatives before the results are sent to the national results center in the capital city; convening of a public ceremony attended by all political parties to accept the results; and sealing of all separate packets of counted ballot papers, rejected ballots, and polling station returns for safekeeping by the Director of Elections. The packets can be opened only with a court order, which may be granted to assist investigation of any complaints or prosecution of an offence under various Acts and Regulations.

MAG), National Unity Democratic Change (NUDO), Republican Party (RP), South West Africa Peoples Organisation (SWAPO), and United Democratic Front (UDF). The National Movement for Democratic Change (NMDC) and South West Africa National Union contested the 2004 elections but failed to win any seats

(EISA, Ibid. 10). It could thus, be summarized that elections in Namibia are backed by law, legitimized by national consensus that accepts government policies, and characterized by broad enthusiasm among supporters of different parties and organizations. Hence, since 1989 the electoral process in the country has entrenched the policy of decentralization thereby guaranteeing transparency and accountability, not to mention the empowerment of local government organs – regional and local authority councils. The empowerment has also seen women representation in the national assembly improve by 0.9 percent to register 27.3% (EISA, Ibid. 12) during the 2004 elections. Normally what happens at national level percolates down to regional and local levels. Consequently the number of female regional governors now stands at 3, female Chief Regional Officers at 4, and female mayors and town clerks at 7 (MRLGH, Regions, Municipalities and Town Councils)

The third is series of sectional meetings that local authorities organize to inform the residents about the municipality views and intentions about the policies in place or to be made. The local authorities are always mindful of residents' expectations and complaints, and they would like to get support from the rates payers for executing their mandate in the manner they do. Duped 'consultative sessions', the sectional meetings constitute an attestation of democracy at work, where consultation takes place at the lowest level of society, and that the ideas and suggestions emerging there from are incorporated into policies.

The fourth is a package of different modes of the media. These include what is referred to as 'The Chart Show', 'Talk of Nation [a Monday night call – in television programme], 'Open Parliament [also a call-

in radio programme, a 'call in' radio programme]' and the print media.

The 'chart show' is a programme open to the entire human population in the country. The programme encourages people to air their views in support or opposition to what they see happening in the communities. Being a conduit of unedited first hand information, it draws the attention of the entire political spectrum in the country, thereby reminding elected officials that they should either perform as expected or face the prospect of losing elections the next time around. Talk of the nation calls on officials of institutions to explain, or clarify institutional policies, or share with the communities their views on the way forward with regard to achieving national developmental objectives. It is also a 'no hold bars' programme in terms of challenging policies on service provision. 'Open Parliament' augments the above two, and the print media is an instrument that the public and private sector, as well as the civil society can freely use to its advantage or to the advantage of the community. Namibia is one of the few countries in the world that enjoys freedom of expression. Not a single reporter or contributor to the print media has ever been arrested for expressing his or her views on an issue in Namibia.

Therefore, the vibrancy of the regional and local authorities in Namibia results from the institutional synergy between the national government and these lower level arms of government as provided for by Article 30 of the Regional Councils Act 22 of 1992, and by Article 32 of the Local Authority Act 23 of 1992.

The Act further compels the council to open its meeting to the public, and to make the minutes accessible to the public as well, not to mention the limitation on the powers of the chairperson in order to guarantee that the council's decisions truly reflect the views of the majority.

The transparency and accountability system of local management

As prescribed under Article 21 of the Local Authority Act 23 of 1992, a management committee of a municipality or town council with fewer than nine councillors shall have three (3) members, and one with more than ten (10) councillors shall have five (5)

members. Every management committee chooses [through a secret ballot] its chairperson who should not be the mayor. The latter is a requirement for purposes of ensuring effective checks and balances, on the whole, achieving democracy

through transparency and accountability. Both the mayor and management

committee members are elected every year.

The municipal movement and the decentralised cooperation

Three associations operating in local government in Namibia:

- Association of Local Authorities of Namibia (ALAN),
- Association of Regional Councils (ARC),
- Namibia Local Administrators' Organisation (NALAO).

The most important of it is the Association of Local Authorities Namibia (ALAN), because it represents all local authority members in Namibia. In addition it provides a platform on which these local authorities can air their grievances and thereby provide better services for the community. The Association aims to be a dynamic, self-sustaining organization that plays an advocacy role on behalf of local authorities, with a view to promoting and assisting its membership address socio-economic problems in a comprehensive and sustainable manner in order to

stimulate growth and financial stability. Any Local Authority or body which functions as a Local Authority in the opinion of the Management Committee may be accepted by the Management Committee as a member of the Association. The aims of the Association and undertakes to pay the membership fees prescribed in this Constitution, as amended from time to time. Every Local Authority or other Authority functioning as a Local Authority shall, as long as it is a member of this Association, be entitled to have the following representatives with voting rights, which may be either Councillors or Officials, or a Councillor and an Official, at any Congress of the Association.

In 2009, ALAN is invited to bid to host Commonwealth Local Government Conference whose theme will be around how can build strong local governance.

VI- The Local finances

Evaluation :

The intergovernmental transfer is not in the spirit of the Namibian decentralisation system. However, the Central government provides some subsidies to LG in need of. LGs are thus encouraged to boost their performance in mobilising their own resources.

Indicators:

- 6.1. Consistency of intergovernmental transfers : ↓↓
- 6.2. LG performances in locally generated resources: ↑↑
- 6.3. The economic and financial weight of LG: ⇒

Intergovernmental transfers

Government grants

These constitute yet another big source of revenue. Emerging from the continuous debate on how best to empower local authorities was a strong recommendation to "increase/expand" the tax base of regional and local authorities in order to match their revenue needs and responsibilities. In short, Namibia's regional and local authorities power to take charge of their administrative responsibilities is incrementally evolving as a result of the government's continuous fine tuning of the policies in place, and introduction of new ones where it is needed in order to systematically facilitate

the movement from delegated to devolved form of decentralization. The authorities can therefore determine their sources of revenue and modalities of using the funds, usually after predicting [a very difficult thing to do even if prior consultation is done] service demands.

The Trust Fund

One major source of transfers is the Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provision Act 22 of 2000. The promulgation of the Act was a clear recognition by government that disparities existed among regional and local authorities in terms of developmental capacity. The purpose of the Act is to

assist with (i) the development of regions and local authorities, and (ii) the implementation, through the active participation of the local people and in accordance with the Decentralisation Enabling Act of 2000, of the decentralization programmes at regional and local authority levels in Namibia.

Implicitly the Act took cognizance of an anticipated long process to achieve decentralisation. Hence, the unavoidable financial transfers from the center either as mandatory or none mandatory; or falling under assigned, incentive, or hundred

percent grants in line with statutory prescriptions continue. However, the Trust Fund Act arrived with a specific mandate: facilitate regional and local development by marshalling financial resources and administering collected funds with equity – an acceptance of the absence of parity among the regions and local authorities in terms of capacity to generate own revenue. Population density and the overall social and economic demands determined the sizes of the transfers as indicated in the chart below.

The locally generated revenues

9.1 Sources of locally raised funds include

- moneys appropriated by law for purposes of the funds of local authority council;
- the rates, charges, fees, and other moneys levied under any provision of the Act and received by the local authority council;
- any moneys borrowed by the local authority council by way of loans or issue of debentures, bills of exchange or other negotiable instruments;
- any interests or dividends derived from investments made under subsection (3) [on financial matters];
- any fines imposed in respect of any contravention of, or failure to

- comply with, any provision of [the] Act or any other provision administered by a local authority council by virtue of the provisions of section 3(3) or 95(4);
- any moneys received by way of donations; and
- any moneys accruing to the funds of the local authority council from any other source.

The Act provides adequate instruments and operational scope to strengthen the tax and financial base for local authorities for effective fiscal sharing, and at the same time leaves enough room for the local authorities to use own initiative to improve the situation.

The financial and economic weight of local governments

The financial weight depends on the transfer of the resources from the centre government or not. In the first case, the weight is quite important because local council benefited both local revenue and centre government resources transfer.

In the second case, local council have to manage only with the local revenue with is not important. Sometimes, the financial weight is reduced by the payment of the moneys borrowed.

VII- Local development and poverty alleviation

Evaluation:

Through planned activities, Namibian LGs have got a sound reputation in service delivery to the population. How ever, the decentralisation process needs to be enhance in the sense of transferring more responsibilities to the LGs in other areas of MDGs.

Indicators:

- 7.1. Local development planning capacity : ↑↑
- 7.2. Level of service delivery to the population: ↑↑
- 7.3. Support to the local economic actors: ↑↑

The local development planning

The local development planning system is part of the overall national planning system. The distribution of roles is set up as follows:

- *National Developmental Plan*: the task of the National Planning Commission is to harmonise [Ministerial] sector planning and rationalize developmental projects so that they fit into national priorities, thereby determining the schedules for planned actions, whereas the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing is responsible for policy formation, implementation, coordination and monitoring. The two organs of government seek to systematically synchronise government actions for development whereby the local functionaries play the key role.

The transfer of resources and competencies facilitate achievement of productive and sustainable local economy. To that end, Development Co-operation for National Development was designed as "an integral process of mobilization, coordination and management of external and local resources and monitoring their utilization in order to promote social, political and economic development of Namibia (Namibia, NDP2 Vol. 1. 06.1.)". Militating the process was and remains to be the quest to create employment and the compulsion on the part of the national government to ensure delivery of goods and services to the nation through the most practical, democratic and realist method. At the time of planning the NDP2 Namibia had a large number of cooperating partners – 16 multilateral agencies and 26 bilateral donors (Namibia, Ibid. 06.1). Local businesses and financial institutions were also part of the developmental collectivity unlimited. Direct beneficiaries then and now include a wide range in informal sector entrepreneurs and formal businesses that today continue to get loans from both the financial institutions and other sources. Their collective products output covers crafts, construction and construction material, food production and processing, and textile goods. However, most of the informal sector recipients of donor assistance have to negotiate an amicable

compromise between specific policy dictates of the donors and conscious recognition of local economic imperatives (Namibia, Ibid. 06.1). It is also important to take cognizance of the topographic and developmental differences among the 13 regions. The differences obviously percolate down to regional and local authority developmental projects. The government bears the responsibility to ensure national equitable development in Namibia. It therefore, provides percolate support to all organs below it in the form of enabling legislation, appropriate policies and regulations, necessary infrastructure, supervision of delegated functions and staff, and fiscal support.

- *Regional Developmental Plan*: It is the duty of Regional councils "to facilitate and promote regional development by providing accessible, quality socio-economic services in a transparent, accountable and balanced manner. Such planning is being done in consultation with line ministries to ensure comprehensiveness in terms of required schedules and inputs, and programme prioritization vis-à-vis national development priorities.

- *Local Developmental Plan*: At local authority level the councils have the freedom to plan in line with local expectations, regional international approach to development, and national global priorities and schedules.

- *Civil Society and the Private Sector Developmental Plans*: Due to their nature in terms of belonging, and the fact that membership to the groups is overlapping, the two play a role beneficial to all levels of government institutions and national development. The role manifests through private companies and non-governmental organizations such as Village Development Committees (VDC), Community Based Organisations (CBO), Constituency Development Committees (CDC), Regional Development Coordinating Committees (RDCC), Association of Regional Councils of Namibia (ACRN), Association of Local Authorities of Namibia (ALAN), and Settlement Committees (SC) (Namibia, 1998. Situation Analysis. iv-v). The

organisations' development plans are usually discussed at regional and/or national workshops or conferences, and some aspects of the plans find their way

into the National Development Plan [master] document. This is an on-going process.

Local Government supply of basic services to the population

Local councils are responsible for water and sanitation, refuse management, environmental protection and energy. Namibian LGs have gained a sound reputation in water and sanitation service delivery, especially in waste water recycling for consumption. Their performance in electricity provision permits to cover the population needs.

In terms of service delivery Equity is ensured by the provisions built into the Act. The provisions were designed to prevent possible nepotistic practices by council members or officials. In addition, there is a statutory compulsion [for members] to declare conflict of interests, and to promote neutrality when outsourcing services virtually guarantees justice and fair distribution of services.

The support to the local economic actors

Being largely dependent on the government fiscally, the regions' support for local economic activities is either conditional or situational. Most of the support is in the form of market infrastructure [cubicles or facilities at open markets] or commercial stands. Build-together housing projects are also found in every region. The local authorities find it easy to manage these because they [the local authorities] identify, demarcate and in some cases construct the necessary buildings usually occupied by SMEs.

Therefore, it is clear that in Namibia development is provided for by the collaborative nature of the operations of the national, regional, and local authority

These statutory conditions apply equally to municipality councils. In Namibia, the decentralization process is anchored in administrative levels and relationships. These explain the quantity and schedules of services to be decentralized.

As already mentioned, the weaknesses and strengths of local economies emerge from different levels of natural resources, unequal levels of developmental infrastructure, availability of skills and the impact of push and pull [economic] factors on human resources. All these assist would be donors to decide on what projects to support and for how long. Nonetheless, many developmental projects are being implemented in every region and at every level country – wide.

administrations supported by the private sector and by civil society organizations. However, regional and local authorities play key roles as area governments in situ. Nevertheless, problems are always experienced due to limited financial resources to carry out locally initiated developmental projects, rural – urban migration that puts constraints on limited resources, heavy backlog and ever-increasing demand for a wide range of services, decaying infrastructure in some cases, limited capacity to access bank loans, and most importantly limited skills required in critical developmental planning areas