RURAL HOUSING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA

by

MARTIN ANDREAS WIENECKE

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the subject

DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR J C N MENTZ

NOVEMBER 1995
To my parents
Wife and children
FOREWORD

Without the support of specific individuals and organisations this study could not have been completed. Those who have provided oral information, data and literature on the various aspects included in this dissertation, contributed to new insights which were valuable for the completion of the study.

To start with, gratefully recognition is extended to all the officials in the various government ministries and departments who provided me with the requested information, data, and documents.

Special acknowledgement is given to the National Housing Enterprise for financial support and the use of the library.

Dr Hannes Mentz as the supervisor, his patience and his valuable contributions, comments and criticism during the years of studying. His visits to Windhoek made it easier for me to discuss problem areas which emerged and therefore facilitated the thoroughness of the dissertation.

Finally, a special thank you to Mrs M. Naude and Mrs F. Davids, who helped with the proof-reading of the manuscript.

M.A. Wienecke
November 1995
SUMMARY:

When Namibia became independent in March 1990, the new government pledged to alleviate poverty, unemployment and to improve the living standards of the formerly disadvantaged groups in the country. Rural development was presented as one of the priorities because the majority of the people live in or still have strong ties to the rural areas.

Rural housing and rural development consist of a number of components. Both have similar objectives, *inter alia*, the improvement of living standards. Development efforts are often impeded by an urban bias in government policies and projects. In the case of Namibia, certain areas do not even have a formulated policy to guide developments, especially in communal areas with a high population concentration. This study explores to what extent the government has realised rural development policies and in particular rural housing in Northern Namibia as a means to improve living standards.
KEY TERMS:

Rural development; Rural housing; Urbanisation; Infrastructural services; Environment; Basic needs; Construction methods; Building materials; Quality of life; Government policy; Northern Namibia
### CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOREWORD</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY TERMS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACRONYMS USED</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES, GRAPHS, AND TABLES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Characteristics of Namibia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Demarcation of the study field</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND THE PROBLEM OF RURAL HOUSING</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. RESEARCH METHODS EMPLOYED</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Primary sources</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Secondary sources</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Procedures</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Techniques</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Interviews conducted</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ANNEXURE: QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2: ISSUES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Development theories</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 The significance of rural development</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Relieving urban population pressure</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Distribution of benefits</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Increasing agricultural productivity and production</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Self-sufficiency and sustainability</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Ecology and environment</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Participation in development</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Appropriate technology</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NATIONAL POLICIES ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Government policies and rural development</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Administration for policy implementation</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 National planning</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Financing development</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 The role of rural development decentralisation</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Decentralised functions</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.1 Local authority functions</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.2 Support components in rural areas</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Co-ordination of development efforts</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PROJECT ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Implementation of rural development</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Manpower availability in rural areas</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Technical components and inputs</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Non-formal education</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 Land reform</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 3: LIVING STANDARDS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION
2. LIVING STANDARDS AND BASIC NEEDS
3. THE QUALITY OF LIFE CONCEPT
   3.1 Introduction to the concept
   3.2 Measuring the quality of life
   3.2.1 Measurements
   3.2.2 Indicators
   3.2.2.1 Distribution and income levels
   3.2.2.2 Technological change
   3.2.2.3 Institutional change and political participation
   3.2.2.4 Poverty
4. APPROACHES TO BASIC NEEDS
5. HOUSING AS A BASIC NEED
6. POST-INDEPENDENCE LIVING STANDARDS IN AFRICA
7. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 4: THE STUDY AREA IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA

1. INTRODUCTION
2. PERIPHERAL AREAS IN NAMIBIA
   2.1 Regional divisions in Namibia
   2.2 Core-periphery relations
3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREA
   3.1 Spatial and geographic factors
      3.1.1 Geographic and geological factors
      3.1.2 Climatic conditions
   3.2 The economic base of the study area
   3.3 Demographic factors and settlement patterns
   3.4 Social and political aspects
4. GOVERNMENT AND PARASTATAL STRUCTURES
   4.1 Parastatals
   4.2 Local authorities
5. THE LAND ISSUE
6. GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURE
   6.1 Sanitary services
   6.2 Energy sources
7. BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS
   7.1 Housing cost factors
   7.2 Supply of building materials
   7.3 Building standards
8. CONCLUSION
9. ANNEXURE
   9.1 Definition of local authorities
   9.2 Powers, functions, rights and obligations of Local Authority Councils

CHAPTER 5: RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL HOUSING

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND URBANISATION
3. HOUSING DEMAND AND SUPPLY IN NAMIBIA
4. THE NAMIBIAN POLICY ON HOUSING
   4.1 Government policies since independence
   4.2 Political commitment and national policy support
   4.3 Administrative support
   4.4 Budgetary resources
5. COMPONENTS OF RURAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
   5.1 Local governments and local government capacity
   5.2 Local industries
   5.3 Infrastructure and services
   5.4 Maintenance and repairs
6. PROGRAMMATIC INPUTS FOR THE PROVISION OF HOUSING 168
   6.1 Processes in housing project implementation 168
   6.2 Human resource development 170
   6.3 Management and technical skills of local authorities 170
   6.4 Co-ordinating authority 171
   6.5 Monitoring and evaluation of projects 172
   6.6 National and local development planning 172
7. TECHNICAL COMPONENTS IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT 173
   7.1 Loans and finances for housing 173
   7.2 Land availability for housing 175
   7.3 Energy provision 178
   7.4 Technology 179
   7.5 Rural industrialisation 181
   7.6 Information distribution 182
8. PROVISION OF HOUSING 182
   8.1 Traditional methods and materials 184
   8.2 Conventional provision of housing 186
9. THE ROLE OF RURAL HOUSING IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT 187
10. CONCLUSION 191

CHAPTER 6: HOUSING IN THE FOUR NORTHERN AREAS 193
1. INTRODUCTION 193
2. HOUSING IN OSHAKATI, ONAMBOME AND ONANKALI 193
   2.1. Oshakati 197
      2.1.1 Location 198
      2.1.2 Physical context 198
      2.1.3 Settlement zones 199
      2.1.3.1 Oshakati East 200
      2.1.3.2 Oshakati West 200
      2.1.3.3 Informal settlements 200
      2.1.3.4 The industrial area 201
      2.1.4 Population 202
      2.1.5 Infrastructure 202
      2.1.6 Housing 203
      2.1.6.1 conventional housing 205
      2.1.6.2 Informal housing provision 206
      2.1.7 Economy 207
      2.1.8 Local resources 207
   2.2 Onambome 209
      2.2.1 Location 209
      2.2.2 Physical context 209
      2.2.3 Population 209
      2.2.4 Infrastructure 209
      2.2.5 Housing 210
      2.2.6 Economy 210
      2.2.7 Local resources 211
   2.3 Onankali 211
      2.3.1 Location 211
      2.3.2 Physical context 211
      2.3.3 Population 211
      2.3.4 Infrastructure 212
      2.3.5 Housing 212
      2.3.6 Economy 213
      2.3.7 Local resources 213
   3. CONCLUSION 213

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION 215
1. SUMMARY 215
2. FINDINGS 217
3. THE PROSPECTS FOR RURAL HOUSING 219
   3.1 Rural housing 219
   3.2 Proposals with respect to rural housing 221
4. EPILOGUE 225
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary sources
   1.1 Interviews
   1.2 Government Documents and Publications

2. Secondary sources
   2.1 Books and articles
   2.2 Periodicals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Primary sources</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Interviews</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Government Documents and Publications</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Secondary sources</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Books and articles</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Periodicals</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACRONYMS USED
The following abbreviations were used in this dissertation:

- ACN (Action Christian National)
- CDA (Christian Democratic Action)
- CSO (Central Statistic Organization)
- DTA (Democratic Turnhalle Alliance)
- DRFN (Desert Research Foundation of Namibia)
- ENOK (Eerste Nationale Ontwikkelings Korporasie)
- ESCOM (Electricity Supply Commission of South Africa)
- FCN (Federal Convention of Namibia)
- FNDC (First National Development Corporation)
- ILO (International Labor Organization)
- MAWRD (Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development)
- MLGH (Ministry of Local Government and Housing) 1991-1992
- MRLGH (Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing) since 1993
- NBC (Namibia Broadcasting Corporation)
- NBIC (National Building and Investment Corporation of South West Africa, which became NHE in 1992
- NHE (National Housing Enterprise)
- NISER (Namibian Institute for Social and Economic Research)
- NNF (Namibia National Front)
- NPC (National Planning Commission)
- NPF (Namibia Patriotic Front)
- SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency)
- SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization)
- SWAPO-D (South West Africa People's Organization-Democrats)
- SWAWEK (South West Africa Electricity and Water Corporation)
- UDF (United Democratic Front)
- UNDP (United Nations Development Program)
- UNIN (United Nations Institute of Namibia), Lusaka
- UNTAG (United Nations Transitional Assistance Group)

Throughout this dissertation reference is made to the South African currency the Rand (R). In 1993 Namibia introduced its own currency the Namibia Dollar (N$). Both currencies are used in this dissertation, depending on the source. For 1993/94 the value of N$ 1 equals R1.
LIST OF FIGURES, GRAPHS, AND TABLES

Figures

Figure 1.1 The Cuvelai River Basin 2
Figure 4.1 Regional division based on the Odendaal Plan 98
Figure 4.2 New regions in northern Namibia and traditional groupings 98
Figure 4.3 Regional division based on the First Delimitation Commission 99
Figure 4.4 Friedman's development regions and associated spatial processes 101
Figure 4.5 Population densities 111
Figure 6.1 Townplan Oshakati 199
Figure 6.2 Formal and informal areas in Oshakati 201
Figure 6.3 Oshakati map 208
Figure 6.4 Onambome map 208

Graphs

Graph 3.1 Household Subsistence Levels in Windhoek 82
Graph 4.1 Rural and urban populations 108
Graph 4.2 Population distribution in urban and rural areas 109
Graph 4.3 Population growth in Ovambo 109
Graph 4.4 Namibia's 13 largest urban areas 110
Graph 4.5 1989 election - distribution of votes 113
Graph 4.6 1994 election - distribution of votes 114
Graph 4.7 Cunene riverflow at Ruacana 127
Graph 4.8 NBIC costs for conventional houses 129
Graph 4.9 Cement sales in Namibia 132
Graph 5.1 Namibia's housing stock in 15 largest urban areas 147
Graph 5.2 Projected housing demand in Namibia's urban areas 147
Graph 5.3 Construction costs 149
Graph 6.1 Population and types of houses 194
Tables
Table 4.1 Population figures 108
Table 4.2 Oshakati population figures 110
Table 4.3 Ongwediva population figures 110
Table 4.4 Ondangwa population figures 110
Table 4.5 Urban population and localities (1991) 112
Table 4.6 Cement consumption in Namibia 133
Table 5.1 Housing backlog in urban centres in the study area 146
Table 5.2 Demand projections and average construction costs 148
Table 5.3 Houses completed by NBIC/NHE 149
Table 5.4 Types of houses in Namibia 150
Table 5.5 MRLGH's budget allocations for housing 150
Table 5.6 NHE's budget allocations for housing 151
Table 5.7 Budget allocations for infrastructure 167
Table 6.1 Building materials for walls and roofs 194
Table 6.2 Oshakati housing stock 1991 196
Table 6.3 Ongwediva housing stock 1991 196
Table 6.4 Ondangwa housing stock 1991 196
Table 6.5 Oshakati housing stock 1993 197
Table 6.6 Ongwediva housing stock 1993 197
Table 6.7 Ondangwa housing stock 1993 197
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Characteristics of Namibia

Namibia is located between the 17th and 29th latitudes, and the 12th and 25th longitudes. The country borders on the Atlantic Ocean in the west and Botswana in the east. To the south it borders on the Republic of South Africa. The northern regions borders on Angola and Zambia. The total land area of Namibia is about 82.4 million hectares, which includes Walvis Bay with 112400 hectares (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:19). This is about 3 percent of the total land area of Africa.

The country has three distinct geographical regions: the Namib Desert, the Kalahari Desert and the Central Plateau (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:19). The Namib Desert which extends along the Atlantic Ocean, constitutes about 15 percent of the total land area of Namibia. From the coastal plain the mountainous central plateau rises to altitudes of 1000 to 2000 metres. Isolated peaks reach altitudes over 2500 metres (Ministry of Transport, Works and Communication 1992:2-1). The lower lying eastern and north-eastern regions are extensions of the Mega Kalahari desert\(^1\). The country is dominated by rocky areas such as steep mountains (36%), sands with low water retaining capacity (28.8%), and poorly developed soils (20.8%), leaving few areas with a potential for crop production (Van der Merwe 1983:9).

Rainfall throughout the country is extremely variable and unpredictable (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:20). It varies from the coast with an average annual rainfall of about 20 mm to more than 700 mm in the north-east. Annual average evaporation is between 3700mm in the central-southern area to 2600mm in the north. About 80% of the total rainfall evaporated shortly after precipitation.

Despite the long coast line, Namibia has only two harbour towns. Walvis Bay, the principal harbour, was reintegrated into Namibia in 1994 (Tvedten & Mupotola 1995:9), after its annexure in 1878 by the British (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:32, Brooks 1976:187). The South-West Africa Act, Act 24 of 1922, passed by the South African parliament, provided that the town would be regarded as part of South West Africa for judicial purposes (Brooks 1976:189). The administration of the town had been transferred to the Cape Province by the South African government in 1977 (Thomas 1978:61). The town became part of the Erongo region after the town was

\(^1\) The Mega Kalahari must be distinguished from the smaller area known as Kalahari Desert, part of which is found in the south-eastern part of Namibia (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:20).
the Orange River, all rivers originate in Angola. As shown in Figure 1, the Cuvelai River also originates in Angola. The importance of this river to the study area is described in chapter four.

Figure 1.1 The Cuvelai River Basin (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:43).

When Namibia became independent in March 1990, the fulfilment of the ruling party's promises during the election campaign in 1989 were anxiously awaited. The population in the north of the country, but also in the urban areas to the south, expected the government to begin immediately to address their problems and demands. However, a large number of former freedom fighters, professionals and intellectuals, is becoming increasingly disappointed with the growing differences of incomes, benefits and living standards between the population and the rulers. It was expected that the new government would seriously tackle the question of inequalities and the distribution of benefits to all. The allocation of very large salaries, luxuries, and benefits to the members of the ruling class, became a theme repeatedly discussed since it appeared in 1990, for example in letters written to newspapers. Especially in the light the tight financial situation of the country, it is implausible how the rulers can live in affluence, whereas not enough funds are available for the needy groups of the population to address basic needs.

SWAPO's election manifesto (1989:17-18) states that a SWAPO government will endeavour to eliminate the wide differences between urban and rural standards of living by initiating development programmes designed to improve income earnings of
enough funds are available for the needy groups of the population to address basic needs.

SWAPO's election manifesto (1989:17-18) states that a SWAPO government will endeavour to eliminate the wide differences between urban and rural standards of living by initiating development programmes designed to improve income earnings of rural communities. It goes on: "It will do this through equitable allocation of investment funds... Since there will be limits to the availability of investment funds, independent Namibia will emphasise the use of labour-intensive methods". Furthermore, the abuse of power and public office, the squandering of public funds by holders of public office as in the past, will be stopped by introducing stringent measures to curb corrupt practices (SWAPO 1989:24). SWAPO promised to reduce the inequalities of income distribution (1989:26). However, after gaining independence, it became clear that government officials and leader's living standards would receive huge boosts due to their salaries and benefits. The Windhoek Advertiser (September 27, 1990:1) commented on this issue:

"The injustices of the past will be addressed by the leaders of the present - and those leaders will be the first to have their injustices addressed".

The sensible use and allocation of available resources for new government structures has been one issue of discussion, after the First Delimitation Commission (Republic of Namibia 1991b) proposed that Namibia should be divided into 13 regions. The members of the commission saw it as their task to establish effective regions with a strong local democracy and to ensure that the areas benefit from development (The Namibian, October 29, 1991:3). Another aim was to create regions that are economically viable as units. The government of Namibia's ability to finance these 13 regions is a matter of concern. The Namibian government was running a deficit even before the new regions come into being. The deficit in the first year after independence amounted to 1,3% of GDP, in 1992/93 it jumped to 5,8%, whereas in 1993/94 it was lowered to 4,9% of GDP (Ministry of Finance 1994:9).

This study cannot focus on all aspects of rural housing, but concentrates on aspects relating to the living conditions of the residents in rural areas. Their living conditions are described as being worse than those in urban areas, because inhabitants have no access to decent housing or receive any government support to build houses (MLGH 1990:3). The study area can be described as a low-income area, because the majority of people live from their land and the contributions by other family members working south of the study area in the major urban areas. As the majority of people in rural Namibia could be classified as falling within low-income groups, the income of a household could be considered an important aspect
relating to living standards. Housing was and is a highly politicised issue in the country as a result of the past, but it is also becoming politicised because of the differences in the living conditions of the members of government and the rest of the population (see chapter 7). In the past the differences were attributed to policies, which largely favoured only one group of inhabitants (see Republic of Namibia 1991b:8).

Government policies reflect the political position of a government. By examining the policies relating to housing, this study tries to contrast the government's proposed policies with the actual reality. Rising inequalities between regions and the different strata of society, are determined as a basis for an evaluation of one of the most important rural development goals, namely the improvement of the living standards of the majority of the population.

A concern for the development of rural housing was never reflected in the policies of previous administrations (see Department of Governmental Affairs 1988, chapter 15). Therefore the present study tries to explore what policies the Namibian government has inherited from the previous administration and what policies it has formulated since independence to address issues of rural development.

1.2 Demarcation of the study field

The demarcation of the study field is twofold. First, a geographical area was determined as the study area. The former Ovamboland territory, which was divided among five regions in post-independence Namibia, comprises the study area. These are the Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena, Oshikoto and Kunene regions (Republic of Namibia 1991b, Republic of Namibia 1992a). For this area as a whole a large number of development projects and programmes are planned and are in the process of being implemented. The region also contains the largest part of the population of Namibia, and will be affected by many of the future projects envisaged for the country as a whole. Furthermore, the available literature and a number of studies which were undertaken in this area, significantly contributed to the study.

The thematic demarcation is the second aspect. In the context of rural development, one specific aspect has been emphasised, namely rural housing. Related to this are issues such as urbanisation, institution building, and the modernisation of rural areas. These themes form part of the topic of looking at the possibilities and options of improving the standard of living in rural communal areas, with respect to housing.
2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND THE PROBLEM OF RURAL HOUSING

Rural development has been declared as one of the most important priorities of the government (Ministry of Finance 1990:2). Rural development is no longer confined to agricultural development only as the sole means to improve living standards in rural areas (see chapter 2, section 2). Therefore in this study it will be shown that the question of housing within the rural development context plays an important role.

Shelter has been identified as one of the basic needs by the ILO (1976:32, 182-183) in 1976 (see chapter 3, section 4). Rural development aims at satisfying basic needs and consequently the improvement of living standards. One important aspect in this regard is rural housing, which play an important role in the life of both rural and urban areas. But due to the remoteness of many rural areas, solutions to the problems of rural housing are more difficult to find, as environmental factors have to be taken into account. The distances from the main urban centres play a role in the provision of modern day facilities, for example the supply of water and electricity, and also social services.

Worldwide, new approaches to rural development in the Third World were developed for different regions and communities (see chapter 2). Some of these were successful in improving living standards of the population, others not. Among the approaches which emerged in the last decades a distinction was made between agricultural and non-agricultural factors (see chapter 2, section 2). Housing has become a complex social process of building homes rather than houses (Viljoen, et al. 1987:187). A wide range of facilities should be provided such as social services, infrastructure, and amenities. Housing issues to be considered include overpopulation, poverty, unemployment, the use of resources, and affordability. Among the goals of housing are the provision of an enabling total living environment which recognises regional identity and characteristics.

The main aim of this study is to explore the possibilities of improving living standards and the position with respect to housing in a rural area in Northern Namibia. Housing is one of the basic needs which forms part of the agenda of rural development. Policies of the Namibian Government with respect to rural housing are examined to determine the extent of support for rural housing as part of the integration of housing into the overall development of northern Namibia. As rural housing has not received wide attention in the past, it is a relatively unknown aspect. Due to the fact that the majority of inhabitants live in rural areas, rural housing should be recognised as an important factor in the improvement of living standards.
The main objectives of rural development are encapsulated in national policies, defining programmatic inputs, local support elements, and technical aspects. These will be examined in this dissertation with regard to rural housing. Attention will also be given to the improvement of living standards in independent Namibia and the modernisation of rural areas.

The adverse economic performances of many African states resulted in a de facto decline in the standards of living of the largest part of their populations. Affected are a wide range of issues such as education, health, employment, agricultural production, and industries. Cuts in government spending will hit the various social services at all levels, but often most severely those living in rural areas.

This study cannot focus on all aspects of rural housing, but will concentrate on aspects relating to the living conditions of the residents in rural areas. Their living conditions are described as being worse than those in urban areas, because inhabitants in these areas have no access to decent housing or receive any government support to build houses (MLGH 1990:3). The study area can be described as a low-income area, because the majority of people rely on subsistence level activities.

As the majority of people in rural Namibia belong to low-income groups, the income of a household is an important aspect relating to living standards. Housing was and is a highly politicised issue in the country as a result of the past, but it is also becoming politicised because of the differences in the living conditions of the members of government and the rest of the population (see chapter 7, section 6.4). In the past the differences were attributed to policies, favouring only one group of inhabitants. But after independence the differences sharply increased as a result of the appropriations of the new ruling elite, which has to define national policies. The differences in living standards between the rural communities and the urban communities in Namibia are growing.

Government policies reflect the political position of the government. By examining the policies relating to housing, this study tries to contrast the government's envisaged policies with the actual reality. Rising inequalities between regions and the different strata of society, are determined as a basis for an evaluation of one of the most important rural developments goals, namely the improvement of living standards for the majority of the population.
In 1988, the total amount invested in housing in Namibia was approximately 4.7% of the GNP, which compares favourably with the United Nations and World Bank standards of a minimum of 5% of the GNP, but the figure does not show the neglect of the low-income requirements (MLGH 1990:4). Only 7% of the total investment by the South West African Administration was available to the low-income sections. Therefore a concern for rural housing was never reflected in the policies of the administrations before independence. This study tries to explore what policies the Namibian government has formulated to address the areas of rural development and rural housing as part of its efforts to improve the living standards of those inhabitants living in communal areas of the country.

People sometimes react with little enthusiasm to development projects designed for them (Van Niekerk 1987:625). Among the reasons are that development projects and modernisation often impose Western values and world-views on other cultures. Different types of resistance can take place, but not all resistance is resistance to development (Van Niekerk 1987:626). Ideological aspects may play a role, mismanagement, and lack of co-operation. Passive resistance can occur, due to cultural factors such as the position of women in traditional society, religious aspects, values, language barriers, or education. Western education can have an alienating effect, separating an individual from his/her traditions (Van Niekerk 1987:631). This has been described as living in two worlds, of having two selves, namely the indigenous consciousness and the consciousness derived from western civilisation (Mphahlele quoted by van Niekerk 1987:634).

This study will focus on the Namibian situation with respect to rural development and rural housing in the first years after independence to assess the living standards of the rural inhabitants. Not only technical aspects are considered, but also political, administrative and social issues to reveal what has been achieved and what is lacking in the spheres of rural development and rural housing.

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Much attention was given in the last decades to rural development (see ILO 1985b, ILO 1985c). However rural housing was not paid the same attention. One reason for this situation is that rural inhabitants have been able to provide their own shelter by making use of locally available building materials (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991b:1). Human settlements have been seen as involving primarily the provision of housing. The latter has been perceived as a non-productive investment by development planners. Low densities in many rural
areas have resulted in the absence of serious public, environmental and health problems, thus removing the urgency for planned settlement development.

Better housing was one of the pre-independence promises made by SWAPO to the Namibian people (see SWAPO 1989:19). The housing problem in general received attention, but rural housing was less of a priority, with the exception of infrastructural projects. The term rural housing is defined by the United Nations (1978:13) as the dwelling units plus utility services such as roads, water supply, sewage disposal, electricity and fuel. Furthermore, it includes markets, health centres, social and cultural areas for education, religion, recreation, community participation and management. Facilities for agricultural and agro-industrial activities and services also form part of the system. This aspect will be discussed in chapter two.

The study area is undergoing far-reaching changes, due to substantial infrastructural investments (see chapter 4), the creation of local authority structures in the growing urban areas, population movements between urban and rural areas, and the deterioration of the natural environment. To address these problems, government is expected to formulate policies, which facilitate the determination of relevant strategies. These strategies assist all involved instances in the implementation process, which otherwise would be based on uncoordinated ad hoc decisions. This is commonly recognised as being detrimental to development efforts.

The opportunities for development after Namibia gained independence imply that the present government should take advantage of the opportunities to promote rural development which affects the conditions in those areas where the majority of the population lives. This requires political support in the formulation of appropriate policies, the development of suitable strategies for the actual implementation of the policies. Much experience in rural development and housing issues is available from other Third World countries, which can be reviewed and put to use in Namibia (see Wienecke & Martin 1995).

The failure of many development strategies of the 1960's and the 1970's, has resulted internationally in considerations of how to address the prevailing problems in order to uplift the living standards in undeveloped or underdeveloped areas. In general the development plans shifted from rapid industrialisation to more balanced economic growth with social equity (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:6). Nevertheless the so-called Third World today is poorer or worse off than three decades ago. For Namibia's first post-independence government, Rondinelli and
Ruddle's statement (1978:6) provides a guideline, which is also of importance to this study:

"The new concern was not only with accelerating growth but also with spreading the benefits of development to more people, especially those living in 'absolute poverty'. And since most who survive at or near subsistence levels in rural areas or on the urban fringes, the spatial focus of development also shifted. The new policies seek to extend services and facilities needed to increase rural incomes, provide employment opportunities, increase agricultural productivity, and meet basic human needs to the places where the poor live".

Provision of housing for the poor was once considered as consumption, but a United Nations report argues that public housing creates employment, mobilised savings, and increased community participation, thus should be regarded as productive priority (Caiden & Wildavsky 1980:11). There is an urgent and imperative need for improving rural housing conditions, but because there are so many other requirements, such as food, clothing, and jobs, the rural poor seldom voice a demand for housing as well (United Nations 1978:7). There are complex linkages between dwelling and community facilities, on the one hand, and agricultural production, local income, employment, and general welfare, on the other (United Nations 1978:8). Furthermore, shortfalls in facilities and services contribute to a cycle of self-perpetuating under-development, as this cycle of substandard living conditions, low incomes, poor health, low productivity and unsatisfactory quality of life leads to rural outmigration (United Nations 1978:56).

Rural housing is not a widely discussed issue, despite the fact that a majority of people in the Third World live in rural areas (Chambers 1974:12, Tvedten & Mupotola 1995:1, Farooq 1985:56). To explore the situation in Namibia after independence, the part of the country in which the majority of people live, was identified as an appropriate study area. Traditional housing alongside modern shelter provides a contrasting range of housing. New local authorities and formal urban centres, established after independence, provide insights in the process of urbanisation of a communal area.

A study of rural housing can therefore address several important issues which affect other aspects of development, such as potable water which affects health conditions, roads influence transport of people and goods, electricity and environmental destruction can become important factors, or infrastructural development can have an impact on employment generation. A government's policies should reflect these concerns as they directly influence the living conditions in rural areas.
Development is not static, but is a dynamic process. It is a continuous process involving changes on various levels of society. One of the most dramatic changes experienced in the last few centuries, in most parts of the world, was the result of what is called modernisation (see chapter 2). "Modernisation has brought change not just in technology and material culture but in the nature and structure of human relationships" (Gran 1983:14). Some Western conceptions substituted "modernity" for "development", based on the development of Western societies (Kotze 1983:10). Development in this regard became the process of modernisation.

Conditions in rural areas in the Third World show that with respect to rural development in general and housing in particular, a wide range of issues have to be tackled by governments. Housing conditions could be based for example on the income of a family, and their ability to pay for services such as water, building materials, and sanitation. Other factors are the general political environment and the policies relating to the different issues of development, technologies, finances, manpower availability, and the political support for the formulation and implementation of policies (see chapter 5).

As many other African governments, the Namibian rulers promised inter alia to focus on rural development and housing, in order to address problems inherited from the past such as the inequalities between rural and urban areas, and also newly emerging problems such as rapid urbanisation. This dissertation has been completed after experiencing more than five years of SWAPO government (August 1995). Therefore the achievements of the ruling party and the government with regard to rural development and rural housing in Namibia can be evaluated.

4. RESEARCH METHODS EMPLOYED

4.1 Primary sources
A large number of interviews, discussions and communications with officials of various government ministries, NGOs, consulting engineers, and NBIC/NHE officials, were conducted during 1992 and 1993. This was supplemented by additional interviews in 1994 and conversations with residents in the north and also in Windhoek. Furthermore, the use of various government publications provided relevant materials for the study.

4.2 Secondary sources
A variety of sources became available in the form of published material and unpublished studies and reports dealing with certain aspects of rural development and rural housing in general and in particular Northern Namibia. The study area
has received much attention after independence from national and international agencies, whose study reports and books provided valuable insights into many aspects dealt with in this dissertation. Reference to all these sources has been included in the bibliography.

5. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

5.1 Procedures

Several research methods have been employed to collect data for this dissertation. The first was observation, which is used to collect first-hand information on what exists (Weber & Abeyrama 1984:30). Personal observations in the various localities provided some insights on the conditions of housing in the three localities Onambome, Oshakati and Onankali. To have a permanent record of the observations, photos were taken whenever possible. Some of these observations made it necessary to conduct additional interviews to obtain the required information on a specific topic. Visits to the selected localities were made between 1992 and 1994. Various residents were visited in their houses or homesteads to familiarise the writer with the existing living conditions.

Secondly, interviews were conducted formally after a questionnaire was compiled to provide guidelines for the interviews and to compare the situations in different localities of the study area. These interviews provided the framework. Additional informal interviews in the form of conversations were held and interviews concerned with a special aspect were added, which became necessary to obtain more detailed data on aspects such as forestry, infrastructural development, for example telecommunications or the supply of electricity.

Most interviews were conducted in 1993 as these provided the framework for additional research. Interviews in 1992 provided information about recent developments in ministries or in the case of Mr Johannes (see bibliography, section 1.1), provided insights into rural housing in Onambome. All interviews in 1994 were required to obtain additional information with respect to specific issues which emerged during the study.

Throughout the interviews notes were made by hand, which were thereafter transcribed onto computer to have a legible record of the interview available. These records were integrated into the chapters of the study. Most of the interviews were conducted in English and Afrikaans, only one interview was conducted in German. No translator was required as all respondents were able to speak one of the languages mentioned above.
5.2 Techniques

As the study explores an area in which limited research has been conducted in the past, it was necessary to adapt to the circumstances. Therefore the interviews were conducted in the form of a conversation in order to remain flexible and to be able to probe aspects emanating during the conversation. A questionnaire (see annexure) provided guidelines during the interviews. The main components are:

- 1. the status of the local authority (modern or traditional authority;)
- 2. land availability and allocation processes;
- 3. infrastructural services and their development;
- 4. building materials;
- 5. local builders/contractors;
- 6. demographic factors;
- 7. type of housing (formal, informal and traditional);
- 8. socio-economic aspects.

5.3 Interviews conducted

The various respondents and the places where the interviews were conducted, are listed in the bibliography.

6. OVERVIEW

In chapter one the research problem and the research methods are described. Chapter two provides the theoretical basis of the study. Various issues in rural development are dealt with such as the objectives of rural development, the importance of policies with regard to rural development, and project organisation and implementation. Chapter three discusses living standards and basic needs as two factors featuring in rural development. This discussion provides more detail on one of the objectives of rural development, i.e. the improvement of living standards of the rural population.

Chapter four describes the characteristics of the study area in Northern Namibia. This includes socio-economic and political aspects as well as factors influencing the provision of housing in the four northern regions. This information is combined with the discussion on rural development in chapter five to demonstrate the applicability of the rural development thinking on rural housing. Housing should be considered as an integral part of rural development. This aspect is investigated in chapter six. Furthermore, the case studies illustrate the differences in living conditions in different parts of the study area. In chapter seven a summary, the findings of the study and the prospects for rural housing conclude the dissertation.
8. ANNEXURE: QUESTIONNAIRE

Local Authority: ..................................

Date: ..................

Land

How many erven are available:
Fully serviced: .................
Partially serviced: ............... 
Planned erven: ..................
Surveyed land: ..................

Services available:
Water ..................................
Sewerage (waterborne) ..............
Sewerage (other) specify: ..........
Electricity: .........................
Roads: ..............................

Capital projects for the current financial year: ..................................
Capital projects for the coming financial year: ..................................

Stage of proclamation: ..................................
Stage of townplanning: .................................

Capacity of services:
Main water supply: ..................
Electrical supply: ......................
Sewerage & ponds: ....................

Building Industry

Local building materials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Supplier</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Building material suppliers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Range of materials</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Local contractors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average building costs per m²:

```
..........  
```

### Existing local initiatives regarding housing:

```
-----------------------------------------------------------------  
```

---

**Population**

### Population figures:

```
...........  
```

### Estimated average household size:

```
...........  
```

### Employment status:

- **Formal:** 
- **Informal:** 
- **Unemployed:** 
- **Pension:** 

### Housing backlog condition:

```
..................  
```

### Extent of informal housing:

```
..................  
```

### Characteristics of population:

```
..................  
```
Employment

Major employers:

Name

1. .................................................................
2. .................................................................
3. .................................................................
4. .................................................................
5. .................................................................

Estimated unemployment figure: ..............

Reason for unemployment: .............................

Economy

Possible new industries:

Agriculture: ......................................................
Mining: ...........................................................
Tourism: ..........................................................
Other: ..............................................................

* * *
CHAPTER 2: ISSUES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the concept of rural development will be discussed. Special attention is given to housing, in order to assess living standards in rural areas, where the majority of people live. The improvement of living standards in general and housing issues in particular, are explored.

1.1 Development theories

Development as a process results in changing circumstances and conditions of target groups in order to improve their living standards. The changes from the status quo to a more advanced state is a transformation, which requires time. Many factors influence the interpretation and understanding of what development means or what it embodies. The concept will be explained and defined according to various authors, which shows the diversity of viewpoints found in the concept development. As Kotze observes (1983:9): "The numerous perspectives on and definitions of development indicate wide intellectual interest in the concept, even if they do not always contribute to greater clarity and consensus". This viewpoint is demonstrated in the divergent theoretical conceptions regarding development, which not only reflect various viewpoints or ideologies but also perspectives in different parts of the First and Third World.

The term 'development' is derived from the Latin "de-velopare", which means "to unfold" (McNamara 1990). This unfolding of the potential of people or communities, happens slowly, over time, stage by stage until a higher level of perfection is achieved. Gran (1983:2) defines development as the liberation of human potential. In order to develop this potential and to make the most effective use of finite resources, the maximum practical control over all aspects of development is needed, particularly over those commodities and processes necessary for satisfying the basic human needs and security. The poor must be empowered to participate effectively in both political and economic terms.

Three broad schools of development theory have emerged during the last decades demonstrating the diverse nature of the term development, namely modernisation, dependency or under-development, and reformism. The development model of modernisation evolved in Europe and America, was based primarily on the European history and was used to encapsulate any form of economic, political and social development (Coetzee 1986a:17). These theories tried to explain deficiencies in certain countries which supposedly could therefore not accomplish the level of development attained in the West (Emmett 1983:24). In Latin America the dependency school developed in contrast to the theory of modernisation. Although the newly
emerging theory was directed by conditions largely prevailing in South America, elements of the dependency view can be made applicable to development in other areas (Vorster 1986:53), which were also penetrated and were being transformed by the capitalist system into a state of dependency (Emmett 1983:36). The dependency school developed in Latin America through the work of its main exponent A.G. Frank (Kay 1989:9). In Africa, John Saul's main purpose was to explain the lack of development in many African countries by analysing the relationship of various groups within African societies (see Munslow 1986:13-16, 34). The debate about the merits of both schools of thought resulted in the positioning of reformists between these two groups of theoreticians. Some perspectives have found widespread support, for example the dependency and the modernisation school, whereas others reflected a more individualistic view, for example Julius Nyerere's African Socialism. Honadle and VanSant (1985:3) state that development literature is moving towards more precise distinctions among various authors working in rural development.

These development theories did not attempt to discuss the problems relating to the overall development of rural areas per se, but concentrated on the deficiencies in the analysis of various authors and also the role of the West in underdeveloping rural regions. A.G. Frank maintains that underdevelopment is the result of centuries-long participation in the process of the capitalist development whereby capital and economic surplus is extracted from the periphery and channelled to the metropolis (Fair 1982a:21, Kay 1989:60). Frank describes this process as the development of underdevelopment (Fair 1982a:22, Kay 1989:153).

Rostow's stages of economic growth model is a typical example of the modernisation school as opposed to the arguments of the dependency school that underdevelopment is the result of external domination (Reitsma & Kleinpenning 1989:247). Karl Marx's class classification was borrowed by the dependency theorists to describe the importance of class and the economic relationships existing between various classes. Dependency theorists were therefore concerned with the flow of capital between the industrialised countries and the Third World (see Baran quoted by Reitsma & Kleinpenning 1989:242). Consequently, the development of rural areas did not play a significant role in these theories, and the theories also did not attempt to provide solutions of how rural development (as defined in section 2) could help to improve living standards of the disadvantaged members of society.

Changes in thinking about development and the doubts with respect to the effectiveness of the modernisation approach's 'trickle down' strategies led to the
development of the reformist school. They assumed that development could not take
place if the distribution of income was such that the few rich people earned the
largest share of national income (Fair 1982a:37). Emphasis was placed on "redistribution with growth" (Cherney et al quoted by Fair 1982a:37) and the
growth pole strategy to diffuse wealth and economic activities. Reformism stresses
self-reliance and self-help on the part of Third World countries in order to
reduce poverty and dependence (Fair 1982a:40).

Neither the modernisation nor the dependency approach have provided a satisfying
solution or explanation to the problems of developing Third World countries. The
capitalist system throughout the world, has in the last years penetrated even
former socialist countries. The reformist approach of modifying the capitalist
system instead of overthrowing it, recognised the importance of economic growth,
and that national development strategies have to take the international
environment into account (Fair 1982a:37-38). Furthermore, basic needs and self­
reliance became new aspects of development. Emphasis was placed on the non­
material needs of society instead of relying solely on material progress (Fair
1982a:39). Another important aspect is that reformist thinking considered the
development of poor areas, mainly rural areas, as a part of the development
process. Three levels play a role in this approach, namely the local level where
the problem actually occurs, on the national level of the society within which the
poor region is embedded, and the international level of the economic system with
which the first two are linked (Fair 1982a:40). These aspects are also of
importance to Namibia's development efforts. The role of the three levels with
respect to housing and rural development will be discussed in the following
chapters, and also aspects such as self-reliance and self-help.

1.2 The significance of rural development

The importance of rural development became evident after decades of failure in
following the Western model. Few however considered the improvement of living
standards of the majority of people in rural areas as a priority, as the skewed
allocation of scarce resources favoured urban areas (Renaud 1981:9-10, Fair
1985:1, Timberlake 1985:12). In most cases the ruling elite often copied the life­
style of their Western counterparts. The rural masses often derived little benefit
from these development programmes, leading to the perception among the people that
rural development was often of little importance to national governments and their
political parties, which resulted in a concentration of wealth in one or more
urban areas. Consequently, living standards of different groups within the
societies displayed sometimes immense variances.
Governments and their agencies in rural areas, more often than not did not address problems in rural areas such as agricultural productivity, ecology, or population pressure (see Timberlake 1985:9). This often led to increased rural poverty, which in turn put pressure on the areas to absorb the migrants from the hinterland. The lack of focusing on the main components of rural development, such as in a national comprehensive development policy, often resulted in the neglect of most disadvantaged regions, especially in Africa (see also Rimmer 1989). Those aspects were often not included in policies related to local components which could benefit programmes and projects, and also programmatic and technical inputs. "Overall Africans are almost as poor today as they were 30 years ago" (World Bank 1989:1).

Rural development could be considered to be an all-embracing concept, which can influence the entire course of socio-economic development of rural areas. Such an approach has some chance of success, although poor countries would find it difficult to implement such a policy due to the lack of resources and knowledge. In this chapter, as indicated above, the framework developed by Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978) is useful to identify the wide range of inputs needed in rural development, but first the concept of rural development is explored.

2. THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section a closer look is taken at the concepts of integrated rural development and rural development. In the beginning rural development concentrated on the agricultural sector, because this was regarded as the main mechanism to achieve economic growth in rural areas. But it was realised that agricultural development alone was not sufficient (Kottis 1980:1152, Ruthenberg 1981:6-7), which gave rise to the concern of fulfilling the basic needs of the poor (see chapter 4, section 2). Therefore other components had to be included in development, such as the provision of social services and infrastructure (Lacroix 1985:3). Since the 1970's rural development became a focus in development thinking.

The concept of integrated rural development emphasised a more holistic approach. This approach promotes a massive, multifaceted effort to satisfy basic needs (see chapter 4, section 2.2). Contrary to previous approaches, rural development emphasises a bottom-up strategy, community involvement, problems facing women, increasing local employment opportunities and enhancing the productivity of the agricultural sector, and also the equal distribution of benefits to all sections of the urban and rural population (see section 3.2). This includes improved health
and educational facilities, improvements in housing conditions, as well as the provision of infrastructural, credit and extension services in rural areas. "But the question still up in the air is how to convert these good intentions into effective deeds" (Coombs 1980:1).

This view of Coombs is supported by Brown (1975:12), who regards rural development as a complex task. He argues that what has to be achieved cannot always be seen or measured, and payoffs can take a long time to become a reality. Often several objectives may be in conflict with one another. Results cannot be predicted in many cases, and rural development activities can stir up political and ethnic sensitivities. The author furthermore states that actions initiated are seldom cut-and-dry, thus requiring frequent assessment and revision of plans.

This more comprehensive approach to rural development emerging in the early 1970s, became known as "Integrated Rural Development" (IRD), and strives to achieve objectives such as balanced economic growth, equitable income distribution, and a commitment to meet basic needs of all sectors of lesser developed countries (Sallinger-McBride, et al. 1989:1), especially those living in rural areas. The authors state that IRD refers to a multitude of goods and services provided to a target population in a designated region. This consists of production, social and infrastructure components (Lacroix 1985:15). According to Montgomery (quoted by Sallinger-McBride, et al. 1989:2), IRD ties diverse functions and programmes together administratively to achieve a synergistic increase in efficiency of individual programmes and the overall effort (see also du Preez 1987:62-74). Integrated rural development programmes provide a broader approach to integrate sectoral programmes and area programmes in a single framework (Thapliyal 1983:287).

Uma Lele (1975:20) defines rural development as "...improving living standards of the mass of the low-income population residing in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining". She elaborates that improving living standards involves the mobilisation and allocation of resources to reach the rural poor (see also Swanepoel 1989:35, Bothomani 1991:2). The rural poor are designated as low-income groups, because their cash incomes are below that of the rest of society. Cash is needed to supplement incomes derived from agriculture, to pay for necessities which cannot be obtained from subsistence incomes, such as school fees, modern building materials, health costs, or transport charges, both for personal reasons and the marketing of agricultural produce.
Three basic elements distinguished by Lele, are found in most definitions, because they are regarded as basic requirements for successful rural development (Swanepoel 1984:19). These elements are: 1. the general improvement of living standards; 2. low-income population, i.e. those with a small or no cash income; and 3. self-sustaining development. Lele (1975:20) elaborates that improving living standards of people living on subsistence level involves the mobilisation and allocation of resources to achieve a balance between the welfare and productive services available to rural inhabitants. Mass participation requires that resources should be equally apportioned between low-income regions and the people living there, and that social and infrastructural services such as education, health, agricultural extension services, or assistance in small scale manufacturing, should also reach them. Therefore Tapson (1986:57) states that due to rural development's multi-sectoral character, the support, co-ordination and commitment by the national administrative institutions are also required for IRD to succeed.

The reference to low-income groups is a vague one. The rural poor are not a homogenous group of people, but defining different sections of this group is not always accomplished. According to Chambers (1983:6) the term rural mass fosters stereotypes which glosses over the reality of rural differences. In the Greek language however, two different groups of poor people are distinguished. In the first case, tokos means people who are extremely poor, they are without any income. In the second case, penes means that the poor have one or other source of income (Personal communication with Dr. P. Isaac, University of Namibia, May 1995). These definitions can to a certain extent eliminate the vagueness of the term poor.

Lele's elaboration contains a reference to low-income regions and classes, which could be considered rather imprecise concepts. The first reference could embrace all inhabitants of a region, whereas the second could be interpreted as focusing on a class, which can be defined as containing only those members of a society who are regarded as disadvantaged or poor due to their low cash income or because they are landless. Caution need to be taken to ensure that one particular group is not disproportionally benefiting from development assistance. As Obaidullah Khan (1980:57) states certain services are needed by all inhabitants, therefore the wealthier section of communities cannot always be excluded in development efforts. However, an area plays an important role, it is primarily the people that are to be developed (Swanepoel 1989:36). Erler (1985:8) criticises development projects which make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Based on her experiences, she concludes that development in such cases often harms all those people who are
supposed to be the main beneficiaries, because misappropriations of development aid and projects can mean the difference between life and death for the poor.

Discriminatory development benefiting only certain rural groups, such as the rural elite, results in even greater disparities. A more socially accepted emphasis could be achieved through a policy of redistribution with growth, with the improvement of incomes and quality of life of rural poor, reconciled with the interests of the rural elite. Because development can be disruptive (see Ruddle & Chesterfield 1976), continuity is necessary, though it does not reduce the need for change. Yet the feasibility of IRD depends inter alia on the availability of finance, trained and experienced staff and priority needs.

To the definition of rural development of Lele discussed above, the World Bank (1975b:3) added that rural development is a strategy designed to improve the socio-economic circumstances of the rural poor. It involves the extension of benefits of development to the poorest members of the community. The report goes on that rural development aims at reducing poverty, not eradicating poverty, which seems to be impossible. Thus an increase in agricultural production and a raise in productivity is essential, but also improved food supplies, basic services such as health and education, improve the physical well-being, the quality of life, and the productivity of the poor. In the same report (World Bank 1975b:3) two aspects are underlined, the first is a rise in income through greater productivity, resulting in an increase in employment and thus higher income, and secondly, to fulfil minimum acceptable levels of food, shelter, education and health. To be able to achieve this, a national programme is needed, made up of single-sector or multi-sectoral projects. This definition of the World Bank is restricted to the socio-economic sphere, and does not take the political and civil spheres into account, Dasgupta and Weale (1992:119) commented some years later.

The definition given by Obaidullah Khan (1980:57) explains that rural development is not the development of a particular area, but is a fundamental process of social, economic and political transformation of a peasant society, in which the main actors are the majority members of that society. Certain services are needed by all members of a community, such as health centres, schools, means of transport, or markets for agricultural producers. But there are groups who are in need of employment, housing, potable water, which is usually available to the more privileged members of the community. The latter do not need assistance in acquiring these needs, whereas the disadvantaged members have to be supported to obtain these necessities. A transformation process can only be considered as being successful, if improvements in the standard of living have been achieved by the
previously unprivileged groups of a society, together with the development of self-sustaining abilities to carry on further improvements and pursue solutions in respect of new arising needs, which are identified by the concerned community.

Bryant and White (1982:283) identify three approaches to rural development. The first approach views rural development as a technical problem, where improvement of technology, fertilisers, and high-yield seeds, are regarded as the solution, resulting in what is known as the Green Revolution (see Harrison 1982:92-98). The second approach maintains that the needs of small farmers are neglected to such an extent that they cannot produce according to their abilities and capabilities. Consequently, an emphasis was placed on non-formal education, improving political access, and addressing the issue of landlessness. In this way, the small farmers can compete with those sectors of the economy which rely on economies of scale or large holdings or farms, which could be considered to be more efficient than the existing farming methods. The third approach maintains that rural poor farmers are poor, because they are powerless. On a local level, those who are powerful could be described as the elite, which derive their powers from their solidarity as a group, thus enabling them to exploit the poor (Chambers 1983:131), and therefore keeping them impoverished. This exploitation of the poor limits their access to resources from the government, legal redress for abuses, and the ability to negotiate wages (Chambers 1983:113). In the case of remote areas, isolation means that powerlessness is reinforced by the inability of the inhabitants to attract government aid, social services, and personnel.

Bryant and White (1982:284) argue that with respect to the first approach, agricultural innovation, research, and the strengthening of extension services are needed. The second is concerned with the improvement of market mechanisms and prices, which might serve as incentives to increase productivity, besides access to land, water, and credit. The third approach could be considered to be less preoccupied with agricultural techniques, but is advocating improvements in rural incomes, and also the improvement of the political leverage of small producers through farmer organisations such as co-operatives, and mobilising farmers themselves in bottom-up planning. Advocates of this approach apparently have excluded the importance of agriculture as a key area for the improvement of living standards, but stress organisational factors.

All of these three approaches contain elements which could be considered to be true to certain conditions in particular rural areas. The differences in rural areas in the Third World have to be taken into account if rural development is considered. The approaches discussed by Bryant and White (1982:283) refer to the
agricultural sector as the main instrument of improving living standards of small farmers. Each approach looks at the agricultural sector from a specific point of view and identifies specific shortcomings. This explains the differences in emphasis of the approaches on technology, the role of rural elite, and production factors in order to improve living conditions especially of the poor.

Some authors not only look at aspects relating to the development of the agricultural sector and the position of the rural poor. One approach tries to explain the position of the poor in general by looking at the distribution of power in the political and economic spheres. Gran (1983:2) argues that "The principal problem for human development are large concentrations of power (governments and corporations), the ideologies or economic doctrines they proclaim, and the processes of exclusion they practice".

To this Chambers (1983:103) maintains that powerlessness is a result of the deprivation trap. The poor often face a number of clusters of disadvantages, such as physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and powerlessness (Chambers 1983:10). Physical weakness can be the result of a high dependency ratio in a household, the lack of food, or the absence of working adults. Furthermore, poor families with a large number of children, often seen as a strategy or hedge for survival, prevent them to rise above survival levels (Harrison 1982:251).

Chambers (1983:103-104, 110-111, 114-131, and 131-138) explains the other disadvantages: vulnerability and powerlessness in more detail. The first is an indication of the lack of buffers against contingencies such as disasters, illness, or exploitation. To make up for such unforeseen expenditures, often due to the lack of reserves, assets are sold, making the poor even poorer. The second is described as the inability of the poor to bargain, to prevent being robbed and cheated by the more powerful. All these clusters interlock, forming the circle of poverty (see Chambers 1983:112).

To the approaches discussed above by Bryant and White, other scholars propose a policy of comprehensive agrarian reform which includes farmer organisations, rural work programmes to provide employment for the increasing number of landless people. It is necessary not only to focus on agriculture, but also look at the level of rural incomes and rural needs (Bryant & White 1982:284). One major factor, which was omitted in many past approaches, has to be added to all development efforts, namely the concern for the environment, especially in arid regions, where the destruction of the environment threatens the prospects of future carrying capacity of the land and its inhabitants. The degradation of land
and the growth in the population, were factors contributing to increasing landlessness, where not enough land was available for cultivation or grazing\textsuperscript{1}. Thus the need arose to find additional employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sector (see Freeman & Norcliffe 1983). These opportunities often existed to a limited extent in urban areas in the formal sector and to a larger extent in the informal sector.

The integration of rural development, which was discussed above, is not occurring on the national level, but concentrates on the regional level. This integration comprises the integration of technological agricultural innovations, such as improved seeds with mineral fertilisers; the integration of extension services such as credit, input supply and marketing; the integration of agricultural packages with productive investment in infrastructure such as feeder roads, soil and water conservation structures; integration of agricultural packages with rural social service investments such as drinking water, health services, educational facilities; integration of agricultural development with efforts to expand rural industry and related employment opportunities (Ruthenberg 1981:7). According to the author, the focus of IRD programmes is not on production but on improving the living standards of the target population - the rural poor. The major objective is employment and income for the poor, thus the provision of basic needs is an important element.

Ruttan (1984:394) points out that the integrated rural development approach drew on complex and often contradicting intellectual and ideological perspectives. A few definitions of rural development, give an impression of the different views on rural integrated development. These views have emerged as a result of different applications of rural development in different countries, which take the needs of a particular country into account. Needs are not necessarily identical, but vary from one country to another, and also from region to region. Therefore the needs of each community must be determined in order to be able to provide a basis for development.

To integrate rural development in the national development of a country, Coombs (1980:15-20) proposes that joint planning of national policies and programmes, across all relevant sectors to make them mutually reinforcing, should take place. For example the integration of essential components of a particular programme, such as education and skills development for productive activities has to be considered. Furthermore, horizontal and vertical integration, referring to basic

\textsuperscript{1} see discussion of sustainable development
needs and interests in the first case and support from outside sources in the second, is needed because villagers cannot do everything on their own. Finally, integration of efforts between separate organisations, to avoid wasteful duplication and bureaucratic conflict is necessary.

Integrated rural development comprises different goals (Beukes quoted by Coetzee & Ligthelm 1986:185), such as economic, to satisfy the most urgent needs; technical which is the use of appropriate technology; ecological includes a development approach not exceeding the inner limits within countries and the outer limits on a global scale set by available resources; social goals incorporate participation of the local population; political goals focus on an appropriate political and institutional framework for development; cultural goals honour the underlying motives of the development process and values and norms.

Seen against the above, IRD consists of a number of rural development projects or programmes. But only if integration is achieved, could IRD be said to have been implemented. Uncoordinated efforts by the various actors in a region do not contribute to IRD, but result in overlapping and duplication of rural development endeavours. Then projects or programmes in a rural area, do not necessarily contribute to the overall improvement of living standards in this area.

Rural development could therefore be considered a reaction against the methods of development pursued in the past, such as the industrialisation of the Third World. A major emphasis in rural development thinking was placed on agricultural development. Agricultural policies tried inter alia to improve the general level of production through the improvement in agricultural productivity, to a level where rural people would be better off compared to their existing circumstances.

3. THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

This could include the fastest possible rate of economic growth to raise the living standards of the mass of people; to maximise new job opportunities; and to encourage an equitable distribution of income (Chambers & Feldman 1973:44). Any strategy of integrated rural development should be based on an appraisal of the country’s economy. Government intervention can attempt to combat distortions accumulated during the colonial period (Chambers & Feldman 1973:39). An interventionist policy for rural development necessitates financial and administrative resources, thus the government intended to redirect revenues from mining and other sources to the rural sector (Chambers & Feldman 1973:52).
According to Hunter (quoted by Tapson 1990:562) rural development aims "...to enable that mass of the rural population who are now in poverty to earn by their own efforts, the basic human needs of livelihood - including food and clothing, shelter and living space, health and help in sickness, the resources and opportunity to use and develop their skills and capacities". The author explains also that "to enable" implies political and administrative action by government, thus policies must be sighted upon this objective. Otherwise it will not release the poor from the trap of poverty. Furthermore, "to earn" means an adequate reward for work done, and to contribute to the economy their share towards the development of community services of health and education.

Jeppe (1985:60-61) notes that rural development should be a mutual process with and by the people. This means that people should participate in the decision-making process about what would be done and how (Cohen & Uphoff 1977:6). Furthermore, the people are involved in the implementation of programmes and the decisions regarding contributing resources. Finally they share in the benefits of development programmes and are involved in the evaluation of programmes.

The need for rural development in Third World countries, including Namibia, is widely accepted. The following arguments for this view are provided. Firstly, the majority of people live and find their livelihood in these rural areas (Chambers 1974:12, Ministry of Finance 1990:2). Furthermore, Chambers states (1974:12-13), there is the migration to urban centres, with the resulting high costs for housing, services, and the unemployment problem. Thus to restrain uncontrolled urban growth, the promotion of development in rural areas is indispensable. A third argument is that most of the poorer and disadvantaged sections of the population are found here. They are often the least influential political groups, least able to help themselves, and hardest for governments to assist. The last point made by Chambers is concerned with economic arguments. Agriculture in rural development is accorded priority in rural development, because of the importance of self-sufficiency in food to save on foreign exchange. The production of cash crops can be developed to earn foreign exchange and increase rural purchasing power (Chambers 1974:13). "Rural development has the dual purpose of stimulating economic growth and helping certain disadvantaged groups" (Brown 1975:12).

Another important objective in rural development relates to the improvement of social, economic and political circumstances of groups which have been identified as poor or disadvantaged. To uplift their living standards, a transformation process takes place for the target groups. To develop or unfold the potential of the communities, the emphasis is on self-help, participation by local inhabitants
and the efficient use of local resources. The benefits received from these activities are shared by the members of a community.

According to Brown (1975:13) rural development objectives usually include some of the following:

- increasing domestic supplies of basic commodities;
- providing opportunities to earn a good living, or at least rise above extreme poverty;
- reducing population pressure on urban centres or regions;
- improving education, health care, sanitation, communications and other basic amenities;
- providing new land tenure rights and other forms of family security;
- conserving soil, forests, and other natural sources for the future.

Two objectives can be identified, which are included in Brown's list (1975:13), namely income and the provision of housing in rural areas. These have been grouped together and are discussed in more detail. Urbanisation and increasing agricultural productivity could make an important contribution to rural development and therefore increase living standards. Brennan and Richardson (quoted by Fair 1990:463) note:

"the main reason for priority to rural development is the need to expand food production and improve agricultural productivity so as to correct declining food production per capita levels which have plagued most sub-Saharan countries in the last decade".

Development projects should therefore primarily serve the socio-economic interests of local inhabitants and only secondly the national economy or national interests (Jeppe 1985:60-61). Bembridge (1987:666) regards as the ultimate aim of rural development the promotion of the well-being of the rural population, and not so much the contribution to the gross domestic product or to the prosperity of the country. According to Thapliyal (1983:287), the objectives of rural development are multifarious, because they seek the overall transformation of rural life by tackling the problem of rural poverty, particularly housing and the improvement of rural infrastructure and social amenities. Rural development is also needed as a way to relieve the pressure caused by migration to urban areas, which are not in a position to accommodate the newcomers.

3.1 Relieving urban population pressure

The objective of lowering the pressure on urban areas in the Third World has to be discussed as part of the larger problem of population growth. Third World countries face the dilemma of population pressure in rural as well as urban areas. In both cases solutions to meet even basic needs are hard to find, especially in Africa. Harrison (1982:256) states that African parents do not yet adjust to the
fact that more of their children are surviving. He further argues (Harrison 1982:259) that even if the population growth would be slowed down eventually, developing countries will still have to deal with a stable population which is then two to three times the present one. By the end of this century there will be a whole new Third World, or more, on top of the present one. Furthermore, the fact remains, the Third World has already the problems of feeding, educating, employing, and housing its poor communities. Possible reasons for the "population bomb" are summarised by Frejka (quoted by Hardiman and Midgley 1982:72): changes in lifestyles, living standards; advances in science, medicine and technology; the growth of urban centres, communications and transport; better education and nutrition (see also World Bank 1984b).

If broad social reforms are to be taken seriously, one problem encountered therefore is the population growth rate. In Harrison's words (1982:220), political revolutions can happen overnight, technological revolutions in a few years, but social revolutions take decades. A high population growth rate can be a brake on development, as the Kenyan Development Plan (quoted by Wisner 1988:75) states:

"Much of our increased national output since Independence has gone to provide necessities for our larger population, limiting the goods and services available for improving the quality of life. Increased pressure on scarce supplies of good land, higher risks of environment destruction, and the social problems that accompany large scale rural-urban migration, are all affected by our high rate of population growth".

Ali Mazrui observes (1986:211):

"In spite of all the drought and famine, in spite of all the trials and tribulations, in spite of the decay and the reversal of modernisation, there is one residual sign of health remaining in Africa, one obstinate symbol of continuity - the population of Africa continues to expand at a remarkable rate. We are multiplying ourselves at a rate unequalled in any other region of the world".

To provide shelter to the increasing population, the solution is not to build more houses. Other aspects have to be considered too, as diverse as sex education, or spatial planning. Despite the theoretical debates of the advantages of secondary urban centres and other smaller urban localities to absorb migrants, these ideas are difficult to implement, primarily because of the lack of manpower, environmental consciousness, finances and a viable economic base for development, the political will for social amelioration, necessary to support these operations. One possibility was suggested by the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN) namely to initiate new settlement schemes in rural areas. Thus "...immediate action on independence could help alleviate the problem of rural-urban shift... Any measures taken for the evolution of new rural settlement patterns should form
an integral part of the independent government's reform measures" (UNIN 1986:438). Five years after independence this respect is only slowly progressing.

With respect to resettlements in West Africa, Mills-Tettey (1990:81) observed that fully built settlements with basic infrastructure and housing for resettled communities have proven to be extremely expensive. Some settlers rejected and deserted the houses, however well-built and architecturally pleasing these houses may be. One problem for the rural communities is that maintenance of these houses cost more than the average peasant farmer could afford. The author points out: "His traditional house built out of local materials can be maintained at very low or minimally at no cash at all".

The lack of employment opportunities, inefficient environmental protection, population growth, political disinterest in rural problems, and unproductive bureaucracies, all contribute to the growth of poverty in urban and rural areas. It is a well documented fact that the drastic increase of population ends up with deprivation of a majority of people (see the Courier 1994:52-53). The misconception that urban areas can absorb and present an alternative to the rural hinterland has time and again been proved wrong, as Oyowe (1994b:61) puts it: "Overcrowding, poverty, pressure on services such as water, housing, education, transportation and health facilities, environmental degradation and the spread of diseases are among the factors militating against rapid urbanisation". Thus to relieve the pressure on urban and rural regions, comprehensive policies including family planning and education are necessary. However, no single strategy is adequate to meet the problems associated with urban drift and over-urbanisation (Fair 1990:463). The author supports a package of programmes, but he goes on: "overhanging such policy initiatives is the problem of population growth, beneath which the best-laid plans could be submerged".

Rural areas in general and semi-arid or arid regions in particular, cannot sustain the livelihood of the existing population. At present it is already impossible to house all inhabitants decently, thus the available urban and rural resources have to be utilised cautiously, which cannot be accomplished if the problem of dwindling resources is aggravated by an increase of needy rural communities. Modern technology such as communication and transport means, education and birth control methods should be promoted amongst rural people. Similar programmes have been implemented in other parts of the developing world, but not too much success was achieved in Africa, which still experiences the highest population growth rates. Thus this aspect alone has to receive much more attention by responsible governments and their agencies. As Harrison (1982:220)
puts it: "Death control without birth control: this, in a nutshell, has been the population problem of the poor countries".

The importance of housing in family life is stressed in chapter 4, section 4. If people cannot be housed properly, housing becomes part of the problem of social decay. Therefore to relieve the pressure on urban centres, policies have inter alia attempted to approach the question of population planning and rural development. Droughts, especially in an environmentally damaged region, show that action has to be taken. Otherwise, as Harrison (1982:260) concludes: "If man does not conquer the population problem, nature will step in and do it for him. And everywhere it will be the poorest families who bear the brunt of the attack".

But, governments should not create programmes that might increase the attractiveness of cities (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:16-17). This is however the case in Namibia, where the government is concentrating on urban areas, thereby attracting increasing numbers of rural migrants. The most visible example is found in Namibia's capital. Since the MLGH and other institutions started with a range of projects for squatters in 1990/91, most are coming from the Ovambo-speaking regions, the city is facing a growing problem with informal settlements (see Kotowski-Ziss 1994).

The strategy of promoting secondary cities as a tool for countering primate city growth, can only be viable, if the policy was harnessed to promote rural development by improving service centres for agricultural needs and by promoting processing centres for procurement and marketing of agricultural produce. The small-scale projects approach has political advantages, because they make it easier to distribute indulgences over large areas that involve more people (Caiden & Wildavsky 1980:311). Labour intensive programmes to increase rural incomes, can yield savings in shelter and service costs by retaining people in the periphery, where the costs of providing shelter are usually lower. However Richardson (1987:212) counters that holding people in rural areas may generate savings in urban absorption costs, at the same time the priorities in rural development should be raising food production and increasing rural per capita incomes. Rural development strategies are most effective when they are combined with small-scale urban strategies to strengthen urban-rural linkages and by improving rural accessibility to public services. In Namibia, the new urban centres could fulfil the role of secondary centres.

Various authors stress (Bos 1989:67) that a country can probably only support two to six growth centres at a time. Thus the most reasonable way is to start with
those urban centres having the highest economic potential, because selectivity is needed in countries with capital and management resource constraints, which a country cannot afford to be wasted. However Coetzee (1986b:382) criticises the growth approach's economic bias and the use of GNP as a yardstick of development. Stohr and Taylor (quoted by Coetzee 1986b:383) maintain that this approach is capital-intensive and favours high technology and the large scale project approach. However, it could be argued that regional development policies in most market and mixed economies are on the growth centre strategy, which should stimulate development of propulsive key industries by concentrating industries in growth poles (Coetzee 1986b:383). According to Hardoy and Satterthwaite (quoted by Bos 1989:70), the best strategy for stimulating development in small and intermediate sized cities is to change those economic, social and political factors inhibiting their development, and those factors which subsidise capital investment and industrial operations in larger cities. To stimulate regional development, intermediate cities must possess linkages with smaller and larger places (Bos 1989:73). In this way, the theory goes, benefits can be distributed more equally. Some relatively successful examples of rural centre policies are given by Robinson (1987:79).

Rural development programmes have to be integrated into national development programmes (see NPC 1993:254), not only functionally but also spatially, because of the existing linkages between rural and urban areas that service the first (Kottis 1980:1153, Fair 1982b). This could lead to a hierarchy of urban centres, as suggested by Kottis and other authors such as Rondinelli and Ruddle (1977b), Fair (1982a:54), Maithani and Tiwari (1982). Smaller centres are dependent upon larger ones for certain goods and services, which cannot be made available locally. Through the various regional capitals, villages and other settlements are connected with the whole system of the urban hierarchy (see Hinderink & Titus 1988). These linkages depend not only upon the level of development of rural areas, but also upon the level of development of towns serving such areas (Kottis 1980:1154). The authors, referred to above, argue that as a result of this, the towns become very important for the process of development of the rural areas. Functions performed by these developing urban centres include the provision of markets for surpluses of production of rural areas (Kottis 1980:1154). On the other hand, inputs and goods for consumption could be supplied to the rural population.

2 see chapter four
Rural towns can fulfill three functions in the development process (Weininger 1985:39-40): 1. they could provide the basis for activating the support system which depends on many professional workers and entrepreneurs; 2. rural towns could also be utilised to establish industries (see chapter 5, section 5.2); and 3. rural towns could facilitate bringing a different culture to rural areas and accelerate the process of modernisation. However, whether any of these factors are really conducive to rural development is open to question.

Often, urban areas receive more political attention and development resources than rural areas. This urban bias has a negative influence on rural development as more resources, manpower, and political prestige are allocated to urban centres, leaving whatever is left to the rural regions (see Fair 1982a:22, Kottis 1980:1152). Comprehensive spatial strategies, giving attention to the deceleration of primate city growth and at the same time contributing to rural development programmes, should be developed to promote secondary cities (Richardson 1987:213). Prospects for reducing the rate of migration to the primate city offer the possibility that past migrants are retained, who would have moved on up the urban hierarchy. A secondary strategy for urban development should not be confused with a growth-centre strategy. What should be emphasised is indigenous development, which could be agro-processing, small-scale industries and the informal sector, rather than attracting large-scale industry (see also Robinson 1987:79).

New forms of employment and modes of production, e.g. in manufacturing and industries previously not known in rural regions, are created. To find employment here, requires new skills and knowledge. "Basic changes are from hand labour to use of machinery in production and from centralising manufacturing processes in the home to centralising them in factories" (Edward & Jones 1976:30). A dependence on resources and markets is created. If "industrialisation takes place in a community, industrial lifeways eventually win out over traditional lifeways and there is no return to the preindustrial way of life" (Edward & Jones 1976:30).

Associated with urbanisation has been industrialisation, although communities can develop without it (Edwards & Jones 1976:30). Changes, required for industrialisation, inter alia comprise the acquisition of modern equipment and the learning of new skills to operate such equipment, or the adaptation of new technologies and techniques in the various sectors of the economy. Most of the changes that occur in urbanisation and industrialisation, together with other changes, constitute the process of modernisation (Edwards & Jones 1976:31). For further discussions on modernisation see chapter 5, section 2.
Urbanisation and industrialisation have set the stage to what eventually is considered to be modernisation, influencing the political, social and economic development of a society. This gradual development of communities is reflected in the changes taking place in those societies, which are transformed from traditional to modern or semi-modern societies. Change cannot be avoided, it is a constant that never ends; a particular state of change is merely one more point in a journey, rather than an end in itself (Frangos quoted in Computer Mail April 26, 1991:31).

In Kenya, after independence, the population of Nairobi grew at a rapid rate (Fair 1990:452), in Tanzania Dar es Salaam's population trebled between 1960 and 1980 (Fair 1990:453) mainly due to the country's successful programme of universal primary education, which encouraged the young educated youth to migrate to urban areas. Zambia similarly experienced a flow of migrants to the copper mines and towns, which could be ascribed to the inappropriate pricing policies of agricultural produce and the lack of an appropriate rural policy (Fair 1990:453). According to Dumont and Mottin (quoted by Fair 1990:453), Zambia's economic policy after independence put too much emphasis on non-productive investment in towns in favour of the privileged minority. This policy accentuated rural underdevelopment, and widened the gap between the rich and poor.

Rapid urban growth has in some developing countries caused serious administrative difficulties, because urban life requires a complicated set of services such as housing, sewerage, water and transport (World Bank 1984a:96). Although agricultural mechanisation, landlessness, natural calamities, contributed to the phenomenon of labour migration, the major reason remains the search for higher incomes and better job opportunities (World Bank 1984a:98). In most developing countries, increases in urban employment is expected to be very low at best, whereas the increase in the urban labour force will be high (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:14).

The large scale migration to urban centres has not relieved rural areas to any significant extent. This resulted in other problems. "As urban growth and development have proceeded in Third World countries, there has been growing apprehension about several trends: the increase in the population of primate cities; the high levels of real and disguised unemployment; the soaring demand for infrastructure, shelter, and services; the persistent lagging and declining of regions; the neglect of development opportunities; and politically explosive regional and social disparities" (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:6). The implications for the provision of housing are that additional pressure from low-income households
is exerted, although they have a limited ability to pay for shelter and related services.

The balancing of the population growth rate and development is a substantial dilemma in the Third World. The problem can be summarised in general, as the question of having too many people living in rural areas, where there is a general lack of employment opportunities, services and other amenities, and at the same time of having too many people migrating to urban centres, where the same applies, i.e. little or no employment, lack of services, and housing. It is recognised that a megalopolis contains in itself the seeds of its own destruction, whilst a city or town, too small to provide an acceptable range of services and amenities, loses its inhabitants to a larger, more diversified community (Visagie no date:3). Large population concentrations require more services, amenities and job opportunities (Visagie no date:4). If these are provided, more people are attracted to these centres, thus the demand increases as the experience in the growth of Windhoek since independence proves3.

One of the most difficult objectives in rural development is the question of relieving urban population pressure. The growth of rural populations provides a tremendous reservoir of potential migrants to cities (Renaud 1981:16-17), because food production has not kept up with the population growth, as well as income differentials between rural and urban areas. Thus balancing rural-urban development has become an urgent objective for many governments. Rural-to-urban migration is not in itself necessarily bad, but can be a positive indicator of healthy economic change (Rondinelli and Ruddle 1978:18). Due to the decreasing demand for agricultural labour, excess workers can be absorbed in urban employment opportunities. The authors state that a certain amount of rural-to-urban migration is unavoidable in a diversified economy. The problem is the spatial pattern of development, the overconcentration of people and investment in a few cities or a primate city (see Harrison 1982:159-161, Renaud 1981:32 and 35), which limits development potential and constrains the spread of benefits to rural areas (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:18-19). Without intermediate and small-sized cities reasonably dispersed, rural migrants have nowhere to go but to the already overcrowded primate city. Richardson (1987:212) supports rural development strategies which focus on raising rural per capita incomes rather then on maximising rural retention thereby contributing to decreasing the influx into towns. Le Roux (1989:59) argues that "in the case of cities where unemployment is

3 A study compiled in June 1994 shows that most adults (53%) came since 1990, and 17% of all adults have been in Windhoek for one year or less (Kotowski-Ziss 1994:3).
already very high, it does not make financial sense to encourage further urbanisation”.

In the Southern African context, Ardington (1990:604) supports a policy of developing villages to concentrate public investments in the most suitable places, for example a place well serviced by transport, centrally positioned with regard to the population, or where infrastructure can be readily developed. New village communities might develop to a point where it will be economical to supply services, such as reticulated water, health and ambulance services, pension payout points, and markets for produce. This aspect will be further discussed in chapter four.

Throughout Africa, governments' most effective disincentive to urban migration appears to be economic reforms (African Farmer July 1990:12). To reverse migration trends, measures should include the raising of producer prices, the lifting of subsidies on food, trimming the government work-force, and making urban life more expensive and difficult than rural life. In some African countries this has led to a growing number of urban residents returning to the countryside. This happened in Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zaire (African Farmer July 1990:13-15). Other government reforms are the raise of agricultural productivity, improving the quality of life in rural areas by providing social and marketing services, and the encouragement of agricultural and other processing industries based on local natural resources (Fair 1990:462).

3.2. Distribution of benefits
A rural housing policy aiming at improving living standards for the poorer sections of society and the distribution of benefits to them, needs to be concerned with aspects such as water, sanitation, electricity and fuel, housing loans and financial assistance, ecology and use of local resources, popular participation, training and education, responsible government institutions, and the distribution of information about relevant development efforts and methods. The Minister of Local Government and Housing (MLGH 1991b) stated that the ministry’s main priority is to provide basic services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, electricity and housing, to improve the life of Namibians. During the budget speech for the 1992/93 financial year, the Minister added orderly planned towns and living spaces, involvement in community development matters as basic services provided by the ministry (MLGH 1992:4).

Muller (1988:156) found that the concept of home ownership in the modern urban sense is an unfamiliar concept for low-income people. They do not understand their
responsibilities as home-owners, including paying off a loan over 30 years (see also chapter 4, section 5.3). Another problem is the insecurity of employment experienced by many low-income earners. Thus a house can become a burden if a family member, contributing towards the repayment of a loan, loses his/her employment. In the traditional context this was not an issue to worry about. The extended family and the homestead provided security for all members.

Distribution of benefits and the allocation of resources to rural as well as urban areas, is often determined by a bias which advances the interests of a particular group, community or an area. People with political connections, the bureaucracy, and the urban areas in general, are usually those receiving most of the benefits. As Caldwell (1991) argues that the invisible poor, those far away and of no real political use, receive nothing.

One major benefit offered to rural inhabitants in arid regions, would be if serious attention would be given to the environment, followed by appropriate improvement measures. Erkkilä and Siiskonen (1992:150) underline that wood is the main raw material for a homestead in the study area. They point out (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:151) that there is a great need for building poles, because of population growth and partly due to shifting cultivation and patterns of settlement. The authors calculate (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:153-154) that an average homestead of about 1900 square meters, with a 2 meter high outside palisade (302 meters long), requires 7700 poles, which is the equivalent of more than 100 cubic meters of dry wood. Such a wooden construction only lasts for about six years, the authors state, resulting in the removal of wood from indigenous woodland of at least 15 cubic meters per annum, or 1,5 cubic meters per capita per annum. By supporting the traditional housing system through an approach of ecological education and helping to sustain local resources, rural areas can be made more viable to its own people.

Other benefits rural inhabitants could receive, include assistance in agricultural production, health, education, employment, transport, wood, water, and housing. The provision of these services can be hampered by an inadequate infrastructure. The general lack of all-weather roads and safe water supplies, are two examples of basic requirements for further developments and improvements in Northern Namibia.

3.3 Increasing agricultural productivity and production

Two different views can be distinguished on the role of agriculture in rural development: Bembridge regards agriculture as the greatest resource and the most
important economic activity (Tapson 1990:563). Therefore this sector's services should be upgraded, with more emphasis on marketing, and purpose-developed technology. The second view by Cross, emphasises a "fully-rounded rural economy" to make rural inhabitants self-reliant (Tapson 1990:563). The first view emphasises agricultural development, whereas in the second view, agriculture forms a minor part of a complete rural economy. Infrastructure and institutions can facilitate participation by rural people in the core economy. This implies the provision of employment opportunities as well as other income generating enterprises to provide regular income, adequate transport, legitimate and responsive local government, water and electricity in rural areas. This should provide people with the basic amenities that urban communities now have, without foregoing their land-based community and social links that make up their survival networks.

The increase of rural income depends on a wide range of factors, some over which man has no control such as rainfall, and inputs such as agricultural inputs (e.g. seeds, fertilisers), markets, and transport links, which could be provided by man. Improvement in rural income can also contribute to a lowering of the influx rate to urban areas by providing employment opportunities in rural areas, to raise the general level of income in those areas. These opportunities have to be created in the agricultural field and the non-agricultural sectors of the rural economy. To achieve this, infrastructural services have to be provided, such as feeder roads, water, electricity, health and educational facilities.

Rural development is facing problems in areas where traditional methods and techniques are employed in the agricultural production processes, once new methods are introduced. New technologies can help to improve output, but whether peasants adopt these new innovations depends on the benefits and costs involved in such an exercise (Bryant & White 1982:277). Todaro (quoted by Bryant & White 1982:278) explains that subsistence agriculture is a highly risky and uncertain venture. For example, in regions with an unreliable rainfall, human life can often be at stake, if the agricultural output is below average. In these cases the family's chances of survival are more important than the maximisation of income.

In the case of communal land, a number of factors have to be considered before the full agricultural potential of the area could be realised. Traditional leaders have to be involved in general programmes of reform and the population has to be involved throughout the implementation process, local conditions also have to be assessed such as soil quality and water resources, markets for increased outputs should be found to ensure that the produce can be sold, and any problems peculiar
to the target area must be sorted out before a programme can become self-sustaining.

Other aspects which could make a contribution in this respect are agricultural growth which should be gradually improved and in definite stages; a support system is also a prerequisite which includes physical infrastructure, an institutional structure adapted to local conditions and the availability of motivated and skilled manpower (Weininger 1985:38-39). To transform the agricultural sector, organisations by and for the farmers are a precondition. Bembridge (1985:73) concludes that "knowledge of how to bring about development of the subsistence level sector is still very limited". Therefore research has first to identify possibilities for development, especially local needs, the use of local resources, and the necessary inputs from outside the rural area, such as social services, transport links, and agricultural inputs. To increase agricultural production and income from it, inputs are needed, such as extension services, fertilisers and seeds. They can form part of those benefits rural people could receive as a result of development activities in their area. This could be an endeavour to distribute benefits to the rural regions, and to create some wealth for peripheral communities.

3.4 Self-sufficiency and sustainability

In the context of rural development self-sufficiency means that people have the will to use their own resources and depend on these for self-sustaining development (Malhotra quoted by Swanepoel 1984:25). Arnold (1989:22) holds the view that current development practice often overestimates the ability of human beings to understand and control nature. There is a high degree of uncertainty about the functions and value of the natural environment for the social system.

Self-sustaining development is closely linked to the term sustainability. According to Tisdell (1985:518), sustainability describes the propensity of a system to recover from environmental stress, and has to do with the robustness of continuing viability of a system when it is subjected to such environmental stresses. Thus self-sufficiency can only be achieved if a system can continue to be sustainable. Similarly, Conway (quoted by Tisdell 1985:518) defines sustainability "as the ability of a system to maintain productivity in spite of a major disturbance such as that caused by intensive stresses or a large perturbation". Rural development can have an impact on environment, social, political and economic systems in those rural areas where development efforts are being implemented.
Sustainable development strives to enhance peoples' quality of life without jeopardising the development opportunities and lifestyles of future generations and involves three aspects: economic sustainability aims at planning for the sustainable use of resources now and in the future; environmental sustainability involves the use of resources effectively and efficiently; social sustainability includes the development of an appropriate social framework for equitable resource use (Jacobson, Jacobson, & Seely 1995:11).

The lack of sustainability may be indicated by declining productivity, but a collapse may come suddenly without warning. Tisdell (1985:518) explains that for example the collapse of an agricultural system can be followed by unequal income distribution and social consequences. Systems of shifting agriculture may be sustainable when the population is small, but can become unsustainable once the population density rises (Tisdell 1985:520). The result of this is that the period becomes shorter in which land is allowed to reafforest and rejuvenate, and serious erosion and soil-nutrient loss may occur.

David Pearce (1989:17-18) refers to other interpretations of sustainability. The first interpretation is concerned with the total stock of all forms of wealth, which should not be depleted. This view accepts the position that if environmental wealth is depleted, it has to be compensated for by building up other forms of wealth, such as human and capital wealth. Thus if one is run down the other must compensate, thus both are substitutes for each other. Pearce (ibid) criticises the view, because the value of certain life supporting elements depends on the environment, thus cannot be determined, i.e. no market prices in an accounting system can be established for this necessity.

The second view is concerned with the assumption that market economies often behave as if environmental services are free goods, gifts of nature (Pearce 1989:18). However, economies and environment interact in intricate and pervasive ways, as an economy cannot function without material inputs, e.g. raw materials, and energy. These material inputs and energy will reappear after usage in the natural environment as wastes, which especially in industrialised countries are becoming a major problem. Finally Pearce stresses that it is necessary to invest the proceeds of any resource depreciation to ensure fairness in the future. This is often not done, instead the proceeds are consumed. The natural environment, once lost or destroyed, cannot easily be regained. "This may be contrasted with man-made capital which can be destroyed and rebuilt almost at will" (Pearce

---

4 an example of this is the Sahel region
As Arnold (1989:21) states, sustainability in one form or another has always been an objective of development, but what is new, is the concern that this is not being achieved. The writer (Arnold 1989:22) also argues that economy and ecology are becoming ever more interwoven, locally, regionally, nationally, and globally, into a seamless net of causes and effects.

The worldwide environmental problems are becoming a major characteristic of the so-called modern times. Most of these are man-made problems. This was not always so. The British environmental group ARK has illustrated this in a video shown on NBC TV (Beyond 2000, 30/10/1991), were mother earth voiced her concern about mankind:

"... I am your mother after all... It's your behaviour I am worried about, dear. Lately I think it's got worse and worse, hasn't it? Don't forget, I know you. I knew you before you could even walk. Actually in those days I [was] a beauty myself... Covered in forests and full of life. We were just one big happy family. Me, the animals, and you. - And then you got civilised...".

Many rural areas face present ecological problems, especially where a high population density is found. Thus the preservation of the natural resources is becoming a prime concern for the future of these areas. Natural resources can be subdivided into two main kinds: bioclimatic and mineral (Cole 1987:21). The first consists of soil or water bodies in which plants grow, as they need heat and water for their growth. The products are plant or animal; though the ingredients for their growth are minerals. The second can in turn be divided into fossil fuels, and non-fuel minerals, metallic or non-metallic (Cole 1987:21-23). Tolba (1987:97) points out that natural resources can be renewable and non-renewable resources. Contrary to non-renewable resources such as coal, oil, minerals, renewable resources need never be used up, such as trees, grass, and solar energy. The author points out, the rational use of natural resources is cost-effective and makes economic sense.

With an increasing population in the study area, the problem of sustainable development becomes a pressing issue. The demographic pressures on the earth's resources are becoming unsustainable, as it is unlikely that the resources can meet future demands of a growing population (Oyowe 1994a:50). Therefore population and environmental issues have to be included into development policies (Oyowe 1994a:51), to make development sustainable especially in rural areas.

Sustainable development of both urban and rural localities in the study area, requires policies and appropriate support to avoid the complete destruction of the fragile environment which supplies local building materials, water, and food
resources. Furthermore, help is needed through research to find alternatives for those regions where the natural habitat is in the process of being over-utilised, especially in an arid or semi-arid parts of the country. As the drought in Southern Africa during 1992 has shown, much more emphasis on environmental issues is necessary to ensure sustainability. This one predicament endorses Arnold's (1989:21) argument that ecology and economy are interwoven to a large extent. The environmental wealth or the potential of rural areas should be acknowledged and utilised to secure self-sufficiency, because rural inhabitants depend on these resources. If not, problems like the migration to overcrowded urban areas continue, and the viability of rural regions diminishes further. The Bruntland Commission (quoted by Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith 1990:10) has defined sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of future generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

The study area's general welfare and development is crucially dependent on water. Housing is strongly influenced by this factor, as the households, their livelihood and natural resources can only exist if water is available. The lack of water means that living conditions become intolerable and cannot longer be maintained when desertification takes over.

The traditional homestead is still a viable alternative to the expensive modern house, especially on the periphery of urban areas. But the lack of natural and personal resources, especially money, in the urban centre results in the erection of shanties. It is cheap to use local materials, skills, people's capabilities and participation. These facts could provide a basis for the promotion of traditional construction methods for the time being, by emphasising forestry, sensible utilisation of the land, ecological concerns, and research to improve aspects of rural housing, such as the storage of water and alternative materials, e.g. clay or asfadobe (see Mann 1982:7).

Tolba's (1987:137) and William's (1989:7-9) emphasis on environmental factors, explains the need for protection of the ecology in arid African countries. The situation in the study area supports Arnold's view (1989:22), that development practice overestimates the ability of locals to understand the consequences of environmental decline, to which the inhabitants daily contribute. As long as a considerable percentage of people still live in rural areas, the maintenance of an ecological balance is an important feature in local development, to provide for present and future demands.
Development and environment can reinforce each other, ensuring sustainability and self-sufficiency. But the question remains, who will ultimately make the decisions? (Arnold 1989:23). If the inhabitants do not understand that some of their customs and the population pressure destroy the natural environment, can community based organisations, NGO's, or responsible government institutions be the answer? Doubts are expressed by Arnold (1989:23) when he argues:

"...the major events which tend to capture the imagination of the powerful and rich tend to be global issues, which bring with them a sense of urgency that increases the temptation to apply macro-level 'solutions' without the 'luxury' of wide-spread consultation. But if the poor are cut out of the process, is there any guarantee that, rhetoric aside, the costs of change will not increasingly be shifted in their direction?".

Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith (1990:11) promote the view that institutions play a key role in sustainable development. Many Third World countries lack the ability of institutions to carry through the complex and exacting duties which are needed to tackle the development tasks of the 1990s. The authors (Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith 1990:12) then differentiate between two types of institutions: 1. those that include rules or procedures which shape how people act, and 2. organisations that have attained special status among the people or legitimacy such as government agencies or NGOs. The process of development can alter a village society's rules as well as roles. Rules can be institutionalised in the form of laws or customs, and roles in the form of organisations. Therefore institution building can play a vital task in development and sustainability of development projects or programmes. To be sustainable, Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith (1990:13) therefore suggest the following criteria: institutions should be able to recover some of their costs or become self-financing; they should supply a continuous stream of benefits; and they survive over time as identifiable units.

3.5 Ecology and environment

Ernst Haeckel coined the word ecology in 1869 to denote the study of relationships between a specific organism and its surroundings (Mayor 1988:34). A number of sub-fields have developed out of this research, for example biology, botany, zoology, earth sciences, and geography. Tisdell quotes two definitions of ecology (1985:513), the first describes ecology as a branch of biology treating the relations between organisms and their environment; in the second, ecology is regarded as the branch of biology dealing with living organisms' habits, modes of life, and their surroundings. The author suggests that these definitions indicate an overlap between economic activity and the area of ecology, as he stresses that both the words 'economics' and 'ecology' have a common Greek root, namely oikos - meaning house or habitat.
It has been consistently argued in this chapter that for rural inhabitants the local environment is of crucial importance for survival. But, for the poor worrying about the environment can often be regarded a luxury (Newsweek June 1, 1992:22). As a poor country, "...the Chinese have made the choice that if there is a decision to be made between development and environment, they'll go for development" (Newsweek June 1, 1992:18). This seems to imply that there is only a slim chance to strike a balance between development and the protection of the local ecology especially in the developing areas of the world.

The importance of the environment, particularly with respect to the rural regions in the Third World, is also stressed by Edwards and Jones (1976:107) who argue that

"As a population grouping in a given locality develops the social organization and shared way of life that are basic in the development of a community, the people become caught up in an ongoing inter-relationship with their geographic environment. That environment affects, and is affected by, the particular uses the people make of the particular space and natural resources that are present. The uses, in turn, yield a patterned and dynamic spatial organization which constitutes the ecology of the community".

Communities which have developed in a particular environment throughout the centuries, are now faced with the unfamiliar situation of steady growth and the effects of the growth on the natural environment. The relationship between community and the habitat is nowadays jeopardised. Therefore, a new relationship or awareness has to be established, which will result in protecting the life-sustaining environment.

Local resources have to be considered as a necessary factor in the development of northern Namibia. If traditional building materials are continued to be used in future, forestry has to become a major concern. Guggenheim and Spears, and Cernea (in Cernea 1991) have described different kinds of forestry projects which involve communities. Only a few qualified foresters are found in Namibia which could support a larger scale forestry programme. Research is imperative, for example, fast growing trees like the eucalyptus or bamboo have to be planted to ensure a continuous supply of timber for building purposes. This study pointed out above, that traditional homesteads require repairs and replacements of materials at least every six years. Not too many trees are left in the study area. An example: To the north of Ondangwa, in 1866, a 60 kilometre wide forest existed; half a century later the width of that forest was only 40 kilometres (Erkkilä & Siiskonen 1992:174). In the 1950's the wooden area was about 10 kilometres wide - today there is no forest left!
Rural energy resources in rural areas also consist mainly of wood, charcoal, and dung. Timberlake (1985:115) asserts that in cases where people practice subsistence farming, there is little chance of renewable energy playing a significant role in the near future. Farming is mainly dependent on manual labour, and little money is available to invest in energy. "Renewable energy technologies are just as far out of reach of the majority of small farmers and pastoralists as are tractors" (Timberlake 1985:115).

Deforestation and desertification are largely the result of population pressures that push the poor to more and more remote areas in search for fuelwood and areas to be cleared for agriculture (Tobey 1990:131-132). The author concludes (Tobey 1990:133) that problems of environmental degradation associated with poverty demand far-reaching solutions. Solutions to these problems often require social reforms that few governments are willing to undertake because of the serious political implications. Participation of the local inhabitants is needed for these efforts, which will be discussed in the next section.

Concern with the environment has led to the recognition that in future several areas will be deforested if the cutting down of trees and shrubs is not halted. The reason for this lies to a large extent in the increase in population in densely populated rural areas and around urban centres. This is the case around the centres in the study area, the newly established regional capitals, as well as in Windhoek. Deforestation leads to soil erosion, landslides, flooding, desertification, and degrading of existing vegetation (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:102). The authors (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1975:102-103) mention some alternative energy sources, but these could only serve small, isolated communities, and thus do not offer solutions to the major energy requirements of rural development in general. These are mainly renewable resources, for example mechanical sources such as wind and water; thermal sources, solar energy and bio-gas plants and solar batteries. However, non-renewable energy resources are also used, for example diesel generators which produce electricity. Problems with large scale electrification of rural areas include the identification of investment priorities in rural regions, and the economics of location and distribution (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:104). Other investments are needed to make such a project feasible. The authors provide several criteria for this: fairly well-developed complementary infrastructure, growth of agricultural output, growing demand on farms and agro-industries, improvements in income and living levels, and proximity of a region to a main grid. The high costs of modern electrification can be brought down by adapting appropriate technologies suitable for rural areas, thus making it less
expensive to provide this service to a larger number of inhabitants (see chapter 4, section 6.2).

However if the scale of destruction of nature in the study area is taken into consideration, these small attempts are not sufficient to restrain the wide-spread degradation of the natural conditions. Not only will a sound environmental policy can help to preserve the natural environment, but also the human ecosystem. As rural traditional life depends on the natural environment, any far-reaching changes or exploitation will influence the human ecosystem. Especially subsistence economies rely extensively on the local resources for survival. Once this is not longer assured, the sustainability of the marginalised areas is often at risk. Nowadays social reforms and ecological awareness are required which call for the participation of the local inhabitants. Otherwise the people will only participate in the further destruction of their existence on the one hand, and many migrate, on the other hand, to the urban areas because the viability of the rural region is not guaranteed. This results in additional predicaments for the urban areas, which also lack resources to absorb large numbers of newcomers. Usually large funds are required to counter these problems.

3.6 Participation in development

Much has been written and said about popular participation, but in the framework of IRD, only small scale successes have been achieved. The public is an important participant in the provision of basic needs as a producer, a maker of rules, and a source of finance (Streeten, et al. 1981:111). A problem in development is the achievement of broad participation in the different spheres of life by the target groups. The identification of needs should be a starting point, but who identifies such needs? (see also Turner 1976:11-13). The local people could be the main source, yet in order to be heard, their concerns must be made noticeable by someone who can help. Coetzee (1986a:149) points out that in many cases, the lack of a viable local representative organisation hampers participation efforts. Rural areas with a dispersed population especially require facilitators to enable them to put forward demands and propositions. To let people participate in this process, it is necessary to make use of local expertise (Swanepoel 1989:39). Only if the needs of disadvantaged groups are recognised and noticed, actions can follow. These actions are means towards the aim of distributing benefits to the people who in the end will be in a position to improve their living conditions through participation.

Williams criticises present rural development efforts. He argues (quoted by Wisner 1988:218): "The only mistake is to expect rural development to be in the
interest of the poor in the first place". His point of departure is the definition of rural development by the implementing agencies, not by its rhetorical goals. Projects in this case are supported by state agencies or donors. Under these circumstances, there is much talk of participation, but it usually "comes down to doing what is good for you". Williams concludes that one should see the state and the peasantry as adversaries, not partners in rural development, which is another way for the state trying to exercise power over the peasantry. Although it may be true that in many instances participation is not an obvious part of the development agenda, avenues for participation should be created if development efforts are to become successful. Possibilities to achieve this aim are discussed below. The criticism reveals the opposite of the idea of people as the target of development and as instruments of development (Gant 1979:10). Uphoff (1991:467) opposes the use of the term "target groups", but proposes the term "intended beneficiaries", because the people are to benefited, rather than "impacted".

According to Bryant and White (1982:206-207), participation during the 1950's and 1960's has been associated with political behaviour. It was defined in terms of voting, party membership, and activities in voluntary organisations. Ruthenberg (1981:8) however lists different types of participation. The most important form of these are land given to the poor, as they have to decide on the use of land. Furthermore, involvement in local councils of elected representatives of rural people; the development of institutions for irrigation, soil and water conservation; as well as participation in production-oriented jobs (Ruthenberg 1981:9).

Haralambos (1980:289), on the other hand, points out some of the problems of direct participation by large numbers of people in the running of an organisation, which is in practice impossible. Direct involvement in decision-making can only be replaced with some form of a representative system, but this can lead to a society which is ruled by an elite, whose overriding concern is the maintenance of its own power. Cohen and Uphoff (1977:11) identify three groups which could participate in rural development projects: local residents, local leaders, and government personnel. With respect to the first group, the authors point out that no assumption can be made that local people constitute a homogenous group. Participation of the rural poor tends to be limited, due their incomes and educational levels, land tenure or social status (Cohen & Uphoff 1977:12).

Keeton (1986:149) maintains that in many areas local participation is hampered by the lack of representative organisations, which should promote the views of the poorest sections of the population. The author supports institutions involved in
mass participation, self-reliance and decentralisation, which should be created if absent. Koppel (1987:213) also refers to the importance of participation and supports the consulting of participants to inform them what the programme is trying to accomplish, and negotiations between the region and the centre in order to strengthen local level organisations.

In the 1970's the emphasis on participation in development literature shifted to administrative processes. One reason was the realisation that the political process in many countries was too undeveloped to elicit preferences or involve the public, thus participation would have a greater impact within the implementation process, and project design (Bryant & White 1982:208). Therefore Omer (1980:118) argues that political and economic elites have not been able to introduce a viable political system, nor economic growth with social justice. Their models have not reflected the people's values and aspirations.

Gow and Vansant (1983:427) give another perspective on the significance of participation. They argue that people organise best around problems which they regard as most important. The authors also maintain that local people are best able to make rational economic decisions in the context of their environment and circumstances. Furthermore, it is necessary to obtain voluntary local commitment to supply labour, material and money which could break the pattern of development paternalism which often reinforces local passivity and dependency. Popular participation therefore implies the discussion of plans with the leaders of the community and their ability to mobilise voluntarily, the co-operation and participation of their people (Abt 1985:50). It could be argued that local representative government serves a two-fold-purpose: the administration of supplying goods and services to the community, and involving citizens in determining specific local public needs and how best they could be met (Humes & Martin 1969:33).

Cohen and Uphoff (1980:219) point out several levels of participation. They include participation in decision-making, participation in implementation, participation in benefits and participation in evaluation. These four kinds of participation constitute a cycle of rural development. However, the cycle is often incomplete in practice and participation in the different activities is often limited or unequal.

The process of participation and decision-making, if taken seriously, requires time. A community based process of development is time consuming, especially if one has to deal with people who do not have the "advanced" background of outside
initiators such as NGO's or government agencies. To build up or create community based organisations also takes time. "Bureaucrats are rarely sympathetic figures even when they are helping people participate in benefits to which their citizenship entitles them" (Montgomery 1988:1). Ministers and their ministries do not always have that much time for such a slow process of development, because results have to be shown, for political reasons. In the case of housing, it is easier to built 1000 houses in the conventional non-participatory method, than to engage 1000 potential homeowners in the whole process of decision-making and building a new home.

An important aspect of administrative processes is planning through which local inhabitants can be involved in state and national proposals. By doing so they take initiative in local projects (Gant 1979:173). But, Abt (1985:50) observes, "Popular participation is not necessarily something that the community can be talked into - unless the absolute profitability, either in income or better services, can be demonstrated". To guarantee popular participation based on common interests, the professional support for this must be at hand and permanently available. Local units must have legitimacy; they have to provide a channel for grass-roots involvement, which cannot be the case if they are discredited in the eyes of the community (Bekker 1988:28).

It is often the case that administrators and the citizenry have different perspectives on participation (Bryant & White 1982:213). In this regard participation can be viewed as a learning process, as mutual interaction. If the populace has its own organisational base, the dependency on administrators who ought to listen to legitimate popular demands, diminishes. But to create effective participation is not easy; there are no blueprints or set models (Gow & Vansant 1983:432). Consequently any intervention must be adapted to the specific environment in which it is to be implemented. According to Koppel (1987:217), participation is crucial, "because sustainability implies a recurrent and continuing commitment by a project's users to actually use, maintain and further develop an earlier investment".

Ways of dealing with particular needs of communities such as services, housing, local resources, can be appraised by interested local groups. Once assistance is obtained where necessary, the active participation in building processes and decision-making, will be eased. To make the supply of housing more efficient, Doebele (1987:129-130) identifies the following categories: appropriate plot

---

5 See also section 3.4 in this chapter
sizes; excessive building costs and standards for infrastructure and services; mobilising local organisations; and cooperate ownership. A potential homeowner can considerably reduce the costs of his house by participating in the housing process. This can be illustrated by the following possibilities: 1. Everything could be arranged by the owner, from designing the house to constructing it, as in the case of traditional housing or the informal urban shelter. 2. Owner-builders are involved in the managing of the building process, for example the owner buys the required materials, and executes certain tasks by himself such as painting the walls. A part of the work is done by a contractor or sub-contractors, for example the building of walls or the construction of the roof. These possibilities result in savings, which are not achieved in the case of a dwelling completed by a developer. These turn-key projects leave little scope for direct participation, except in the selection of an erf and the choice of the house type.

In Africa's rural areas, specific problem factors have to be taken into account. One aspect is the role and position of women. The absence of men in many instances, means that women have to take over tasks such as food production besides providing fuelwood, water, caring for the sick and children, and cooking (Wisner 1988:234). Various authors (cited by Wisner 1988:245) point out the fact that African women's importance in basic needs satisfaction has been invisible to planners for so long. Agencies such as the World Bank, have been trying to recognise the 'invisible woman' in development (World Bank quoted by Wisner 1988:245). If participation would have been accomplished on a large scale, it can be assumed that many problems would have been solved already. This is however not the case. Only certain small projects have been described as a success in this respect.

An interesting example of participation is quoted by Gilbert and Gugler (1981:85) who reject the myth of 'culture of poverty' that leads to a change in housing policy. They go on: "If the poor are considered to be incapable of helping themselves, then they have to be helped. In a housing context this tends to mean that only governments are capable of building satisfactory housing for the poor". This however would mean that the poor are becoming dependent on government efforts. But Turner (quoted by Gilbert & Gugler 1981:85) argues that governments are best advised to help people to help themselves. Self-help housing can produce superior shelter to that produced by government, if the poor understand the role that housing plays in their lives. The major criterion to be used should be whether housing suits the needs of particular poor families (see also section
3.4). Governments could help in facilitating the use of appropriate technologies through research and development, based on locally available resources, and the training of people to enable the use of the technology and natural resources.

This view is supported by Namibia's Minister of Local Government and Housing stated in the 1992 budget speech (MLGH 1992:51) that people should be involved in the whole housing development process, by taking decisions on what they want and to initiate action. Furthermore, choices should be afforded through a maximum number of possible housing options. The Minister (MLGH 1992:52) added that the role of the state is to facilitate, while the role of the people is to decide and act. Therefore choices must be provided with respect to services, building materials, and designs, and the different possibilities to erect a house (see above).

Meaningful participation is also a process of education, which cannot be achieved overnight. The need for ecological education serves as an illustration in the rural areas. In urban areas, education regarding the modern municipal system, conventional houses and services, is needed before participation in the local authority can become meaningful. Local support and participation in rural and urban areas is a precondition and an essential component for development. To make the participation process self-sustaining, requires appropriate skills and implementing capacity, the presence of institutions at local, regional and central level, to ensure effective use of available resources and to advance the mobilisation of additional financial and human resources for continued development.

Participation by a poor individual or community can be achieved in various ways, whether it is on a political level or in self-help housing. The government could facilitate this process by supporting activities on the local and regional level. Furthermore, the development of capabilities of individuals and communities could contribute to more meaningful participation in development. One method contributing to this is the development of appropriate technologies.

3.7 Appropriate technology

In contemporary society, science and technology are fundamental factors supporting the economy and the welfare of the society (Moremi 1994:2). These factors contribute to the development of new products and processes. Technology can be obtained from two sources. One is to import foreign technology, the second source is to develop new technologies within a country to develop domestic technology capacity. The latter is important in order to absorb, use and adapt
foreign technology for local requirements (see also Thompson 1985). Local industries could require a tailored technology that cannot be obtained from abroad. Productivity in various fields could grow by improving foreign and local technology. "These improvements can only be made through local research and development efforts" (Moremi 1994:2). Among the efforts in Third World countries is the promotion of technologies which are befitting small scale enterprises in rural areas by providing employment opportunities, promote self-sufficiency, preserve the environment, and enable inhabitants to participate in the development and use of suitable technologies.

A great deal of rhetoric about appropriate technology, intermediate technology, and alternative technology, has been going on in the debate of possible means to bridge the chasm between the First and Third Worlds (Harber 1991a:23). The author argues that there has been very little action on finding realistic solutions for the needs of underprivileged communities. In order to utilise the labour in developing countries, the dominant role of advanced technology was modified to emphasise appropriate technology (Cohen & Uphoff 1980:216). It was not always the smallest in scale but was more manageable by the majority of beneficiaries. Instead of relying on the top-down approach, attention was given by researchers to decentralised, local approaches of development.

The term 'appropriate technology' is defined by Napier, et al. (1987:1) as "technology that is appropriate to the needs of a particular society at its present level of development, since different cultural and geographic groups require different technologies. 'Technological self-determination' should harmonise with cultural identity and complement the needs of the community in a satisfying and creative process". It also stresses that every society has a technological tradition and new technologies should not come into conflict with traditions. This however is not always possible, especially in cases where the communities demand those technologies used by the 'modern' sections of the society.

A good example which demonstrates the use of appropriate technology, are machines which could make heavy work much easier. However, if modern machines such as a mill to grind mahangu in the rural regions of the study area (diesel or petrol driven), are introduced to women who are unable to repair such machines, then the technology could be considered to be inappropriate. Instead a hand driven mill, which is easy to repair and to maintain, would be more appropriate.

---

6 This work is hard and very time consuming.
Appropriate technology does not mean condemning developing countries to a state of perpetual technological backwardness (ILO 1985a:48). The use of modern technology may be essential in order to improve traditional technologies to achieve economic efficiency, employment generation and income distribution. A country's technological capacity requires that emphasis is given to adapting and upgrading simple traditional technologies (ILO 1985a:49).

Wang (1991:10) differentiates between three terms, which are often lumped together. The first is intermediate technology, an approach to development in which full industrial technology is eventually possible. The second term, appropriate technology was discussed above. Proponents criticise industrial technology as being not appropriate for poor communities, except for certain tasks. The third term, alternative technology, is a radical criticism of the excesses of the industrial society. By promoting alternative technology, its proponents seek to reform society by making use of technology which is environmentally sustainable, affordable, and allows equity in the access to resources. The alternative to industrial technology should have aspects accommodating the needs of the rich and also the poor. The rich need a technology to allow them to achieve their desired living conditions without unnecessary depletion of natural resources, whereas the poor require technology suitable for their survival needs (Wang 1991:11). These technologies should be cheap, simple and effective. Among the alternative technologies are for example bio-gas plants, which make use of waste products, are environment friendly, and could be used for fertiliser production and to produce gas for cooking purposes in rural areas, thereby eliminating the need for firewood.

Intermediate technology is concerned with small-scale industries starting with existing techniques and using knowledge of advanced techniques to transform or improve them (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:105-106). In poor communities technological innovations must be inexpensive and of minimal risk. Thus to be relevant, the demand for low-cost products must be within the purchasing power of the consumers. Another form of intermediate technology is village technology aimed at small farmers. It is advocated that innovations in this respect should begin at the current level of village competence, for example using traditional carpenters or blacksmiths. Materials used should be locally available at low costs. "Village technology should seek principally to reduce bottlenecks and constraints in production systems" (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:104). The authors conclude (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:107) that to stimulate rural development, a balance is needed between traditional and modern technologies, each having its appropriate function at different levels of the spatial hierarchy for communities at different
levels of economic development. Intermediate technology must be made available to those interested and requiring it. Knowledge can be transmitted through training and information channels from one place to another. A central authority gathering, researching and providing relevant information, can be a useful point to start with the dissemination process.

The potential of appropriate technology has largely been ignored or underestimated by planners in most developing countries (ILO 1985a:49). The development of appropriate technology can have an impact on society and economy, as skills can be developed, and new employment opportunities could be created in rural areas. Therefore the advantages of this kind of technological development have to be assessed in order to promote it as part of the policies associated with rural development.

4. NATIONAL POLICIES ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The positive contribution which suitable policies can make to growth and social well-being in rural areas, should be emphasised (ILO 1985a:10). Public policies or guidelines are future oriented and are subject to continuous review by the legislators (Hanekom 1987:5). The course of action should be visualised for the attainment of societal goals or how societal problems could be resolved. Consequently, national policies are strongly influenced by the system of government found in each country.

Broadly differentiated, governments can be characterised by systems of personal rule, such as is found in military regimes and one party states, or some form of democratic government. In the first two cases, national policies are often decided by a small minority or clique. A change of government was usually achieved through a military or inter-party coup (see Tordoff 1984:10). Democratic governments, especially in Africa, were a rare phenomenon in the past, as the democratisation process is a fairly recent phenomenon. A change of government through electoral means, was in most countries not on the political agenda, such as Malawi under Banda, but also in multi-party states such as Botswana. A responsibility to uplift the living standards of the masses, was for most governments not a policy priority. Thus the majority of people did not experience a major change in their living standards, in contrast to the ruling elite and their associates. Whether democratic governments, with an elected parliament and a cabinet, can engage in the formulation and implementation of national, regional and local policies, must be reviewed on a regular basis, otherwise policies could become obsolete.
Policies have to be decided on the various levels of government, i.e. national, regional and local level. After gaining independence, Namibia underwent changes on all three tiers of government. Policies regarding the local and later regional authorities were considered. However, the decision-making capacities of many of the newly created local and regional authorities are limited due to the lack of skilled personnel, funds, and political will (deursettingsvermoë).

Besides the overall responsibility of governments towards the country as a whole, Chambers and Feldman (1973:184) argue that government ministers have a special responsibility towards rural development, because as leaders of the government they are well placed to explain policies. They can set an example which can have an impact on self-help activities. They should also stay in close contact with people in rural areas, but at the same time have to maintain contacts with local and regional officials. But whether this is always the case is often questionable.

4.1 Government policies and rural development

In most African countries the majority of inhabitants are still living in rural areas, usually under quite difficult socio-economic conditions (World Bank 1994:162). African governments are usually the major employers in their respective countries, a situation which is characterised by huge bureaucracies. Therefore, Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978:139) believe that in developing countries, governments are often the only entity capable of initiating, organising, and guiding programmes of the size and complexity such as integrated rural development. The authors stress that top-level political and administrative support for rural development should be the sine qua non of strategy implementation. In the same vein, the World Bank (1975b:29) contends that a strong commitment to rural development policies at the national level is required to make an impact on the problems of rural poverty. In the report (World Bank 1975:29-33) mention is made of some areas of important government policies: price and fiscal polices, land reform, regional policy, technology, planning and resource requirements, all of which could be considered to be of crucial importance for rural development (see section 3.4).

The importance of government policies could also be illustrated by a review of the situation in Latin America. Newly elected governments, headed by young technocrats, insist that Latin America's myriad social problems all have their roots in the misguided economic policies of the past (Newsweek December 10, 1978).

7 about 70% live in rural areas (African Farmer July 1990:6)
To keep pace with the times, changes are needed for survival, for example from an organisational point of view, institutions could review their goals, structures, policies, and procedures (Qamar 1979:256), otherwise they will fall victim to modernisation by becoming outdated.

There is also the need to ensure high priority for rural development policies in resource allocation by central government, since without stable and continuous political commitment, statements on such strategies remain only rhetoric (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:141). Often, barriers against the redistribution of investment have to be broken, which were raised by entrenched interests. However, constant pressure from the international and local community has led quite a few countries to commit themselves to rural development (Bryant & White 1982:280). The authors argue (Bryant & White 1982:282) that one major obstacle in achieving support for rural development in many countries since 1973 has been the rapid rise in oil prices, which influenced the economies negatively as other prices rose sharply, especially that of agricultural inputs.

4.2 Administration for policy implementation

Another important aspect in rural development is the administrative skills needed to implement a policy of rural development. In this respect support is required from government ministries (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:143) to achieve the general aims of such policies. But Coombs (1980:21) asserts that the main obstacle is usually the bureaucracies and specialists, who often block or delay the implementation of rural development programmes. Michels (quoted by Haralambus 1980:289) maintains that "Bureaucracy is the sworn enemy of individual liberty, and of all bold initiative in matters of internal policy". However, the complexity of rural development and the need for political support in Third World countries, makes bureaucracies unavoidable instruments for implementing policies. Thus agencies specially concerned with rural development and able to provide inputs for government decisions could help to promote policies in the interest of rural inhabitants. The public administrator in Third World countries does not only perform administrative functions, he/she is also considered to be the political spokesman of the government and in this way a development agent. Consequently, political neutrality, as in Western administrations, is not a characteristic of public administration in the Third World (Tötemeyer 1988:8).

In the case of rural areas where a government wants to install new authorities, Toulmin (1991:34) points out to some difficulties: First the level at which a local community is defined has to be determined, e.g. should it be the village or group of villages? Is there a representative body at the local level which is able
to manage and control access to resources? The interests of local communities and the national government may not always coincide, therefore whose interest should receive priority? (Toulmin 1991:35). This situation requires management structures which could bring together local representatives and the national government to agree to management rules. Toulmin asserts that in reality, governments have made little if any progress in transferring power away from the centre.

4.3 National planning

An important facet of national planning should also be rural development. It is essential to assist in the identification of immediate and long-term needs. The success of rural programmes depends on political and administrative support of public and private institutions at the national, regional and local level (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:144). Therefore, the authors claim, strong central planning and programming are indispensable. Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978:145) also state that in Africa, national planning must provide centralised direction in order to co-ordinate various public and private activities. It is a top-down operation which determines broad objectives and policies, and allocates resources (Thapliyal 1983:289). In many countries this guidance is not provided by the government. The planning process often does not fully consider implementation requirements and there is a failure to anticipate potential implementation constraints (Swanepoel 1989:38).

4.4 Financing development

One of the most important functions at the central government level is the allocation of finances, because a steady and reliable flow of national budget resources is crucial for successful rural development (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:146-147). Even if political and administrative support is available, the scarcity of operating funds could seriously hamper programmes. Comprehensive planning and budgeting can play significant roles in making optimal use of scarce resources, and to ensure that the necessary funds are available when a project is implemented. Furthermore, the differences between amounts budgeted and the funds actually released can be enormous, due to a paucity of operating funds (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:147). To this Weitz (1979:75) adds that the ability of an authority to act often depends on its degree of control over public funds. This issue is the source of frequent difficulties because of the rigidity of government budgets as well as the diverse demand on it. The issue has been complicated because of the imposition of structural adjustment plans on many African governments due to the large debt burden (see UNICEF 1994:50-51). Another aspect is the increasing scarcity of funds for rural development and the emphasis on urban areas, where
4.5 The role of rural development and decentralisation

Among the institutional reforms proposed for successful rural development is decentralisation. Nattrass (1985:6) argues that before a basic needs strategy is implemented, the decentralisation of decision-making has to be further increased to ensure real participation in government, especially in rural areas. Besides government, informal and traditional authorities should be included in the overall rural development efforts.

Another important reason for decentralisation is to divide up and disperse the work load and to avoid congestion at the centre and benefit from knowledge of conditions and of institutions at the local level (Gant 1979:169). Furthermore, the decentralisation of public functions is also needed, according to Gant, to extend their benefits to people in the localities in which they live, localities with residents who have information and opinions about the development and expression of local characteristics. Planning and development at lower levels of government are more difficult to characterise, because it is here that the planning function shifts from the experts to the people (Gant 1979:173). Expert planning is not often found to be organised at the lower levels, except in some urban areas. Citizen committees represent the people, which give some assurance that local priorities are established. But, local and regional governments in most developing countries are too weak to assume complex responsibilities, because of the lack of trained and experienced manpower, but also because of the reluctance of central authorities to delegate responsibilities to a lower level (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:151).

For the effective implementation of rural development on the local level, a number of inputs are to be considered, ranging from institutional structures such as a local authority to grassroots level participation in development programmes, for example Community Based Organisations (CBO), in the spheres of agriculture, local industrialisation, infrastructure, and education. The importance of popular participation has been emphasised above as an important objective of rural development. On the local level, the involvement of the inhabitants is called for in the various components discussed below.

To sustain social and economic transformation in rural areas requires the strengthening of the capacity of local government to plan and manage public facilities and also to deliver basic services (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:125). To
enable them to do this, local authorities need power to handle matters of local interest. This is in line with the general principle of decentralisation (Totemeyer 1992:79). The powers and functions of local authorities would differ according to the kind and level of local authority (see chapter four, section 9.1). The functions given to local authorities, the resources which are provided, and the structural supports and defences for a decentralised system should be spelled out clearly (Totemeyer 1992:79).

Conyers (1983:99) argues that many newly independent countries in the 1950s and 1960s tended to model their decentralisation programmes on the colonial government system. Since the 1970s, decentralisation policies not only emphasised participation of local inhabitants, but also became concerned with the improvement of planning and implementation of national development, especially rural development, and envisaged the facilitation of more effective ways for popular participation. Decentralisation was also regarded as a means to improve the planning and implementation of rural development programmes by making them more relevant and responsive to local needs and conditions, allowing greater flexibility in their implementation and providing means to co-ordinate agencies involved on local and regional level. The objectives of decentralisation varied from country to country. This led to the establishment of many different forms of decentralisation, which suggests "that there is no one 'right' form of decentralisation; they all have advantages and disadvantages and the choice must depend on the objectives of decentralisation and environment in which it will operate" (Conyers 1986:598-599).

Bryant and White (1982:160-161) differentiate between two forms of decentralisation, namely the administrative and the political. The first implies the delegation of some implementing powers to local levels, also called deconcentration. The second, termed devolution, means some decision-making authority and control over resources is assigned to regional and local officials. Evidence suggests that local input can improve project design and implementation. Thus Coombs (1980:22) regards a larger measure of administrative decentralisation and devolution of responsibilities as a basic requirement for successful rural development. Local support has to be obtained before programmes or projects can be successfully implemented.

Overcentralisation creates apoplexy at the centre and anaemia at the edges, and also produces cumbersome bureaucracies (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:10-11), because they are slow to react and try to preserve their powers, thus often defer development initiatives. Decentralisation is therefore encouraged to advance local efforts and
initiatives. This is however difficult to achieve, because in developing countries markets for capital, labour, and commodities are not yet well developed, thus "development neither trickles down from the top nor effervesces from the bottom" (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:11).

4.6 Decentralised functions

4.6.1 Local authority functions

Functions assigned to local government are the provision of small-scale infrastructure, such as drainage facilities, roads and water supplies and also the co-ordination of public and private development. In this way they can function as a communication link between national and local government (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:125-126). However, the authors stress that in few developing countries local authorities perform these functions effectively.

The local level is often ignored by central governments and also the population in general. Governments frequently do not have the resources to support all development efforts (Gow & Vansant 1983:438). To this they add, "Many activities would probably function better without the involvement of governments at all". Nevertheless some local authorities can be useful in identifying local needs and making them known to a higher authority, if outside help is necessary. "Allocation decisions are determined in any political system by influence" (Bryant & White 1980:8). Therefore the development of appropriate local authorities for rural areas has a potential for the future which has not yet been realised by many political leaders, who are scared of the influence of local leaders. The cooperation of local inhabitants and the various local leaders should be attained, to make a decentralised authority appropriate to the needs of the particular area it serves, and to ensure the general stability of the country.

With respect to local leadership in rural areas, one has to take into account the presence of traditional leadership in a particular area, for example tribal chiefs or headmen. However, non-traditional leaders should not be overlooked. For local leaders to be effective they need legitimacy and some latitude for exercising discretion, thus sufficient authority must be delegated to them or indigenous influence generated (Bryant & White 1980:30). For this reason programmes which attempt to bypass traditional leaders are often not viable (Gow & Vansant 1983:435) and could be counter-productive.

4.6.2 Support components in rural areas

Other local support components are research stations and agricultural laboratories which serve as sources of technological innovations in rural areas,
although in many countries this is often not closely integrated with extension services and the ultimate users of the new products (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:128). The authors suggest that those involved in research, can make their findings more relevant by focusing on the needs of small farmers, for example by co-ordinating national studies on traditional crops and agricultural technologies (National Planning Commission 1993:62). To diffuse modern technological innovations effectively to the small-scale users, they should be made culture- and site-specific. One way in which research can improve income and living standards for small farmers is the improvement of productivity of land and increasing production of the small farmers. New methods can help the farmers (see section 3.7), without having to break away completely from the well-known traditions of the past or drastically increasing the need for capital, e.g. through sequential planting (see Marais 1989).

Although agriculture could be considered the backbone of the rural economy, rural areas also need the development of industries relevant to the particular region. Such industries can be divided into agricultural and non-agricultural industries such as service industries. Repair and maintenance services in rural areas are generally neglected in developing countries, resulting in an enormous waste of resources and the deterioration of existing facilities (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:132). The promotion of small repair and maintenance shops scattered throughout a rural region can render valuable services (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:133). More specialised services can be provided by workshops in larger towns. To complement these services, local production of simple spare parts and tools should be encouraged. A first step towards achieving this goal is to train artisans and to provide financial means and buildings for the establishment of these small enterprises.

Scarce resources and the lack of qualified manpower create pressure at the central government level to concentrate both at the centre, where they supposedly can be used more efficiently (Bryant & White 1982:157). But the authors state (Bryant & White 1982:159) that there is increasing evidence that organisational arrangements of centrally directed development are not appropriate for the newer range of developmental goals for example decentralisation and local decision-making (see Ruthenberg 1981:10-11). Centrally directed projects have often been ineffective, wasteful, ignoring local interests and contributions.

4.7 Co-ordination of development efforts

Due to the multisectoral efforts in rural development, and the involvement of different organisations and institutions, co-ordination between all the activities
in one area has to be attempted. In the report already quoted, the World Bank (1975b:7) maintains that strong co-ordination at the centre is becoming essential for the successful implementation of rural development programmes. This viewpoint is also supported by Swanepoel (1989:38). At the local level, co-ordination is needed because multisectoral programmes can be implemented most effectively through substantial increase in decentralisation. Interaction between the various levels of government is nevertheless required, such as between the local and the national level. Successful co-ordination also necessitates support from the lowest level of authority. In this respect, organisation on the local level has to take the various local support components into account, such as local governmental capacity and agricultural activities. In this way services, shelter, or infrastructure could be provided at community level.

The IRD approach is a difficult one, as it requires proper co-ordination among various agencies and authorities (Bothomani 1991:13). Co-ordination of activities in rural areas could minimise duplication of efforts by different organisations and individuals, which would save scarce resources such as manpower and funds. In this way national policies, projects, and programmes, as adopted in national plans, could be implemented more effectively on the local level.

5. PROJECT ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Implementation of rural development

Rondinelli and Ruddle (1977a:21) maintain that one of the preconditions determining the ability of developing nations to implement development plans, is local administrative capacity. The expansion and maintenance of local government capacity to support integrated rural development projects is a crucial element of any successful growth-with-equity programme. It could also be argued that multisectoral rural development projects depend on inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination (World Bank 1975:74). Hence those responsible for preparing projects must also identify institutional constraints in the public sector and seek practical solutions to overcome them.

Rural areas with their particular problems which inter alia are a result of their distance from urban and administrative centres (see Hardiman & Midgley 1982:107), means that additional constraints are put on the planning and implementation of development efforts in these areas. To generate interest in endeavours initiated or assisted from outside the traditional area, can become a long drawn out process, because local political, social or institutional structures must be consulted to obtain support. Co-operation is of particular importance in a
situation of rural poverty. On the one hand, the officialdom fails to address the problem, because "rural poverty is not seen and, not being perceived, is not addressed" (Chambers quoted by Bryant & White 1982:275). To this Galbraith (quoted by Bryant & White 1982:275) adds that rural inhabitants have survived in an equilibrium of poverty for a long time. It has become difficult to escape from this minimum level of subsistence.

Outsiders underperceive poverty (Chambers 1983:2), because these outsiders are often attracted to and trapped in urban areas. The urban influences are reflected in a number of biases discussed by Chambers (1983:13-23). Outsiders limit visits to towns and centres which are accessible by car. Preferred are rural localities where projects are in progress. Due to the remoteness of many rural areas, access and therefore visits are limited to the dry season, which is the worst time for the rural poor (see Chambers 1983:20-21). Contacts are dominated by a small group of persons who can give information and impressions from their point of view. Another bias is the result of professionalism, which leads to specialisations in various fields. Therefore the professionals are not in a position to fit all the pieces of rural life together and are not aware of the factors affecting poorer people (Chambers 1983:23).

According to Rondinelli and Ruddle (1977a:22), rural development projects succeed or fail on the strength of the available institutions. This could be a government agency; an area-based local council to integrate inputs of ministries, and non-governmental organisations; or a district project implementing unit, autonomous from and outside the regular government structure. The latter has several advantages in countries with severe shortages of trained manpower, for example where an identifiable organisation exists; clear authority could be granted to a single organisation and finances could then be allocated for specific projects. Independent organisations are often considerably more flexible to innovate and to experiment; they have less red tape; and they can perform highly specialised functions while government agencies often lack the competence or resources to undertake such functions which will improve the quality of life in such areas (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1977a:22-23).

5.2 Manpower availability in rural areas

The availability of suitably qualified manpower is another aspect which should be considered in rural development. In most developing countries there is a paucity of trained and skilled manpower in all sectors. In Africa, countries have attempted to Africanise the civil service after independence, but shortages of the "right" people to fill posts has often resulted in the filling of vacancies with
incompetent personnel (see Lele 1975:132, Nafziger 1988:88). As long as this practice is followed, no successful development for those in dire needs can be envisaged. Development efforts cannot succeed, if the unfolding of the available potential, is not achieved. This is also the case with respect to the programmatic inputs for rural development.

To rely on expatriate staff is also problematic, because of the unfavourable living and working conditions in most rural areas. As Lele (1975:133) argues, trained manpower is a scarce commodity, commanding high returns in the form of attractive salaries in government and parastatal jobs, the benefits of city life, fringe benefits, and foreign training. Recruiting and retaining staff for rural development poses the danger of further widening the existing differential in salaries, which leads to increased disparities between the salaried classes and rural people (Lele 1975:133-134).

In many instances, to be effective, the tasks of an organisation could be assigned to teams, groups and individuals from within the project staff could be recruited for this purpose. Therefore procedures should be devised to obtain the necessary facilities, equipment, land, labour, and finances (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1977a:25). But the authors warn that over-sophisticated or cumbersome procedures can hinder rather than facilitate decision-making. Thus appropriate procedures and techniques are essential for efficient performance and the future running of a completed project. Among the most important and least carefully considered functions of programming is the transfer of activities, methodologies, and outputs to regular administrative agencies to ensure that the services to the beneficiaries are continued (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1977a:25). The ability of the project staff in the implementation phase to transfer functions to future operating institutions, is essential for strengthening the administrative capacity of public agencies and for building institutional infrastructures in rural areas. A project could be regarded as being successful only if the operations are taken over by the local inhabitants. Complete dependency or reliance on outside assistance and resources for an infinite period of time, are sure signs of unsuccessful implementation.

Successful implementation in rural areas, depends on whether or not local participation and support could be obtained from those who are the beneficiaries of a project. To achieve this, local interest is required and the readiness to become involved in the proposed activities. This community involvement is a time consuming process, as the clarification of project aims, the implementation process, the responsibilities of the community members, their motivation and
interest in the project should therefore be secured. In the end participation by the beneficiaries ensures an achievement in development. In a few instances where participation was successful, local leaders and community representatives were directly involved in major project activities right from the beginning (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1977a:25). The authors also point out (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1977a:27) that the ability to elicit local involvement depends primarily on the attitudes of project personnel and on efforts which they make, to provide local residents with opportunities for participation.

5.3 Technical component and inputs

The importance of identifying appropriate technical inputs needed to stimulate rural development, is emphasised by Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978:82). Marketing facilities, making credit available, extension services, training, resettlement, and availability of energy sources, are among the components which could be made available through government intervention or by incentives to and regulation of private organisation. Leonard (1977:172) stresses that national agricultural programmes and technical recommendations must be adapted to local conditions to make them effective and appropriate.

One problem found in many developing countries is the marketing of agricultural produce. Increased productivity and the consequent increase in marketable goods cannot always be brought to the markets, and often results in losses in the rural areas (Hardiman & Midgley 1982:107), as produce rots away, or is eaten by birds and rats (ILO 1985a:38). Hardiman and Midgley (1982:107) point out two other important aspects relating to marketing. The first is the inaccessibility of markets, as the result of inadequate roads or transport facilities, which could mean a loss in income for the farmers and the increase in destitution in rural areas on during the dry season.

The second aspect relates to the pricing and fiscal policy of government (Hardiman & Midgley 1982:107). Programs directed at raising the productivity of small farmers have usually failed to provide some kind of credit or crop insurance against losses. Furthermore, larger farmers are often the ones who receive finances, because they are more likely to respond to opportunities for innovation (Hardiman & Midgley 1982:106). Governments are also influenced by the urban sector to keep prices down (ILO 1985a:37, Hardiman & Midgley 1982:108). This lowers incomes for the rural population, who must however buy inputs from the urban sector at high prices, as argued above. With respect to fiscal policies Hardiman and Midgley (1982:109) state that public expenditure favours urban dwellers, because proportionally more is spent in towns than in rural areas (see Harrison
Governments try to keep the urban population happy, as their politicians fear instability of the government.

Most small farmers need credit to increase output and productivity (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:87). The majority must however operate without it. Most of the credit available to farmers is for short-term loans for one season or two years, to purchase seeds, fertiliser and pesticides (World Bank 1975:105). Loans between two and five years are for purchasing livestock and equipment. There is also an urgent need for credit among those small farmers to enable them to produce a marketable surplus and thereby contribute to the development process in general. Low levels of income and the lack of collateral exclude many small farmers from obtaining bank loans (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:87). They borrow against forthcoming harvests, but because of low productivity little capital accumulation results. The availability of credit should be so designed as to promote a strong inducement to the improvement of farm techniques, institutions and organisations, but should also be supported by the provision of agricultural extension and marketing facilities (Belshaw quoted by Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:88). In short, in many rural areas in the Third World there is an urgent need for agrarian reform.

It is often true that the potential for savings available in rural areas remains untapped, thus ways should be developed to mobilise such savings (Lele 1975:98). However, locally available resources are not enough to provide for investments in modern inputs such as improved seeds, chemical fertiliser, herbicides, and farm machinery (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:89). Financial institutions are often mostly geared to industrial and commercial lending and find it uneconomical to give loans to small farmers. One alternative is to examine the institutionalisation of rural savings through traditional organisations (Lele 1975:98). Furthermore, involving people in saving and receiving credit will lead to more direct interest in assuring repayments, as the Grameen Bank's activities in Bangladesh show⁸(see United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991b).

An skewed income distribution may also result in higher recorded saving rates in urban areas, but these savings are not necessarily translated into productive domestic investment (Crosswell 1978:39). Wealthy savers can invest in financial and physical assets locally and abroad, or in speculative domestic land transactions. These investments yield little or no return to the urban and rural economy in terms of increases in stock and other resources to increase productivity, especially in rural areas.

⁸ The Grameen Bank's services include the provision of housing loans
Agricultural extension education often forms part of rural development projects, to give farmers access to new technologies and skills (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:91). Extension programmes aim at transmitting technical knowledge to farmers, thereby hoping to improve rural living conditions by training the local population in a variety of skills. But in most countries, the authors point out (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:91) that extension programmes face operational problems, due to institutional, organisational, educational, and communication difficulties caused by inadequate interpersonal communication. In the words of Lele (1975:62), "Extension agents are few and far between, ill-paid, ill-trained, ill-equipped with a technical package, and consequently very poor in quality". One of the most common problems are the attitudes and behaviour of extension agents, the lack of local social and cultural information, the failure to understand the local agricultural system, and errors in programme design (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:92). In addition, the urban background of most extension officers and their lack of identification with the rural population, and understanding of the traditional human ecosystem also pose problems which need to be addressed urgently. Another obstacle is widespread dissatisfaction among officers, due to poor morale, complaints of low pay, poor working conditions, heavy workloads, and other logistical problems (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:93).

To bring about a more effective extension service, several methods have been developed in general. This includes the use of group demonstrations, whereby agents design experiments and then convene groups of farmers to whom the results are explained (Bryant & White 1982:190). These meetings can stimulate more innovations, reach more inhabitants, and allow for more effective supervision. A second method (Bryant & White 1982:190-191), is a highly intensive training and visit system, where extension workers focus on small groups of farmers, who are frequently visited. The workers are not working alone, but can rely on a network of village workers, who live in the villages and work directly with the farmers (Bryant & White 1982:190-191). This system also provides regular training for the agents, to inform them about new developments and involve them with subject-matter specialists.

To improve extension services, it may be necessary to provide a technical package that is profitable at farm level and gives incentives to farmers to adopt innovations. This could include the training of extension officers to solve constraints faced by the farmers; an incentive system to encourage extension services to perform its tasks efficiently; relieving extension services of unnecessary duties; and secure the active support and participation of the farmers themselves (Lele 1975:63).
5.4 Non-formal education

Improvements of non-formal education could also be considered an important aspect of rural development. It implies organised and systematic activities to provide learning in certain fields for specific groups of adults and children (D'Aeth 1975:62). It is separate from formal schooling, and includes programmes of adult literacy, occupational skills, agricultural extension, community programmes in health, family planning, and also the establishment of and management of co-operatives. Non-formal education and training in the context of rural education could be considered to be important vehicles for introducing change in developing countries (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:94). The formal school system often does not provide appropriate education for rural inhabitants, because of "urban" curricula, the lack of qualified teachers and school facilities (see section 3.1). Lele (1975:162) notes that local involvement and institutional development could not be considered effective unless training is provided to sensitise people, to increase receptivity and ability of rural people to respond to development programmes; for the field staff to improve technical and administrative performance; and for higher-level administrative personnel to improve the quality of policy formulation, co-ordination, and overall effectiveness of implementation.

Non-formal education could form an indispensable instrument of rural development, if it is of the right kind in the right places and tied to complementary efforts such as employment creation, credit schemes for small entrepreneurs (Coombs & Achmed quoted by D'Aeth 1975:63). For the poorest countries it gives a favourable political climate and determination by its leaders and people to build a better future. Finally, developing countries can forge ahead more quickly in non-formal education if critical help from the outside is made available. Another aspect is closer integration of non-formal education with other development programmes. Greater equity is related to the basic difficulty in development that those who need little help are those who most readily take advantage of them, while those who live in poor circumstances are the least able to respond to new opportunities (see chapter 3).

5.5 Land reform

Land reform is consistent with the development objectives of increasing output, improving income distribution and expanding employment (World Bank 1975:199). Land tenure forms the basis of the economic structure of most rural societies, and constitutes the rules, procedures, governing rights, duties, liberties and exposure of individuals and groups in the use and control over land and water (Dorner quoted by Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:99). Land reform attempts to reformulate those rules and procedures to make tenure patterns consistent with the
goals of economic and social development of the country as a whole. The authors note some examples of such changes as expropriation of large estates; the abolition of tenant farming where the tenant becomes owner-occupier; amendments of tenure conditions through rent control, compensation for improvements and security of tenure; the issue of land titles; and changes in traditional farms to improve cultivators' rights. A commitment to land reform requires simultaneous activities to create an input system to meet the special needs of the beneficiaries (World Bank 1975:199), but only if the carrying capacity of the land allows this. Small farms can generate employment to absorb underemployed labour (World Bank 1975:200). Whenever possible, tenants should become owners of the land they cultivate, because owner-operated farms tend to be more efficient and equitable than tenant farming (World Bank 1975:201).

The greatest obstacle to land reform are usually socio-economic and political factors, vested interests such as large-scale farmers often result in solutions introduced after confrontations between political elites and organisations representing farmers and labourers, or through external pressure (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:100). In Africa, vested interests with respect to land came to the fore between commercial farmers and the majority of inhabitants living in communal areas, which were usually restricted to densely populated or arid peripheral regions (see UNIN 1986: 112). Large farmers in communal areas have the financial means to fence off certain parts of the land. In Namibia this practice is found in many communal areas, although it is illegal (SSD 1994:39-40).

Thus the distribution of land became a major post-independence issue, especially in countries where racial policies have contributed to this situation. Legislation passed in this respect after independence is usually ineffective, because of political opposition. It also lacks specific procedures to redistribute land in long-settled areas or to compensate owners at a fair price (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:100).

The organisation of agricultural producers could be regarded as a precondition of the sector's transformation (Weininger 1985:39). The transformation from traditional subsistence agriculture to diversified commercial farming requires an adequate organisational structure. One of the measures which hold out much promise is the formation of co-operatives. They are organisations of small and medium farmers with similar needs and resources and could be used to rationalise and speed up acquiring inputs and the marketing of agricultural produce (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:97). Different types of co-operatives could be found, for example multi-purpose co-operatives to handle inputs, products, seeds, fertiliser, or they
could perform banking functions. Co-operatives enable the members to fully participate in activities concerning themselves. These institutions could be helpful in obtaining credit for their members. Group members could be held responsible for repaying loans, for accepting input supplies purchased from the outside, and for delivery of marketed surplus to appropriate agencies (World Bank 1975:37-38). However, the experience with regard to co-operatives in Third World countries were not always positive.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter numerous facets of rural development have been addressed. Competing ideas of development make the task difficult as no clear cut lines are available. However, in the case of the study area, rural development is the only opportunity to improve living standards, as urban areas are not yet fully developed to act as service centres, although new growth points are being identified to enhance the development of these future urban areas (see chapter 4). The diverse efforts of developing various sectors in a region, cannot occur in isolation, but have to be integrated into a comprehensive approach to avoid overlapping and duplication. This is however often not the case, as each sector or agency is working more or less in isolation for example, in the rural water supply, housing provision, agriculture and forestry.

On the one hand this is the result of a lack of policies on the government side, where co-ordination on central government level is largely absent, so no co-ordination of projects can be attempted. Examples will be described in the following chapters to show that integrated rural development is not yet taking place in Namibia. In the study, rural area development policies planned and implemented include specific rural projects such as the rural electrification programme, roads construction (Oshakati to Tsandi), housing in the urban areas of Oshakati and Ongwediva, and environmental issues such as tree planting. IRD is a comprehensive approach as described in section two. It could be regarded as the ultimate aim of rural development efforts, i.e. to integrate the diverse attempts into one comprehensive approach which aims at improving the living standards of the inhabitants.

To promote government policies to meet the needs of the inhabitants in the four regions and thereby improve the standards of living of the inhabitants, adequate resources will have to be allocated to these low-income regions. These regions should obtain services to stimulate production, such as in the agricultural or small business fields, and also social services, for example health and education.
To make the process self-sustaining, appropriate skills, implementing capacity and the presence of institutions at local, regional and central levels are required, to ensure effective use of existing resources. These aspects with respect to the study area, will be discussed in chapter 5.

The effects of Western civilisation can already be noted in these remote areas. However, modernisation is not necessarily the solution to the problems of the Third World. Development has to aim at the unfolding of the potential of available resources such as human or natural resources. Only then can the basic needs of the poorest of the poor be satisfied, resulting in a higher standard of living. These processes should become self-sustaining to minimise dependency on outside resources. Modernisation and traditionalism in Third World countries exist side by side. The clash of cultures, institutions, ideologies and technologies has in Africa contributed to inequalities between different strata of society. Mehden (quoted by Omer 1980:119) describes this situation as a "juxtaposition of an elite educated in a tradition of exogenous inspiration and a mass rooted in a variety of indigenous cultures engenders problems that turn up throughout the world of the new states".

Rural development cannot be achieved by focusing on a single sector. The integration of a wide range of components and programmes has to be envisaged on the local, regional and central level. Due to the differences found in the rural regions within a country, rural development has to adapted to suit the requirements of a particular area. Therefore a capable administration, which is supported by the local inhabitants is of importance. Co-operation is needed to carry out objectives or goals set by communities in collaboration with government agencies. This necessitates political support on all levels of government, which is often not forthcoming or is biased towards rural areas. Should this be the case, people tend to move to areas or centres where attention is given to some of their grievances. Problems in rural areas are not solved, but are merely shifted to other localities.

The lack of development in rural areas could contribute to the problem of urbanisation and the bias towards urban development. Insufficient resources have often led to discouraging outcomes of attempts in rural and urban developments. Rapid population growth and its effects on the natural environment which is not matched by an equal growth in the economy, are matters of grave concern for many countries in the Third World, and especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. These are two aspects playing an important role in the possible development of the Ovambo-speaking regions in Namibia in general and in the field of housing in particular.
In the next chapter the topic of unequal standards of living will be discussed in more detail. The needs of rural inhabitants are then examined, and the housing conditions in the study area are considered, to provide a basis for the assessment of the possibilities for improvements of the existing circumstances prevailing in the four Northern regions of Namibia.

* * *

* * *
CHAPTER 3: LIVING STANDARDS AND RURAL HOUSING IN NAMIBIA

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the attention given to rural development internationally, few countries in Africa have managed successful attempts to improve the standards of living of their rural inhabitants. There is considerable disillusionment and pessimism about development in the Third World (Coetzee & Ligthelm 1986:157), especially as poverty has remained a common problem (see McNamara in Chambers 1983:1). The often marked differences in the standard of living between rural and urban areas, and between the different strata of societies, have not diminished, but have instead often increased the difference between them. Living standards could be compared by various measurements and also observations of the well-being of individuals or groups in a society. Although the instruments used are not perfect, they could be considered useful aids to collect and compare data which can then be used to examine the living standards within a society. Some of the measurements and indicators will be discussed in this chapter to assess the concept quality of life.

The concepts rural development and rural housing contain a large number of similar components, such as government policies, programmatic inputs for project implementation, and technical components (see chapter 2 and 5). Requirements for rural development are often requirements for the development of rural housing too. Aspects such as the availability of land, infrastructure, local resources, ecological problems, the question of sustainable development, participation by the inhabitants, and available technology, play a role in rural development in general as well as in housing issues. But it also has an important bearing on the concept quality of life and its improvement.

The unequal spread of development projects throughout a region and efforts to implement them, has often contributed to the widening gap between the quality of life in rural and urban areas (see discussion of urban bias in chapter 2, section 3.1). Needs differ from community to community, and from region to region even more so in the case of urban and rural areas. Development only makes sense if specific needs have been identified by the beneficiaries of an envisaged programme. Government planning should consider the needs, ideas, and proposals put forward by communities, and consult with these communities in order to co-ordinate the various development activities on a regional level. Therefore any attempt by government to bring benefits to the people, ought to consider local realities. Housing is regarded as one of the basic needs (see chapter 3, section 5) and portrays people's living conditions, especially the influence of modernisation on rural communities, the problems associated with housing in high density semi-urban areas, and the question of popular participation.
In the case of the study area, the existence of semi-urban areas, has also to be taken into account in the overall rural development planning by both the central and local government. The high growth rate of urban areas is a serious problem world-wide (Mabogunje 1992:1, Gilbert & Gugler 1981:5-8, Mohan 1979:viii and 9-11). The creation of local authorities in former predominantly rural areas, such as Oshakati, influences the participation of local communities in an urban environment, as well as their responsibilities as potential taxpayers and voters in urban development. Local authorities form the lowest tier of government institutions, and are responsible for the well-being of the inhabitants in the areas under their jurisdiction. The inhabitants are expected to pay for services rendered and also participate in local elections - aspects not found in traditional societies where elders and headmen are the principal authorities who made decisions on behalf of the community as a whole.

Hardiman and Midgley (1982:218) argue that very few studies refer to rural housing conditions, because it is assumed by national and international institutions that rural housing conditions are reasonably satisfactory and that the urban housing problem requires more attention. In a policy statement, the MLGH (1991a:5) states that provision of rural housing has up to now been neglected in Namibia. An urgent study is needed to assess the real needs in these areas. Among the national housing goals (MLGH 1990:13) is the issue of rural versus urban priorities. The document states that it is accepted that urban housing should have priority over rural housing through the overall allocation of public funds. As will be shown in this study, investments in urban housing dominated the housing sector. Smaller settlements have received limited funds and are struggling to obtain additional funds for the development of the local housing sector, including township developments. This one-sided approach is made worse by the lack of research and development efforts, which could inter alia provide alternative employment opportunities and building materials to rural communities. In those communal areas, where urban development was suppressed in the past, new formal urban areas have to be declared or proclaimed, in order to commercialise the land to enable local authorities to obtain their own revenues and also to attract private investments into the area. This process was still under way when this study was completed.

Houses built in rural areas using traditional building materials rather than imported materials, are cheap to construct but require extensive maintenance (MLGH 1991a:5). But the report further asserts that up to 90% of these houses have no

---

1 The authors quote one United Nations report
2 This was confirmed in discussions with officials in other parts of Namibia.
sanitary facilities and do not have access to clean water. The hygienic spaces provided for in a traditional homestead include a bathroom, urinal and the garbage pit (Mills 1984:143-144).

In this chapter, the following issues will be addressed: the living standards in African countries after independence (see Eziakor 1989:73, Markovitz 1977, Babu 1981); and basic needs, with an emphasis on shelter or housing. This will form the background for the investigation of alternative options for improvements (see chapter five). Among these options both fall within the provision of traditional and conventional housing in the urban, semi-urban and rural context. Basic standards for housing in rural as well as urban areas, will be discussed, in order to identify possible improvements for rural housing. Attention will also be given to technical standards of housing. This will give an indication of the existence of modern influences in the form of building materials, construction methods, and their implications for communities in rural and semi-urban areas.

2. LIVING STANDARDS AND BASIC NEEDS

It is a well-established fact that policies concerned with development take place in a specific political and socio-economic environment. In Namibia, SWAPO's victory in 1989 ensured the establishment of a new government. The new administration differed from the previous one in many important aspects. With the removal of the remnants of the old regime's governmental structures and the replacement of it with a modern bureaucracy, new opportunities were offered to the people of Namibia. One of these was that strong emphasis would be placed in the post-independence period on the development of peripheral areas. This includes the improvement of living standards as part of rural development efforts.

Innovative development efforts can be an instrument for reducing inequalities in a society and meeting basic needs. Based on Beckerman's argumentation Streeten, et al. (1981:17) assert that in societies with very low living standards, meeting basic needs is more important than reducing inequalities in income or wealth. No one knows how to achieve equality and to maintain it, how to define it, or by what criteria to judge it (Streeten, et al. 1981:18). Besides the views of outsiders, the perception of the poor is also relevant, because this perception is a function of the reference group from which the poor take their standards of what comprises the necessities for a decent minimum level of living (Streeten, et al. 1981:19). As the poverty norm moves up with average income, there is a desire to live at a standard that is regarded by society as decent. However, such standards differ in all countries. Streeten et al. (1981:19-20) question whether poverty should be defined in such a way that it can never be eradicated or even reduced,
irrespective how much absolute income levels rise, if the measure of inequality remains unchanged. Only societies which have been successful in meeting basic needs are those that have also reduced inequalities (Streiten et al. 1981: 21).

The ruling party's election manifesto has been regarded as offering a solution for many of the country's problems. As in other African countries, the pre-independence period nurtured the belief that political independence would bring "all other things" (Bengu quoted by van Niskerk 1987:634). This led to many disappointments in the post-independence period, as the expected improvements did not take place. Bengu further states that economic catastrophes contributed to a very large extent to the search for Africa's own cultural identity as "Poverty, external dependence and internal repression are still the same, if not worse than during the pre-independence period" (quoted by van Niskerk 1987:634). However, there is still much disillusionment with the results of the present development strategies, as the differences in living standards between rich and poor have rather increased, than decreased.

3. THE QUALITY OF LIFE CONCEPT

3.1 Introduction to the concept

The quality of life "is a deceptively simple concept. Everyone - social scientist and the man on the street can tell you broadly what it means or is suppose to mean. It is simply the degree of well-being or satisfaction experienced by individuals or aggregates of people under prevailing social and economic conditions" (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:1). However, does this really cover the concept? To determine what the living standards of a people should be is a difficult task, although, perhaps to the economist, and also to social scientists in general, a definition is often elementary (Johnson 1973:222): "poverty consists in having insufficient spendable resources to maintain a standard of living deemed by some standard to be adequate for civilized survival". But the problem is, what is an adequate standard of living, falling below which indicates poverty (Johnson 1973:223)?

Möller and Schlemmer (1981:7) pose the crux of the matter by asking what does quality of life mean? It is to a certain extent synonymous with life satisfaction, need satisfaction or social well-being. But quality of life is not a phenomenon based on consistent linear progressions upon all of its many dimensions. "It also has no absolutes, no zero points and also few saturation thresholds" (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:7-8). The authors state that inasmuch as objective indicators of material welfare and objective indicators of need satisfaction are all relative and subject to judgement, the subjective element of quality of life allows
approximating a standard of evaluation - what people themselves feel about the issue. If people are unhappy and feel dissatisfied, then no matter what the objective or hard indicators disclose, they have not achieved what people should have the right to achieve (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:8). How can these goals be achieved and what means are available to promote the envisaged goals? Several aspects should be taken into consideration, such as the modernisation of rural regions and living conditions, the main objectives and components of rural development, and government policies to cover both these aspects.

Dube (1988:57) points out that it is difficult to project a universally acceptable definition of quality of life (QoL) or to formulate indicators to measure and evaluate the concept, because both objective conditions and subjective feelings are represented. The author quotes two definitions (Dube 1988:58); the first was used in an UNESCO report of 1977: Quality of life "covers all aspects of living, including material satisfaction of vital needs as well as more transcendental aspects of life such as personal development, self-realization and a healthy eco-system". The second quotation, by Hallmann (Dube 1988:58), who refers to individuals and the interaction between an individual, his society and his habitat. Quality of life is determined by the satisfaction of their aspirations. In an analysis the dimensions which make up the human space should be taken into account. The number of dimensions of human space is determined by the minimum number of independent needs with which the particular set of aspirations may be explained. No further explanation of the human space concept is furnished. Dube goes on to provide a list of various human needs and quality of life requirements (1988:59-60), which could indicate dimensions of human space, for example housing, nutrition, employment, or education.

Elements of quality of life given by the OECD (Carr-Hill quoted by Wisner 1988:29) are as follows: minimal level of health; education; employment and the quality of working life; income and economic security - the prerequisite of satisfying material needs depend on the personal economic situation; the physical environment such as shelter and a hospitable environment; the social environment; personal safety and administration of justice.

According to Sopher (quoted by Wisner 1988:30), the term need is very often used by political authorities to justify policies imposed from above on the people. The political commitment to basic needs leaves open the question concerning the means by which this objective is achieved (Stewart quoted by Wisner 1988:30). The fulfilment of needs can only be attained if the means of meeting these needs empower poor people to become agents in creating a more just society (Wisner
Quality of life is influenced by a number of factors such as individual objective and subjective feelings, a community's material well-being, or the dimensions of what is called the human space. The concept contains material and non-material aspects which have to be taken into account. In order to assess quality of life, measurements and indicators have been developed to obtain an understanding of the concept.

3.2 Measuring the quality of life

The difference between measurements and indicators can be defined as follows. Measurements are fixed units such as kilometres and square meters. Indicators are variables which can change over time, for example income levels and housing densities in an area.

3.2.1. Measurements

Möller and Schlemmer (1981:1-7) discuss ways of measuring or assessing quality of life. The first includes objective socio-economic factors, which relate to factors such as income (see also chapter 2, section 2), life-expectancy, or housing characteristics. Another approach is the description of territorial indicators which apply not so much to groups as to geographical regions. They are useful in identifying regional disparities in welfare (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:1). Another possibility are subjective quality of life studies. Two types of approaches are found. One is the qualitative approach, where open, free-flowing and unstructured accounts from people about the quality of their lives are obtained. The second, quantitative approaches, measure subjective feelings and reactions by rudimentary scaling or reactions.

According to Dasgupta and Weale (1992:119), the measuring of the quality of life can be accomplished in two ways: measures can reflect the constituents of well-being, or they can be measures of the access people have to the determinants of well-being. The first refer to indices regarding health, welfare, and basic freedoms. The second includes availability of food, clothing, shelter, potable water, educational facilities, and income in general. The authors point out that most indices in use are restricted to the socio-economic sphere of life. The political and civil spheres are usually kept separate. Both indices have not been combined to arrive at a pluralist measure to compare the quality of life across nations or within a nation.
The question of measuring standards involves the definition of the spending unit by which poverty is to be assessed, and the measurement of spending power. Several other definitions have been established, for example the Minimum Living Level (MLL) index covering food, clothing, fuel/lighting, washing/cleansing, rent, transport, tax, medical expenses, education, household equipment replacement; or the supplementary living level index, which in addition to the Minimum Living Level index includes recreation, personal care, pension, medical and burial costs (Wilson & Ramphele 1989:16-17). However, such measurements have been criticised as being often too subjective in estimating theoretical minima (Budlender quoted by Wilson & Ramphele 1989:16).

Barnard and van der Merwe (1991) developed measuring instruments, consisting of various aspects of community life, which were tested successfully on illiterate farmworkers. This data can be used to evaluate processes and outcome of development. As one of the most important goals of community development is to improve the quality of life, it is necessary to measure those facets and dimensions of community life within which change is to be brought about (Barnard & van der Merwe 1991:57). To facilitate this process, various indicators are used, such as house density, room density, or illiteracy.

3.2.2 Indicators

A development indicator represents an aspect of development, such as industrialisation or health, and may be a direct measure of an economic or social variable (Baster 1972:4). Variables include: the size of agricultural sector, extent of urbanisation, degree of modernisation of outlook, political strength of the traditional elite, per capita GNP, or the level of modernisation of industry (Baster 1972:13). A UNRISD study (quoted by Baster 1972:12) gives inter alia the following indicators: percentage of population living in localities of more than 20000, average number of persons per room, per capita electricity consumption, or percentage of salaried and wage earners to the total economically active population. Complex phenomena, which are investigated, can be broken up into smaller components, for which indicators are selected to represent these components. Development indicators are used to describe trends in society, or to diagnose a particular development situation; the interrelationships between variables could be analysed; indicators could be used to make predictions; and also for planning purposes to measure objectives and targets and to evaluate progress (Baster 1972:5).

Carley (1981:74) asserts that the studies of the quality of life have not provided sufficient agreement on social indicators which could reliably claim to measure it. The writer (Carley 1981:82-84) offers a framework for social indicator
research, which make use of different levels. At the first level research is
directed towards the refinement of those few indicators which are deemed to be
important by the general policy process, such as for unemployment, crime rates,
and demographic trends. At the second level research aims at single domains3,
utilising groups of social indicators which reflect the multi-dimensionality of
the domain. The third level consists of multi-indicator research across a limited
number of domains (Carley 1981:84). Attempts can be made to explain a variable in
one domain in terms of changes in variables in other domains. This type of
research proved to be the most promising one, because at lower levels cross-domain
influences and interactions can occur. The highest level of dimensionality in
social indicator research attempts to measure the overall quality of life across
all domains having an important impact on human beings. This research can become
unwieldy.

Carley (1981:34) also contends that most researchers focus on subjective social
indicators, which are based on the distinction between those aspects of a person's
life which relate to its quality derived from sources external to the person, and
those derived from the person's own perceptions of what is important to his
quality of life (Ward quoted by Carley 1981:34). If the quality of life in rural
and urban areas in developing countries is studied, differences in its general
perception often become evident. Gilbert and Gugler (1981:50) found in some case
studies in Asia, that even in the poorest sections of urban centres, people stated
that they were better off than had they remained in the rural areas. According to
Majumdar (quoted by Gilbert & Gugler 1981:50) the average wages of urban poor in
Delhi, were two and a half times what they could earn in some rural areas.
However, Gilbert and Gugler (1981:51) caution that a comparison of urban and rural
wages is notoriously problematic, as the basis for comparison is an urban wage
index and a crude agricultural income index.

Development indicators are needed to describe and compare trends and situations;
to analyse interrelationships between variables; to predict and are used for
planning (Baster 1972:5). Most development indicators, however represent only some
aspects of development, for example health, equality, or popular participation,
and may be a direct measure of an economic or social variable (Baster 1972:4). It
could be argued that most of the commonly used indicators of the quality of life
are indirect measures of different aspects of welfare. In general a distinction
can be made between those authors who give a greater weight to normative aspects
of development, and those who stress the empirical process of development (Baster
1972:5).

---

3 Examples are housing, health, and environmental issues
The concept of hierarchical needs, as in Maslow's classification, implies that a relationship exists between the more general nature of society and the environment, often measured by objective indicators (Carley 1981:37). Schneider (quoted by Carley 1981:37) warns that the use of objective measures alone as quality of life indicators is highly suspect. Research has shown that there are strong socio-economic strata differences in the correlations between socio-economic indicators and satisfaction of basic needs. Some people may experience complete satisfaction with a small cottage, others with a large country estate (Carley 1981:38). These differences between groups or sub-groups in a society must be considered as they indicate the different needs of each group. According to Viljoen et al. (1987:186), quality of life is conceptualised in terms of the extent to which certain needs are fulfilled. Baster (1972:15) differentiates between indicators of three major interrelated development themes, namely equality of distribution, technological change, and institutional change.

From the discussion up till now, it is clear that different indicators could be used for different research purposes, for example indicators to determine the quality of life with respect to health, housing, or agricultural production. Adelman and Morris (1972:117-119) propose a process to develop indicators. The first step is the visualisation of the concept, which may be derived from explicit theoretical reasoning, from the observation of regularities among empirical events, or from an intuitive feel for some set of interrelated phenomena; examples are industrialisation, urbanisation, mobility or political democracy (Adelman & Morris 1972:117). The second step is the specification of the dimension of the concept (Adelman & Morris 1972:118), which may be deduced from explicit theory, logical reasoning, or the observation of regular phenomena. An example to specify a dimension is social mobility, where upward movement of individuals or groups through a hierarchy of positions, can be gradual or abrupt as by revolution. Another dimension is the introduction of new systems of stratification involving changes in the criteria for evaluating social roles. To represent various dimensions of a complex concept, indicators must be selected from a range of possibilities. The selection involves theoretical reasoning about causes and effects. A further choice is knowledge of empirical regularities or correlations. The final step is the formation of indices from component elements which represent the selected dimensions of the concept (Adelman & Morris 1972:119). Theoretical reasoning interacts with empirical or pragmatic considerations.

The quantification of results does not make them less subjective or feeling-based. "It does not make them objective indices" (Müller & Schlemmer 1981:4). The third approach deals with the public mood and opinion polling. Research is concerned with general issues, for example how satisfied are people with life at
present, with the economic situation, with leadership, with public services, or with the way people are treated by government (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:5-6). This data can provide short-cut, broad indicators to the subjective quality of life in a community or society. Finally, the authors summarise the basic needs research (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:6-7). Most of the input into quality of life research procedures came from interest in developing countries, but concerns about conditions in less-developed countries emerged. The basic needs approach to development has set criteria for what needs to be done to improve the development status of Third World communities. "In effect, development for people and improvements in the quality of life in poorer societies are synonymous" (Möller & Schlemmer 1981:5-6). Thus research into basic needs such as health, nutrition, shelter, transport and schooling has added precision to quality of life studies.

3.2.2.1 Distribution and income levels

According to Baster (1972:15), indicators reflecting equality aspects are concerned with the distribution of incomes and minimum income levels (see also section 2 and 3.1.2). Aspects discussed in this respect by various authors, include poverty levels, employment, and the availability of social services.

The University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) regularly compiles results for the household subsistence levels in major urban centres in Namibia, in this case Windhoek and Swakopmund, which give an indication of minimum income requirement for the lower end of the formal income earners. The household subsistence levels since independence in Windhoek are as follows (in September of each year):

![Graph 3.1 Household Subsistence Levels in Windhoek (Source UPE)](image)

The graph shows a steady increase in the household subsistence levels. However, salaries, especially in the public sector either have not reached the minimum
level or the yearly increases keep the wages and salaries below the levels indicated in the graph.

At present no statistics are available on the incomes in Namibia. The CSO started in 1994 to research expenditure patterns throughout the country, but the final results are not yet available. The only indication of income levels was given by the Minister of Finance in his budget speech for the additional budget 1990/91 (quoted in Windhoek Observer March 16, 1991:1.04). He said that Namibia's distribution of wealth is among the most uneven in the world. The Gini coefficient is more than 0.6, compared to 0.5 for the average developing countries and 0.4 for the average industrialised country.

3.2.2.2 Technological change

Two concepts are involved in the discussion of indicators of technological change. The first is scientific knowledge, which has to be distinguished from technological change (Baster 1972:16). Bell (quoted by Baster 1972:16) defines knowledge as an intellectual property which is part of the social overhead investment, measured by such indicators as the number of scientific journals and papers, by expenditure on R&D, or the stock of high-level scientists available in the country.

The second concept is technological progress, which consists of all methods and improvements of organisation that improve the efficiency or the utilisation of capital. This results in an upward shift of the production function (Bell quoted by Baster 1972:16). Indicators of technological progress do not only include the acquisition of machinery and equipment, measured by indicators such as output per man-hour, use of mechanical power, but also administrative efficiency, improved information about available technologies, improvements in education and communication, and the number of scientists and engineers (Baster 1972:16).

In developing countries these concepts have to be adapted to develop indigenous technology, which means that knowledge become knowledge which is relevant to problems in developing countries (Baster 1972:16-17). Therefore technological progress involves the adaptation of existing technologies and the introduction of new techniques. Information about available technologies and sources plays a major role to avoid duplication of efforts. Furthermore education and organisation are essential parts of the process of technological change (Baster 1972:17). The latter will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.
3.2.2.3 Institutional change and political participation

The analysis of institutional change involves issues such as the concentration of economic power, the degree of social cohesion, and the degree of political participation (Baster 1972:17). A wide range of indicators is being developed. Among them are those concerned with the structure of land tenure, the degree of concentration of land holdings, or the degree of indebtedness of farmers. With respect to social institutions, aspects such as social stratification, social cohesion, and social mobility affect social relations and attitudes (Baster 1972:17).

Adelman and Morris (1972:124) based their measurement of political participation on the following aspects:

- the extent to which the major socio-economic and cultural-ethnic groups have their interests represented in the making of national political decisions affecting them;
- the extent to which those individuals belonging to one of the above-mentioned groups, can choose between political channels in seeking national representation of their interests;
- the extent of actual participation by individuals in the national political process through participation in political parties, special interest groups or institutions carrying out political functions, or through voting between genuine political alternatives.

In chapter 4, section 3.4, the political voting patterns since independence in Namibia are described. Section 6 in this chapter describes how major socio-economic and cultural-ethnic groups achieve higher living standards due to their political affiliation.

3.2.2.4 Poverty

The concept quality of life has a direct bearing on poverty. A household is regarded as poor when only a few assets are available, including land, tools, livestock (Chambers 1983:109). Townsend (quoted by Haralambos 1980:142) states that people can be said to live in poverty or could be considered to be poor, when they lack the resources to obtain nutrition, participate in social, economic and political activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary accepted, or at least widely approved in the societies to which they belong. A critique of the concept maintains that it cannot be assumed that there are society wide standards of reasonable and acceptable life styles, for example acceptable standards for the working class may differ significantly from those of the middle class (Haralambos 1980:143).
Social scientists distinguish between absolute poverty and relative poverty. It is possible to "fix" a level (the poverty line), below which poverty begins and above which it ends (Haralambos 1980:140). It also involves a judgement of basic human needs which are measured in terms of the resources required to maintain health and physical efficiency, such as nutrition, shelter, and health. Another concept is relative poverty, measured in terms of judgements by members of a particular society of what is considered a reasonable and acceptable standard of living (Haralambos 1980:142). A third concept is subjective poverty, referring to whether or not groups or individuals feel they are poor (Haralambos 1980:143). The author argues that this concept is important since people act in terms of the way they perceive and define themselves.

4. APPROACHES TO BASIC NEEDS

Friedrich Engels (quoted by Schwefel 1978:6) stated that Karl Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, buried under the ideological overgrowth, that people first of all have to eat, drink, shelter and clothe themselves, before they can participate in politics, science, art, and religion. Later, Maslow (1970) established a hierarchy of needs, starting with basic human needs and moving up towards higher needs. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the physiological drives such as hunger and thirst, which are followed by the need for safety. They include security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear and anxiety (Maslow 1970:18). Belongingness and love needs are the first of the higher needs, which are found within the circles of family and friends. This is succeeded by the esteem needs - people's desire for a stable, firmly based, usually high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others.

Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary in the world" (Maslow 1970:21). The final need identified by Maslow is self-actualisation or self-realisation. It is the satisfaction of individuals doing what he or she really wants to do or practice. "What humans can be, they must be" (Maslow's emphasis 1970:22). The lower needs are predominantly satisfied externally, whereas higher needs are satisfied internally to the person (ILMT no date:3-2). Maslow argues that the needs are to be met in some semblance of ascending order, i.e. physiological must first be fulfilled before any higher level can be met (Carley 1981:36-37). Man's self-actualisation process, or his quality of life, can be promoted or hindered by the nature of his society.
In 1976, the ILO emphasised that development planning should include as an explicit goal, the "satisfaction of an absolute level of basic needs" (ILO 1976:31). The definition of a set of basic needs, which would constitute a minimum standard of living, would also help in the identification of the poorest groups of the population. It would also provide concrete targets against which to measure progress. Basic needs constitute the minimum objectives of society, not the full range of desirable attributes (ILO 1976:33).

During the 1976 ILO conference basic needs were defined comprehensively in the Programme of Action formulated at the conference (Wisner 1988:33). Basic needs include two elements (ILO 1976:32, 182-183): 1. minimum requirements of a family for private consumption such as adequate food, shelter, housing and clothing; and 2. essential services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, education, public transport and health. Furthermore, participation of the people in decision-making should form part of such an approach. The ILO also stressed that strategies and national development policies should prioritise the promotion of employment and the satisfaction of basic needs. The concept of basic needs could be seen as country-specific and dynamic, thus the concept should be placed within the context of a nation's overall economic and social development (ILO 1976:182). This approach also called for the co-ordination of all policies which directly or indirectly could sustain a higher level of basic-needs satisfaction (ILO 1985a:32).

The Programme of Action's concern with employment, the emphasis on participation and self-organisation, lead to more radical interpretations of the basic needs approach (Wisner 1988:34). Various other interpretations followed, for example, a differentiation was made between basic human needs and basic needs (Wisner 1988:36). In the first case, emphasis is placed on participation and productive employment as vital means as well as integral ends, whereas in the second case minimum income and survival needs are emphasised.

Sandbrook (1982:7) differentiates between the conservative and the radical basic needs approaches. The first approach proposes piecemeal reforms within the existing national and international economic order. Poverty is deemed to result from internal factors within each developing country, thus poverty can be overcome by policies aimed at these obstacles to development (Keeton 1984:280). The second approach advocates structural changes at the national and international levels (Sandbrook 1982:7). It involves a redistribution of income and wealth, to create an effective demand for basic goods and services amongst the poor (Keeton 1986:280). Furthermore, a redirection of the production structure is required, away from luxury goods and services catering for the needs of a privileged
minority, towards the basic goods and services essential for the poor. Appropriate production technologies are necessary which suit the low income of the people, to create sufficient remunerative employment.

Keeton (1984:281) points out that both approaches stress the alleviation of poverty, which can be achieved through the mobilisation of under-utilised productive factors, by providing remunerative employment and essential public services for all. Both approaches also recognise the need for changes in demand and production structure, away from the needs of the minority towards those of the majority. Appropriate technology should be used and access to public services for all, are common principles of this approach (see chapter 5, section 7).

A further differentiation is made between material and non-material needs (Ligthelm 1984:150). Material needs include housing, water, or food, whereas non-material needs are more difficult to define, such as participation, and decision-making. Members of a community who are not in a position to obtain whatever they need, have to rely only on that which they can afford.

Turner, Gilbert and Gugler (1981:86) state that all families have three basic needs with respect to housing: security, identity, and opportunity. In the first case, ownership is important, whereas identity refers to the high-quality standards of shelter. Opportunity in the case of poor families is concerned with the proximity to jobs. Each income group normally or as a rule, emphasises different basic needs, for example middle-income groups stress quality and ownership, whereas the poor regard proximity to work as more important. These factors have an immediate effect on the perception of the quality of life of the residents.

Riedijk (1984:6) discusses needs in development. He claims that western technology presupposes and produces spiritual, political and economic dominance of masses by the elite. The customs of western society include an artificial pattern of needs, which are created by the requirement to maintain mass-production. The author further states (Riedijk 1984:6): "The needs of western society stand close to greed. Greed for material satisfaction... The more we possess, the more we want". The ILO in its basic needs strategy focuses on means to fulfil those needs (Riedijk 1984:6). He concludes: "If you do not know the needs, there is a great

4Ownership can mean possessing a piece of land and the improvements on it by means of a title deed or a Permission To Occupy in urban areas. According to traditional law ownerships of land rests with the community, and the traditional leader acts as the trustee. Members of the community may use a certain piece of land for their own benefit, but may not be alienated by any means as the land remains property of the community.
risk, that the wrong technical means will be delivered. 'Milk powder, but no clean water'”.

Before a country reaches the stage of satisfying positional necessities, the basic communal needs of at least the largest part of the population should be assured (see section 2.2). Community amenities include potable water, water reservoirs, sanitation and sewage treatment units, electricity, structures for communal food storage, essential roads, and some form of cheap urban-rural transportation (United Nations 1974:2-3). Due to financial constraints, priorities must be determined. Among the highest priorities, the report states, are water and hygienic sanitation, because they are fundamental to survival and good health, and their construction or improvement accompany construction and improvements in housing. Thus they constitute essential concomitants of a housing program.

The priority of peoples' needs changes in the course of development, from the satisfaction of basic needs to the satisfaction of aesthetic and existential needs or wants, which are important in developed countries (Redclift 1987:41). In developing countries, environmental goods are survival goods: fuelwood, clean water, and staple food (Redclift 1987:41-42). In developed countries 'positional goods' (Hirsch quoted by Redclift 1987:42) play an significant part in personal well-being. The latter however is also true for the "modern" elites in developing countries.

UNICEF (1990:44) found that the key input needed to increase production of the most important crop, millet or mahangu, is water. Provision of water is a general dilemma in a semi-arid country like Namibia, and especially during times of drought becomes a major issue. It is a major difficulty in most areas of the Ovambo-speaking region. This was illustrated by the following experience of the Minister of Education in Ovambo, who asked children after the opening of a new school (The Namibian March 25, 1992:2):

"NOW you have classrooms, and you have teachers. Is there anything else you want?"
The answer: "Water!"

Among the most urgent needs in the shanty towns around Oshakati, identified by a team investigating the Oshakati Human Settlement Improvement Project, is adequate housing (Tvedten & Hangula 1993:16, 26). It was found that this aspect is the most wanted improvement, employment was second, i.e. 17,1% and 17,8% respectively, and third was health with 16,4%. The main reason for not improving the shanties was the lack of money to do this due to limited employment opportunities.
The quality of life in most Third World countries could generally be seen as comprising two broad strata: the haves and the have nots; those who benefit from economic growth and those who do not, or the winners and the losers in the development game (Harrison 1982:413). The author also contends that the winners are often those who have a foot in the door of the modern, westernised sector, such as government employees in those countries. These people sometimes receive excessive salaries with "unshakeable" security, and attractive perks. This category also includes the owners, managers and the salaried employees in the private sector - the urban property owners. The Cocoyoc Declaration (quoted by Harrison 1982:405) declares that a growth process which benefits only the wealthiest minority and maintains, or even increases, the discrepancies between and within countries is not development; but could be seen as exploitation.

According to Barkan (1984:20-21), the wealth of most African countries is unequally distributed in at least three ways: Firstly, inequalities in the distribution of personal income among the members of different competing social classes, especially between members of the bureaucratic and commercial petty bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the remainder of the population on the other. The second dimension of inequality is of an aggregate nature, resulting from the maldistribution of personal income and the maldistribution of government services and opportunities for development between rural and urban areas. The third are the aggregate inequalities that exist between different rural areas. Violations of harmonious development in societies in Africa include (Onuoha 1965:53) the excessively high salaries and allowances of government officials; co-existence within the same community of luxury and destitution; the neglect of rural areas in the distribution of social amenities; an inequitable system of taxation, and corruption.

Innovative development efforts can be an instrument for reducing inequalities in a society and meeting basic needs. Based on Beckerman's argumentation, Streeten, et al. (1981:17) assert that in societies with very low living standards, meeting basic needs is more important than reducing inequalities. No one knows how to achieve equality and to maintain it, how to define it, or by what criteria to judge it (Streeten, et al. 1981:18). Besides the views of outsiders, the perception of the poor is also relevant, because this perception is a function of the reference group from which the poor often take their standards of what comprises the necessities to achieve and maintain a decent minimum standard of living (Streeten, et al. 1981:19). The poverty norm moves up as average income increases and there is the desire to live at a standard that is regarded by

5 for examples in Namibia see section 6 in this chapter
society as decent. However, these standards should be differentiated in all countries. It is in this sense that Streeten et al. (1981: 19-20) question whether the extent of poverty should be defined in such a way that it is difficult to be reduced, irrespective how much absolute income levels rise, if the measure of inequality in such a society remains unchanged. In the light of this, only societies which have been successful in meeting basic needs are those that have also reduced inequalities (Streeten et al. 1981: 21) and reducing the extent of poverty.

To satisfy needs in the context of rural development, a wide range of issues has to be taken into account. Shelter is one basic need which must be examined in relation to other factors, such as settlement patterns, water supply, economic activities, building materials and local resources. Besides concerns for education, health, shelter, and agriculture, outside influences such as foreign cultures, technologies, or political structures, are increasingly featuring in most Third World countries. The introduction of such influences and innovations is often associated with the term modernisation (see chapter two). Development and modernisation in this regard can be tied together in efforts to develop poor communities.

5. HOUSING AS A BASIC NEED

Man has been housing himself for aeons without the aid of architects, town planners, or quantity surveyors (Frescura 1981: 10). Generally a settlement, even a temporary one, starts with the erection of some kind of shelter, and is located near a site where water and/or food can be obtained. In an area with a potential to grow food and keep livestock, settlements tend to become permanent, and shelter was constructed to last, using locally available building materials. Therefore shelter is one of the first basic needs attended to by humans.

Human settlements should be recognised as part of the physical infrastructure essential for development (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987: 15). "Shelter is an indispensable part of the infrastructure of a productive society" (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987: 16). A shelter system encompasses public regulation, interactions between public and private buildings, the provision of infrastructure and services by the state. The way of obtaining housing has social and political implications. The existing formal system of planning, land proclamation, building codes, development control, are inappropriate (Ministry of Local Government and Housing 1990: 3). They tend to neglect the basic needs of the people and thus the quality of life, of the majority of the inhabitants in terms of living habits, affordable materials and traditional construction practices, especially in rural areas.
Viljoen et al. (1987:186) declare that housing and residential satisfaction are significant determinants of quality of life. The authors go on that it is important to consider quality of life when providing houses to people who are unable to provide it for themselves, due to the lack of resources. However, not everyone has control over residential satisfaction when it comes to evaluating quality of life, for example those who do not own the house in which they live, cannot always modify their home environment to suit their needs.

According to the National Housing Policy (MLGH 1990:8), the most significant constraint to meet the housing needs of the lowest-income groups in Namibia, is poverty. "Poor people need first to generate or improve their incomes before they can improve their living conditions" (MLGH 1990:8). However, the Ministry's statement does not take into account the possibilities of self-help; the use of local resources; participation by the residents including "sweat equity", which can reduce the costs of housing, thus enabling the poor to improve their homes by using available materials, without relying solely on income. The poor find it difficult to improve their incomes (see chapter 2, section 2).

6. POST INDEPENDENCE LIVING STANDARDS IN AFRICA

Before coming to power, the African "organisational bourgeoisie" committed itself to the general principles of social justice, constantly lambasting the "privileges" of the established order (Markovitz 1977:199-200). Demands made included the creation of a more perfect social organisation, freedom based on material equality, and a selfness community of citizens. But once in power, the urge for social justice weakened, and the contrast between the rulers' concepts and those of the old colonial elite gradually dimmed, therefore in many countries, disillusionment with the ruling class became widespread (Markovitz 1977:200).

Babu (1981:6) contends that governments in many African countries often isolate themselves from the masses, increasing the apparent disparities in living standards. By doing so, they no longer understood the real needs of the majority of the people (see section 2.4 in this chapter). Policies often evolve, which had very little relevance to address the basic needs of the majority of people. McKinley (1994:21) also argues that the people's involvement often becomes selectively expendable once formal liberation is achieved, which means that

"The new political institutions, we are told, are representing 'the people' by implication - who else is there anyway, to represent them?"

A crisis of legitimacy faced most governments in Africa after independence (Loutfi 1989:145), which had not improved since then, but worsened. Personalised
rule in Africa is common and patronage plays an important, if not critical role. "This tendency is prejudicial not only to efficient administration but also to sound public finances" (Loutfi 1989:145). The author quotes Ghai and Smith (Loutfi 1989:145) who examined the issue of food policies and equity in sub-Saharan Africa, and conclude that state policies have often greatly accelerated the growth in rural-urban inequalities (see also chapter 2, section 3). Furthermore, government services and inputs not only favoured the elites or haves, but these people often have used the machinery of the state to their advantage. According to Wisner (quoted in Loutfi 1989:145-146), there are multiple constraints on poor households and their ability to meet competing demands with very limited resources. This engendered a "basic needs conflict" - a crisis within a crisis - which could be considered to be at the heart of Africa's downward spiral experienced at present, which is manifested in issues such as famine, environmental destruction, aid-dependency and lack of progress for women.

In this way, the African bureaucracy could not be considered to be an instrument for meaningful change of the quality of life. Generally speaking, the benefits of development often do not reach the poor, except for those who are perhaps associated with the elite. The latter is defined by Markovitz (1977:205-206) as the organisational bourgeoisie - those members in a society who are distinguishable by the strategic positions they occupy (see also section 3.2.2.3 in this chapter). From this privileged position they will make major decisions that affect the life of thousands of their compatriots. They are often to be found in the bureaucracy which enables them to make a living out of the 'national income', from the productive efforts of others.

Markovitz (1977:207) also argues that the members of this group are the first beneficiaries of economic growth, and they enjoy the luxuries of "Western civilisation". What is disturbing, is what exactly separates the organisational bourgeoisie from the masses. Among these are the crushing burden of this bourgeoisie upon the nations' economy, a burden that has weighed ever more heavily. This is the result of the expansion of the public sector, the expansion of expenditures for administration, and the rising costs of maintaining political officialdom at ever higher levels of comfortable living (Markovitz 1977:207). The bureaucratic elite's significance in the process of impoverishment is the result of its use of power and influence, which distorts the allocation of resources and mis-specified the nature of goods and services to be produced, thereby impoverishing those who are excluded from the allocation (Elliott 1975:191).

In the pre-independence period, SWAPO has repeatedly stated that the standard of living will be improved by the new government, especially for those who live in
poor conditions in rural and urban areas. This definitely does not mean that equality would be the ultimate goal of these efforts. However, the government was expected to initiate programs which aim at improving the existing low living conditions of a sizeable number of people.

The former United Nations Institute of Namibia (UNIN) lamented (1986:77) that Namibia in 1977 had the most unequally distributed income in the world. Black to white income ratios vary between 1:25 in the rural areas and 1:12 in the urban centres. Furthermore there is a 6 to 1 differential between the "elite" of black households, comprising 10 to 15 percent of the black population, and the masses. In order to differentiate between high and low living standards within Namibia, a comparison between those who are responsible for government policies and the majority of the population, is drawn. Due to the importance of income, one possibility to contrast living conditions, is a simple comparison between income levels in the public sector. This is in line with the approaches defined by Möller and Schlemmer above.

Shortly after Namibia gained independence, it was reported that the new government ministers will receive about R12500 a month, R8000 for deputies, and R5000 for permanent secretaries (The Namibian March 29, 1990:1). In Namibia during 1990, the income ratio between top salaries in the public service (that of a permanent secretary) and the lowest salaries, that of an unskilled worker in the public sector such as a cleaner earning R260 per month, was 19:1. Taking minister's salaries of R12500 per month, the ratio is 1:48, and for deputy ministers 1:31, without the allocated benefits. For comparison, Nyerere claims (Coulson 1982:198) that in Tanzania, the ratio between the top salary in the civil service and the bottom narrowed from about 20:1 in 1967 to 9:1 in 1976. In Namibia the opposite trend is occurring. In the beginning of 1995, the local press reported (see for example The Namibian February 23, 1995:1) that all political office bearers have been granted a 20 percent salary increase, whereas the public service received an increase of 10 percent increase. Together with other benefits, a minister earns approximately N$20000 a month.

7. CONCLUSION

It is widely agreed that housing is one of the basic needs (see section 5 in this chapter). Housing conditions reflect the general standard of living of a household. Measurements and indicators have been developed to obtain more concrete information describing the quality of life of different strata of a particular society. The distribution of benefits of development is regarded as one way of achieving a more equal distribution of a country's wealth. This requires a
commitment by governments to accomplish such a distribution. Rural development could play an important role in this respect.

The widening gap between the haves and the have-nots has been stressed especially in Africa. One reason is the downward trend of the living conditions of the majority of the population as a result of economic and environmental factors. Technological and institutional changes have to be promoted to arrest the decline. However the emphasis on urban areas leads to a neglect of the rural areas. This will be outlined in the case of Namibia in the following chapters.

The conditions in the rural regions in Northern Namibia will be examined in the next two chapters, in which the characteristics of the study area and rural housing aspects in particular have been discussed in more detail. This will show the differences of living standards between rural and urban areas, and also the differences between various strata of society. Components of rural development are applied to rural housing to show the applicability of rural development components in the analysis of rural housing development.

* * *
CHAPTER 4: THE STUDY AREA IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA

1. INTRODUCTION

The study area played a major role in the history of Namibia, particularly in the last three decades. From a development point of view, development in general was limited and with respect to rural development largely non-existent. The first large infrastructure project was the water supply scheme from the Cunene river to Oshakati as part of the South African homeland policy in the 1960s (see Hangula 1993:7). The arrival of the South African Defence Force (SADF) in the 1970s and the increasing involvement of the SADF in the bushwar during the 1970s, contributed to some large-scale projects, concentrating on the semi-urban centres and their infrastructural requirements, such as the tarred roads in the area and the establishment of a water supply system. However, the region in general lacked large-scale development to improve the standards of living for the majority of rural people.

Three locations have been selected as representative of some of the main characteristics of the study area. Attention will be given to housing in particular. The three locations are a traditional settlement, a formal urban area, and an area with elements of both of these. In the first case, the conditions and problems relating to rural housing in a primarily traditional settlement will be explored, which is contrasted with the conditions in a "modern" urban area surrounded by communal land. This urban area forms part of an urban nexus consisting of a total of three urban centres. The third area along the major road artery shows characteristics of traditional and modern elements of housing, which influence the living standards and circumstances in this settlement.

The Ovambo-speaking region is experiencing a transition from a tribal system to one of combining modern elements with aspects of traditional culture. The influences of modernisation increasingly manifest themselves in the region, particularly as the Namibian government facilitates the introduction of modern services and technologies into the rural areas, thus advancing unfamiliar concepts, technologies, and political structures. In this chapter the conditions in three different locations will be described and it will illustrate some of the changes taking place in northern Namibia.

2. PERIPHERAL AREAS IN NAMIBIA

2.1 Regional divisions in Namibia

Due to the lack of development with respect to the improvement of living standards, and the war situation, the northern regions could be regarded as a
peripheral area\(^1\). Therefore it is necessary to consider what constitutes a peripheral region, and what makes an adequate region for planning purposes (Keeble 1969:47). The writer defines a region as follows:

"A region in a general sense is an area of land possessing characteristics which make it a readily identifiable entity; these characteristics may be physical, economic and/or social, and, in the case of a region with strong marked identity, several are likely to apply to it".

This implies that specific characteristics can be found in a particular region, which characterise this region in terms of social, economic and political factors. In the case of the study area, the physical, traditional social, and economic characteristics could be similar throughout the Ovambo-speaking region. Variations in the language (dialects) or customs do occur, but they do not fundamentally change the main identifiable characteristics of the region. Likewise the economic basis is fairly common throughout the whole study area, so are the geographical attributes, such as topography and rainfall patterns. The Ovambo-speaking area can be defined as one region, because of the similarity of characteristics such as culture, economics, and tradition.

The ideal region for planning purposes is therefore an area which is large and self-contained enough to enable substantial changes in the distribution of the population, i.e. movement of people within a region's rural and urban areas, and employment taking place within its boundaries, yet it is small enough to be comprehended as a whole (Keeble 1969:47)\(^2\). This classification could be regarded as an appropriate description for the study area before Namibia's independence, when the whole Ovambo-speaking area inside the borders of Namibia was considered as one entity (see Figure 4.1). However, due to the lack of development and the lack of employment opportunities in the regions, migration of large numbers of people to the towns in the south was experienced and reinforced by the migrant labour system under South African rule.

The most important aspect of the First Delimitation Commission's (Republic of Namibia 1991b) work lies in the division of the country into regions to achieve an equal distribution of eligible voters. Therefore the report (Republic of Namibia 1991b:62) states that "In delimiting regions, population and voter numbers have been considered in conjunction with the other relevant factors. However, for the delimitation of constituencies, population and voter numbers have formed the

---

\(^1\) A peripheral area is the result of polarised development, in which peripheral regions are dominated by the centre, thus become dependent on this centre (Fair 1982:11).

\(^2\) This was proposed by Odendaal Commission
primary criteria. This view left out considerations of the viability of a large number of regions. New bureaucracies have to be established and financed for each of them. However, the regions have no revenue basis, except for the three towns in the Oshana region. This makes them dependent on the central government (the centre), which supports the view that these regions remain peripheral areas as the government could dominate local development. The population data used by the commission was mainly based on the 1981 census as well as the 1989 voter registration exercise, plus additional information received from the major churches and other organisations, who made representations to the commission. The former Ovamboland was divided into four regions. The final report of the Commission shows the following population figures for each of the four regions: Omusati - 158000; Ohangwena - 159000, Oshana - 178000; and Oshikoto - 176000 inhabitants.

The three selected localities within the study area are found in the following regions: Oshakati in the Oshana region, Onambome in the Omusati region and Onankali in the Oshikoto region. Figure 4.2 shows the newly created regions in northern Namibia superimposed on the distribution of traditional groups adapted from maps in Williams (1991:x) and First Delimitation Commission (Republic of Namibia 1991b:232).

The new division of Namibia into regions (see Figure 4.3), to a large extent disregards traditional borders between the different population groups inside Namibia. The First Delimitation Commission (Republic of Namibia 1991b:13-14) did not classify a region as a political entity, but as "predominant administrative and socio-economic entities which should not only organise the people properly but should also stimulate development". Delimitation criteria used by the Commission (Republic of Namibia 1991b:34) are: 1. geographical features; 2. demographical distribution of eligible voters; and 3. relevant infrastructure and resources. With the exception of the Ndonga-speaking region, all the other regions, combine different traditional groups (or tribes). Therefore, the four new regions are not uniform in their characteristics with regard to certain social aspects, but the physical and economic characteristics largely remain similar. Compared to the national level, marked differences between the regions occur: It could be argued that two of the new regions have a primarily traditional economic basis, another region contains all the major urban settlements in the study area, and the fourth one is attached to an established mining and commercial farming area in the South. However, the Department of Water Affairs did not accept this division for their work in the Directorate of Rural Water Supply. The four mainly Ovambo-speaking re-
Figure 4.1 Regional divisions based on the Odendaal Plan. Source: van der Merwe 1983

Figure 4.2 New regions in Northern Namibia and traditional groupings (broken lines)
regions (Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Omusati) were combined into one region, called Cuvelai (see Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development 1994).

The new regional dispensation therefore cuts across tribal boundaries, incorporating and also dividing different tribal authorities into new regions. For example, in Ombalantu, some of the Uukwambi headmen's traditional areas of jurisdiction were thus divided into two regions, namely Omusati and Oshana. Uukwaliudhi and Uukwambi are found in Omusati. However, the Uukwambi tribe was dispersed over three regions, i.e. Omusati, Oshana and Ohangwena.

Figure 4.3 Regional divisions based on the First Delimitation Commission

The Ovambo-speaking region, divided into these four regions, represents by far the largest ethnic entity in Namibia (see Figure 4.2). The present map also shows that the present day border between Namibia and Angola divides the whole Ovambo-speaking people in this area approximately in half. The physical, economic, and social characteristics of the Ovambo-speaking region make it an easily identifiable entity. Geographically, the whole study area forms a plain, with the
oshanas in the central part of the study area as a dominant feature. Similarities are found in climate, hydrology, rainfall patterns, natural vegetation, agriculture and also culture. Economically, the four northern regions present a large market, due to the fact that it has the highest percentage of the Namibian population. The majority of the labour force is also coming from this part of Namibia. However, except for agriculture and forestry, no commercially viable resources are located in this most northern part of Namibia, to support a regional economy. Thus Keeble's description of a region above, could be regarded as suitable with respect to the study area.

2.2 Core-periphery relations

The economic system inside a country, often results in a strong polarisation in the spatial organisation of economic activities (Fair 1982a:10). This means, that in a particular locality such as a city, the main production factors are often to be found. This includes the traditional economic resources, such as capital, labour, professional and technical skills. This contributes to an uneven development pattern between different areas, resulting in polarisation of the country. This gives rise to a pattern comprising a core or centre, and a periphery or hinterland (Fair 1982a:11). According to Lloyd and Dickens (quoted by Fair 1982a:11), the centre tends to dominate the periphery in most economic, political, and social respects, which forces the periphery into a dependent relationship to the centre.

Friedman's centre-periphery model generates a series of development regions (Fair 1982a:17). The first region is the core or centre (reference 1 in Figure 4.4), with a high capacity for generating and absorbing innovative change. It is the dominant centre of the space economy and the remainder of the national domain, the periphery, is dependent on it. The periphery comprises different parts (Fair 1982a:18). They are the upward-transitional regions or inner periphery (reference 2), which are favoured due to their location relative to the core. The outer periphery or downward-transitional regions (reference 3) have stagnant or retrogressing economies relative to the whole country. The latter supplies the bulk of the migrant workers to the core, the upward transitional regions and resource frontiers. Resource frontiers (RF) are zones of new settlements located in virgin territory, which are made productive by investing in the mineral or agricultural sector. The last type of regions are special problem areas (SP), which are regions bordering on foreign countries, water resource areas, tourist or

---

3 see section 3
4 see chapter two
water resource areas, tourist or military areas. If the model is applied to the situation in the study area, the following picture emerges:

The Ovambo-speaking region can be described as a peripheral area in general and as downward-transitional areas because of its distance from the major economic centres in Namibia. These regions provide most of the country's unskilled and semi-skilled labour (see Republic of Namibia 1994c:45). Especially after independence large numbers of unskilled workseekers flocked to the towns in the south in the search of employment (Tvedten & Mupotola 1995:15). Their lack of skills makes it difficult for them to earn a constant income, which would permit them to settle down permanently in urban areas. Therefore ties are often kept to their former area of origin. Permanent settlement will only takes place once those leaving the Ovambo-speaking area, receive housing and employment in the urban areas, as is the case in Windhoek at the present. Consequently the capital, which is already the dominant core area of Namibia, constitutes a major attraction for people leaving the four northern regions.

The following sketch illustrates the different development regions according to Friedman's model:

![Diagram of Friedman's development regions and associated spatial processes](image)

Figure 4.4 Friedman's development regions and associated spatial processes (Fair 1982a:12)
Economic factors contributing to the failure of a region of being developed are the absence of markets of significance, an absence of trained manpower, an underdeveloped infrastructure, limited raw materials and the lack of domestic savings (Nkuhlu 1987:39). The Ovambo-speaking regions could be regarded as such a pool of unskilled or untrained labour. At the same time, it is the area with the highest population density, thus making it a potentially significant market. But the area is handicapped by a lack of raw materials, the limited or underdeveloped infrastructure, except for the semi-urban centres and main transport routes, and the distance to other markets.

Before independence, because of an war situation, the local economy was to a large extent stagnant\(^5\). Economic ventures tended to be service oriented and largely catered for the needs of the SADF (Tapscott 1990:10). Apart from some small enterprises there was very little industry in this area (Tapscott 1990:11-12). The author also states that with respect to agriculture, subsistence farming could still be regarded the prevailing economic activity, which has been in decline for the past few decades (Tapscott 1990:12).

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY AREA

Social dislocation as a consequence of the war between 1967-1989 and the employment opportunities generated by the SADF, largely contributed to the growth of Oshakati and Ondangwa (Pendleton et al. 1993:1). During the implementation of UN resolution 435, the withdrawal of the SADF and its allied forces, lead to a drop in the number of white inhabitants in the area. However, the informal areas surrounding these towns grew rapidly due to the shortage of housing. To get a better picture of the main urban localities in the four regions, the characteristics of each one is outlined below.

All three urban and semi-urban centres are found in the Oshana region\(^6\). The new boundaries of the Oshakati townships include an area of 5703 hectares (Republic of Namibia 1991b:207), compared to Ongwediva with 4104 hectares (Republic of Namibia 1991b:211) and Ondangwa with 5323 hectares (Republic of Namibia 1991b:213). Oshakati was proclaimed a town in 1993, thus became the first formal urban area in the study area.

\(^5\) see Hangula (1993:2)

\(^6\) The other three regions do not have such centres, with the exception of Tsumeb in Oshikoto, which is located outside the study area.
Ondangwa was the administrative centre of the former Ovamboland. All government offices of the previous administration were located in the town. Originally Ongwediva was developed and planned as the new main growth centre of the region (NBIC 1982a:274). It was also proposed as the new capital of Ovamboland (NBIC 1982b:58). The town was surveyed in 1976, and between 1976 and 1977 services were provided. However the main economic and administrative activities took place in Oshakati and Ondangwa respectively, because of Ondangwa's importance as administrative centre and Oshakati's importance as commercial centre (see Hangula 1993).

Ongwediva has a very small private sector basis. It is a town characterised by educational institutions and also as a major residential area. Formal houses consists mainly of medium to high standard housing. The very limited economic basis of Ongwediva makes the town dependent on outside resources. It would have made more sense to have the town incorporated into Oshakati, as it is difficult to distinguish between the two towns physically. According to sources in government, the reason behind the fact of two separate towns was politically motivated (private communication). It could be expected that Oshakati and Ongwediva will grow together as the region develops, as the most suitable land available for new urban development is located between these two towns, thereby eventually forming one urban entity.

Ondangwa is a town, where the poorer people can live more comfortably than for example in Windhoek, as it is much cheaper for them (interview with Hoejgaard 1993a). The town experienced an outflow of mainly educated people, due to the lack of educational institutions in the town. According to the mayor, Mrs Mushelenga (interview 1993), Oshakati has better educational facilities. Furthermore, the lack of school hostel space lead to overcrowding in the existing school hostels. Some of the pupils have to live in shacks in the informal housing area of the town.

The town council of Ondangwa is trying to lure businesses to Ondangwa, due to its shorter distance to Angola, which is regarded as a major market for services and goods once peace is ensured in that country (interview with Hekandjo 1993). The deputy major of Ondangwa complained that before independence, Oshakati received preference, because the whites lived here. Now the present government is also concentrating on Oshakati. Towards the end of 1994, the MRLGH was busy compiling plans for new extensions and services for more than 1000 erven in Ondangwa.
The shortage of land for residential purposes in Oshakati, makes Ongwediva the next best choice in providing housing for people working in Oshakati and to a certain extent in Ondangwa. Compared to Oshakati and Ondangwa, Ongwediva's existing housing stock is of a fairly high standard compared to the houses in Oshakati and Ondangwa.

Ongwediva is the smallest urban centre in the region. However, it is the only town with a large number of serviced erven and enough virgin land for new developments in the housing sector. 2257 erven were planned in the first phase, and another 2843 erven were envisaged in the second phase (NBIC 1982a:274).

New extensions to the town in Ondangwa and Oshakati are all in a planning stage, therefore they must still be surveyed and serviced. This requires large investments in the three towns. Ongwediva and Ondangwa are in a disadvantaged position compared to Oshakati, as these two localities are not yet formally proclaimed towns.

3.1 Spatial and geographic factors of the study area

The study area's northern boundary is the Angolan border and the most southern part adjoins the Etosha Pan. In the east the area borders the Kavango region, to the west the Herero-speaking region Kunene is found. The country is flat and featureless, interrupted by a network of seasonal watercourses, known as oshanas (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:11). These oshanas form part of the drainage system originating in Angola from where these water courses originate and form an inland delta towards the south (DRFN & SIDA 1992:4). The plain area is normally flooded by the Cuvelai river in southern Angola, giving rise to a network of shallow watercourses, which filter through the region in a system of broad channels draining into the Etosha Pan (Mills 1987:103). Any developments such as roads or canals can interfere with this system, hampering the flow of water and thereby threatening the livelihood of communities further south. The water is a direct source of food and water and is essential for maintaining agriculture and the natural ecosystem (DRFN & SIDA 1992:18).

3.1.1 Geographical and geological factors

The study area forms part of the Southern African Plateau at a height of about 1100 m above sea level (Mills 1984:8). The plain is between 1090 and 1150 meters above sea-level, and has a fall of only 60 meters (Malan 1980:75). The plain slopes gradually towards the Etosha Pan. Between Ondangwa and the latter the fall is 1 in 2500, while north of Ondangwa it is only 1 in 5000 (Malan 1980:76). This flatness results in a slow flow of water through the system where fresh water fish
can live and is taken to the communities in the south. The effect of this gradient of the flat plain is the creation of a series of islands which form the basic settlement pattern. Thus homesteads and settlements are generally located on the higher lying areas between the oshanas. Due to the gentle slope, the oshanas are not regarded as rivers as the water appears to be motionless (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:11).

The entire plain consists of a deep upper layer of sand and dolomite, which could be between 18 meters and 40 meters thick, overlying rock (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:12; Mills 1984:7). Black clay is found in the oshanas and pans. These clays are highly expansive, but usually non-sodic and non-saline (Ministry of Works, Transport & Communication 1992:3-6). "Dit is haas onmoontlik om 'n klip in die sentrale gedeelte te kry" (Republic of South Africa 1964:288). Consequently no coarse aggregate for road construction or concrete is available in the region. The subterranean strata is highly impervious, thus hardly any water is lost except through evaporation (Republic of South Africa 1964:289). The upper geographical layer consists of fine sand with a high salt content and a sublayer of limestone of between 7 m and 10 m deep (Mills 1984:7-8; AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:12).

3.1.2. Climatic conditions

The climate in the area is characterised by an average annual rainfall of between 400 and 500 millimetres. Oshakati, for example, has an average of 509 mm per annum (NBIC 1982a:289). Rainfall is usually in the form of tropical storms of brief duration (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:13). The highest temperatures of 34 degrees Centigrade occur during the hot summer in October and November; winters are mild with the lowest temperature of 6 degrees Centigrade (Mills 1984:7). During the rainy season from November to April, the humidity could be as high as 82% in February, whereas a humidity of only 22% has been recorded between August and October (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:14). Consequently, living conditions during the summer are unpleasant. Annual evaporation is high, with a potential annual average of between 2600 and 2800 mm (Van der Merwe 1983:15). The period of highest evaporation coincides with the summer rainfall months, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the already low rainfall (Van der Merwe 1983:15). The erratic nature of rainfall and the evaporation rate, result in the region's arid or semi-arid environment.

3.2 The economic basis of the study area

Agriculture is one of the most important economic activities in the study area (UNICEF 1990:39). From these activities income is derived and food provided on a small scale. Agriculture is mainly subsistence agriculture and is regarded as part
of the informal sector. The produce is largely consumed by the producers themselves (Plan Medewerkers et al. 1985:20). However subsistence agriculture has been in decline for the past few decades (Tapscott 1990:12). Livestock numbers in 1990 for the former Ovambo region, were estimated at 458000 head of cattle, 499000 goats, and 120000 donkeys. These figures fluctuate due to seasonal cattle movements in the region and the periodic droughts which lead to a decline in numbers. Estimates of peasant sales and income from stock in 1979 for the region were (Moorsom 1982:102): cattle R800000; small stock R60000; and pigs R40000 (value in Rand). According to Van der Merwe (1983:57), out of a total of 47000 pigs in Namibia, 72,4% were kept in Ovambo; 17,8% of the goats, and only 0,2% of the sheep. With respect to large stock Ovambo had 16,1% of Namibia's cattle, 4,6% of the horses, and 48,0% of the donkeys. Despite the large number of livestock surpluses are seldom realised and marketed. The high percentage of livestock in the northern regions and the high population density also contributes to the degradation of the land (see chapter five).

The regional cattle herd is about 350 000 animals, with a probable annual off-take of 30 000 animals. Exact figures cannot be obtained as a large number of cattle are slaughtered in informal butcheries. The only formal market is provided by Meatco in Oshakati where prices of R650 per head are paid, whereas between R800-1000 per head is obtained in bush butcheries (Social Sciences Division 1994:56). This is a strong incentive for farmers to sell to informal markets.

The staple crop is mahangu or pearl millet. Nearly all households surveyed by UNICEF in 1990 grew mahangu, but a significant number also plant sorghum and beans, and to a much lesser extent maize, pumpkin, and peanuts. About a third of the households plough with hoes, less than a quarter with oxen, less than a third use donkeys, ten percent own a tractor, and about seventeen percent make use of hired tractors (UNICEF 1990:43). In 1978/79 about 110 000 hectares were used for the growing of mahangu, with yields of 250-400 kilograms per hectare under average rainfall conditions, but can drop to 70-100 kilograms per hectare during years of below average rainfall (DRFN & SIDA 1992:24). According to Leistner and Esterhuysen (1991:113), the average size of area under crop cultivation in Ovambo is one hectare per household. The authors estimated an annual yield of 24000 tonnes for the whole of Ovambo. The other main crop under cultivation is sorghum, with an area of about 1000 hectares, and yields of 0,2 tonnes per hectare.

Other economic activities are on a small scale, with trade as the most important and very little industrial development. The informal trade sector is mainly performed by Cuca shops. Information about the number of these shops is not
available (Plan Medewerkers et al. 1985:31), but Tapscott (1990:12) estimates that more than 800 did exist in Oshakati and Ondangwa in February 1990. However, some formal industries have been established, which in 1985 were primarily controlled by the First National Development Corporation. Tapscott (1990:11-12) states that apart from these smaller enterprises there is virtually no industry in the area. Businesses found in the area are general dealers, garages, restaurants, barber shops, bakeries, hawking (smous), and bottle stores (Plan Medewerkers et al. 1985:31).

According to Tapscott (1990:10), a major contribution made to general trade turnover is in the informal sector. The feared trade losses after the withdrawal of SADF and UNTAG from the northern region, did not occur. Only a few retrenchments occurred in the private sector, mainly in trading activities, and no excessive pessimism was expressed during a survey of enterprises in May 1990 (Tapscott 1990:11). It seems that larger businesses have been affected more than the smaller ones. The latter benefit from a laissez faire economy; as they do not pay General Sales Tax, no income tax, and are not subjected to trade or health inspectors. Due to their small size they cater for the needs of the residents in the area.

The Ovambo-speaking region could be of particular importance in future trade relations with Angola. A large potential exists for trade, once the war in Angola has stopped. Rebuilding the devastated economy in southern of Angola, requires a variety of inputs. Thus the four regions could become a major bridgehead for aid and reconstruction in southern Angola. To illustrate this point: during the peaceful period before the 1992 elections in Angola, 10 to 15 trucks per day, some with trailers, transported goods to Angola (interview with Hoejgaard 1993b), which were valued between R1 and R1,5 million. The consumption of Coca Cola alone increased three times.

Thus there are prospects that Angolan businessmen will open offices in Oshakati and Ondangwa, increasing trade between Namibia and Angola, once the situation across the border improves. Namibia's direct link with the Republic of South Africa, despite the long distances from the industrial centres, makes it possible to import and export all kinds of materials and other inputs into the area (see NPC 1993:103, SSD 1994:17). This would require an upgrading of infrastructural and other services to assist the economic activities in the neighbouring state. Due to the fact that most of Angola's infrastructure has been devastated, aid and support from the Namibian side of the border can be made readily available. Firms from
Namibia have already started with ventures in Angola or investigated investment opportunities.

3.3 Demographic factors and settlement patterns

Before independence, Northern Namibia consisted of the regions known as Kaokoland, Ovambo, Kavango and Caprivi, which cover 21% of Namibia's surface area, containing 60% of the total population (Czypionka 1991). Approximately 44% of the total population of Namibia lives in the four Ovambo-speaking regions of the study area (see figures 4.1 and 4.5). In 1979, 15% of the inhabitants were working outside the area (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:17). This percentage has increased drastically after independence, but no concrete figures are available. The Namibian Central Statistics Office (CSO) is busy adapting census figures of 1991, which were based on the old divisions of the country, to the new regions. The population growth of the urban and rural population since 1951 in Namibia is shown below:

Table 4.1 Population figures (Source: CSO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>362825</td>
<td>70256</td>
<td>434081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>402647</td>
<td>123357</td>
<td>526004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>567000</td>
<td>170500</td>
<td>737500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>767300</td>
<td>258600</td>
<td>1033900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>954100</td>
<td>455800</td>
<td>1409920</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The population has increased rapidly in rural as well as urban areas. However, the growth in the urban areas is expected to increase at a higher rate in the following years. Census figures provide the following picture of the population living in the different communal areas in Namibia compared to those living in the urban areas (see table 4.5) within these rural areas, and the total urban and rural population in the country:

RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION

Graph 4.1 Rural and urban population
Comparing the number of people living in rural (communal) and urban areas in 1991 the following graphs shows the distribution:

Graph 4.2 Population distribution in urban and rural areas

The changes in population in Ovambo during the last seventy years is illustrated in the following graph:

Graph 4.3 Population growth in Ovambo

Similar to the overall Namibian growth rates, the population in the four northern regions is growing at a very high rate. The effects of this growth with respect to housing are discussed in chapter five.

The demographic trends in the three major towns in the study area are shown on the following pages. It must be noted that in the case of Ondangwa, the statistics seem to contradict the population trend in the region, especially the years between 1970 and 1982. This is probably the result of different delimitations of the census districts used by the previous administration.

7 Adapted from DRFN & SIDA (1992:19)
Table 4.2: Oshakati population figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>GROWTH p.a.</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2924</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1970 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>3684</td>
<td>2.12%</td>
<td>1981 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>21602</td>
<td>19.35%</td>
<td>1991 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>50000</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Ongwediva population figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>GROWTH p.a.</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>not in existence</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1970 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1981 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>6172</td>
<td>27.35%</td>
<td>1991 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Ondangwa population figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>GROWTH p.a.</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2658</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1970 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1049</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1981 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2705</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>NBIC 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7916</td>
<td>12.67%</td>
<td>1991 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>12000-18000</td>
<td>23-51%</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the four regions which constitute the study area, the only urban centres are Oshakati, Ongwediva, and Ondangwa in the Oshana region. The Omusati region has only two smaller settlements; Ohangwena has three settlements, and the Oshikoto region has only one settlement (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 1994). There is also the town of Tsumeb which is located outside the study area, but forms part of the Oshikoto region. The largest urban centres in Namibia in 1991 were:

Graph 4.4 Namibia's 13 largest urban areas
Figure 4.5 Population densities
Adapted from Van der Merwe 1983
Urbanisation in Namibia is characterised by uneven development. Despite the existence of several urban and semi-urban centres, the most important political and economic activities are found in Windhoek. The capital's population is bigger than the next 10 towns combined (MLGH 1990:1). In 1990/91 it was estimated that about one third of the total population was living in 57 recognised urban areas, which means that nearly one third of the population could be regarded as urbanised, according to the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (see Graph 4.2).

Table 4.5 Urban population and localities (1991)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karas</td>
<td>22732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardap</td>
<td>29020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khomas</td>
<td>147056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erongo</td>
<td>35062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjozondjupa</td>
<td>47021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaheke</td>
<td>8340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshikoto</td>
<td>16211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshana</td>
<td>35726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omusati</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okavango</td>
<td>19366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caprivi</td>
<td>13377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunene</td>
<td>8769</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The unequal distribution of urban centres and their population is shown in Table 4.5. Certain regions do not have an urban population at all. This has implications for the functioning of the Regional Councils especially the funding of the Councils through the collection of rates, fees and charges from settlements areas (see SSD 1994:113). Not all localities with a population of more than 2000 can be regarded as urban areas. They are often rural settlements without any urban amenities or structures such as a formal authority. The Oshana region has the three major urban centres. Of the three centres in the Oshana region, only Oshakati has been proclaimed a town in 1995 (see Government Gazette, Nos 90-95, 1 June 1995). The other two towns are de facto run by the MRLGH (see Tvedten & Mupotola 1995:6) Their personnel administration, budgeting and planning is done by the Ministry, and not by the local authority. It has been agreed that the Ministry will be involved in local affairs until the towns are proclaimed (interview with Shigwedha 1992). However, it is certain that the urban areas will continue to depend in the foreseeable future on the central government, due to their lack of resources, manpower and administrative capacity.
3.4 Social and political aspects

During the 1989 elections for the constitutional assembly which led to the formation of the first Namibian parliament, SWAPO only received enough votes to form a majority government after the votes in Ovambo were counted. Out of a total number of 579,098 votes, SWAPO got 197,100 in Ovambo (or 34% of the total votes). The DTA's total for all votes cast was 191,532 (or 28.6%), thus making it the main opposition party. Before the Ovambo region's result was announced, the DTA had received 156,228, whereas SWAPO had received only 135,788 votes. Consequently, SWAPO would have lost the election in 1989, if the organisation would not have secured the massive support of the Ovambo-speaking region.

![Graph 4.5 1989 election - distribution of votes](image)

The distribution of votes during the November 1989 elections, in the three principal voting regions Windhoek, Ovambo and the rest of Namibia is illustrated in Graph 4.5. All participating political parties are included in the graph. The Graph indicates the very high number of votes for SWAPO in the Ovambo region, with the Windhoek area in the second place. The main opposition party, gained most of its votes in the rest of the country, as well as Windhoek as the second most important voting district. The DTA was unable to obtain a significant number of votes in Ovambo.

During the national elections in 1994, the following results were obtained:
These graphs show the importance of the four northern regions for the ruling party since the 1989 elections. Without the votes from these regions the ruling party could not stay in power. With the exception of the DTA, no other party is likely to succeed in obtaining a larger percentage of votes to make this party an influential factor in Namibian politics.

4. GOVERNMENT AND PARASTATAL STRUCTURES

4.1 Parastatals

Housing provision in communal areas before Namibia's independence was mainly in the hands of the so-called representative authorities, the second tier of government, and the private sector. In 1982 a parastatal, the National Building and Investment Corporation (NBIC) was established. The Corporation concentrated on the low and middle income housing sector in established urban areas. However, no provision was made for direct involvement in communal areas, except as an agent appointed by a Representative Authority (interviews with Merrington/Rudd 1991).

The NBIC targeted those members of the population with an income of less than R485 per month (for June 1989) as well as other groups not catered for by the private sector (NBIC 1990b:12). Five categories of houses have been built (NBIC 1990b:16-17): Upgraded, which includes houses with higher standards of finishing such as

---

8 Parties not mentioned elsewhere: DCN - Democratic Coalition of Namibia; MAG - Monitor Aksie Groep; SWANU - South West African National Union; WRP - Workers Revolutionary Party
9 A Representative Authority could approach the NBIC with a proposal, and the NBIC would execute such a project, which was funded by the Representative Authority.
ceilings and a hot water system. The second are conventional units with no ceilings, no hot water, no plaster, and no paint. In the downgraded category finishes are lower than the previous, with no internal doors and no cement floors for example. Ultra-low units consist of a basic shelter with a room, toilet and wash facilities. The last category comprises site and service schemes, where loans of R1800 or less are allocated to assist the very poor. According to affordability, 60% of NBIC's clients fell into this category. However less than 0.5% of past projects have been site and service developments. Houses designed and built by the NBIC have been severely criticised by many home owners, because of their minimum space standards and minimum finishes (MLGH 1990:3).

Since 1991, the NBIC was restructured and renamed, to become the National Housing Enterprise (NHE). The company was established in terms of Act 5 of 1993, National Housing Enterprise Act. Contrary to the NBIC, the NHE can operate throughout the country, including the communal areas. At that time it was envisaged that it would concentrate largely on the low-income groups in the country. However, the government decided in 1993 that no further subsidies will be paid to the NHE (MRLGH 1993a). A considerable decline in available funds was the result. Such funds would have been used more productively for investments in infrastructural and housing projects, which could have boosted the local economy in rural areas.

4.2 Local Authorities

Shortly after independence, the former second tier ethnic administrations were dismantled (Social Sciences Division 1994:7). Fourteen Regional Commissioners were appointed on a temporary basis during September 1990 by proclamation. Their responsibilities included, inter alia, the conducting of investigations into the functioning and management of government services rendered at these offices, with approval by cabinet; inform officers about government policies and decisions; act as representative of the government for receiving members of the public or their representatives; and convey to the cabinet any complaints or representations (Special Advisers and Regional Representatives Appointment Act No. 6 of 1990, Section 3; and Republic of Namibia 1990c). With respect to the Ovambo-speaking region, two Regional Representatives were appointed - one for the Eastern part, called Ondangwa, and one for the Western part, named Oshakati.

New regional councils were constituted during 1992, replacing the temporary Regional Representatives (Social Sciences Division 1994:7). Their powers include inter alia (Friedrich Ebert Foundation 1994:9-10): the collection of data and statistics for planning purposes, identification of development projects, the
preparation of medium and long term development plans, and the co-ordination and monitoring of development projects in the region. A Regional Council also has to look after the development and effective functioning of local authorities in the region. Another aspect is the assistance, management and controlling of so-called settlement areas, which are mainly informal or traditional settlements, to enable them to be developed into structured villages with certain services. The Regional Councils are not directly involved in the provision of housing.

Various government ministries have established offices in the study area, to offer certain services. They encompass the Ministries of Health and Education, and others which provide infrastructural services, and the collection of rents and payments for water, electricity. In the following chapters more details will be supplied regarding the efficiency of some of the services provided by these ministries or their representatives. Corrupt practices have already become apparent due to a lack of control on central and regional level, resulting in huge losses in income for the authorities (The Namibian February 4, 1992:1+3, Tvedten & Mupotola 1995:20).

In the Constitution of Namibia (Republic of Namibia 1990a, Act 1 of 1990, article 102), provision is made for several types of local authorities, namely municipalities, communities, and village councils. The functions and powers were laid down in the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23 of 1992) and the Regional Councils Act (Act No. 22, 1992). An efficient system of local government is a prerequisite for development in rural areas (Tötemeyer 1988:9).

After independence, the MRLGH considered the position of the existing municipalities and the possible establishment of new urban areas and local authorities. Three types of urban settlements were consequently determined (Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23 of 1992, section 3): municipalities, towns and villages. Furthermore, a distinction is made between two kinds of municipalities. Although the law does not explicitly states the differences between the two kinds of municipalities, Part I municipalities have more autonomy than any of the other local authorities, and they also generate a substantial part of their revenue from own sources. Under Part I in schedule I (Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23 of 1992:122), municipalities may borrow money by ways of loans from any source within Namibia without the approval of the Minister of Regional, Local Government and Housing and the Minister of Finance (only Windhoek and Swakopmund fulfil this requirement). All other local authorities must first get approval from the Ministry. The establishment of a local authority structure and the local authority
council's powers, functions and rights and obligations are listed in an annexure to this chapter.

The MRLGH is creating new municipal or local authorities, to form the third tier of government. Oshakati, Ondangwa, and Ongwediva are included in the new local authority structure. New laws have been introduced for the future authorities in rural and urban areas. During August 1992 the new local and regional acts (Regional Councils Act, Act No. 22, 1992 and the Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23, 1992), were passed in parliament to create decentralised authorities on a regional and local level.

Most of these authorities have to start from scratch as no viable administrative structures were in place. The lack of qualified manpower is one aspect which can determine the efficiency of the new local authorities. Furthermore, rural-urban linkages and district planning, have to take into account the opportunities for rural development which are generated by urban development. To utilise them, the urban centres should be administratively associated with their rural hinterlands (Chambers & Feldman 1973:219). Administrative areas of different government departments should be the same and the districts should be manageable. The authors (Chambers & Feldman 1973:220) point out, administrative capacity is a scarce resource, thus new activities and the setting up of new organisations, require additional staff and make demands on existing organisations. To counter this situation, only one proposal to the First Delimitation Commission limited the number of regional councils in Namibia to six (Wienecke 1990, Republic of Namibia 1991b:42), the other proposals varied between 10 and 12 (Republic of Namibia 1991b:41-43). In the end 13 regional councils were created without the necessary resources. For the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development it is not possible to operate 13 regional offices due to the constraints in manpower and resources (interview with Kahuure 1992).

The planning of local development is an important task of local government. This is a highly difficult responsibility to carry out, especially due to the lack of qualified personnel. Furthermore local services have to be provided and maintained, which was another area where problems have been experienced in the past due to the lack of qualified personnel and the lack of sufficient funds. As local authorities have to generate finances within the area of their jurisdiction, ways of collecting them have to be found. This is a particularly intricate problem.

---

10 The "New South Africa" was divided into only 9 provinces after the ANC formed the new government.
11 see also section 2.1 in this chapter
in a peripheral area, where incomes are generally low. Therefore funds must be obtained from somewhere else, usually from central government, as the regional councils will also have only very limited financial resources. Article 77 (Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23, 1992) makes provision that five percent of rates levied by the local councils on rateable property be paid to the regional councils.

Cowling and Steeley (1973:6) advocate an advisory role of sub-regional planning in general. They point out (Cowling & Steeley 1973:7) that all plans are advisory until they are converted into legally binding contracts. This point was also made by Kahuure (interview 1992), who proposed that the ministry and directorates should be smaller and act as advisors to the government. This requires political backing and direction.

It is necessary to provide a link between local communities and the central authority by means of an intermediate body such as a regional council. Cowling and Steeley (1973:14) mention some aspects of planning undertaken by regional bodies. This includes advice given on the impact of national decisions on the region and part of it; bringing together central government interests and structural planning by publishing regional strategies and plans; co-ordinating structural planning activity in those large conurbations whose problems should be considered on a national level; and to give technical services to structural and local planners by making forecasts and analysing data on both the regional and national level. The authors emphasise that choices must be made between areas which vary tremendously in terms of culture, population density, industry, and topography, in allocating benefits, or establishing priorities.

Regional authorities in northern Namibia have inter alia to look at ways to prevent further ecological damage, thus promoting the sustainability of the regions. Co-operation between a number of authorities and the central government has to be achieved. This is also true for infrastructural development and resources management.

Political motivation for regional plans usually arises when an inequality of income and the standard of living among people exists (Bos 1989:62). Regional disparities in per capita income tend to widen in the early stages of the development process and then narrow (Thirlwall quoted by Bos 1989:62). Thus the question is how to address these inequalities. The two main approaches are rural development, stressing equity, and growth pole strategies which emphasise growth. Another point is made by Gasper referring to Zimbabwe (1988:435-436), who argues
that rural centres help "...to satisfy the commitments of the new government, eager to bring benefits to the rural population that had borne the brunt of the liberation war. The government was also eager to strengthen its own legitimacy, since many had acquired habits of opposition to government". The author further states (Gasper 1988:457) that plans for new rural centres, initiated during colonial rule with the aim of retaining the people in those rural areas, were built after independence because they appealed to various groups for diverse reasons. They suited the government as a form of visible direct action, and are attractive to small businesses and their promoters.

Bos (1989:62) points out that in the discussion of regional development, a compromise is offered between advocates of continuing growth of primate cities and those who recommend a rural bias, namely the intermediate city. According to Egan (quoted by Bos 1989:62), they offer good economic prospects, income and employment opportunities, thus can achieve social, political and equity objectives. Hansen argues (quoted by Bos 1989:63) that "... the most efficient use of public funds for regional development programmes might be to encourage the growth of medium-sized cities, especially those that have already given some real evidence of possessing growth characteristics". Another advantage mentioned by Bos (1989:64) is the encouragement of migration from stagnant or underdeveloped areas to faster growing areas, thus involving migrants in economic processes which raise productivity.

The sensible use and allocation of available resources for new government structures has been one issue of discussion, after the First Delimitation Commission proposed that Namibia should be divided into 13 regions. The members of the commission saw it as their task to establish effective regions with a strong local democracy and to ensure that the areas benefit from development (The Namibian, October 29, 1991:3). Another aim was to create regions that are economically viable as units. But, as the history of Nigeria shows, "The immediate problem is how to finance the new states. No one can even begin to estimate how much it will take to build the nine new states. But analysts agree that the cost is certainly staggering" (New African November 1991:26). The same argument holds true for Namibia. The government of Namibia's ability to finance 13 regions is a matter of grave concern. The Namibian government was already running a deficit budget even before the new regions came into being (see chapter1, section 1.1). Additional taxes, such as the rise of fuel taxes in November 1991, is used as additional revenue. A businessman is quoted: "We are not always told the truth, and that our Government needs additional revenue is beyond saying" (The Namibian November 15, 1991:4).
5. THE LAND ISSUE

Land is a major factor in urban and rural development planning. In both instances, land usage and its availability influences local development conditions. Utilising this resource for the benefit of the local inhabitants requires in-depth investigations. "Markets, housing estates, industrial and commercial developments and economies can all grow, land cannot" (Ardington 1990:610).

Different land tenure systems have been identified by Loehr and Powelson (1981:246). The first is customary (tribal or clan) tenure, where the chief holds the land in trusteeship for the community. Usufruct is allocated by him according to established rules. Village or communal land is available to all members, namely for grazing or arable land. The second tenure system is collective tenure. The land is owned by a government agency, central or local, or by individuals who have agreed to combine their holdings into a co-operative (Loehr & Powelson 1981:247). However, it is quite common in Africa that tribal land tenure predominates. Most of the land in the study area is communal land. The newly created local authorities have jurisdiction over the land which was allocated to them (see article 3, Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23, 1992), with the exception of properties belonging to the central government such as schools, hospitals, and police stations.

Land which is used for urbanisation is usually lost for agricultural production. UNIN criticises the traditional usage of communal land as being detrimental to the ecology, because it does not encourage investment in soil and water conservation, fencing, and others. "Communalism in land-use may be considered a paradoxical falsehood since it permits direct exploitation of a communal or public asset for exclusive individual enjoyment with minimum input into the asset" (UNIN 1986:133).

In the study area, two kinds of land holdings are found. The first is communal land, and the second the individualisation of former communal land, i.e. private ownership. In the case of urban areas, land ownership is being changed slowly from the traditional leaders to that of a local authority, which in turn may sell land to private individuals or institutions. This process takes away a major function of traditional leaders, who as a consequence thereof, loose influence and power. Some headmen are accommodated in the process, by participating in the local committees or in negotiations with the new local authorities (interviews with Hoejgaard 1993c, Hailulu 1994, Hekandjo 1993). In Onambome and Onankali rapid changes in the authority structures are not expected in the near future, as they fall outside the areas of intensive activity, i.e. urban areas. Therefore the
headmen and other traditional authorities remain the major players in the allocation and use of land in those areas, without a formal local authority or areas under the jurisdiction of local authorities, where land on the periphery will remain unused in the foreseeable future.

Land may be available in those places where new municipalities are established, but the use and allocation thereof must be taken into consideration. Communal towns in the past, did not have a delimited jurisdictional area. Control and the maintenance of the municipal services was exercised by a central government department or agency in the built-up areas or areas used for urban development. Coetzee states (1987:7-8) that it is not correct to argue that land is readily available in communal areas for town developments as long as traditional leaders are in control of allocating the land. Thus the land may be available, but the use thereof must be taken into account, for example, land could be identified for developing new townships, but is used as agricultural land, as in the case of Oshakati (see National Building and Investment Corporation 1990a:2) and Ondangwa. Thus the land used for agriculture in the past is converted into residential land. This results in the loss of productive land in the case of families living near or in new township areas.

Hardiman and Midgley (1982:227) state that in many developing countries a critical shortage of serviced land is experienced, even though land as such is plentiful. This is also the case in Namibia, where a NBIC investigation (1990a:2) identified a suitable site for a self-help scheme near Oshakati. The report stated that the land is currently used for agriculture, thus was rejected by a former member of the Executive Committee of the Ovambo Administration. Agricultural land in the study area is used for subsistence, therefore all these parcels of land within a municipality's jurisdiction, could lead to the loss of the livelihood of families depending on that land. Only resettling these people to new areas could solve this problem.

The three major urban centres in the study area, are in the process of being surveyed and proclaimed. The MRLGH is responsible for this formalisation of urban areas. How long the influence of traditional leaders will remain a factor in the allocation of land, is uncertain. One outcome of these changes is that the individualisation of land is a requirement for commercial lending and investments. As van den Brink, et al. (1994:181) put it: "... when communal land tenure institutions are replaced with individual tenure institutions so that European-style banks will be willing to make European-style loans, thereby ignoring the possibility that alternatives to European-style credit may be more appropriate to
African circumstances", then the control of the land by traditional authorities is lost to modern institutions, which imposes new concepts to rural areas which are not understood by the majority of people.

A property agent involved in marketing houses in the Oshakati area, found (personal communication August 1994) that many interested individuals wanted to pay cash for their new houses. Those who did not have the amount available to pay in cash for a house, did not accept the possibility to obtain a loan, in order to finance the purchase. This is an example of the cash economy in the study area. Officials in Ondangwa confirmed that all privately built houses in the town were fully paid in cash.

In Namibia, the National Housing Enterprise, is the only housing developer not restricted by the obstacles of unproclaimed land. The National Housing Enterprise Act (Act No. 5 of 1993) gives the NHE the possibility to develop land and erect houses in any part of the country, including communal land, on a PTO (permit to occupy) basis, which does not require a formal title deed. A PTO is a legal document, but does not enable the holder to sell the land. This means, private investors cannot invest in urban areas which are not proclaimed. This in turn can impede economic and infrastructural developments envisaged by the private sector. Furthermore, the land has not been commercialised, as most people have not yet been exposed to the possibilities of buying and selling land for a profit. According to Hoejgaard (interview with 1993b), cuca shops in prime areas are being bought by certain individuals for R60 per square meter, for future developments. A deeds office is urgently required to control these transactions.

In the study area, urban land use is further restricted by the oshanas. This is shown on the map of Oshakati earlier in chapter three. Consequently space and land provision have far-reaching implications in the development of urban land. Especially the large informal settlements around Oshakati and Ondangwa will represent problems to the new authorities. In both towns foreign organisations, from Germany and Denmark, started in 1993 with programmes in infrastructure rehabilitation and settlement upgrading. These projects are aimed at upgrading urban areas, which have developed rapidly as a result of urbanisation.

6. GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The provision of modern infrastructure could be considered as an important aspect in development planning. Transport connections, communication, and water supplies, could have a positive effect on the living standards of rural
communities. Namibia's newly proclaimed urban areas, require these services to function effectively. As the problems in urban areas are more visible, developments are concentrated in these localities (see discussion on urban bias in chapter 5, section 2). Rural communities receive certain services, but on a much smaller scale compared to the semi-urban and urban centres. In the study area, the conversion of the semi-urban areas into formal urban centres, made their needs and requirements a government priority.

According to Nkuhlu (1987:40), many surveys of rural priorities and basic needs conducted in less developed parts in Southern Africa, indicate an overwhelming preference for meeting infrastructural needs first. Included are access roads, secure water supplies, accessible fuel and building materials, basic health and educational facilities. Infrastructural development lends itself to labour-intensive techniques, and it is a way to create self-sustaining sources of income. The provision of infrastructure also contributes to the quality of life and adequate infrastructure facilitates production and marketing (United Nations 1978:56). For example, adequate transport provides access to education, health care, and market-oriented production. Most services are directly related to production, but others are partly or wholly amenities for general purpose and could be considered essential parts of the whole social structure.

Since independence the importance of infrastructural services\(^\text{12}\) in the four regions was emphasised. The three localities selected have been affected in various degrees by these developments. In Onambome hardly anything changed in the first five years since independence. Onankali had a tarred road and a bulk water supply in the form of the water pipeline since before independence. Oshakati's water supply was improved, roads were built in the past but need to be upgraded in certain areas of the town (see chapter 6, section 2.1). The growth in population also necessitates an expansion of the sewerage system and the electrical distribution to provide these services to the modernising townships.

The growing population densities in many rural areas increasingly put pressure on the traditional way of life, making many of them obsolete as future options. Hence alternatives have to be found to counter the dilemmas of providing water, sanitation, and other services to low-income inhabitants. Services in rural areas have to meet three fundamental principles (United Nations 1978:54): 1. maximum territorial dispersal of service units to reach the mass of small producers in a wide area with little or no transportation facilities; 2. the efficiency of

\(^{12}\) These services include the supply of bulk services such as water, electricity and roads.
services in price and quality; and 3. the location of various services and the links between them. All services that function on a similar scale should be concentrated in a single physical location known as a service centre. In this way rural residents are able to obtain what they need in one place. Available resources could be used more efficiently for the development of infrastructure; contacts and co-operation between various elements of the supporting system are facilitated; and a central point could develop into an urban environment, where landless people can be accommodated.

Large parts of urban Ongwediva are up to now undeveloped. Once development takes place water demand could increase up to three times the present consumption (Departement van Owerheidsakte 1986:34). Thus water provision and reticulation is another expensive aspect in the development of these semi-urban areas, especially if they become municipalities.

For the whole Ovambo-speaking territory, a Road Master Plan was formulated to facilitate improvements in transport and communications. At present two tarred roads cross the Ovambo-speaking area, one from Oshivel to Ruacana, the other from Ondangwa to Oshikango. The rest of the roads have gravel or sand surfaces. New roads are presently being built, some with a bitumen surface, to the west of Oshakati to improve the roads in the Ongandjera/Tsandi area.

Passenger transport is limited to private mini-busses which service most parts of the region (Tapscott 1990:9). Commercial transport is provided by suppliers and private contractors. An air connection between Oshakati and Windhoek is available. The nearest railway station is Tsumeb, some 250 km away from Ondangwa. Thus road transport is the most important factor in freight and passenger movements.

The available surface water sources in Ovambo have their origin in neighbouring Angola (Plan Medewerkers, et al. 1985:6). They are the Kunene river and the efundjas (floods), which supply the oshanas south of the border. In the first case, raw water is pumped from the Ruacana diversion weir to a high point and then gravitated by canal to Ongongo (NBIC 1982a:293). Here the water is stored in an open earth dam before treatment in a conventional water treatment plant. Then the water is pumped via a main pipe line to take off points such as Oshakati, Ongwediva, and Ondangwa.

Most of the drinking water in the region's rural areas is found underground or in ponds. The Ovambo-speaking area is characterised by hand-dug wells, but people have to shift them from place to place, because the wells come up with "liquid
salt" for water (New Era July 25-31, 1991:15). Most of the underground water in the study area is saline (interview with Koch 1992). The Department of Water Affairs is planning an extension of the rural water supply network (Department of Water Affairs 1993). A rural water supply policy is in the process of being formulated. The Department of Water Affairs has established a Directorate of Rural Water Supply, which is specifically concerned with water supplies in the rural regions.

Piped water from the main water line between the Kunene river and Ondangwa, is a possibility to provide water to rural communities which are not too far away from the pipe line. An official told New Era (July 25-31, 1991:15) that the Department of Water Affairs is a bulk supplier to rural areas, focusing on schools, towns and hospitals. The department has established regulated tap-off points for cattle and installed taps for human consumption along the line. These measures are available to a small number of rural people only, as the majority lives away from the pipeline.

Despite the fact that a hydro electric power station has been built in Ruacana, the power is mainly transmitted to the south of the country. Central Ovambo, up to Oshakati, receives electricity via Tsumeb (see map in Times of Namibia January 19, 1989:4). Water and electricity is provided to formal houses in the planned semi-urban centres. Informal settlements have water stands, shared by numerous households (Tapscott 1990:9). The author (Tapscott 1990:9-10) states that SWAWEK has supplied break down points to some 3200 households in the shanty settlements.

The Ministry of Mines and Energy is implementing a rural electrification programme in the Ovambo-speaking area. The urban centres and certain rural districts in the study area have received funds from abroad to build up an electrical distribution network. Government institutions, such as schools or hospitals are the main consumers (interview with Engara 1992). However, the future of the rural electrification programme depends on the availability of foreign funds.

Oshakati and Ondangwa's post and telecommunication services consisted of antiquated manual exchanges (Tapscott 1990:10). Although fax and telex facilities are obtainable, the telecommunication service could be seen as a constraint for business people. The postal services are running via Tsumeb, which has an automatic, secondary exchange (Van der Merwe 1983:76). Oshakati had a manual, tertiary centre and Ondangwa a manual subordinate exchange. Since independence, the post office introduced automatic exchanges in the main centres, which was
accomplished on 1 November 1991. It was an investment of R26,3 million (The Namibian November 4, 1991:3), consisting of the most modern apparatus and technology available in the world.

In April 1994 a new rural telecommunications project was completed after four years of preparation and implementation. With the help of the German government 22 villages were linked to the telecommunications network, inter alia Oshakati and Okalongo (interview with Moths 1994). This is a pilot project, which can only be expanded if new sources of finance are found. Between the villages the system is operated by radio signal, but the distribution in the villages is by copper cable. The system relies on the rural electrification network, but has already experienced problems, as the power supply is unreliable (interview with Moths 1994).

If the north of Namibia ought to play a role in trade with neighbouring states, it is imperative that the government upgrades the infrastructure in the region. Infrastructural services are a major requirement for inter-African trade. The lack of and the widespread deterioration of the existing infrastructure, in the last ten years, has been described as the "lost decade" in Africa (Namibian Broadcasting Corporation news broadcast, 15 May 1990). International and inter-regional relations have been hampered due to these negative developments in the past.

6.1 Sanitary services

There is a link between rural housing and health in which sanitary services play an important role. This includes water supply; sewerage and solid waste water disposal; drainage; food protection; and control of insect and animal vectors of disease (United Nations 1978:77). By providing these services, considerable improvement of living conditions could be achieved. But the widely dispersed population in rural areas, and the usually high costs associated with the provision of these services, often make these efforts unrealisable. Ways to finance and implement these programmes have not only to be investigated, but also the possibilities of using local materials in order to cut costs.

As an alternative to the polluted ponds alongside the water pipe line in the study area, New Era (July 25-31, 1991:15) proposes that the inhabitants should be taught to harvest rainwater and to clean water. Catchment tanks, to collect rainwater, can be built out of wire mesh, cement and sand. A 5000 litre tank can hold enough water for a period of six months, at seven buckets of water per day. The supply of water is in general a problem for Namibia as a whole and for rural
areas in particular (Aulakh & Asombang 1985:23). It is made even more acute, because of the irregular rainfall. During periods of drought water supply constitutes a serious problem.

6.2 Energy sources

In Namibia, electricity is generated inter alia by the Ruacana powerstation which is situated to the west of the study area. However, the shortages experienced in 1991 show that this is not a reliable source of energy. The supply of electricity shows how dependent the country is on its neighbours, Angola and South Africa, as well as on nature. Due to the drought in southern Angola during 1991, a shutdown occurred each night at 23h00 and lasts until 6h00 in the morning (Windhoek Advertiser July 9, 1991:4). In 1991 the Cunene River has reached its lowest water level in 30 years. The situation worsened in 1993 and 1994. Therefore, Namibia is becoming partly dependent on South Africa's ESCOM should the Kunene's water level fall below operating volume. ESCOM supplies additional energy to make up any shortfall. This could lead to price increases, because the power from South Africa is not the cheapest energy source. The following graph illustrates the situation since 1992 until August 1995:

An alternative supply could come from the building of a new hydro-power station at the Epupa falls on the Cunene river, which has a price tag of R1 billion, of which Namibia could generate only about 30 per cent (Mr Polla Brand on NBC TV July 10, 1991). It will cost about R20000 per kilometre to extend the ESKOM power network (The Times of Namibia October 2, 1991:33). But it is impossible, without definite projects, to obtain figures for the costs of expansion of the electrical
network, due to a number of factors which have to be considered in the planning stage (Telephonic communication with Mr Hoogenhout, SWAWEK, 22/08/95).

7. BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS

In the construction of housing, local factors should be taken into consideration. To most Europeans, a bamboo house is inferior to one built out of bricks (Gilbert & Gugler 1981:83). However, in a hot climate, bamboo and wood are more than adequate construction materials, as it is more pleasant to live outdoors in tropical countries.

Other factors affecting housing costs in rural areas in developing countries, compared to urban areas, include the lower costs of component inputs, the lower total financial needs, requirements to capital market access are much less, and the capital markets to which access is required are usually not the ones from which funds for financing urban housing would be sought (United Nations 1974:16). The Namibian government has embarked upon large scale projects (inputs) which are costly, requiring large sums of money, which must be obtained from a variety of sources. Among them is the domestic capital market, foreign grants and loans, and taxation for budget allocations. Whether this strategy is feasible in the long term is doubtful, as the financial requirements for other sectors also increase and external sources of funding are not reliable. Thus alternatives have to be studied, for example by looking at the prospects of producing inputs locally.

Building costs could be considered to be directly affected by a number of factors, such as subsidies, interest rates, supply of building materials and the transport to remote areas, the dependence on only certain suppliers and manufacturers, the availability of funds, and the potential of participation by local inhabitants. These elements are considered below.

7.1 Housing cost factors

The financing of housing in Namibia is in a predicament, especially because of high building costs and the dependence on the South African currency. At present, the high South African interest rates make it expensive to built conventional houses, even if the standard of finishing is not very high. Should low-income groups received subsidies, the government must obtain the necessary funds elsewhere, as somebody has to pay for it in the end. Housing finance and the subsidisation of it are aspects which determine costs in the supply of conventional housing and services to a large extent, especially for the low-income sector.
Since 1982, the National Building and Investment Corporation (NBIC) has been the only institution lending long-term for low-income housing \(^{13}\). This was made possible by subsidies received from the central government. But this system of highly subsidised interest rates made it necessary to allocate larger amounts to these subsidies each year (MLGH 1990:6). This subsidy burden is generally considered as being detrimental to the national economy, as it creates an artificial high demand for houses. The private sector is affected because subsidies prevent developers to enter low-income housing markets. Due to an artificially high demand for housing standards, costs are increased and consequently also the subsidies. Subsidisation stimulates urbanisation and increases the magnitude of present problems, because of the lowering of the barriers to housing (MLGH 1990:10). This means, housing in urban areas can be easier acquired at a lower cost, which attracts people to settle in areas where subsidies are made available.

The cost structure for houses built by the NBIC in Namibia shows that the costs for land, labour and materials make up 78.3% of the total costs (NBIC 1990b:31):

![NBIC HOUSES - COST STRUCTURE](chart)

In order to reduce costs, various possibilities could be considered. The first is the provision of cheaper building materials, which can be found locally or which can be manufactured in a certain region. Secondly, ways can be explored to reduce the costs of serviced land by investigating methods which are more suitable for a low-income area such as popular sector construction (MLGH 1990:8). Labour costs could be decreased if the skills of the work force are improved and a higher productivity could be achieved in this way. This however, is outside the control of the NBIC/NHE as private contractors are responsible for providing their own manpower for projects financed by the NBIC/NHE.

\(^{13}\) The NBIC was replaced by the NHE in 1993 after the National Housing Enterprise Act (Act 5 of 1993) was promulgated.
7.2 Supply of building material

Many developing countries have adopted Western methods of making building materials, resulting in a specific attitude described by Nyerere (quoted by Spence 1987:28):

"The present widespread addiction to cement and tin roofs is a kind of mental paralysis... Cement is basically earth; but it is called 'European soil'. Therefore, people refuse to build a house of burnt bricks and tiles; they insist on waiting for a tin roof and 'European soil'. If we want to progress more rapidly in the future we must overcome at least some of these mental blocks".

This attitude is also illustrated by Leonard (1977:12), describing a house of a government employee in a rural area in Kenya. The roof of the house was made of corrugated steel sheets, thus the employee was among the most prosperous 25 percent of the residents. But because his house was not made of cement and bricks, it was not permanent, therefore was not an elite dwelling in local eyes.

Two kinds of materials are available (Schreckenbach & Abankwa 1981:73): 1. natural materials, provided by nature, which can be used directly after some preparation, or can be utilised without the establishment of huge factories. 2. Man-made materials, developed from raw form to a finished product in an industrial plant, or by using appropriate technologies.

Research has shown that alternative materials can be easily used instead of conventional materials. One example is bamboo, of which a thousand species are known world-wide (Schreckenbach & Abankwa 1981:85). The UNDP documentary Azimuth (shown on NBC TV May 1992), stated that bamboo can grow up to 20 meters in only six months. It is therefore ideal for deforested regions. Chemical treatments have been developed in countries using bamboo to repel attacks by pests. In the study area, it would provide an alternative, if instead of the trees, bamboo is used for the repairing, renovating of traditional homesteads.

Building materials are very important elements in housing provision. Shortages, price distortions, and the availability or non-availability of certain materials have a profound impact on the construction sector. "Most shelter policies neglect the building materials industry. Since it is an industry, it is often not thought of as part of the shelter sector at all" (Van Huyck 1987:353). The author suggests the following areas of concern (Van Huyck 1987:353-354):

- a strategy is needed to determine the possibilities of local production compared to imports;
- appropriate standards for the use of building materials has to be established to encourage efficient use of materials;
so-called 'temporary' and 'semi-temporary' materials should be allowed in low-cost housing to stimulate supply of housing stock;

- as the most effective way to control prices and stimulate the supply side, a strong private sector in the industry must be promoted with a minimum of public sector regulation;
- some materials can be produced by small-scale enterprises, particularly those in low-income shelter;
- governments can contribute to lowering the costs by providing appropriate guidelines for standardisation with quality control;
- standards not set artificially high to ensure low prices.

As a result of commercialisation, modern building materials are used, for example roof sheeting which are manufactured in urban areas thus contribute little to the local rural economy (T'Gilde & de Jonge 1987:37-38). The buying of modern materials, plus transport costs and the need for skilled workers makes the building of a house or the renovation an expensive exercise. The large distances between rural areas and the sources of supply and also within rural areas means, that transport costs play a significant part in building costs. T'Gilde and de Jonge (1987:35) point out that the population pressure has brought with it that building materials which were found in the vicinity in the past, must today be bought. For grass and branches money must be paid, as in the case of the study area (see chapter 6, section 2.2.5).

Another important cost factor is the distance of a rural region from the supply centre. The lack of suitable building sand for cement bricks in Ovambo, means that after they are produced in Tsumeb, they have to be transported to the north. Galvanised sheeting is manufactured in Okahandja some 600 km away. Gravel too, has to be transported by truck from Tsumeb to the north as no railway line exists. Most of the other materials have to be ordered from Windhoek or have to be imported from the R.S.A.

Namibia's dependence on the South African economy, could also be illustrated by looking at the cement industry, which is dominated by the southern neighbour. In an interview with S.A. Construction World (April 1991:38), Peter Michau, managing director of a company in South Africa, which is a major user of cement, complained about the existing cement cartel in South Africa. He describes it as being arrogant and insensitive to the needs of the end user. Prices are arbitrarily fixed to suit the cement producers. Namibia, in the past, has been just another easy accessible market for this cartel. Michau also points out (1991:43) that the arbitrary price increases are passed from the contractor on to the consumer down to the consumers, i.e. the home-owners. This also fuels the national inflation rate and is stifling infrastructural development and the provision of housing. A few years ago, Spanish cement imports through Natal, were prevented by the cement industry to enter the market.
In the beginning of the 1970's, the 14 cement factories in South Africa were owned by three companies (Jubber 1971:2.8). As Jubber states (1971:2.9), cement prices for all end users receiving cement supplies are fixed, including the end users inside of what is now Namibia. The author (Jubber 1971:2.12) also mentioned that the South African multi-national, Anglo-Alpha Cement, in 1967 registered the South West Africa Portland Cement Company Limited in order to build a cement plant in the country. But the project was deferred after problems with the SWA Administration developed and the drop in cement consumption occurred. But to discourage potential competition, SWA Portland Cement decided to erect a cement packing plant at Windhoek (Jubber 1971:2.13). Jubber argues (1971:1) that the smallest economic factory size is to have a productive capacity of not less than 200 000 short tonnes of cement, but he maintains that a plant should only be erected when a capacity of 250 000 short tonnes of cement per annum is required after an increase in demand takes place. In the beginning of the 1980's a bulk facility was erected in Windhoek. Based on Godö (1990:6) the annual cement sales in Namibia since 1970 are shown below:

![Graph 4.9 cement sales in Namibia](image)

The graph shows that after independence a decrease in cement consumption occurred. This would make a cement factory in Namibia uneconomical if Jubber's argumentation is accepted.

An official of Namibia Portland Cement Limited told the author (telephone communication November 12, 1991) that a cement plant in Karibib would cost about R218 million. A small percentage of this cement also finds its way into Angola, where the black market rate in Lubango is about R147 for a bag of cement. In Luanda a bag on the black market costs about R30 to R50. At the end of 1991, the

---

14 1 U.S. short ton equals 907.19 kilograms
Namibian market needed 120,000 tonnes of cement. At present the company's sales are distributed as follows:

**Table 4.6 Cement consumption in Namibia**

- 5% - southern Namibia up to 90 km south of Windhoek;
- 5% - eastern Namibia;
- 30% - Windhoek;
- 30% - the western part from Karibib to Swakopmund;
- 30% - northern Namibia with the largest part of the supplies to the Ovambo region.

During the past three years, Namibia's first cement plant was erected in Otjiwarongo, some 430 kilometres south of Ondangwa and 460 kilometres away from Oshakati, after a lime deposit was found 40 km away from the plant. The plant is capable of producing 100,000 tonnes cement a year, which is, according to the chief executive, the yearly consumption of the country (Windhoek Advertiser December 15, 1990:43). Attempts to get a loan from the First National Development Corporation failed before the project started. Estimates regarding the costs are in the region of R16 million (Windhoek Advertiser December 15, 1990:42).

Imports of building materials could also be a drain on foreign exchange at a time when developing countries can least afford it (Moavenzadeh 1987:93). Constraints in the supply of formal building materials could also be the result of the debt servicing situation of a country (Moavenzadeh 1987:94). The low value-weight ratio of most building materials make the cost of transportation higher than the cost of producing them.

Namibia in general has faced the dominance of large foreign firms from South Africa. Namibian firms consequently have experienced many problems. One example is an entrepreneur who produced plastic pipes in Swakopmund. He was, after opening his plant, put under pressure from South African cartels which undercut his price until he went out of business. Similarly, one of the most important building materials, cement, was only imported from the Republic of South Africa. If the South African cartels want to protect their market in Namibia, and the Namibian government is not introducing anti-cartel laws, indigenous firms will always face extreme difficulties to establish themselves in the relative small domestic market.

7.3 Building standards

Building standards in Third World countries are rarely based on local experience, they usually have a Western orientation and a strong urban bias (Miles & Parkes 1984:3). Thus they are often in conflict with traditional standards based
on cumulative experience of people over hundreds of years. The authors point out that the most critical area where standards have affected provision of shelter, has been in the type of building material permitted. "Inappropriate standards foster the use of inappropriate and expensive materials" (Miles & Parkes 1984:3). The writers state that earth is still the cheapest and most common of indigenous building materials. But cement remains the most important and widely used building material in virtually every developing country. One of the constraints associated with it is the high price, as a result of transportation and distribution from central plants as indicated above. In many countries projects cannot be finished because there is no cement (Spence 1980:1). Spence argues that cement must be counted among the basic commodities on which development programmes rely, with an importance comparable to water, energy and fertiliser supply.

In Africa, standards and criteria for shelter provision are mainly an urban characteristic, inherited from colonial times (Mabogunje, et al. 1978:47). High standards are increasingly regarded as one of the major barriers blocking the provision of shelter for low-income families, but the formulation of appropriate standards remains a difficult task (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:9). The authors point out that this is no longer a technical problem but an institutional one. Politicians are amongst those who support official standards as a symbol of their efforts to provide benefits for their constituencies. With this attitude, they too, can add to the costs of building materials and construction, which is contrary to what they should accomplish for their poor constituencies. This is not helpful in improving the living standards of those who need some encouragement, and to facilitate appropriate means for self-development.

Decision-makers have trouble finding the most suitable technological approach to a particular situation, because of preconceptions regarding the suitability of broad classes of technology, such as advanced, intermediate, traditional, indigenous, or imported (Weiss & Ramesh 1979:12). Regulations and institutional structures made it difficult for traditional technologies to survive, even when they brought in socially needed products and provided productive employment. Unrealistically high standards for roads, housing or public services, resulted in expenditures which made the recovering of the costs too high for the needy. According to de Sebastián (1979:68), appropriate technology has to be defined with reference to the different economic groups in order to determine the needs of some and also the obstacles that others put in the way of meeting those needs. The author argues that the technology found in developing countries is generally speaking, appropriate for the rich and powerful, but highly inappropriate for the poor majority. Riedijk (1984:14) states that the introduction of Western products
will require Western tools, which in turn necessitates Western organisations, which in the end leads to the Westernisation of the Third World. The methodology of Western technology assumes uniformity, its mass production requires uniformity, requires standards, and the same design for an item (Riedijk 1984:15), to produce it at competitive prices.

In the established urban areas, south of Ovambo, one problem often encountered with municipalities, is their insistence on complying with their building regulations and standards. This too has been a major factor in the provision of expensive housing for low-income groups. As Barclay (1987:14) asserts, with some exceptions, most building regulations in the Third World are invariably restrictive and tend to inhibit the development of local building materials. The author states that building regulations should be framed to facilitate further development and use of appropriate materials and methods of construction, consistent with health and safety requirements appropriate for the conditions prevailing in such a country. Therefore incentives should stimulate innovative and inventive intermediate technology in the building of low-cost housing, the materials required, and the services needed.

It is futile to build houses of a high standard for poor groups if this does not match their needs and level of income (Gilbert & Gugler 1981:86). The authors claim: "Good housing should not be designed on the basis of assumptions about what the poor's need ought to be, but should provide the flexibility by which the poor can trade off one need against the other". Three needs were identified, namely security of ownership; identity or quality standards; and opportunity or the proximity to unskilled jobs.

Mabogunje, et al. (1978:47) identify three types of standards to be considered in shelter provision. The first refers to space, which specifies the amount of space to be made available and the rights of individuals to that space and the manner in which it is used. Examples are the plot size, number of buildings per unit area, building bulk per unit area, and the number of persons per room. The second type are technological or performance standards, which define the quality of environment, the quality of construction, the type of material to be used, and the quality of services offered. Others include building by-laws, codes of construction, regulations on water, fire, waste and industrial effluent. Finally, there are threshold and range standards, defining the lower and upper limits of the size of population, area, or distance to be serviced by a particular amenity or community facility (Mabogunje, et al. 1978:48). Some examples are per capita water supply, and the amount of recreational land required to serve a certain
number of people. Whereas range standards outline the maximum area serviced by a facility, threshold standards determine the respective minima.

Governments in general have responded to housing shortages with policies of public provision of housing (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:8). But a major constraint was the high standards and accordingly the high costs. Most residents cannot afford these units without subsidies. "In some instances, prevailing standards have not been a conscious choice; they simply mirrored the inherited colonial standards and ways of thinking. In other cases, high standards were demanded as evidence of modernisation and economic progress..." (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:9).

Standards and expectations of the people are often in conflict with each other. Many people in Namibia looking for a house had certain expectations at the time of independence as a result of promises made by SWAPO. Once the MLGH started with the 530 house project in the Oshakati/Ondangwa nexus, the standards of these units were lower than what the people expected. This is reflected in the name the residents gave the Ministry's houses, namely "better houses". This is the abbreviation for better than nothing (Shomongula 1993).

Standards for design and equipment are significant factors in encouraging appropriate technology for urban water and sewerage systems (Gakenheimer & Brando 1987:133). An objective is to provide adequate water and sewerage services to more people in cities. Two ways are pointed out by the writers. One is higher investment, the other is to make better choices of equipment, better design and construction procedures in order to supply more services on a limited budget. Excessively high standards in developing countries sometimes double the cost of services. Reasons for this, the authors (Gakenheimer & Brando 1987:134) maintain, are excessively large pipes, unnecessarily high-quality material in pipe manufacturing, spacing manholes closer together than necessary, and using heavier covers than required. These examples are true for urban centres, not rural environments, where there is no need to use higher technologies (Gakenheimer & Brando 1987:135).

Moavenzadeh (1987:97) considers appropriate standards for low-cost shelter. He states that government agencies often have set unrealistically high standards for building materials and construction design, such as materials of the highest grade possible, or all houses must have indoor sanitation. These standards were all imported from developed countries or formulated by people educated in the Western tradition. The author proposes that for each type of building material, the government should require a national standard or range of strength. Instead of
demanding a 200 mm wall, other aspects could determine a smaller width. An example from Bogota shows that informal settlements had adopted standards far below government standards, but were acceptable to the residents (Moavenzadeh 1987:98).

Building standards in the Third World have been heavily criticised as being generally too expensive and wasteful. One reason is the colonial inheritance; standards which have not been changed after independence. A curious example from South Africa (The Economist in Urban Forum 1991:99): "In sub-tropical Durban the railway station's roof is designed to withstand three feet of snow". The Economist (in Urban Forum 1991) discusses the problem of inherited standards in Africa, where governments plead to protect the standards, making it difficult for low-income earners to build appropriate shelter. "Like the colonists before them, Africa's black elite seem to wish themselves in Europe, and do not want other kinds of Africans spoiling their view" (The Economist in Urban Forum 1991:101). Bye-laws and regulations are used to exclude the poor from certain areas, whenever possible. An example taken from the Weekly Mail (quoted by Saff 1991:59) refers to a squatter, pointing to the affluent residential area in Hout Bay near his shack, commenting as follows:

"The people in those houses? They pay a million Rand to live there and what do they see when they look out of their windows? Me!"

8. CONCLUSION

The study area faces problems such as increasing urbanisation and its accompanied housing shortage, unemployment or the lack of infrastructure. The rural character will not change in the foreseeable future as traditional homesteads and the way of life of the inhabitants will remain part of the formal town. The problem of unequal standards of living in urban and rural areas, will probably not be resolved by the present government, which also contributes to the widening gap of living standards between the various groups in the country.

To narrow the gap between urban and rural areas attention should be given to aspects such as the development of infrastructure, the provision of appropriate and affordable building materials, the establishment of government structures, and appropriate technologies.

In the next chapter the policies of the Namibian government with respect to urbanisation, rural development and rural housing are discussed, as well as the components which play a role in rural development efforts. Furthermore, the provision of housing in the four Northern Regions are examined.
9. ANNEXURE

9.1 Definition of local authorities

The President shall not declare any area to be (Local Authorities Act, Act No. 23, 1992, section 3):

(a) a municipality, unless -

(i) an approved township exists in such area;

(ii) its municipal council will in the opinion of the President be able -

(aa) to exercise and perform the powers, duties and functions conferred and imposed upon a municipal council in terms of the provisions of this Act;

(bb) to pay out of its own funds its debts incurred in the exercise and performance of such powers, duties and functions;

(cc) to comply with all its other liabilities and obligations so incurred;

(b) a town, unless -

(i) an approved township exists in such area or a town exists in such area which in his or her opinion complies with the requirements of an approved township;

(ii) its town council will in the opinion of the President be able -

(aa) to exercise and perform the powers, duties and functions conferred and imposed upon a town council in terms of the provisions of this Act;

(bb) to pay, whether with or without any financial or other assistance by the Government of Namibia or any regional council, out of its funds its debts incurred in the exercise and performance of such powers, duties and functions;

(cc) to comply, whether with or without any such assistance, with all its other liabilities and obligations so incurred;

(c) a village, unless -

(i) it consists of a community which in the opinion of the President is in need of the services which are required to be rendered or may be rendered in terms of the provisions of this Act by a village council;

(ii) its village council will in the opinion of the President be able to exercise and perform, whether with or without any assistance by the Government of Namibia or any regional council or other local authority council, the powers, duties and functions conferred and imposed upon a village council in terms of the provisions of this Act.
9.2 Powers, functions, rights and obligations of Local Authority Councils

According to the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23, 1992, section 30), a local authority shall have the power:

a) to supply water to the residents in its area for household, business and industrial purposes;
b) to provide, maintain, and carry on a system of sewerage and drainage for the benefit of the residents;
c) to provide, maintain and carry on services for the removal, destruction or disposal of nightsoil, rubbish, slop water, garden and stable litter, derelict vehicles, carcasses of dead animals and all other kinds of refuse or unhealthy matter;
d) to establish and maintain cemeteries;
e) to construct and maintain streets and public places;
f) to supply electricity or gas to the residents;
g) to establish carry on and maintain sand, clay, stone or gravel quarries and works for the manufacture of bricks and tiles;
h) to establish, carry on and maintain a public transport system;
i) to establish under certain conditions a housing scheme, whether by itself or in conjunction with any other person;
j) to establish, carry on and maintain markets and to construct and let market houses, auction or sale rooms, stalls, warehouses;
k) to establish, carry on and maintain: abattoirs, aerodromes, ambulance services, bands and orchestra, dipping tanks, a fire brigade, museums, pounds, nurseries;
l) to construct and maintain buildings or depots for the reception of perishable goods;
m) to establish and maintain parking garages and to designate areas for the parking of vehicles;
n) to beautify and secure the neatness of its area, including the planting, trimming or removal of trees;
o) to establish and maintain any building or structure for any community requirement;
p) to allocate bursaries, and grant loans, for educational purposes;
q) to confer honours upon any person who has rendered a meritorious service to its residents;
r) to construct, acquire and maintain railway sidings in any industrial area, and to recover the costs incurred with the construction form the owners of immovable property connected or capable of being connected to such railway siding;
s) to acquire, hire, hypothecate or let any movable property or sell movable property;
t) to buy, hire or acquire, with the prior approval of the Minister, any immovable property or any right in respect to immovable property;
u) to determine by notice in the Government Gazette, the charges, fees and other moneys payable in respect of any services rendered by the local authority council;
v) with the prior approval of the minister, to borrow money from time to time by way of loans from any source within Namibia and against the security which the local authority council may deem fit or the issue of debentures, bills of exchange;
w) to establish advisory committees;
x) to guarantee the fulfilment of the contracts and obligations of any person, and enter into surety bonds or deeds of security;
y) to open banking accounts, including savings accounts with a building society or the Post Office Savings Bank;
z) to accept donations made or receive moneys offered to it by any person within Namibia, and with prior approval of the minister, to accept donations or moneys offered to it by any person outside Namibia; to exercise any other power conferred upon or assigned to a local authority council in terms of any other law.

* * *
CHAPTER 5: RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL HOUSING

1. INTRODUCTION

Increasingly Western ideas, values and products, which can have both positive and negative influences on non-Western societies, are finding their way into the development discussion. Advances in health, for example, contributed to the "population bomb" with all the negative circumstances surrounding it. One consequence thereof is the destruction of the natural environment; another is the large scale migration from rural to urban areas. In the previous chapter it has been shown that the degradation of the natural environment has resulted in shortages of traditional building materials on the one hand, whilst on the other hand changes brought about through the impact of modernisation have led to the substitution of traditional building materials with modern building materials, inappropriate as they may be.

Governments should facilitate the development processes by providing a policy framework to achieve the goals or objectives of the government (see National Planning Commission 1993). The neglect of housing and infrastructure and other community facilities in remote regions, often resulted in deteriorating standards of living for those who live there. Policies should determine priorities, for example improving housing and services in remote regions. However, Namibia is lacking a number of essential policies, inter alia a rural housing policy. A number of infrastructural projects have been undertaken in rural areas, which could be considered to uplift the general living standards to some extent in these areas, but it could be argued that the main beneficiaries are government institutions and some affluent individuals and not the majority of the population.

Rural development and rural housing share similar objectives and components, which will be discussed in this chapter. As indicated earlier in this study (see chapter four), the phenomenon of the urban bias has left most rural areas in Namibia in a subordinate position compared to urban areas. To balance the needs for rural development and urbanisation, and to integrate the demands of both spheres in a national development framework, is crucial for future development. The policies of the Namibian government regarding housing in urban and rural areas after independence are also examined in this chapter. Furthermore, the housing conditions in northern Namibia in general, and in three selected localities (see chapter 6) in particular, provide more details with respect to the present living standards of people under different circumstances.
2. RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND URBANISATION

The development of the Third World and especially Africa, is taking place under very different circumstances when compared to that in more developed countries. Most African economies are not performing as well as was expected by many at the time of independence, inequalities in their societies are increasing instead of decreasing, and tribalism could still be considered a powerful factor in many countries (see Potholm 1979:145-146). These countries are beset by internal problems of which high population growth rates, uncontrolled urbanisation and environmental degradation in the form of erosion and deforestation are the most important (Wisner 1988:154).

Urbanisation as part of the modernisation and industrialisation process, played a significant role in the rapid changes occurring in Europe during the industrial revolution. However, in Africa, no signs of an industrial or any similar revolution are apparent. This view is supported by Mohan (1979:10) who argues that unlike Western cities, urban centres in developing countries have grown suddenly and often explosively due to the influx of large numbers of unskilled people. During the period of rapid urbanisation in Europe, annual population growth rates were around 0.5 percent, compared to figures in developing countries of between 2.5 and 3 percent (Mohan 1979:11). Namibia's annual growth rate between 1981-1991 was 3.1% (Republic of Namibia 1994c:7; see also Stals, et al. 1987). Most African countries have a growth rate of more than 2.5%; during the period of 1980-92, the population growth rate in Kenya was 3.5%, Zimbabwe 3.3%, Cameroon 2.9%, Mozambique 1.7%, and Botswana 3.1% (UNICEF 1994:72).

The phenomenon of rapid urbanisation poses a serious problem to most Third World countries, as they lack many of the preconditions and inputs which normally are available in the West, for example urban growth in developed countries started after the rural areas had reached a certain degree of economic development and prosperity, where agricultural surpluses made it possible for some people to specialise in non-agricultural activities (Reitsma & Kleinpenning 1989:174). Furthermore, urban pressures in the West were instrumental in raising living standards of the non-urban population (Dube 1988:30). In the developing countries, the modernising elite and the early beneficiaries do not spearhead the diffusion of the gains of modernisation to the entire society. The experience in less developed countries suggests the opposite trend, as the privileged urban sectors aggressively demonstrated their hostility to all equalising measures (Dube 1988:30-31). In this instance, history is not repeating itself. Although Western experience remains important, the insights from it should not be applied blindly to programmes of modernisation in the Third World.
Caution regarding transplanting or summarily adopting the developmental model of the West is therefore necessary (see Article 102 (1) of the Namibian Constitution, as well as Humes & Martin 1969:234-235, referring to the role of traditional leaders after independence). Urbanisation is a result of economic development, but developing countries ought not to follow the same pattern as the now developed world (Weitz 1983:1). The connection between economic development and growth of cities was not accidental in the Western world (Weitz 1983:3). Urban populations are dependent on regular food supplies. As long as agriculture in the Third world is based on subsistence agriculture, there are limits to growth in urban populations.

Economic growth could also be promoted if transport is available to the immediate surroundings of a town, where a small market is accessible for rural producers. Once agriculture and the supporting infrastructure have been further developed, the extension of commerce and industry could be accomplished, to clear the way for the growth of urban centres. Urbanisation processes similar to the Western experience, cannot be repeated in the Third World where different circumstances prevail. One argument advanced by Weitz (1983:3), is the high population growth rate to which reference has been made above. Despite the large numbers of people migrating to urban centres, rural population growth rates remain high. The majority of migrants reaching towns, quite often do not improve their standards of living but merely exchange rural poverty for urban subsistence living.

The ineffectiveness of spatial development strategies could be attributed to the failure by many policy makers, to recognise the interdependencies existing between urban and rural development, because urban and rural development policies should be complementary, not alternatives (Richardson 1987:209). In most countries the growing rural population cannot be absorbed in the rural areas, therefore absorption in urban areas is needed if rural per capita income levels are to rise above the existing subsistence levels. Rural development, on the other hand, could be considered crucial to the increase of food output and to improving rural household welfare.

As attention of most Third World governments concentrates on urban areas, a look at the situation in Namibia, in particular the position of the government's policy towards housing, shows a clear urban bias. To make this point more tangible, the demand and supply positions have to be considered.

1 Fertility rates in 1991 for Namibia were 4.7 for urban areas and 6.8 in rural areas (Republic of Namibia 1994c:69).
With respect to the four regions in northern Namibia, the Omusati region, in which Onambome is situated, no urban areas exist, only two villages are found and 35 small settlements (see Republic of Namibia 1991b:72). In the neighbouring Oshana region, the two main centres of Ovambo are located, namely Oshakati and Ondangwa, besides Ongwediva which is also targeted as a municipality, in addition to eight small settlements (Republic of Namibia 1991b:72). The third region in the study area, south of Ondangwa, called Oshikoto, incorporates the established municipality of Tsumeb and the settlement of Oniipa near Ondangwa, plus 14 small settlements (Republic of Namibia 1991b:88). This division shows that the new regions in the Ovambo-speaking territory are not viable and have to rely on outside sources and assistance to fulfil their functions and duties. In the case of township developments and housing, it is doubtful whether the new local and regional authorities can make any substantial contributions towards solving the problems without outside assistance.

3. HOUSING DEMAND AND SUPPLY IN NAMIBIA

Before housing demand is considered, an explanation of housing and shelter is appropriate. Housing refers to accommodation and certain services related to this accommodation, for example infrastructural services. It also refers to the type of accommodation such as a flat, shack, or detached dwelling. Shelter can be any unit which gives protection to its inhabitants from weather conditions, ensures privacy, storage of personal belongings, and provides accommodation too. The unit can be a traditional hut or a luxurious house. Housing and shelter are therefore used synonymously in this study.

Another aspect relevant to the study area, is of a semantic nature. In the indigenous languages in the study area, there is an important difference between a house and a home. The first refers to any building which offers protection and accommodation. A home on the other hand is the place of origin, usually the homestead or village, and which is the place where a person will be buried. A house or a homestead can be a home to a "modern" family, but for those adhering to traditional customs, houses, shacks and other structures in urban areas are not regarded as a home if one still has a home somewhere else.

The market share of the different income groups differs. High income housing has the smallest share, whereas the largest market for housing consists of that of low income groups, who have a low affordability. Therefore the major demand is coming from those groups with low incomes, which puts conventional housing out of their reach. Housing demand is sometimes referred to as backlog or shortage. These
concepts are difficult to apply, if the demand includes informal and traditional houses in rural areas, as quantitative information is usually insufficient. Laquian's quotation (in de Beer 1991:64) questions the claim whether there is really a shortage, when it comes to housing, when people have a place to go at night, irrespective the type of shelter available (see chapter 3, section 2). Shelter is provided in the form of a shack or a hut for a large percentage of people. These people have housed themselves with what means are available, thus accepting the type of shelter they have created and which is suitable for the environment in which they live. If certain types of shelter are regarded as inferior by society or by affluent groups within a society, or in urban areas by the local authority, the solution would be to improve these units to an acceptable standard. Furthermore, employment opportunities and services needed by communities to achieve a higher standard of living, should be considered as part of the solution.

With regard to rural development, the policy of the Department of Rural Development in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water & Rural Development places the emphasis on the provision of infrastructure with the supportive services being referred to the other line ministries involved (interview with Kahuure 1992). A preliminary policy document, highlighting strategies for each region, was drafted in 1992 by the Ministry (MAWRD), but was not accepted at management level in the Ministry. In August 1994 the fifth draft, combining policies for agriculture and rural development, were still discussed by the relevant Ministries (interview with Kahuure 1994). It was planned to distribute the final draft of the policy to all interested parties for comment in November 1994, in order to put it before parliament in February 1995. However, this was not accomplished and it is uncertain when the policy document will be completed (personal communication with Mr Kahuure 22/08/95). Another official of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (MAWRD) pointed out that the policy which is being drafted at present is primarily an agricultural policy. Occasionally reference is made to rural development, but this policy is not a rural development policy (Telephonic communication 23/08/95). Therefore no policy regarding rural development will be available for some time to come. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development formulated The National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy of the Government of Namibia in 1993. The policy's goals are (MAWRD 1993:5):

- To provide water and sanitation services to all Namibians, and should be accessible at a cost which is affordable to the country as a whole.
- This improvement of services should be achieved by combining efforts of the government and the beneficiaries.
- Communities should determine which solutions and service levels are acceptable to them. Beneficiaries should contribute towards the costs of the services at increasing rates for standards of living exceeding the levels required for providing basic needs.
• An environmentally sustainable development and utilisation of water resources of the country should be pursued.

This policy document differentiates between urban and rural water supply needs, and accepts that the sustainability of the sector depends on its ability to become self-sufficient by covering both operational and maintenance costs (MAWRD 1993:7). The policy provided a framework for the establishment of the Directorate of Rural Water Supply in 1994 within the MAWRD, as part of the Department of Water Affairs. The Directorate of Rural Water Supply is aiming to give special attention to important aspects in rural areas such as community participation, training, which could include technological matters such as the maintenance of pumps. Some of the infrastructural developments in the four Northern regions have been provided in the fields of telecommunication, water supply, electricity, and transport (see chapter 4, section 6).

Housing shortages can be estimated in two ways (Touzel quoted in SAIRR 1995:507), either as the number of households less the number of acceptable houses, or as the number of informal housing units, which are an indication of the need for acceptable housing. It is however difficult to determine what 'acceptable' means. The CSIR interprets 'acceptable' as formal housing (SAIRR 1995:507). By using this method, the backlog in the urban centres of the study area is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Backlog 1991</th>
<th>Backlog 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ondangwa</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>2176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongwediva</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshakati</td>
<td>1425</td>
<td>8590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2089</strong></td>
<td><strong>13257</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the CSIR's definition, the backlog for the Ovambo-speaking regions in 1991 would have been 93605 units if traditional housing had been regarded as not acceptable. The backlog would be only 2687 units, if traditional housing had been considered as acceptable. Then the demand for housing would be much smaller in rural areas, whereas the table indicates a huge increase in the urban areas. These areas are the major problem in the provision process of housing, as conventional housing is too expensive and the traditional materials are not easily available.

To illustrate the conventional housing stock in various parts of Namibia the following graph shows the distribution:
Graph 5.1 Namibia’s housing stock in 15 largest urban areas

The graph shows the dominant position of Windhoek compared to the other towns in the country as a primate city. Excluded are the informal housing stock.

Various institutions in Namibia are involved in the provision of housing-related aspects. They include parastatals such as SWAWEK for electricity, or the NHE (see also chapter 4, section 5.3), private developers and the public sector, for example the MRLGH, or the Department of Water Affairs, which provide accommodation for some of their employees. Before independence², the semi-state sector was to a large extent excluded from providing housing in rural areas, due to the conditions laid down in the legal framework. After independence, a ministry was established to deal inter alia with housing, opening up new avenues which could be explored for the provision of housing in all regions of the country and the formulation of a housing policy. This is necessary to narrow the gap between the existing housing stock and the increase in demand as shown below:

Graph 5.2 Projected housing demand in Namibia’s urban areas

² This refers to the NBIC from about 1982 to 1991
Based on the graph above, the following projections were made by the NBIC in 1992 for Namibia's urban areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>87480</td>
<td>93529</td>
<td>96854</td>
<td>104786</td>
<td>111073</td>
<td>117737</td>
<td>124801</td>
<td>132289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing stock</td>
<td>37430</td>
<td>39155</td>
<td>41275</td>
<td>43395</td>
<td>45515</td>
<td>47635</td>
<td>49755</td>
<td>51875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backlog</td>
<td>50550</td>
<td>54104</td>
<td>57579</td>
<td>61391</td>
<td>65558</td>
<td>70102</td>
<td>75046</td>
<td>80414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average costs/m²</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>1087</td>
<td>1263</td>
<td>1467</td>
<td>1703</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the budget speech (MLGH 1991b) for the financial year 1991/92, the Minister estimated the urban housing backlog to be between 40-45000 units. For the 1992/93 financial year the backlog was estimated to be 90000, of which just over half is in established urban areas (MLGH 1991b:40). Table 5.2 shows a backlog for 1992/93 of about 50000 units.

**Demand** in the above case refers to the concept of housing people in a modern or Western styled unit, i.e. a conventional house in urban areas. No data is available with respect to rural housing demand. To meet this basic need (see chapter 3 section 5) three aspects have to be taken into account (Streeten, et al. 1981:110): namely supply, demand, and institutions. What is required is adequate provision of affordable housing units, adequate purchasing power by the poor, and an institutional arrangement facilitating access and delivery in the market and non-market sector. The writers furthermore differentiate between three forms of demand. **Primary demand** created by increasing the earning power of the poor through employment or ownership of assets; **secondary demand** is created by channelling public services to the poor to increase productivity and earning power; and **tertiary demand** created by transfer payments to the poor in cash or in kind.

Supply is also related to affordability, i.e. how much a household is able to pay for a house. A square meter price of R636 for 1993 (see table 5.2), means that only medium income groups can afford a conventional house. A research project on the total national housing need in Namibia, projected the present housing requirements around 218118 units throughout the country. Nearly all local authorities were contacted and institutions involved in housing provided information, which exceeds the Minister's estimate. About 360000 units would have to be built between 1993 and 1998 just to cope with the demand as pointed out by the MLGH. But the figures for houses constructed since independence show that the average number of 72000 units needed per year is unachievable. As one of the major

---

3 According to the director of a South African building company (telephone communication 04/07/94)
developers in the low income market, the NBIC/NHE has constructed the following number of houses:

Table 5.3 Houses completed by NBIC/NHE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990/91</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991/92</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992/93</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/94</td>
<td>773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/95</td>
<td>1121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As in other African countries, planning targets since independence have tended towards overoptimism (Davies 1990:478). Western style houses are too expensive for the majority of people, and problems are experienced in obtaining some local materials, such as wood and grass/thatch. Therefore alternative materials and construction methods are needed to supply enough shelter to the needy (see section 6.4). According to officials at the Central Statistics Office (personal communication, June 1994), no statistics regarding the housing backlog in Namibia are available.

Conventional houses are fast becoming too expensive, as salaries and wages are not increasing at the same rate as the average increase in construction costs which is at present 16.15% per annum. The following graph illustrates the rise in construction costs in the case of NBIC/NHE projects for the conventional type of house for mainly low-income households:

Graph 5.3 Construction costs
The 1991 census identified the number of households living in various types of houses. This was the first time that a comprehensive profile of housing conditions was compiled in Namibia. The following housing stock existed in 1991:

Table 5.4 Types of houses in Namibia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conventional</th>
<th>Single quarters</th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Mobiles homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>62400</td>
<td>10928</td>
<td>7250</td>
<td>2818</td>
<td>1138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>28052</td>
<td>3887</td>
<td>10885</td>
<td>125452</td>
<td>1561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communal</td>
<td>25395</td>
<td>2397</td>
<td>9326</td>
<td>126747</td>
<td>1023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-communal</td>
<td>65057</td>
<td>12547</td>
<td>8809</td>
<td>1523</td>
<td>1676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the top twelve housing development priorities identified by the Ministry (MLGH 1991a:4) are: squatter upgrading in Oshakati and environs; site and service schemes in Windhoek; site and service schemes in Oshakati and environs; blighted area upgrading in Windhoek; houses for under R40000 in Oshakati and environs. To meet the demand in the northern regions, the Minister of Local Government and Housing said during the 1991/92 budget debate, that 70 per cent of the budget allocation will be committed for housing in Ovambo⁴ (The Times of Namibia June 17, 1991:3). Nevertheless the budget allocation will have a marginal impact on the existing housing backlog. The MLGH/MRLGH’s budget allocations during the last four years are as follows:

Table 5.5 MRLGH’s budget allocations for housing (in millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loans</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>24.12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHE shares</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>8.12</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>32.25</td>
<td>27.52</td>
<td>18.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To meet Namibia’s urban housing demand, the ministry aims at providing over 100000 houses by the year 2000 (MLGH 1991a:2). In 1991/92 six million Rand was allocated for new houses in Windhoek by the NHE; at R30000 a piece, 200 units can be erected. The Ministry can build 1200 minimum cost units for R20000 each, bringing the total to 1500. This falls short of the target of 3400 units in 1991 (The Times of Namibia June 12, 1991:5). By the year 2000, the MRLGH plans to build 8200 units a year. This figure does not include provision of housing for the estimated 100 000 squatters in Namibia, which could require 27 000 units (The

---

⁴ this was before the First Delimitation Commission’s report was available
The NHE’s budget allocations for housing since 1992 are as follows:

Table 5.6 NHE’s budget allocations for housing (in millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992/93</th>
<th>1993/94</th>
<th>1994/95</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conventional</td>
<td>12.475</td>
<td>57.929</td>
<td>61.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-help</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.516</td>
<td>1.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erf servicing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.573</td>
<td>3.541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>12.475</td>
<td>65.018</td>
<td>65.987</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1988, the total amount invested in housing in Namibia was approximately 4.7% of the GNP, which compares favourably with the United Nations and World Bank standards of a minimum of 5% of the GNP, but the figure does not show the neglect of the low-income requirements (MLGH 1990:4). Only 7% of the total investment by the former administration was available to the low-income sections.

The Ministry of Local Government and Housing has in the first months of 1991 employed private consultants for housing projects in the study area. Tenders were invited to build 40 houses in Ondangwa, 450 units in Ongwediva, and 40 in Oshakati in 1991. This was part of the aim of the Ministry to facilitate the production of over 100 000 units by the year 2000 (MLGH 1991b:2). The Ministry’s goal is to facilitate inputs from other agencies, public corporations, the private sector and communities. However, the president of the Master Builders and Allied Trades Association, pointed out (The Times of Namibia June 12, 1991:8) that:

"The government is faced with a major problem because it promised affordable housing to all and it cannot afford it. Neither can the vast majority of the people demanding formal housing".

Housing policies evolving in any country, are never fixed or complete, but must be responsive to the political dimensions present in every country (Van Huyck 1987:346). Due to the differences in the characteristics of each country, it could be argued that there could be no one model shelter policy that will be appropriate to all countries and for all time. Van Huyck advocates a policy based on an understanding of the existing situation prevailing in a country and previous shelter sector experience, thus an assessment of shelter needs should be undertaken to identify the level of demand and the magnitude of the task in hand. The role of housing within overall national development priorities should be developed realistically, because only through an understanding of a country’s macro-resource allocation situation, can appropriate goals be set. Factors to be examined in this respect are economic development, including industrial and agricultural development, and the rate of urbanisation.
4. THE NAMIBIAN POLICY ON HOUSING

4.1 Government policies since independence

Van Huyck (1987:339) strongly supports a written national housing policy, approved by the highest level of government. However only very few countries have done so. The author (Van Huyck 1987:339) enumerates the value of a national shelter policy:

1. It provides a common data base and projections for the private and the public sector;
2. It establishes a unity of purpose and a basis for decision-making in all sectors and can act as agent for co-ordination;
3. Shelter is placed in the national development priorities. "Shelter has often been left as a "residue" to other sectors" (Van Huyck 1987:340);
4. The roles of the private and public sector are defined, to form an effective public-private partnership;
5. The policy defines the shelter delivery system to serve the needs of all income groups throughout the settlement system, and seeks to do away with bottlenecks and constraints within the delivery system.

The National Housing Policy as published by the Ministry (MLGH 1990:27) states the following goals regarding rural housing:

1. To improve living conditions in non-urban settlements. Squatter settlements near the administrative centres in communal areas, could be regarded as urban in character, thus will be dealt with in terms of the urban housing policy.
2. A study will be commissioned to determine the extent and the need for rural housing. In the interim, public investments will concentrate on the provision of basic services and technical guidance to those who construct their own homes. Housing programmes will be initiated and directed through the Regional Authorities.
3. The third goal also deals with commercial farmers, but is not applicable to the present study.

The National Housing Policy (MLGH 1990:32) further states under the heading "Housing Administration and Controls", that with respect to rural housing, the individual householder has the primary responsibility to plan and build a house. The secondary responsibility is allocated to regional authorities, which include the Regional Councils, the Housing Directorate of the MLGH, the NHE, and any appropriate agency such as NGOs involved in this field. At present the authorities responsible for rural housing are the Regional Councils. The powers, duties, and functions of the Regional Councils with respect to housing and related matters are determined by the Regional Councils Act (Act No. 22 of 1992, section 28)\(^5\).

---

\(^5\) the planning of development of a region with respect to the distribution, increase and movement and the urbanization of the population in the region; natural and other resources, the economic development potential; existing and planned infrastructure; land utilization patterns; sensitivity of the natural
The National Housing Policy (MLGH 1990:27) also envisaged, that, *inter alia*, a study will be commissioned to determine the extent and nature of the need for rural housing. However, not one of the proposed studies has been commissioned. The document's proposals with respect to the envisaged studies on various housing matters, were not carried out. Those proposals were merely "wishful thinking" (interview with Gowaseb 1994), as they did not keep the realities with respect to priorities and available resources in mind.

The Director of Housing stated during a meeting (interview with Gowaseb 21 May 1992) that his ministry plans to formulate a rural housing strategy. But two years later, no policy on rural housing exists (interview with Gowaseb 1994). The issue of rural housing, especially in communal areas, has been assigned to be a function of the Regional Councils. In particular the identification of existing settlement areas, in accordance with the Regional Council Act, Act No. 22 of 1992, is regarded as part of the rural housing issue. Due to the fact that the Regional Councils are still in the process of recruiting staff (August 1994), it is possible that no rural housing policy will be forthcoming in the near future. Each region has to decide on this matter on its own. As a consequence, different approaches with respect to rural housing in Namibia could be expected as the only possibility in the foreseeable future. However, due to the limitations the Regional Councils are faced with, the main activities relating to housing could be expected in the identification of potential settlement areas as outlined in the Regional Council Act (Act No. 22, 1992). The MRLGH will have to finance any developments in the new settlements as the revenue basis of the Regional Councils will make it unlikely that they will be able to become involved in the provision of infrastructure and housing. One reason given by the Director of Housing (interview with Gowaseb 1994), is that the regional councils are still in the process of recruiting staff, therefore no projects have been planned or carried out thus far. In other words, the implementation of this part of the Act is lacking as a result of the councils' lack of capacity. Another reason is that the MRLGH pays for the functions of the regional councils, but the councils have no control over implementing activities in the end (interview with Shivute 1993).

The Housing Needs Report (MLGH 1991a:5) identifies "main dimensions at which housing agencies can target their resources", including rural housing. The report acknowledges that most rural houses are cheap to construct although they require extensive maintenance. Up to 90% of the houses have no sanitary facilities and environment; to assist local authorities in the exercise of their functions and duties; and to acquire or dispose of immovable property. This was confirmed by the Director of Housing (Gowaseb 1994) in an interview.
access to clean water. This is an indication of the importance the Ministry attaches to infrastructural projects. The paragraph on rural housing is concluded by stating that "An urgent study needs to be commissioned to assess the real needs".

A document, *Guidelines for the National Shelter Strategy* (no date, circa 1994)*, provides a framework for the future development of housing. The paper describes the programme as being national, thus it includes rural, urban areas, and commercial farms. The strategy for each area may differ, but it should be consistent with the overall national policy. All groups should be involved, such as welfare cases, for example handicapped people, pensioners, and also the low, middle and high income groups. The sources of finance will differ for each group, so will be the support the state can expect from each group.

Among the characteristics of the above strategy are a high profile with full political commitment; mass mobilisation of people's efforts to house themselves; integration with other components of human development, such as health care, skills training, and income generation. The process of the provision of housing should place people at the centre of the decision-making and action.

The National Shelter Strategy divides the role of the state into four sections: Recognition, support, devolution, and reorientation. In the first case the state recognises the right of the people to a plot of land and services; recognises and acknowledges the capacities and resources of the people; recognises and respects conventional wisdom and the ingenuity of the people; and recognises what CBOs, building societies and the private sector have been doing. Secondly, the state's support should begin at the point where the people cannot do it themselves. Therefore the state should not take over what people have been doing for generations, in a better and cheaper manner, i.e. building homes. The state's support is required regarding legal matters, the provision of basic services, community facilities, training, information and advice. A process has to be created to empower people at all levels. Thirdly, devolution involves families and communities deciding on matters that affect them. For example, decisions taken by the people regarding their own housing, may not be perfect, but they are more satisfactory than decisions taken by government institutions or officials not residing in the area. Program implementation functions have to be devolved to local authorities, which would have to be provided with guidelines and training. Finally, the authorities should reorientate the approach from top-down

---

7 No further information could be obtained from the MRLGH regarding the status of this document.
intervention to supporting people's action. The paper states that the reorientation of the bureaucracy and their technocracy should change these instances from providers of answers to people's problems to respecting people's solutions and supporting them.

The guidelines further discuss the role of the people, which should be fourfold:
1. organise community groups for collective decision-making and development, and mobilise their own resources through savings and credit associations; 2. decide on the planning, construction and financing of their housing; 3. initiate development and seek support from the authorities, initiatives should be generated through discussion and dialogue with the community; and 4. accountability of people and people's organisations to their own members and to the authorities. These people's organisations should work with a high degree of openness in decision-making and transactions. The paper concludes that the details of the strategy should be worked out through the process of implementation and generated by the people themselves.

The above-mentioned guidelines seem to confirm the role for traditional and informal provision of housing. Furthermore, it supports alternatives which would make housing more affordable in urban areas, whereas the rural areas could benefit from support for the environment which supplies local building materials. This could be considered as a move towards defining matters relating to rural housing.

A responsible low-income housing policy in rural areas has to be supplemented by appropriate rural development programmes to increase the resource base with respect to employment and training opportunities (MLGH 1990:10). To reduce rural-urban migration it is most important to organise economic activities around the need of creating job opportunities in the rural areas of Namibia, commensurate with the provision of education (United Nations 1978:33). This should then be followed by improving environmental conditions and living standards. Therefore steps to create certain aspects of the urban conditions in rural surroundings are needed.

McNamara (1990) supports a de-politicisation of the housing process. He argues that the government should only play a facilitating role in the provision of low-income housing. This includes objectives and policies that will guide the structures, such as developers, building societies, and self-help organisations, which control and implement low-income projects. "The Government must then sit back and allow the structures to function without interference or influence" (McNamara 1990). The latter is however not possible. To de-politicise housing
provision would require non-involvement of government in housing and infrastructural projects and the formulation of a national housing policy. This document gives guidelines to developers and also foreign investors or donors, who want to play a part in the housing process, especially if it is concerned with low-income groups. The government's political role includes the formulation of a housing policy. Furthermore, a government is usually interested in obtaining the maximum support from the electorate, thus housing can be used as a visible example of the government's concern in providing shelter, infrastructure and employment. This again makes the provision of housing a political issue. Furthermore, the expectations of a part of the population in Namibia before independence were high and still are. Housing can become politicised again, once the electorate becomes aware that the government cannot deliver its promises regarding housing.

The private and public sectors in many Third World countries have failed to provide housing in adequate numbers and at prices the poor can afford (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:18). The authors therefore assert (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:19) that the general thrust of a redirected housing policy focusing on the poor, must also address the housing demand of the lower income families. A viable housing policy requires political support. But a policy with a focus on the poor only could not count on sufficient political support. In the past, middle-income groups were the main beneficiaries of public housing programmes in Namibia. This group would exert pressure on the government to provide an alternative, if construction for the provision of housing for this segment of the market was curtailed.

Housing policies in the past suffered from a number of deficiencies (Van Huyck 1987:341), which, it could be argued, apply to present day Namibia too:

1. they usually failed to recognise the financial resource limitations of the public sector to execute the policy;
2. limitations of the administrative and management resources of government to implement the policy were not taken into account;
3. policies usually lack a realistic and comprehensive implementation strategy;
4. the private sector’s role was frequently not defined, and remained without a strategy to induce the private sector to meet its responsibilities;
5. policies were negative or ignored the potential of informal sector contributions.

Reforms are needed to rectify the situation. Under the heading "Working for the people", Newsweek reports about the policies initiated in a poor Brazilian state. The state governor (quoted in Newsweek June 15, 1992:37) declares, that the trick needed to modernise an archaic government, is to convince the masses that they have a stake in reforms. "Whatever you save has to go straight to the poor," he says. "You have to spend it building houses, building water systems". In this example an impoverished economy is revived by a reforming government. An
inhabitant talks approvingly about this state government, and concludes (Newsweek June 15, 1992:37): "but we could also use a federal government [i.e. central government] that does something".

An effective approach to housing and settlement policies should take the limitations and possibilities of top-down directives and bottom-up impulses into account (Rodwin & Sanyal 1987:11). Solutions are not possible through centralised mechanisms with larger pyramidal structures, nor can they come only through local planning, as the preferences of the locally powerful interests cannot guarantee efficient and equitable use of scarce resources. The authors argue that central authorities can improve settlement and shelter systems through local assistance and the initiation of structural changes and redistribution policies.

To understand the reasons why migrants move from rural to urban areas, the United Nations (1978:33) identified three possible objectives of migrants: a. to earn an adequate living wage; b. the availability of socio-cultural facilities such as housing; and c. the attraction of the modern urban environment, symbolising dynamism that is more attractive compared to the rural environment.

This led t'Gilde and de Jonge (1987:37) to conclude in a case study of Kenya8, that rural development in general, and the general improvement of agricultural output in particular, can in the long-term contribute more to improvements of rural housing conditions, than direct investments of authorities in rural housing. However, the differences in rural housing make it necessary that a development policy of which housing forms one part, should be so tailored that it takes the local situation into account. In respect of rural housing, the authors suggest therefore that the authorities could follow the following approach: On the one hand, improving the building or structure of housing itself, which should be the outcome of improvements of incomes from agriculture. On the other hand, such improvements of housing in a spatial sense should aim at supplying health facilities, education and infrastructure such as roads or water, using as an instrument local projects in co-operation with the local population.

The development of a rural housing system could therefore be seen as an opportunity to readjust highly unequal income distribution through government assistance to housing, sanitary services, and community facilities (United Nations 1978:61-62). Furthermore, labour-intensive processes of the provision of housing have a considerable potential for job creation, and can be significant areas for

8 The case study dealt with living conditions, including housing, in Kenya’s rural areas.
income and employment, the upgrading of skills to accommodate those people with jobs near their homes, and could reduce the flow of rural migrants to cities (United Nations 1978:8), as was argued above. However, many problems are still encountered with the housing question in Third World countries, including Namibia.

Namibia formulated a housing policy shortly after independence including aspects pointed out by van Huyck. However, as this study points out, this policy is outdated and urgently needs a revision due to the changes in the economic and political realities since 1990. A revised policy could provide guidelines as to who is responsible for the provision of rural housing. This would also underline the commitment and support given by the government towards housing in general and rural housing in particular.

4.2 Political commitment and national policy support

In the case of Namibia, the government and the MRLGH in particular, have not yet provided a policy for rural housing. The National Housing Policy is primarily an urban housing policy, as it pays scant attention to rural areas. As the National Housing Policy was formulated in 1990, parts of the document have already been overtaken by events (interview with Gowaseb 1994). Amendments, according to Gowaseb, will be considered as soon as the new Housing Bill has been discussed.

The UNIN study (1986:615-616) proposed inter alia, that rural development policies should aim at improving the standard of living of the rural masses; creating self-reliant and progressive areas; redressing the imbalance between urban and rural sectors through equitable allocation of investment funds; and the provision of basic infrastructure for economic development and the maintenance of social stability in rural areas. However, the willingness of the present government to support the development of the various sectors by speedily introducing policy documents seems to be questionable. In the run-up to the 1994 presidential and parliamentary elections, SWAPO stated that the first four years after independence were devoted to planning and that in the coming years the planned programmes will be implemented (NBC TV 31/08/94).

As the urban centres with their expanding bureaucracy and population receive most of the attention, rural areas are left behind, except for the new local governments. The UNIN study (1986:438) also suggested in its two paragraphs on rural housing, that its provision "would be an essential component of rural development strategies". This would entail the provision of water, electricity, sanitation, roads, community facilities, and shops. The need for the improvement
of rural housing conditions has been acknowledged, but this has not been accorded a priority after independence by the government.

In the beginning of 1995, the MRLGH started a programme to map possible settlements areas throughout the country. This indicates a commitment towards creating new centres in rural areas. These settlements could be regarded as potential growth points. The Regional Council Act (section 31) states that a regional council has to publish the name and the boundaries of a proposed settlement area in the Government Gazette. This can only be done once the mapping and townplanning exercise for the large number of future settlements areas is concluded.

Another issue is the creation of the new regional capitals. In the case of the study area, the Omusati and the Ohangwena regions do not have any settlements which could be described as urban. The MRLGH decided on development plans for the two places designated regional capitals, i.e. Uutapi and Eenhana. In both cases, 100 erven are to be serviced (MRLGH 1993a). In the 1994/95 financial year, funds were allocated for townplanning, aerial photography and surveying (MRLGH 1994). As urban areas are supposed to provide certain taxes to the Regional Councils, this source of income is not in existence in these regions until the capital is formally proclaimed and a local authority installed and operational. But one urban area cannot pay for all services which a regional council should provide, thus subsidies from the central government will be required.

An endorsement to rural housing is contained in the National Forestry Policy of Namibia formulated by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, which was approved by cabinet in March 1992. This document acknowledges that forests provide fuel wood, building materials for homesteads and cattle kraals, sawn timber and fencing poles (Ministry of Environment and Tourism 1992:2). The policy therefore states (Ministry of Environment and Tourism 1992:5) that the country must be made self sufficient in fuelwood, poles, construction wood and timber.

4.3 Administrative support

The capacity of the local as well as regional authorities is not yet developed, thus an important component in rural development is lacking (see chapter 5, section 4). Local and regional authorities will have limited autonomy in own affairs as long as they are dependent on the central government, which effectively controls the administration of the various authorities. Decision-making possibilities on local and regional level are therefore limited. This also makes it unlikely that support will be given to the development of alternative housing
methods and the development of local building materials production in rural as well as urban areas.

The MRLGH is prepared to give administrative support to all authorities until such time they are capable of administering their own affairs. Support is provided in personnel matters, such as personnel seconded to an authority or the paying of salaries of officials. Finance is provided for the running of the authority and for capital projects. The proclamation process is also executed by the MRLGH, which includes townplanning requirements.

The question of whether traditional building methods and materials can be used in an urban environment is usually repudiated as not being appropriate. This may be true for the size of a traditional homestead as it is found in the study area, which often does not fit on an urban erf, but traditional construction methods can be used for the provision of urban shelter.

An example of what an administration can achieve is the establishment of a self-help project in Grahamstown in 1991 by the Eastern Cape Administration, where the construction method was based on the traditional Xhosa wattle-and-daub technology (NBIR 1983, Agrément Board 1991). This system became known as the Zenzele system. An important aspect was that no subsidies were paid, participation of the community was obtained, local materials and labour were used, and the houses were affordable to low-income families. Therefore this project placed no burden on the finances of the administration.

4.4 Budgetary resources

Involvement in the national economy by the government through budgetary allocations, is often regarded as necessary to stimulate specific economic sectors. Already before independence the building industry in Namibia was lacking new inputs, especially large scale projects. In the 1991/92 budget a large percentage was included for capital projects. Don Russel of SWABOU stated in an interview on NBC television, that this budget represents 55% of Namibia's GDP, which is a very high percentage compared to other countries in the region. He argued that this situation is more characteristic of a socialist economy than a capitalist one. Therefore resources should be developed to provide for future needs. This is not necessarily the case in Namibia. Russel pointed out that the bureaucracy and the top leadership of government channelled a large percentage of funds into unproductive, non-developmental sectors, such as the growing bureaucracy, which leaves a relatively small percentage of the budget for development and the improvement of living standards, especially in rural areas.
With respect to local and regional authorities, budgetary allocations in the budget of the central government are inevitable, as long as the newly formed regional and local authorities do not have their own revenue base, which could be used for the financing of the services the authority is supposed to render. As a result of the delimitation of the regions, the resource and revenue base of the regions in northern Namibia is non-existent or very limited (see chapter 3, section 2). Furthermore, the huge bureaucracy which was created as a result of the delimitation, makes it even more difficult to secure funds locally. This leads to an even larger dependency on central government budget allocations, diminishing the prospects of developing housing on a local level, except for the large scale infrastructural projects which are financed by the relevant Ministry.

5. COMPONENTS OF RURAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The objectives of rural development provide guidelines for the discussion of components of rural housing, as most of these objectives could be applied to rural housing development. The components relating to the rural housing system are therefore discussed in this section.

5.1 Local governments and local governmental capacity

Before Namibia gained its independence, some rank and file SWAPO members had expressed the wish for a new system of "people's" municipalities. This is the outcome of the official apartheid policies in the past, which excluded the majority of the population from participating directly in local affairs. UNIN (1986:809) similarly stated that local authorities should be responsive to the needs of the masses. Gorvine (1965:226) is of the opinion that local government consists of those institutions of government which are closest to the people, whether the area is urban or rural. The Namibian government changed the local authority structures, after the proclamation of the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23, 1992) and Regional Council Act (Act No. 22, 1992). A Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing has been established in Namibia as part of the Central Government in Windhoek, thus combining the responsibilities of decentralised authorities and housing.

The semi-urban centres in Ovamboland had been characterised by the absence of an overall responsible authority regarding matters concerned with urban life until the promulgation of the Local Authorities Act in 1992. Shortly after independence, inhabitants in the three largest towns in Ovamboland, stopped payments to the state for water, electricity, and rents. The loss of income to the state has been estimated to be between R6 and R10 million. The Minister of Local Government and
Housing is quoted as saying, that "Die mense het 'n wanbegrip van onafhanklikheid en dink omdat Swapo aan die bewind gekom het, hoef hulle niks meer te betaal nie" (Die Republikein January 9, 1991:1).

The new dispensation in Namibia has not yet brought a fully functioning decentralised system of government to the fore. The dominance of the central government in local and regional affairs will prevail in the future as the new authorities are too weak and under-resourced to function properly. This stretches the available resources, such as manpower and finances, of the MRLGH to its limit, which is not conducive to development. It is therefore unlikely that the Namibian government will be in a position to solve these problems within the immediate future. Local government at the local and regional levels does not possess all the implementing and decision-making powers, own financial resources, manpower, and knowledge to run local affairs effectively without dependency on the central level. The MRLGH will help new local authorities as long as is necessary due to their lack of resources and skilled manpower (interview with van Rooyen 1994). At present the local and regional authorities in the study area do not have an independent source of revenue, which makes them completely dependent on the central government and does not promote the development of local capacity. The lack of autonomy is also obstructing investment and development efforts. Nsarko and Chikulo (quoted by Mukwena 1994:60) observed: "the fundamental problem in local government finance is how to provide the money necessary to meet the cost of the services carried out without imposing an intolerable burden upon rate payers and without local authorities becoming unduly dependent upon government".

In the pre-independence period, the South African government was not willing to proclaim growing settlements as formal urban centres, despite the fact that administration officials in Ovambo tried to advance the creation of formal centres, according to officials in the MRLGH. This resulted in a huge backlog in the legal process of establishing urban areas and their authorities after independence. For example a report (NBIC 1982b:63) claimed that in 1978 11 townships were proclaimed. However, an investigation in 1993 showed that this policy was never implemented as a result of the refusal by the South African government in Pretoria (conversation with officials involved in this process). Due to the present high cost of surveying all the urban centres and the lack of qualified land surveyors, development in many municipal areas will be hampered until formal proclamation has been achieved. Many private investors cannot invest or are not willing to invest in areas where they may not hold title deeds to the land used for establishing a business. Private developers cannot always invest, on
a PTO basis, as this does not provide an adequate legal foundation to work on, especially if bank loans are requested.

The issue of legitimate local leaders in local government has to be assessed in the light of the new political conditions. Town Clerks in the study area are politically appointed officials, paid by the MRLGH. Traditional leaders are influential to a certain extent in the designated urban areas, but are still relatively strong in the rural areas. According to Mbaeva (interview 1992) the Namibian constitution states that communal land is the property of the state, therefore traditional leaders have no say over land. During 1992, the Commission of Inquiry into matters relating to Chiefs, Headmen, and other traditional or tribal leaders and authorities was appointed, in accordance with Article 102 (1) of the Namibian Constitution. The Commission completed its report in 1992, according to the Minister (MLGH 1992). In the middle of 1995 no new legislation was as yet promulgated which defines the status, functions and powers of traditional leaders. Von Muralt advised (quoted by Mathur 1982:350): "One of the most important policy questions in the introduction of social change and development at the local level is the problem of how traditional values and institutions can be harnessed for the purpose of development".

Another leadership problem which emerged in Oshakati was caused by a Danish NGO (IBIS) which started an upgrading programme in the informal areas. Among the goals of the project were community participation and institutional strengthening (IBIS 1994:i). However, the Community Development Committees which were formed in the different informal areas, apparently became too independent from the local town council, which effectively lost control over the management of local affairs in those areas as a result of the support given by IBIS (according to NGO employees in Oshakati July 1994). In the middle of 1994, the problem of managing the informal areas had to be sorted out between the Oshakati Town Council and IBIS. Agreement was reached that adjustments in the management and the organisational setting of the project will have to be made (IBIS 1994:annexes).

5.2 Local industries

The semi-urban centres in Ovamboland came into being without a viable industrial base. The development of towns and cities is not dependent upon the previous establishment of industries (Breese 1969:234). Once local authorities have been created, urban centres can play a role as administrative and commercial centres. The first economic units in Oshakati in 1968 (Hangula 1993:21) were established through the Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC), which was involved in the formation of ENOK/FNDC in 1978 (UNIN 1986:456). The BIC built a garage, a
furniture factory, a workshop and a business complex to accommodate private general dealers as well as a butchery and bottle store, owned by the Corporation (Hangula 1993:21). During 1969 other commercial units were taken over in Ondangwa, Ombalantu, Endola and Omafo. Most of the businesses established were set up during 1968-1971, before the bush war started. Other enterprises established were the abattoir and a meat processing plant in Oshakati, as well as a dairy on the outskirts of Okatana near Oshakati (Hangula 1993:22). Some of the businesses closed down due to high import prices for materials and the effects of the war (Hangula 1993:23). The author concludes that the projects of the BIC were too few to lead to large-scale development of Ovambo. But the corporation was active as a stimulator of economic growth and social transformation in the region.

During the pre-independence period, the First National Development Corporation (FNDC, better known by its Afrikaans acronym ENOK) was only active to a limited extent in Ovambo, due to the war situation (Mosehuus 1987:92). Only one project after 1978 in the Ovambo region is mentioned by Mosehuus (1987:115), i.e. the erection of the open market in Oshakati which was planned in 1987 and financed by the corporation. Pendleton et al. (1993:67) note that the FNDC was supposed to help small businesses become competitive, but "it had in fact ended up as the major competitor to them; developing larger scale projects which put small concerns out of business". In general FNDC's achievements with respect to its aims, such as training, financing, expertise and management assistance, are regarded as limited or "dubious if not unimpressive" (Kukuri 1990:109). Kukuri states (1990:110) that the corporation never had a clear development plan. Apart from its good intentions, it did not contribute in any large measure towards the upliftment of all the inhabitants.

It is doubtful whether all the new urban centres in the study area can attract new industries, except for trade and commerce. As long as the economy is based on subsistence, even agro-processing industries will not be viable. One aspect is the rehabilitation of southern Angola, which can provide some additional inputs in the rehabilitation of the infrastructure, trade and commerce. The centres of Oshakati and Ondangwa can serve as bases to store materials and equipment. Among the first priorities in the neighbouring country, are the reconstruction of the infrastructure, possibly by Namibian firms.

Industries in the rural hinterland in Ovambo, with the exception of some small enterprises such as nurseries or community based facilities, are unlikely to establish themselves in those areas. The lack of infrastructure alone will make the establishment of larger industries impossible. In the urban and rural areas,
there are some prospects for industries engaged in building material production, such as forestry or brick and roof tile manufacturing.

The importance of the informal sector in producing shelter has been recognised for some time (Moavenzadeh 1987:77). However a problem appears in defining the informal sector in terms of location. In rural areas, the unregulated building of houses is centuries old. To define this activity as an informal housing market seems meaningless, because it is the only market in rural areas. Thus the term 'traditional' is more appropriate. The lack of formal housing in urban areas resulted in the provision of shelter in the traditional way and by means of using any materials available for the building of a shack. In this case, Moavenzadeh asks, whether this is still traditional or could it now be defined as informal, in contrast to the formal urban sector? In squatter settlements, traditional techniques were adapted to urban conditions and were also improved with materials and methods from the formal sector. Thus the lines of distinction became blurred.

An advantage of the informal sector's production of building materials is, that almost no imported inputs are used (Moavenzadeh 1987:86). This conserves scarce foreign currency and stimulates the demand for local resources, rather than foreign input. The production is well suited for small-scale techniques and local resources. Its labour-intensive nature results in the creation of numerous jobs in the rural sectors, and brings much needed commodities to rural areas.

Among the constraints in the informal supply of building materials are the lack of financial support for small-scale enterprises. Informal producers are in a weak bargaining position compared to the large firms (Moavenzadeh 1987:95). They are less visible to the government, they receive few subsidies, and disadvantaged in marketing their wares, especially to large buyers such as the government. The products of the informal sector are sometimes limited by their quality, lack regularity and smoothness. Accordingly these products are being regarded as substandard by the formal sector and are not considered as alternatives.

5.3 Infrastructure and services

The existing urban infrastructure in the Oshakati/Ondangwa nexus has been investigated since 1992/93, because many services no longer function properly. Many are in a dilapidated condition as was pointed out in chapter three. An example is the sewerage system in Ongwediva, where consultants found (MRLGH 1993b) that due to the non-involvement in construction supervision by the consulting firm which originally designed the system, enormous problems were experienced due to blockages and overflow of sewage. To solve these problems huge amounts of money
are required, which the new authorities cannot procure without outside help. For example, the urban areas of Oshakati, Ongwediva and Ondangwa are assisted by German advisors and funds provided by the German Government in a project called Sewage Water Awareness Management (SWAM). In co-operation with the MRLGH, the programme focuses on improvement, upgrading and rehabilitation of the wet services (water and sewerage) of the three local authorities (SWAM 1993:2).

It is clear that the new municipalities will find it difficult to rehabilitate or replace existing services on their own. The rural hinterland will face even more problems as most parts of Ovambo have only a limited infrastructure, such as gravel roads or dirt tracks. Certain services, e.g. water supply, are of utmost importance for development, whereas the provision of electricity by means of power lines is too expensive and cannot be afforded by most locals. Therefore infrastructural developments in the study area (see chapter 2, section 6.4) have no immediate impact on living standards for the majority of inhabitants.

Investment in infrastructure is largely a public sector responsibility, thus it should have a higher priority in public resources than investment in housing units, which can be provided by either the private or informal sector (Van Huyck 1987:349). The author (Van Huyck 1987:350) advocates co-ordination of infrastructure provision to residential areas through integrated sectoral plans. The lack of infrastructure to guide new settlements or area development can add to future costs of provision, many years after these areas have been developed. Basic services include the supply of safe water to the community and to individuals; sanitation for individual dwellings; electricity supply to buildings and households; and refuse collection (Schreckenbach & Abankwa 1981:279).

Infrastructure needs in Namibia should be carefully planned and should take population shifts into account (Czypionka 1991). In the 1991/92 budget, the increase of 46,7% for infrastructural developments is undesirably large, because infrastructure should be created in areas with a good chance of economic development. In the 1991/92 budget this is not necessarily the case. Czypionka furthermore states that too much and too rapid investment in infrastructure could result in several unfinished projects, if budget cuts follow in the coming years.

The Namibian government's official budget allocations for infrastructural developments in rural and urban areas in the fields of electricity, water and transport, including roads since 1991 is shown in the following table (Republic of Namibia 1990d, 1991c, 1992, 1993a, 1994a):
Another aspect is the pricing policy for infrastructure, which should eliminate unnecessary subsidies to those households which do not require them. As Shakur (1987:5) points out, housing for the privileged few is heavily subsidised, which makes it impossible for countries with limited resources to subsidise the provision of housing to a large number of low income communities. Once services are available, maintenance and operations should also be addressed. "The record of developing countries on maintenance is not encouraging. The failure of adequate maintenance provision adds enormously to the public capital investment costs in several ways" (Van Huyck, 1987:351). Initial capital investment is frequently larger than necessary, because of the fear that maintenance will be lacking. Lifetime of capital stock shortens as a result of maintenance failures, thus rehabilitation or replacement must be considered at a later stage.

Water is an important component in the housing system as it affects not only the health standard of the population, but also the production of agricultural produce as well as being needed for household purposes. About two litres of water per person per day is a physiological necessity; to maintain a reasonable minimum standard of living, 25 to 40 litres are needed (Streeten, et al. 1981:139). The availability of water within a reasonable distance from a well, can save women and children time, as it relieves them of the time-consuming task of fetching it.

In regions with a high population concentration, it is an urgent matter to find effective ways of providing sanitation. A study by five NGOs investigating Ventilated Improved Pit latrines (VIP) built for institutions and individual households in the Ovambo-speaking region, found that in general the VIP latrines did not perform satisfactorily. Ventilation especially appeared as a major problem (UNICEF, 1994:6). Another difficulty identified was that none could be emptied following the filling of the pit. Those involved placing VIPs in communities, may have to re-evaluate, whether this model of latrine is the right one to support in this environment (UNICEF, 1994:5). Another aspect is the question regarding community preferences with respect to latrine types (UNICEF, 1994:10). The study

9 figures for 1995/96 are estimated
recommends that other latrine types should be encouraged, due to the high costs of the surveyed latrines and the problems identified.

5.4 Maintenance and repairs

A large part of the existing infrastructure in the three urban centres of the study area is in the process of being rehabilitated. In future, maintenance and repairs will have to be carried out regularly by the local authorities. This requires qualified manpower, which is scarce in Namibia (see section 6.2 in this chapter). Therefore the main responsibility for the urban centres in the study area will be in the hands of the MRLGH's technical departments (see section 4.1).

Without the proper functioning of the local infrastructure, it is impossible to develop new townships for the growing population and to provide sites for the investment in new industries. Maintenance of and repairs to the infrastructure depend on continuous financial support, the training of skilled manpower to manage the infrastructure, and the availability of spare parts to avoid long periods of stoppages.

6. PROGRAMMATIC INPUTS FOR THE PROVISION OF HOUSING

6.1 Processes in housing project implementation

The implementation of housing projects has to facilitate an efficient and affordable provision of shelter. Options have to be investigated in order to find the most suitable way to provide housing to a target group, especially for low-income groups. The sequence of development with respect to housing and needs is discussed by Sharma (1990:41-43).

a) The first approach to shelter is the provision of a built house. The sequence of development in this case is land, followed by the provision of services, then shelter and finally people. People come last, thus they often have no choice in the determination of the site, services and design of the shelter (Sharma 1990:42). This is often alien to their needs, lifestyle and affordability.

b) In the case of site and service schemes, the development sequence is site, services, people, and then shelter. People have not been involved in the housing process before a shelter is built. Plot sizes and services have to be determined and provided before the residents move in, thus they have no choice in the location and the standard of services.

c) The third approach covers squatter settlements, where the order of development is: people, sites, shelter, followed by services, if this is done. People first select a site, build a shelter, then wait for services. Sharma argues that these
settlements fulfil the needs of the poor in a logical sequence suited to their needs, where all are involved in decision-making about where and how they will live. Therefore, squatter townships could be regarded as the most successful settlements, but they do not comply with city planning regulations, and the cost to the authorities in regularising these settlements, without getting any value for the land or services, is substantial. To overcome the problem, a solution close to the order of development in the squatter camps must be found.

Sharma (1990:42) asserts that the next best order of development would be: Land, people, shelter, and finally services, which is the approach of planned upgradable sites. In this instance a site is offered to the people with no services, except for access and water as per rural standards. The sites are given on a temporary license, which is lost if a shelter is not erected and occupied within a specified period of time. Over a period of time services would be provided. After this a permanent lease is granted. Reservations regarding this approach include:

a) The lack of services for the poor, especially sanitation, is a problem in areas of high population concentrations. But if unserviced sites are not provided, the poor will squat anywhere, whether there are services or not. Planned sites can be more easily serviced at a later stage.

b) The development of such sites could encourage further migration to urban areas. But according to Sharma, organising upgradable sites cannot lead to additional migrants moving to the urban areas, and can eliminate squatting or at least can control it (Sharma 1990:43). This argument by Sharma is questionable, as the provision of serviced sites has encouraged people to move to those urban areas where these services are offered. An example is Windhoek, where the MLGH initiated the resettlement of squatters in 1990 to a formal township, thereby attracting more people to the city, thus increasing the squatting problem.

c) A third objection is the difficulty of providing enough suitable land on a large scale. Poor people will find vacant land for themselves and consequently initiate unplanned settlements.

To enable the poorer sections of society to obtain affordable shelter, participation in the housing process is a necessity in order to identify local resources and make use of local knowledge. Co-operation between various participants is another requirement. Traditional leaders should be consulted in the rural regions. The local authority should be included in the decision-making process in urban settlements. Other possible participants in the implementation of projects are NGOs, community-based organisations, and interested individuals.
6.2 Human resource development

The policy of establishing new local authorities in communal areas has to consider the particular difficulties associated with the creation of administrative structures in those areas. A legislative body or council has to be formed, a new viable administration has to be created, regulations and bye-laws have to be adapted. The Ministry of Local Government and Housing started in 1992/93 to train 15 future town clerks (MLGH 1992:13) in three-months courses. Thereafter they first have to work in established municipalities to get the "feel" of their new jobs. When the three town clerks in the study area were interviewed, they expressed their concern of being unable to fill vacancies, as there are not enough qualified people available (interviews with Shigwedha 1993, Taanyanda 1993, and Hailulu 1993). Some relief is provided by donor agencies who assist with advice, community development, and funds and human resource development.

In most of the new local authorities, the lack of qualified manpower means that the chief executive, i.e. the town clerk, is at the centre of most of the municipal activities and has to act as head of several departments at the same time, as in the case of Ondangwa (interview with Shigwedha 1993) and Ongwediva (interview with Taanyanda 1993). In Oshakati, three out of four departmental heads were appointed on a temporary basis (interview with Hailulu 1993). This situation means that the delegation of responsibility is practically impossible in order to lessen the workload of the chief executive. In certain cases, technical help could be obtained from the outside, e.g. the municipality of Tsumeb (interview with Shigwedha 1993).

6.3 Management and technical skills of local authorities

Obtaining qualified manpower for the requirements of an independent Namibia remains a problem for the execution of development programmes. "The need for skilled manpower for economic development, including rural development, can hardly be overemphasized" (Ahmed in ILO 1985a:4). According to Humes and Martin (1969:207), a problem facing local representative government "is the lack of high calibre elected and staff persons, in particular persons who can provide the necessary leadership to the local units". J.S. Mill (quoted by Humes & Martin 1969:207-208) said: "The greatest imperfection of popular local institutions, and the chief cause of the failure which has often attended them, is the low calibre of the men by whom they are almost always carried on".

Another aspect in management is the skill of delegation. As an organisation is limited in time, energy, and the attention span of its chief executive, delegation is an important attribute of good management (Leonard 1991:267). However, in many
cases the chief executive places himself at the hub of all decisions (see 5.2 above) and delegates the execution of tasks only. This style of administration arises most frequently in cases in which there is a great gap between the skills of the person in charge and his subordinates. Delegation can occur within an organisation such as a municipality or on a central government level, where powers are delegated to local authorities (see chapter 2, section 4.5).

Technical training has, up to now, had little impact on the general conditions in the labour market. For example, when a technical position became vacant in one of Namibia's larger municipalities, it was only filled after two and a half years, and then only after the job was downgraded to make it easier to find a suitable person. With the new municipalities planned in the country, this problem will increase even more, because modern services in the semi-urban areas must be maintained in future, despite limited financial resources and the unusually high costs of attracting and keeping personnel. The private and the parastatal sectors often offer more attractive working environments. Therefore qualified staff are not eager to leave and work for the local authorities.

Behrman (1979:126) proposes that companies could work with local training institutions, technical and managerial, and with universities to develop appropriate programmes. The NHE started with such a process in 1995 in co-operation with other institutions and companies. For the local authorities in rural and urban areas, to operate and maintain the existing services and infrastructure, will depend on outside help in terms of finances, manpower, and technical support. This assistance must be co-ordinated by someone, to ensure that all the smaller local authorities receive the help they need.

6.4 Co-ordinating authority

The co-ordination of development projects in any given area can benefit those agencies involved in development programmes. In the study area various projects have proceeded without effective co-ordination. Savings with respect to manpower utilisation or the costs involved in infrastructural developments, could be among the advantages obtained.

Due to the existing problems on the local level, i.e. lack of human resources, dependency on the central government, limited decision-making powers, the local authority is often not in a position to co-ordinate the activities in the area.

---

10 In Ondangwa for example, three different agencies were involved in township projects situated next to each other in 1994. This was discovered after some projects were already at an advanced stage. Attempts were made shortly afterwards to redress this situation to improve cooperation and coordination.
under its jurisdiction. Co-operation and co-ordination between agencies involved in an area should be sought (SWAM 1993:3). Another difficulty is the relationship of these agencies with different ministries and donor agencies, which have not succeeded in co-ordinating their efforts in a specific area. In Namibia the co-ordination of projects in various sectors has not yet been achieved.

6.5 Monitoring and evaluation of projects

The monitoring and evaluation of projects and other activities, can serve as an opportunity to communicate with other communities and their involvement in development. Information exchange can greatly benefit those communities which are unable by themselves to engage in those activities for which they are not equipped. The monitoring and evaluation processes are ongoing activities. Changes can be introduced as a result of identifying shortcomings and problem areas. With respect to public policies, including the local level, Hanekom (1987:88) asserts that "Public policies are evaluated with a view to adjusting or terminating existing policies or devising new policies". The author (Hanekom 1987:91) distinguishes between pre-implementation and post-implementation evaluation. In a pre-implementation evaluation, the feasibility of a policy on all levels of the community has to be assessed. The second contains aspects such as representativeness of the clientele, efficiency regarding costs, equity or whether benefits are equally distributed, responsiveness to the interests of certain groups, appropriateness or whether the outcome is worthwhile, and adequacy or to what extent a problem was solved. How far the monitoring of a local authority and its officials by the electorate can be achieved or promoted, depends to a large extent on the organisation of local interest groups. Some pressure could be exerted by NGO's and organisations working in and with the communities.

6.6 National and local development planning

Development planning involves the economising of scarce resources on the part of the publicly constituted authority and embraces organised, conscious, and continual efforts to choose the best available alternatives to accomplish definite goals (Waterston cited by Bryant & White 1982:232). Ackhoff (quoted by Bryant & White 1982:232) insists that "the attempt to deal holistically with a system of problems is what planning, in contrast to problem solving, should be all about".

Planning on the local level has to take into account available resources and what local needs have to be addressed. Most communities are not equipped with the means to do planning on their own. Nevertheless, participation in all aspects of development must first be investigated on the local level by encouraging participation. The identification of real needs and demands provides guidelines
for what has to be done at local level. There are however, circumstances when regional planning has to be considered first, for example large-scale efforts such as infrastructure. Bulk services often cannot be handled by the various local units as they are the responsibility of a national supplier, for example the Department of Water Affairs and SWAWEK.

Regional development planning in Namibia is theoretically in the hands of the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the Regional Councils. But officials, also in other parts of Namibia, have indicated that there is no communication between the NPC and the Councils regarding development planning. One reason is that the Regional Councils are not yet fully operational (interview with Gowaseb 1994). Planning in the case of housing in Namibia is mainly directed towards urban areas. Rural housing in the planning period 1991-1994 receives scant attention (see NPC 1993:219-226).

In terms of the constitution of Namibia, the NPC was established after independence. Its constitutional task is to plan the priorities and directions of national development (NPC 1993:ii). In the words of the Director General (NPC 1993:ii): "In practice this means that it is at the very heart of the process of redirecting government spending and policy towards the new priorities". In addition the NPC helps to channel funds from abroad to projects which further the development aims of the country. But "Who's co-ordinating Namibia's planning?" (The Namibian June 30, 1992:1). Central government ministries plan their priorities on their own (see SSD 1994:112) and the funds for their expenditure have to be approved by the Ministry of Finance. The first National Development Plan for Namibia had not been completed in August 1995. Therefore in Namibia the situation is that "Planning is an elusive concept, more preached than practised, more discussed than defined" (Waterston quoted by Bryant & White 1982:232).

7. TECHNICAL COMPONENTS IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Loans and finances for housing

The provision of small loans for housing, local building materials production, and the provision of community facilities, is an urgent need in many poor communities. The availability of finance for the provision of shelter to all income groups, but particularly the poor, is part of a systematic response to housing demand at a scale sufficient to impact national needs (Van Huyck 1987:351). Besides the public sector, the private and the parastatal sector can become involved in housing provision through the allocation of funds. It is important to broaden the financial base for low-income housing to include
employers, local financial institutions, and the general public (NBIC 1990b:11). Moreover the government can help with tax incentives and services.

The construction of most types of houses is often restricted by a scarcity of finances. The availability and cost of borrowing money, especially for low-income groups, is crucial (Miners 1984:87). Prices for building materials in rural areas are usually higher than in urban centres, due to the large distances goods have to be transported to reach consumers in remote regions (see chapter 4, section 7). The high price of the conventional type of housing consequently becomes too expensive for the lower income groups. Even if a loan is offered, the low income of a household often makes this type of house unaffordable.

The government owns most of the houses in the urban centres in the study area. These houses are rented by the residents once their applications are approved and a house becomes available (Shomongula 1993). According to this official, rents in Oshakati for government houses, which were built a long time ago11, vary between R200 and R300 and in Ondangwa they are about R200 per month. These relatively low rents mean that a house bought by means of a loan is much more expensive. For example a house worth R50000, at 16 percent interest per annum, will cost about R696 per month, excluding insurance fees and municipal services. Consequently, buying a house with a loan is not a preferred option if low rent houses are offered.

Mobilisation of funds in non-traditional areas must be considered, or as Vogel (quoted by Meyer 1989:279) puts it, deposit mobilisation in rural areas has been the forgotten half of financial intermediation. Financial services were provided to some rural areas, after several commercial banks established themselves in the Oshakati/Ondangwa nexus before independence. During 1993 one of the two building societies in Namibia planned and started an office building in Ondangwa in 1994 to provide services to the northern regions. However, the remote areas have not been serviced by financial institutions. Only the Post Office Savings Bank, provides a limited range of financial services to rural communities through local post offices. Factors regarding the mobilisation of rural deposits include political and economic instability which discourages such activities, the degree of monetisation of the rural economy and lack of confidence in financial institutions. Literacy and economic sophistication also influence how rural inhabitants obtain and utilise new information (Meyer 1989:283).

11 In 1982 building costs varied from R8700 to R10200 for smaller houses, and from R20500 to about R22000 for larger houses (NBIC 1982a:268-269).
A study of low-income households in Ondangwa showed, that about 40% have savings with a median amount of N$300. Minimum savings are N$60 and the highest amounts stated were N$42000 and N$8000. 61% of the people in the formal part of the town surveyed, have a savings account, whereas in the informal settlements 38% have an account (NHE/Sum Consult 1994).

To achieve economic growth, savings and investment are needed to increase stocks of productive resources, which in turn will lead to an increase in physical capital stock (Crosswell 1978:36). In this respect decisions about savings and investment are determined by two considerations. The first, how much more consumption in future will be how productive in investment? Secondly, how important is consumption now compared with consumption in future? The author (Crosswell 1978:36-37) circumscribes this point with an example. A starving man is faced with two possibilities. Either a loaf of bread now and one loaf later, or no loaf now but four loaves later. He will pick the first option, however attractive the second may be on technical grounds.

The overall market in the study area has a large potential compared to the rest of Namibia, because of the cash economy prevailing here and the high population density. This is recognised by some financial institutions which are moving to the urban centres in these areas. It remains to be seen whether they will attempt to reach the more remote areas in order to promote and improve their services to new clients.

7.2 Land availability for housing

The availability of land is a major factor in the provision of shelter and housing development. One important difference between traditional and "modern" housing systems is space. Traditional homesteads could expand whenever necessary. New buildings could be built, because when the homestead was established extensions were planned as the need for more space arose (see Mills 1984:60-64). In urban areas this is impossible, because the size of the erven offered is limited and often this is not sufficient to accommodate growing families. Plots of about 250 square meters, for low-income families, offer very little space, thus overcrowding becomes visible as soon as informal structures are erected. Municipal building regulations often do not permit the whole erf to be used for buildings.

Urban centres are characterised by the high density of the population. Overcrowding is one aspect which contributes to the decline of living standards in the low income areas. Extreme overcrowding is defined as less than 25 square ft (2.32 m²) of living area per person (Bapat 1991:510). The author states (Bapat
that the restricted access of low-income groups to adequate living conditions is related to the larger question of the role of the state in distributing a city's resources, especially land, among the different groups of residents. Townplanning is the mechanism of regulating the distribution of population and supposedly ensures orderly development and hygienic living conditions for all on a local level.

An associated aspect of urbanisation is what Davies (1990:475-476) calls peri-urban cultivation. Rural-type patterns of small scattered cultivated plots, which emerge around a city, provide cheap food for the urban poor and work for the unemployed. Under-utilised land is made productive, although ecological damage is caused due to the deforestation of the peri-urban area. This process undermines law enforcement by the municipal authority. This process is underway in the study area's urban centres.

In densely populated rural areas, the provision of additional agricultural land is increasingly becoming scarce, and only a few non-agrarian activities are available (T'Gilde & de Jonge 1987:35). Migration is therefore becoming a widespread phenomenon. Saini (1980:142) stresses that the traditional pattern in rural areas is bound to become disorganised sooner or later, as a result of outside influences such as modernisation, and the resulting break-up of the traditional structures of communities (see chapter 2, section 5). Additional changes could be the improvement or reconstruction of villages in the form of better houses, roads, environmental and other services. Reconnaissance studies are necessary to evaluate villages for redevelopment and the willingness of people to welcome the changes. Saini suggests that household surveys have to be conducted to obtain information on the physical conditions of housing and people's attitudes to housing and living patterns. "Any reconstruction programme is unlikely to succeed if the type of houses and other buildings do not permit people to follow their traditions and customs freely. It is also necessary to have some knowledge of local building resources, construction practices, and available building materials and labour" (Saini 1980:143-144). Furthermore, social consequences generated by the introduction of changes, must be taken into account to keep resistance to a minimum (Saini 1980:145).

According to van Huyck (1987:347), the land issue is usually ignored in most shelter policies. The failure to establish a sound land policy is probably the single most important constraint in solving the housing issue, because the availability of an adequate supply of land at affordable prices is a prerequisite for achieving adequate shelter for all people. In the traditional system, a
headman would allocate land, after a payment in cash or livestock (see SSD 1994:38-39). The distribution of cultivable plots occurred on the basis of need, existing resources and the ability to utilise the area concerned (SSD 1994:38). Some headmen are enriching themselves by selling off land, due to the fear that they will soon lose control of the land to the state (SSD 1994:39). This trend towards "privatisation" of land marginalises the rural poor and speeds up the degradation of the environment due to increasing population pressure on the remaining communal land.

The public sector's responsibilities include tax policies inter alia on land, and tenure arrangements that do not reward speculators; establishing appropriate and efficient procedures encouraging the maximum legalised development of shelter; developing land-use standards, such as plot size or open spaces, to enable cost-efficient development related to the target group's needs and ability to pay. Furthermore, a decision is needed as to how far government should be an active and major participant in the land market. The public sector is usually the owner of large tracts of land, controlled by ministries, public enterprises, or the military. In Namibia, communal areas are regarded as state land, although no law has been promulgated to provide a basis to this effect (see also discussion in section 2 of this chapter).

The development of a settlement requires that land is carefully managed and that development must aim at using available land prudently and improving existing land-use practices (Blakely 1989:140). The author (Blakely 1989:141) discusses one method of land management, namely landbanking. It is the acquiring and improving of contiguous parcels of land, to put together sites for development. Landbank sites could include surplus city-owned land, donated land, purchased land from private sources, and former military installations. In order to build a landbank, continuous research is necessary to identify under-utilised, underdeveloped, and/or misused properties. These sites must be catalogued by size and location. One drawback of landbanking is its substantial capital requirement (Blakely 1989:142). Another tool of land management is zoning, which can promote economic and commercial development by setting aside sufficient land for industrial and commercial use (Blakely 1989:143).

There are no possibilities for expanding the existing communal regions as the extent of deserts, state land such as parks, and commercial farmland, considerably limit such expansions. Consequently the use of the land must be carefully considered. The boundaries of the newly demarcated urban areas in the study area were determined by the MLGH, taking the extent of present settlement patterns into
account and also future expansion (interview with Mbaeva 1992). However, in the case of Oshakati, land suitable for new extensions is limited due to the presence of oshanas (see Figure 6.3, chapter 6). Within the townlands of the new urban areas in the study area, the competition between urban expansion, i.e. the development of new townships, and agricultural land is already under way. Cross (quoted by Tapson 1990:573) argues that to view communal land as a purely economic asset ignores its more important role as the social cement of the fabric of rural African societies.

As the study area is not one of the most fertile regions, those pieces of land which are fertile enough for agricultural use should be protected. Overgrazing and deforestation have led to a point where the natural resources have already been marginalised, for example, to satisfy energy requirements. This is one factor of immediate concern.

7.3 Energy provision

The modern energy sector provides energy in the form of petrol, diesel and electricity. Using traditional fuel is a sure way of destroying the environment. However, using modern energy resources is very expensive for a low-income region. Alternatives are available at a price, for example wind energy, solar energy, or bio-gas technology. Technology transfers to developing areas is often a long-term matter, as energy technologies suitable for low-income communities are still in the process of being developed and tested in many countries. In many cases the new methods must still be made viable or affordable. At present some technologies such as solar energy, are still too expensive to be of any use in these regions.

Inappropriate standards or a local authority's regulations can restrict the provision of energy to low-income groups in urban as well as rural areas. Some examples illustrate this aspect. During a seminar in September 1989 in Windhoek, an official from ESCOM, Mr. R. Ackermann, explained this factor with regard to electricity provision. Planned changes in voltage drops in the electrical system of about 5%, and instead of 7.5% as it is at present, can reduce costs by 30 percent (thirty) in electrical appliances and supply. Furthermore, compact low-cost "ready boards", which consist of three plugs, a light and switch, and a circuit breaker plus installation, cost R420.00, compared to R1100-1300 if an electrical contractor had installed it according to present standards and regulations. This board can even be installed in traditionally built huts in rural areas. Mr Ackermann pointed out that the benefits of any technological advance depend on the amendment of existing regulations to accommodate more appropriate
standards. The level of technology used should be in accordance with the needs of the people who use it, since they must install it, operate it, and maintain it.

Provision of low-cost housing is becoming expensive, because first world standards are applied in Third World communities. Electricity, once installed, is less expensive than paraffin, gas or batteries. Ready boards or the pre-paid meter system are increasingly used throughout Namibia, inter alia for individual house connections within the rural electrification programme in the study area (see MLGH 1992:24-25).

Namibia is at present investigating the use of more hydro energy about 130 km west of Ruacana. A pre-feasibility study is in progress, and tenders for the study were handed over to SWAWEK (see Die Republikein 12 September 1994:3). Should the project commence and be completed in several years, Namibia could be self-sufficient in energy requirements.

Another method is to save energy. If Namibia could save 10 to 15 percent of energy per year, this would result in a saving of between R80 and R125 million, which could be used to reinforce needy sectors in the economy (Jeske quoted in Die Republikein February 24, 1992:4). Each percentage of energy saved means that an additional R8 million is available for other development purposes. In other words, better use of available technology and the utilisation of alternatives are ways to tackle some of the problems in the future.

7.4 Technology development

According to Mohan (1979:12), the solution of problems arising from the high rates of population growth in urban centres, requires modern technology. This technology makes it possible to have cities with populations of millions of people. Problems such as sewage disposal, water supply and transport cannot be handled with traditional technological means in expanding settlements. However, the costs involved can be an obstacle in the implementation of technological solutions.

High migration rates, low incomes, and scarcity of capital produce squatter settlements, which could account for half of the total housing in many cities (Mohan 1979:16). Western brick houses and the traditional homestead both fulfil their basic purpose, that is to provide shelter. The technology used in building these homes, is in some cases appropriate, in others not. The traditional homestead is not appropriate for an inner city environment, but on the other hand
use of sophisticated technologies is not always suitable for remote rural areas, for example a waterborne sewer network.

Technology is not an aim in itself, but a means to an end: satisfaction of needs (Riedijk 1984:4). The character of technology is defined by Kranzberg (quoted by Riedijk 1984:4) as: "Technology is neither good nor bad, nor is it neutral". He explains that technology is the expression of values and lifestyles living within society. Steele (1979:114) argues that:

"Specific technologies must be tailored to each local situation. The modes of acquisition will differ for each technology, as will the manner in which they are applied and the types of control exercised over them by the receiving country".

Most technologies focus on the needs of the urban sectors. Rural areas require a different approach. Theunis (1984:45) argues that urban poverty is more visible as it can be seen in the streets, whereas in rural areas, poverty is more diffuse and hidden from the eye. Among the possibilities for raising living standards in these regions, technological assistance has to be considered, such as the most appropriate form of rain water storage for the dry season and sanitation. Appropriateness in building operations has to take the local climatic conditions into account, as well as available materials, the incorporation of indigenous techniques and skills, in order to apply indigenous building forms (Huybers 1984:274). Other aspects are to let the inhabitants specify their needs, and to avoid the use of machinery for production, transport and lifting gear, as local knowledge is usually not at hand to repair and maintain machinery and equipment (Huybers 1984:275-276). It is important to find technologies which can fulfil the requirements for developing rural areas and thereby help to improve the living conditions of the local people. Hyung-Sup Choi (1979:134) advocates the development of an infrastructure for technology which is conducive to the development of technology. Thus institutional frameworks, qualified people, and incentives have to be provided in order to approach the problems. The author states that little attention has been given to the crucially important transfers between urban and rural areas. "Without a means for active transfer of technology within countries, development efforts are futile" (Hyung-Sup Choi 1979:137, author's emphasis). Consequently the pooling of resources and knowledge inside a country, research and communications, are additional factors to be considered.

Technological aspects of housing include building materials, tools, and skills (Turner 1976:86), construction methods, the supply of water and electricity, and sanitation. To develop technology on a local level is of utmost importance. Once
this is achieved the information must be distributed and made available to other parts of a country, even to neighbouring countries with similar requirements.

7.5 Rural industrialisation

The provision of housing on a large scale, cheaply and without the loss of identity, has become a problem for developing countries (Frescura 1981:187). Thus the question is whether a solution is to be found at grass-roots level in the form of "vernacular mass housing". To achieve this by using traditional but improved techniques and methods, an examination of existing local resources must be made to facilitate rural industries. These resources should be controlled and regulated to ensure a continuous supply of materials in the future. Traditional buildings are all self-help housing. Self-help refers to people's activities such as the making of bricks, masonry works, roof construction and finishes (De Beer 1988:63). Vernacular architecture is created by its users and is easily understood by them (King 1980:28). Modern sophisticated architecture is the result of four separate groups: architects, builders, clients and the users, who adapt it to fit their own purposes. This division emerged largely in the industrial period in the Western world.

Important aspects in the industrialisation of rural areas in Zimbabwe were reviewed in 1984-85 and produced the following results (Gasper 1988:441): no
industries will move to rural areas simply in response to the creation of a market area, bus stop and zoned sites. Genuine growth points need a substantial economic base. Existing small towns are often the most promising growth points. Some centres are simply service centres, not growth centres, which could promote promising industries utilising local resources, thus providing for agricultural needs, repairs, carpentry, construction and building materials.

7.6 Information distribution

According to Behrman (1979:126), one of the primary concerns of developing countries is that they do not know what technology is available. Sources of technology have to be found which are capable of disseminating information to everyone interested. The Rural Development Centre's activities in Ongwediva remain virtually unknown inside and outside the study area. Even the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development in Windhoek did not have any information available when visited at the beginning of 1992.

The tasks of gathering information, evaluating, publishing and distributing it, is to some extent an ambiguous one. To find a responsible body is the task of all those involved in development. But for development purposes this is necessary. Any solution found and not made available to others, is a waste of scarce resources. It could be a case of re-inventing of the wheel.

Namibia does not have a national resource centre on housing and related aspects. The NHE's information centre has not been assigned the task of collecting data and information for distribution. Information and data needed for internal purposes and for projects, is compiled and distributed through the Research and Development Department. The United Nations has established a resource centre for housing matters in Nairobi, under the auspices of Habitat. But access to the information is difficult, due to the distance between Windhoek and Nairobi and the general lack of communication channels.

8. PROVISION OF HOUSING

A combination of modern and traditional materials and construction methods was investigated at the Rural Development Centre in Ongwediva, where two "bottle houses" were built with mortar and bottles for the walls. Bottle houses are easy to erect and look attractive (interview with Ingram 1993). In the study area, empty bottles (empties) can be regarded as a local building material as they are found everywhere littering the environment (interview with Ingram 1993). Success
has already been achieved when some headmen supported the idea of building these houses, in order to clean up the areas falling under their jurisdiction.

Another local material, clay, is being researched for more efficient use in the provision of housing and other purposes. In 1993, a Finish NGO erected a pilot plant in Ongwediva to investigate the use of local oshana clay and other types of clay found in the study area, to produce bricks and roof tiles. The project leader told of experiments to manufacture two kinds of burnt bricks, one for low-cost housing and another for higher standards of housing (interview with Vakkari 1993).

In Namibia a private organisation started with the researching and promoting of clay as an alternative building material. The Namibia Clay House Project built a experimental house on the site of the Rural Development Centre in Ongwediva towards the end of 1993. The short term objectives are: 1. to demonstrate the viability of relevant and environmentally friendly building methods, and 2. to develop an operational method of demonstration, training and public interaction, using earth construction (Ministry of Environment and Tourism 1994). This will enhance popular participation to enable the poor to help themselves. The costs were estimated to be around R400 for a house of approximately three by three meters, compared to a bottle house of the same size, costing R1700 (interview with Ingram 1993). The clay house is based on the design developed by the Egyptian architect Fathy (see also Volkmann 1986).

Fathy rediscovered this traditional material and method of building houses in Egypt. During the Second World War, he only could obtain mud bricks to built houses. Shortages of other materials meant that "...I had mud bricks and nothing else, I was no worse off than my forefathers. Egypt had not always imported steel from Belgium and timber from Rumania, yet Egypt had always built houses" (Fathy 1973:5). With mud bricks he built walls and roofs without any other materials needed, and found that mud brick buildings could go up two stories and can survive for a thousand years (Fathy 1973:5). Traditional mud brick housing with vaulted roofs were beautiful and cheap (Fathy 1973:7). In 1977 an experiment in Zambia with such brick vaulting proved very successful (Mann 1982:8). Wherever clay is locally available local industries can alleviate the problem of a cheap building material.

The traditional building is often downgraded to mud huts, hovels or infested warrens unfit for human habitation, but nevertheless, even apparently humble dwellings are more than material objects or structures, they are institutions,
basic cultural phenomena (Rapoport in King 1980:285). Suburban dwellers in modern
times have borrowed some of the indigenous elements of earlier times and applied
them to their dwellings (Frescura 1981:3). Among the most expensive houses in
cities are those with a thatched roof on a conventional layout, plus all the
amenities available in a modern home. Rapoport (in King 1980:285-286) interprets
the indigenous design as part of a typology which compromises primitive,
indigenous as well as high-style or grand-design environments. Modern architecture
is seen as a special case of the latter. Rapoport (in King 1980:286) describes
indigenous design as a process, of how it came to be, on the one hand; or as a
product, the resulting environment having certain characteristics, on the other.
In a process, the design is created by the user. Indigenous design is achieved
through the application of a system of shared rules. "It is accepted and adjusted
to specific requirements and this makes it very specific to its context and place"
(Rapoport in King 1980:286). The indigenous environment is also culture-specific
and has a close link to the culture in which it occurs.

8.1 Traditional methods and materials

Fencing in the peri-urban and rural areas consists mainly of wooden tree trunks
and larger branches, with strands of straining wire attached to the posts. In many
cases palisades are used, especially around the homesteads, which is the most
wasteful use of the increasingly scarce suitable trees. It is possible that a
fence consists of a "modern" material such as corrugated steel sheets. This is,
however, a rare method of fencing. In the Onankali area, near the tarred road, no
fences are used in the case of single roomed-houses and most of the shops.

Rural building techniques and materials have not solved the problem of
developing a form of shelter which does not require repeated repairs and does not
become dangerous to inhabit because of increasing structural deterioration,
vulnerability to high winds and floods, infestation by vermin and high

Traditional building methods and organisational structure have been determined
by traditional beliefs, norms, values, and availability of materials (Mills
1984:1). "The physical organisation of architecture and settlements reflects the
society in which they are produced" (Mills 1984:10). Homesteads must be suitably
sited and functionally planned to take into account the socio-economic
requirements of the family unit, the neighbourhood and district (Mills 1984:60).
Furthermore, it is necessary for the well being of all inhabitants, in an area
with limited material and land resources, that the homestead is well integrated
into the environment.
A division of labour is found during the erection of homesteads. According to Mills (1984:97) men are responsible for:

- erecting the palisaded walls and perimeter columns
- construction of the roof frame
- thatching
- making mud bricks and erect the walls

Women assist the men by:

- collecting grass and millet stalks for thatching
- plastering the interior of palisaded walls and the outside of mud brick walls
- preparing the floor, its mud and dung surface.

As in other parts of Africa, the common form of traditional huts in Northern Namibia is rondavels. The materials which have been used are (Mills 1984:90-93):

Walls - palisaded walls consisting of timber poles; mud walls made of sun-dried bricks; millet stalks as substitutes for palisaded walls.
Roof - grass thatching, millet stalks or a combination of both.
Floor - compacted earth with the addition of cow dung.
Openings - there are no windows in traditional design, only a low and narrow doorway.
Threshold - made of bottles or timber to prevent rainwater from entering the hut.

In a report of the United Nations (quoted by Hardiman & Midgley 1982:218) it is argued that, despite their very low incomes, simple techniques and materials, many inhabitants of rural areas have developed a form of housing adapted to the local environment. Due to many problems with traditional methods, such as leaky or worm-infested roofs, the absence of elementary services such as latrines and safe water, there is a need for improving rural housing conditions. Mills (1984:72) points out that wooden stakes that have rotted or deteriorated as a result of termites or ants are replaced, thatching is trimmed or replaced, and plaster is touched up where necessary. This was done when the seasonal cycle or productive activity allowed, usually after the grain was harvested or when men came home. Thus these tasks did not interfere with the important tasks during certain periods, and kept the family busy during times when little other work had to be attended to.

In the study area, grass roofs are built onto palisaded walls instead of mud or other materials. Only a few buildings have walls, built of clay bricks. Among the traditional materials in Ovamboland, thatch was usually used as a roofing material before Western building materials and methods were introduced. Enough grass was once available, but is no longer widely found in the rural areas compared to thirty years ago, partly because of overgrazing. Thus galvanised roof sheeting is
now commonly used. The replacement of thatch roofs with tin may not be suited to the climate but at least they do not need to be repaired regularly (Hardiman & Midgley 1982:218).

8.2 Conventional provision of housing

Conventional housing in the study area is at present mainly found in the urbanised areas. In these urban centres a variety of groups have to be considered in the provision of housing or shelter. Modern concepts such as income levels and affordability are usually used to determine certain groups within a society. At the top are the high income earners, who can usually provide for themselves. The second group are the middle-income people, who could require some assistance, especially in the light of high interest rates and high building costs, as they desire conventional modern houses. Provision of housing to one group is problematic, and these are government employees, teachers, and health personnel who can be transferred by a ministry to other parts of the country and therefore need assistance with respect to accommodation.

Private sector involvement in low-income housing has been advocated at various occasions, but there are limitations to this. In a free enterprise and capitalistic society most businesses take a long-term view in planning (Visagie no date:4). The author states that the private sector has to contend with many problems and commitments in order to survive changing business cycles. They must observe the rule - to show a profit in order to remain viable. One difference between the approach to the provision of housing by the public and the private sector is that politics play a major role in the case of government involvement, whereas economics play the major role in the case of the private sector (Van Niekerk 1990:2). Another aspect identified by Van Niekerk (1990:5) is that not only can the government bureaucracy have a negative influence on property development, but financial institutions such as building societies can also. Standards set by the latter, "...are for a first world country and not for a third world country as we live in" (Van Niekerk 1990:5).

The private sector's role in housing provision is restricted in the Ovambo-speaking region. Due to the fact that the region is a low-income area, profit-making is limited, except for larger projects initiated by the public sector, be it by the central government or the future regional councils, or the local authorities in future.

At independence Namibia had an established parastatal primarily concerned with the provision of conventional middle income, low-income and, to a lesser extent,
ultra-low income housing. After independence, an expansion of operations by the organisation into the rural areas occurred (see National Planning Commission 1994). Shortly after independence the World Bank and the United Nations (see UNDP 1990) were involved in investigations concerning this parastatal and were, in general, surprised by the overall standards of all units built in the past. However, the government and certain groups regarded most units as sub-standard. This led to a situation where foreign experts supported the designs and materials, whereas the government and certain residents claimed that the units were inadequate. A restructuring process took place, resulting in a new name for the NBIC (now NHE), and a new approach to housing and policy followed.

Since 1991 higher quality houses for the lower-income groups were built. This resulted in an immediate sharp rise in construction costs of individual units, due to the more sophisticated designs and materials used (see also chapter 4, section 7). Consequently even less people could afford these houses, especially without some subsidies. This is not unique to the Namibian situation. As Shakur (1987:4) writes, "Post colonial housing policies are characterised by high standards, low density public housing schemes for a few privileged upper and middle class income civil servants". These schemes were expensive, non-flexible and unaffordable to the lowest income groups (Shakur 1987:4-5).

9. THE ROLE OF RURAL HOUSING IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The term rural housing is defined by the United Nations (1978:13) as the provision of a dwelling unit plus utility services such as roads, water supply, sewerage disposal, electricity and fuel. It also includes markets, health centres, and social and cultural areas such as education, religion and recreation. The provision of these facilities is often limited to more developed centres in rural areas and to urban areas. The lack of these amenities could mean a lower standard of living for the people living in remote areas, compared to the more developed areas. This situation contributes to the migration from rural regions to the more developed regions of a country (see chapter 5, section 2). Furthermore, employment opportunities, environmental issues, economic aspects such as agricultural and non-agricultural activities, also have an influence on the conditions of rural housing.

To a large extent it could be argued that rural housing has not been one of the most discussed themes in development and architectural studies. One reason for this is given by Casmesasca and König (in Casmesasca 1971:6), namely that in the history of architecture more attention has been paid to grander buildings, such as
palaces, abbeys, cathedrals and castles than ordinary houses. Housing is at a disadvantage, because time takes its toll, and many houses disappear over time. More elementary buildings of mud and wattle and brick, were less resistant to the erosion of time and climate (Casmesasca & König in Casmesasca 1971:6-7).

A study by the International Institute for Environment and Development found that governments practically never take into account housing and service requirements in rural areas and small urban centres (Hardoy & Satterthwaite 1987:316). The latter are closely linked with the rural hinterland, because employment is related to rural production or the incomes generated by such production. The governments in those countries, except some former socialist states with predominantly rural populations, have not shown interest in improving conditions in rural housing. The private sector invests little in rural housing and services, other than those related to production.

Housing issues can be manipulated by governments through taxation, interest rates and land concessions, all of which influence the affordability of housing at all levels of society (Miners 1984:87). Therefore, he argues, every government should take a hand in housing matters, although the ultimate financial responsibility of providing for this basic need must rest with the owner (see chapter 3, section 2). The large subsidies paid by governments are often regarded as a waste of scarce resources, on the one hand, or as a way to redistribute income through the provision of affordable housing via mortgage interest subsidisation mechanisms, on the other hand (Lewis in Housing in Southern Africa, February 1990:11).

There is a great need for upgrading the quality of housing in rural areas, but development in these areas can proceed without major housing projects (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:135). This may be true in some remote areas. However in rural areas with a large concentration of people in a particular location and no formal local authority, this could result in informal settlements which lack the most essential services, such as water, sewerage, electricity, and transport. Occasionally large villages which have a number of facilities such as businesses, a school and a clinic, include some semi-urban characteristics. Thus a programme could help in further developing these rural centres, not only by building houses, but also by supplying services and erecting facilities in these centres which are not available. Residential and non-residential buildings are required in larger settlements, which can support a viable construction industry (Rondinelli & Ruddle 1978:132).
Morehouse (1979:77) describes the options confronting most Third World countries as a Hobson's choice: too much emphasis on meeting basic needs is likely to result in relegating these countries to second-class economic and political status, if this involves opting primarily for small-scale village technologies. Too much emphasis on a strategy to strengthen national economic and political autonomy through the acquisition of high technology, may not only lead to greater technological autonomy but also to greater dependence at a qualitative higher level. This is contrary to the concepts of self-sufficiency and sustainable development (see chapter 2, section 3.4).

A Danish organisation Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) has in 1990 established a tree planting project and nursery in the Ovambo region, near Ombalantu (NBC TV 17 October 1991, Ministry of Environment and Tourism 1994). They want to promote the planting and use of a variety of trees in the region. Fruit trees, trees for firewood and poles, and experiments with others including the baobab tree, are undertaken. The DAPP nursery also conducts courses in tree planting and vegetables growing. Another NGO in Ongwediva is a women's forestry and agriculture project, supported by a Finish NGO (Ministry of Environment and Tourism 1994). It is also a centre for advice on environment, forestry gardening and stove making.

A newly emerging country in Africa, planted 28 million trees, built 17 dams, increased agricultural production four-fold after good rains and official distribution of seeds, fertiliser and oxen, without international aid and support after three decades of war (New African March 1993:21). This country is not Namibia, but Eritrea, which is rebuilding a war-battered economy with its meagre resources and lack of international donors. Eritrea's government has set the following priorities: to support the population and the environment and not a small elite, in an attempt to secure future development. Despite all problems "...if the government and population's performance so far is any indication of their determination and resourcefulness, they might just be able to meet the challenges ahead" (New African March 1993:21).

Many inhabitants in Africa live in dispersed villages. Only a small percentage of people live in urban centres or rural towns (T'Gilde & de Jonge 1987:25). To improve rural living conditions in general and housing in particular, options and resources in rural areas have to be assessed, to provide the support for an efficient housing system. Most rural areas are low-income regions, thus the costs concerning housing and services are important determinants with respect to affordability. With the increasing pressure on rural areas, the question of
infrastructural development to combat environmental destruction should receive attention. Care must be taken to avoid that the new infrastructure does not damage the environment. This point is emphasised with respect to transport in the study area (Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication 1992:exec-9): in the development of roads, the Cuvelai system must be safeguarded. Transport and road structures should be of secondary importance. "The water of the Cuvelai is the life-blood of Owambo" (Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication 1992:exec-9). Therefore if this system is threatened the living standards of the people will decline and the region will loose the system which in the past regenerated the region ensuring sustainability and self-sufficiency to a large extent.

Many alternatives in shelter provision have been rejected in some African countries on political grounds or were criticised as being unacceptable, such as roof schemes, core houses, or traditional structures. In Zimbabwe, local councillors insisted on 'modern' construction materials, because "Thatched roofs, for example, are unacceptable" (Gasper 1988:435). In Namibia, which does not have a rural housing policy, it is necessary to assess and research the possibilities of alternative housing and the acceptance by the rural population within the framework of rural development.

Hardiman and Midgley, quoting a report of the United Nations (1982:218) point out that despite the low incomes and simple techniques and materials, most inhabitants of rural areas have developed a form of housing fairly well adapted to the local environment. But due to population increases, these materials are no longer available in many places at the scale needed to provide for the growing population. Thus new materials and techniques have to be considered, or housing can become a problem in some rural regions. These problems can only be tackled if the participation of the inhabitants is accomplished in the identification of needs and the implementation of programmes, as changes in the various spheres of life can affect the sustenance of local communities.

Leonard (1991:222) shows the importance of cultural and social traditions for achievers in the modern sector. The community expects that the well-to-do also build a house at their place of birth to reaffirm their membership even if they live elsewhere. For those in senior positions, the houses have to be 'modern' and substantial to reflect their status (Leonard 1991:222-223). In many cases, these houses are nothing but monuments to the strength of communal ties (Leonard 1991:223). These buildings are a visual statement that one's "home" is in the particular village (see also chapter 5, section 3), even if he is a permanent resident of an urban area.
In all three localities in the study area, which could be regarded as similar to rural areas in many other parts of Africa, the traditional type of housing is still regarded as a viable option for shelter, despite the maintenance problems. It is a self-help system, relying on locally available resources, and it is affordable. But this is no longer sustainable in many parts of Africa, because of the high population growth rate which affects the natural environment and the availability of resources, inter alia building materials (see chapter 1, section 2). The housing situation in Onambome, Onankali and Oshakati, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. The importance of living standards in urban areas is reflected by Dube (1988:50), who states that the elite are often the trendsetters and reference models for the lower strata of society. If living and housing standards are to be improved in the less well-off regions, this often means introducing some of the urban comforts, such as potable water, electricity, educational facilities, or the building of conventional houses.

10. CONCLUSION

It is not obvious that there is the political will to implement rural development in Namibia, especially if one considers the few policy documents regarding various aspects of rural development published since independence. Only certain infrastructural projects and the provision of social services have received attention, often due to donors insistence (see chapter 4, section 6). Therefore one cannot but agree with Tapson (1990:568), that policy on rural development as embodied in the annual budget speeches of the ministers, is fragmented and uncoordinated. The concentration of projects in urban centres, and the few rural based infrastructural projects, indicate that the government has not yet acknowledged the need for a policy of comprehensive rural development, regardless of the fact that the majority of inhabitants are living in rural areas. The distribution of benefits, including all the money for housing coming in from abroad, is primarily used in urban areas. This situation is closely related to the situation described by Honadle and Vansant (1985:9) who argued that "rhetoric emphasised alleviating poverty, but resources were spent on capital-intensive physical infrastructure; goals stressed the process of institutional development and local capacity building, but immediate targets and donor evaluations focused on physical production and resource disbursement".

Namibia's government still has to formulate a well-formulated policy for rural development. The few policy documents available more than five years after independence support the view that the Namibian government, to a large extent, lacks direction or that priorities in this area have not been clearly determined.
Even the establishment of the National Planning Commission has not achieved the integration of rural and urban policies and projects. At present the urban bias displayed in many projects and expenditures since independence shows that the interdependencies between the rural and urban sectors have not yet been fully acknowledged. The majority of rural inhabitants still have to wait for policies that directly affect their living standards in a positive manner.

* * *
CHAPTER 6: HOUSING IN THE FOUR NORTHERN AREAS

1. INTRODUCTION

The previous two chapters discussed some aspects with regard to rural development in the four northern regions of the study area, including government structures as well as components in the building industry. In this chapter, the three case studies are examined with respect to rural housing and rural development.

It has been argued that the demand for housing appears to be most pressing in urban centres, therefore urban centres received most of government’s attention and the available resources, i.e. the uneven distribution of development funds to urban areas to the detriment of development of the rural areas where the majority of the population still live (Renaud 1981:9-10, Fair 1985:1, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991b:3). The more visible problems caused by urbanisation, such as overcrowding, unhygienic living conditions, unemployment, have time and again been aggravated by the phenomenon of urban bias in the policy of many governments with respect to development - a situation already experienced in Namibia (see chapter 5).

2. HOUSING IN OSHAKATI, ONAMBOME, AND ONANKALI

Three typical localities have been selected as case studies. They are Oshakati, the main semi-urban centre; Onambome, a rural conglomeration of traditional homesteads; and an area near the main tarred road about 50 km to the south of Ondangwa, called Onankali. The latter is not geographically defined, but serves as a typical example of two influences on housing in a confined rural area, i.e. the modern and the traditional.

A problem encountered in the provision of traditional housing in the study area is the increasing difficulty to make use of traditional materials due to population pressure in these areas with its high population concentration and growth. This situation often worsens during times of drought. Generally speaking, some homesteads show the use of modern building materials, such as bricks, or galvanised roof sheeting. But a major problem is the high price which must be paid for these items due to the long transport routes from Windhoek or even South Africa to the North (see chapter 4, section 7.2). About 80% of all building materials are imported from the R.S.A. (MLGH 1990:6).

Among the constraints in communal areas are the neglect of housing in the past as a result of the previous homeland policies (MLGH 1990:9). This document also
states that the worst incidence of squatting occurs in the communal areas where
the majority of people live. However, since independence squatting became a
problem in nearly all urban areas and rural towns. In general the document does
not proceed into sufficient detail about aspects of rural housing. The emphasis
and discussion mainly focuses on the provision of urban housing, thus leaving out
the majority of people who are still living in rural areas, as was indicated in
Chapter 5.

To illustrate the extent of the existing housing stock in the four mainly
Ovambo-speaking regions (Oshikoto includes commercial farm land and also the
mining town of Tsumeb), the following graphs shows the different house types and
the percentage of the population living in these houses:

Northern regions
Percentage of households living in:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohangwena</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Graph 6.1 Population and types of houses (Source CSO 1991)

The following table shows the materials used in the northern regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.1 Building materials for walls and roofs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walls:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cement bricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facebricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wooden poles, sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corrugated steel sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof materials:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corrugated steel sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wood and mathole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thatch, grass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In all three locations, traditional homesteads make up the majority of house types. Building materials used in the four regions, show the dominance of traditional materials. The information based on the data of the 1991 Census and Housing Census (CSO 1991). It can be assumed that all households in the study area at that time, were surveyed.

Mills (1987:105) distinguishes between three types of settlements and the characteristics of housing. The first are dispersed rural homesteads, which consists of isolated but socially interconnected farms. The design is based on traditional spatial arrangements, style and technology. Construction materials nowadays used include wooden stakes and sheet metal for stockades, stamped earth as well as plastic sheet flooring, sun dried mud bricks and millet stalks for walls, and roofs are thatch or corrugated metal sheets (Mills 1987:106). Steel windows and door frames are also becoming increasingly common building materials. Termites present a problem to homesteads built from traditional material, such as wood. Deforestation is another factor influencing the use of non-traditional building materials. Consequently there is a trend to utilise more "modern" and more durable materials.

The second type are spontaneous urban settlements, especially around Oshakati, Ongwediva and Ondangwa. This is the result of the severe housing shortage coupled with the high rents for lodging in these towns, which have forced many migrants to erect their own shelter (Mills 1987:107). The author points out that similar to the traditions in rural areas, access to land and the right to build on it, occurs only after a life-long rent is paid to the chief or headmen under whose jurisdiction the land falls. In 1983 prices varied from R70 for a small plot to R450 for a large piece of land on which a store, dwelling and a fast-food shop could be build. The designs reflect the availability of materials (Mills 1987:108). A blend of rural homestead architectural forms and materials, as well as modern materials, are characteristics of the dwellings of the inhabitants. When parts of the dwelling are replaced, corrugated sheet metal fastened to a wooden framework is widely used. The houses become rectilinear, to ease the use of the sheet metal, which is difficult if the circular form is applied. A dwelling form is consolidated when the owner can afford brick walls, and industrially available fittings such as doors, windows and/or ceilings.

The construction is carried out by semi-skilled tradesmen, who learned their trade on labour contracts in the south (Mills 1987:108-109). Many of these house builders have become established contractors, re-furbishers and employers in the four northern regions. Mills also points out that this has not only lead to
employment opportunities in the informal sector, but has also promoted ancillary services such as the manufacture of sun-burnt bricks, furniture, doors and window frames.

Finally there are the planned urban townships, planned and designed by government authorities and private consultants (Mills 1987:110). As a result of the influence of the apartheid policy, two townships were created, one well-serviced, carefully maintained for the white civil servants, military and police personnel, called Oshakati East. The other, Oshakati West, was developed for the mainly Ovambo-speaking population. Both are physically separated by an oshan. Oshakati West consists of those standard four roomed houses as they have been built all over southern Africa in the 1960s. Seen in relation to the size of the house, the erven on which they are located are extremely large, from 450 square meters to 1100 square meter. A large percentage of the erf areas have un- or underutilised spaces.

In 1991 the housing stock in Oshakati, Ongwediva, and Ondangwa was described as follows:

Table 6.2 Oshakati housing stock 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal housing</th>
<th>Informal housing</th>
<th>Other housing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>1626 Shacks</td>
<td>1215 Single Quarters</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached</td>
<td>705 Traditional</td>
<td>64 Flats</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25 Mobile home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2522</strong></td>
<td><strong>1304</strong></td>
<td><strong>215</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3 Ongwediva housing stock 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal housing</th>
<th>Informal housing</th>
<th>Other housing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>193 Shacks</td>
<td>132 Single Quarters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached</td>
<td>62 Traditional</td>
<td>11 Flats</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>21 Other</td>
<td>8 Mobile home</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>276</strong></td>
<td><strong>151</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4 Ondangwa housing stock 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal housing</th>
<th>Informal housing</th>
<th>Other housing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached</td>
<td>621 Shacks</td>
<td>231 Single Quarters</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached</td>
<td>51 Traditional</td>
<td>204 Flats</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>91 Other</td>
<td>23 Mobile home</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>763</strong></td>
<td><strong>458</strong></td>
<td><strong>95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1993 the housing stock in the three urban areas, according to officials of the different local authorities, was the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.5 Oshakati housing stock 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal housing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshakati East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshakati West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLURGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.6 Ongwediva housing stock 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal housing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.7 Ondangwa housing stock 1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal housing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tables (6.2 - 6.7) above show the large number of conventional houses in the Oshana region's urban areas. However, informal and traditional housing is an important aspect regarding the urban housing stock. Once the three towns have been proclaimed, investments are expected to concentrate on conventional housing, with the exception of the upgrading projects in the informal settlements. In the urban areas as well as in all the regions, traditional housing is still the most commonly found type of residence.

2.1 Oshakati

Oshakati means "in the middle", as it is located at the point where three traditional tribal lands come together, namely the Ondonga, Okwanyama, and the Uukwambi tribal lands (Hamupunda in an interview on NBC TV 14/08/94).

The origin of Oshakati goes back to the 1960's, after the Odendaal Commission's recommendation that a hospital should be build at a new settlement called Okatana. The hospital was completed in 1966 (Hangula 1993:20). It was decided in a meeting in 1964 that the new settlement should be renamed to become Oshakati. Other public
institutions followed, such as an office for the Department of Water Affairs, a post office, the police, a school, and a radio station. It became a major problem to accommodate the officials and employees of these institutions.

Oshakati has maintained its role as the main economic centre in the north. It continues to attract people from rural areas, but also national and international investors. After independence, it was the first town in the region to be proclaimed, reinforcing its regional economic, political and social dominance. Tvedten and Hangula (1993:2) estimate that around 80% of the town's population live in shanties (see also Table 6.2 and 6.5). Approximately 77% of these shanties have roofs and walls made out of corrugated iron sheets and scrap metal, with dirt floors (Tvedten & Hangula 1993:15). Tvedten and Hangula (1993:16) also found that in the shanties of Oshakati, people have a clear idea of what improvement of housing standards means. For them it means a modern house. About 95.8% claimed that they did not have money to improve their shacks. According to Tvedten and Hangula (1993:7), the shanties represent a substantial potential for development, because of the large number of people living here, and because the people in the informal areas possess considerable resources such as traditional skills and manpower (see section 3.1 above). Furthermore, the authors claim, without positive development in the shanty areas, other developments in Oshakati and the rural hinterland could be jeopardised.

2.1.1 Location

Oshakati is located 10 km west of Ongwediva and about 35 km north of Ondangwa; approximately 15°45' east and 17°45' south. The town is located in the Cuvelai drainage system, which extends from central Angola to the Etosha Pan in the south.

Oshakati is the most northern town in the Ondangwa/Oshakati nexus, which is the main commercial and population centre in northern Namibia. The town is approximately 44 km away from the Angolan/Namibian border in a direct line, but to the borderpost of Oshikango by road, via Ondangwa, the distance is about 95 km.

2.1.2 Physical context

The Cuvelai oshana divides the town into two parts (see Figure 6.3). More than 23% of the municipal area consists of oshanas, some streams and vleis or marshes. The larger oshanas have standing water for many months after the end of the rainy season, thus are a breeding ground for mosquitoes creating a major health hazard.

A considerable part of the townlands consists of oshanas, shown in blue in Figure 6.3. In some of these oshanas standing water throughout the year is
possible. This water is used for household purposes. Township developments inside the municipal borders have to consider these streams. Infrastructural projects, such as road construction, should not interfere with the water flow to prevent less water flowing down the stream, causing a disruption of the livelihood of the communities depending on the water. Housing developments cannot be envisaged in areas inside the oshanas, as flooding will leave the houses standing in water for a long time, thus making them inhabitable. Only the diversion of the flood waters by means of dams or land fills, could make the winning of additional land for township developments possible. However the environmental impact of such projects has to be studied carefully.

2.1.3 Settlement zones

There is an extreme shortage of land for development within the Oshakati townlands as no surveyed and serviced land is available. New townships or extensions are planned, but the development of the first phase depends on the availability of funds. The existing infrastructure is inadequate, especially water and sanitation (Wienecke & Martin 1994:7).

Figure 6.1 Townplan Oshakati (Source Urban Dynamics 1995)

1 Problems were experienced in the Okavango Delta in Botswana.
Four distinctive areas within Oshakati can nowadays be identified. The main tarred roads to the North divide the town into a high and middle income area on the one side and the lowest income area on the other as shown in Figure 6.1.

2.1.3.1 Oshakati East

Before independence Oshakati East was the former white township, surrounded by army bases and a security fence. Infrastructural services include waterborne sewerage, water, electricity, refuse removal and tarred roads with stormwater trenches. The houses in this part of Oshakati met the high standards set by the pre-independence administration.

2.1.3.2 Oshakati West

Oshakati West was originally developed as a black township (NBIC 1982b:59). Erf sizes average 1000m² (varying from 836-1765m²). Services include waterborne sewerage, water reticulation, electricity, refuse removal and roads. The first conventional houses have brick walls, steel roof sheeting, no ceilings, and external ablution blocks. Only houses built between 1968 and 1970 had an internal bathroom (NBIC 1982b:59).

Subletting in the conventional houses is extensive. Due to the large erf size, informal structures have been erected. The rapid increase of the population, especially in Oshakati West, resulted in a situation where the water supply by the Department of Water Affairs could not meet the actual demand. Watertowers remain empty, although the pumps run 24 hours. The internal water distribution system is also not adequate to supply the various communities (Wienecke & Martin 1994:8).

2.1.3.3 Informal settlements

Informal settlements are expanding and new ones are established in and around Oshakati (see Figure 6.2), consisting of informal structures without the services found in the formal part (see also NBIC 1990a).

IBIS² started with an pilot building project in Oneshila consisting of 500 units. The project is pursued without any initial costs for land, as the idea is to establish a community development trust, owning the land in which informal settlements are located (interview with Maasen 1993)³. In addition to the proposals for upgrading, income generating projects are also planned. The project's objectives include inter alia (IBIS 1994:i) the upgrading of public

---

2 IBIS is a Danish NGO
3 This project is similar to the Old Naledi squatter upgrading project in Gaberone (see von Nostrand)
upgrading private housing, site and service schemes, and urban development planning. Urban development planning includes (IBIS 1994:10) the documentation of appropriate survey procedures and standards; standards for minimum erf sizes; aspects such as environmental management, enterprise development, and non-governmental management structures in informal settlements; and the development of appropriate community mechanisms for sustaining the benefits delivered to a target population, for example the maintenance of water supplies or the maintenance of roads.

Figure 6.2 Formal and informal areas in Oshakati (IBIS 1993 appendix 2)

2.1.3.4 Industrial area

As the industrial area has been established (see Figure 6.1), the 250 cubic meter watertower is being disconnected from the Oshakati West network, otherwise no water would be available for the industries (Wienecke & Martin 1994:8) making industrial development in the area difficult, if not impossible. Due to the demand in Oshakati West this tower often stands empty as was indicated above.

In recent years a large number of new businesses have established themselves in Oshakati. A large number of service industries have been established to offer services to the town and the neighbouring districts (Wienecke & Martin 1994:9).
The major area for investments is along the main tarred road between Oshakati West and the industrial area. The following sketch shows the different residential areas:

2.1.4 Population

Present estimates, by the local authority and the MRLGH, come up with a population figure of around 50000 inhabitants. A growth rate of 3 to 5% is used as a basis for planning (Wienecke & Martin 1994:2-3). However a precise calculation is not possible because of the continuous influx of people into the area. In 1993, the population living in Oshakati represents about 7.6% of the total population in the Ovambo-speaking regions (see also chapter 4, section 3.3).

According to Hailulu (interview with 1993), many inhabitants are not permanent. They move to the traditional farming areas during the rainy season, but come back in the dry season. Most of these residents stay in the informal areas. Their houses are not always occupied during periods of farming activities.

2.1.5 Infrastructure

In general the infrastructure in Oshakati needs attention. Services are often inadequate due to the rapid growth of the town in recent years. For example the sewer system must be upgraded and the capacity of pipes increased (interview with Hailulu 1993), as was indicated in Chapter 4. Existing oxidation dams run full, therefore their capacities should be increased (interview with Hoejgaard 1993c). The distribution of water is hampered by the fact that the pipes are too small to cater for the growing demand. Consultants have to be appointed to investigate the whole infrastructure, which would take some time to complete. During 1993/94 some funds were provided to address water and sewer problems in Oshakati West and the industrial area (interview with Hailulu 1994).

Street lights are an important priority for the town council (interview with Hailulu 1993), in order to provide some safety to the inhabitants at night. The focus is on the main roads and the highway through Oshakati. But it is uncertain whether enough money will be made available.

Tarred roads are mainly found in the former white part of the town. However, with the future upgrading of the other townships, it is envisaged that new road surfaces will be provided. The main road from Ondangwa to Ruacana which runs through Oshakati, also has a bitumen surface.
An airfield, built for the South African army, is located inside the boundaries of Oshakati. However, the major airport of the region is located in Ondangwa, but the offices are located in Oshakati (interview with Hekandjo 1993).

A regional NBC radio station is located in the town. A small airport has been built by the previous administration primarily for the military. The latter was also primarily involved in the provision of most of the infrastructure at present found in some parts of Oshakati. The regional headquarters of the police, the largest post office and the major hospital were all in this centre. A power station with a diesel turbine was operated here, before the connection to the national power line.

With the expansion of activities by government departments and the services provided by them, access will be easier for the residents. A new magistrates court for example, was built in 1993, a branch of the receiver of revenue commenced with duties, and the local hospital was enlarged. Furthermore, the regional council has its offices in Oshakati.

2.1.6 Housing

Large plots with open ground contributed to high development costs in Oshakati in the past (NBIC 1982a:298). However, they enable the inhabitants to cultivate maize and maintain some livestock. To the west, a large "squatter" township grew in the last couple of years.

The former "whites only" township of Oshakati East has been transformed into a "mixed" township, where anybody may live now. After the SADF left, UNTAG officials stayed in many of the government owned houses. After independence, the picture changed again. Government officials and employees of NGO's and the United Nations agencies, reside in the erstwhile exclusive area. This township appears run-down, as the local authority is not capable to provide essential services such as the cleaning of streets and stormwater channels.

The effects of the withdrawal of the SADF on the housing areas, has been investigated by Pendleton et al. (1993:66-67). Freedom of movement and of association were possible after the curfew was lifted, which contributed to the influx of people to the towns. With respect to businesses, the authors state (Pendleton et al. 1993:67) that only a few respondents mentioned some decline in business since the SADF left.
The type of housing found in Oshakati East and West in 1982 was the following (AEA Town & Regional Planners 1982:52-54): in the former white township, 292 houses were built on erven averaging 1500 square meters; the former black township had 658 houses on erven with an average size of 1100 square meters. The informal settlements accounted for a residential area of 34,8 hectare, and a population density of 417 net persons per hectare. Furthermore, about 300 dispersed traditional homesteads were found in the area. The size of these homesteads range from 1500 to 3000 square meters, with an average of 2200 square meters.

The housing conditions in Oshakati were determined in 1991 during the census survey. Some of the characteristics are listed below, based on data received from the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO 1991).

For walls the following materials are used:
- Cement blocks: 38,5%
- Burnt bricks: 5,5%
- Corrugated iron sheets: 46,1%
- Prefab: 6,4%
- Poles, sticks: 2,3%
- Sticks, mud, dung: 0,4%
- Other: 0,8%

Roofs materials consist of:
- Corrugated iron sheets: 91,9%
- Asbestos: 2,0%
- Brick tile: 1,1%
- Slate: 1,2%
- Covered wood: 1,0%
- Thatch, grass: 1,9%
- Sticks, mud, dung: 0,1%

Cooking is done in the following manner:
- Electricity: 9,6%
- Gas: 19,8%
- Paraffin: 1,3%
- Firewood: 68,5%

Light is provided by:
- Electricity: 21,8%
- Gas: 1,2%
- Paraffin: 21,2%
- Candle: 55,0%
- Firewood: 0%

Water is obtained from:
- Piped water indoors: 15,2%
- Piped water yard: 29,6%
- Public pipe: 54,2%
- Well: 0,1%
- Borehole: 0,2%
Sanitary facilities:
- Water closet: 28.4%
- Pit: 20.4%
- Bucket pail: 1.4%
- Bush: 49.2%

The tenure system in 1991 was as follows:
- Rented: 21.6%
- Owner occupied: 68.9%
- Rent free: 8.8%

2.1.6.1 Conventional housing

Conventional housing in the study area is at present mainly found in urbanised areas. In these urban centres a variety of income groups have to be considered in the provision of housing or shelter. Modern concepts such as income levels and affordability are normally used to determine certain groups within the society to qualify for housing. At the top of the pyramid are the high income earners, who usually can provide for themselves. The second group are the middle-income people, who would require some assistance, especially in the light of the present high interest rates and high building costs, as they demand conventional modern houses. One problematic group, demanding assistance, are government employees, such as teachers, health personnel and other government employees who have been transferred by a ministry to that part of the country.

Private sector involvement in low-income housing has been advocated at various occasions, but there are limitations to private sector engagement. In a free enterprise and capitalistic society most businesses take a long-term view of planning (Visagie no date: 4). The author states that the private sector has to contend with many problems and commitments in order to survive fluctuating business cycles. They must observe the normal rule - to show a profit in order to remain viable. One difference between the approach to housing by the public and the private sector is, that politics can play a major role in the case of government involvement, whereas economics play the major role in the case of the private sector (Van Niekerk 1990: 2). Another aspect identified by Van Niekerk (1990: 5) is that not only the government bureaucracy could have a negative influence on property development, but also financial institutions such as building societies 4. Standards set by the latter, "...are for a first world country and not for a third world country as we live in" (Van Niekerk 1990: 5).

---

4 This includes guarantees before a loan is granted, a certain deposit to be paid by the client, or women who may not be granted a loan without their husbands approval
The private sector's role in the provision of housing is restricted in the Ovambo-speaking region. This is due to the fact that the region is generally speaking a low-income area, profit making is limited, except for larger projects initiated by the public sector, be it the central government or the future regional councils. One project was funded by the MLGH in 1991/92, when 530 conventional houses were constructed by private contractors in the three main urban centres of Ovambo, of which 50 in Oshakati.

In 1991 the Ministry of Local Government and Housing insisted on a higher quality of housing for the lower-income groups build by the NBIC/NHE (personal communication with officials). This resulted in an immediate sharp rise in construction costs of individual units, due to the more sophisticated designs and materials used. This resulted in that even less people could afford these houses, especially without some subsidisation. This is not unique to the Namibian situation. As Shakur (1987:4) writes, "Post colonial housing policies are characterised by high standards, low density public housing schemes for a few privileged upper and middle class income civil servants". These schemes were expensive, non-flexible and unaffordable to the lowest income groups (Shakur 1987:4-5).

2.1.6.2 Informal housing provision

The informal settlements are perceived as becoming a major problem in Oshakati as there is a continuous influx from people. The newcomers settle on any land available and make use of existing services, especially water, which are insufficient to cater for the rapidly growing population.

To design and built a shelter is an arduous task, as income, demands and affordability play a significant role in the provision of shelter. At the lowest end of the scale, there are those with no or extreme low earnings, calling for so called ultra-low-cost shelters, such as self-help, or site and service schemes. In the past, the pre-independence administrations have only to a limited extent supplied for the needs of all these categories. In the example of the latter two cases, nothing was seriously done, which resulted in the growth of the informal townships.

The government's commitment to improve housing in Namibia's urban and rural areas can take several directions. One possibility are site and service schemes in densely populated areas for the very poor, whereas conventional houses are built by private developers. Miles and Parkes (1984:2) write that governments came to realise that there will never be enough resources to solve the 'housing problem'
by vast government-funded construction programmes using mass production and heavy mechanisation. This only leads to the building of a few houses, too costly for the low-income groups. Among the resources in the provision of housing or shelter, is land in general and serviced land in particular which aggravates the provision of housing.

2.1.7 Economy

Oshakati was originally founded as an industrial area, which included sites for administration workshops and a power station (NBIC 1982a:289). The town grew rapidly in the 1970s when the bushwar escalated between South Africa and SWAPO. New businesses and enterprises were attracted, contributing to the growth of the town.

The town became the major trading centre in the north, a large number of different types of businesses have established themselves in recent years, such as building material suppliers, banks and insurance companies, wholesalers and shopping centres, branches of beverage companies. One problem with the expansion of the business sector in the north is, that the economy is primarily based on services (interview with Hoejgaard 1993b). Not much is invested in manufacturing or small industries which would create more job opportunities. According to Hoejgaard (interview with 1993b) the housing market must be made more stable in order to make a positive contribution to local building material supplies.

Cultivated lands (shown in green in Figure 6.3) form another big area of Oshakati. Consequently the expansion possibilities of the formal residential areas are limited. The cultivated fields are usually in the vicinity of established homesteads, or the homesteads are located inside the fields. Until a complete survey of the existing town has been undertaken, new developments in the form of additional townships can be seriously hampered.

2.1.8 Local resources

Few natural resources are found in Oshakati and the surrounding areas. Except for clay, no other suitable local building materials are available.

Due to the rapid increase in the population, there is an enormous potential with respect to human resources. The growth in manpower is evident, but due to the overall economic situation no use is made of this potential. Furthermore, skills are usually lacking, thus investments in training must be considered.
Figure 6.3 Map of Oshakati (Source: Surveyor General Windhoek, 1976)

Figure 6.4 Map of Onambome (Source: Surveyor General Windhoek, 1991)
2.2 Onambome

The name Onambome means *luislang* (interview with Johannes 1991) or python.

2.2.1 Location

The village is located about 25 kilometres from the tarred road to Ruacana or circa 10 kilometres from the Namibian/Angolan border. To reach the village, a drive of about 45 minutes with a car during the dry season is required, after rain it takes half a day to cover the distance from the main road to Onambome with a four wheel drive vehicle (interview with Johannes 1992).

2.2.2 Physical context

Except for some pans in the vicinity, large *oshanas* are not found nearby. Not one large *oshana* is found in the neighbourhood of Onambome. The nearest *oshana* is about 3.5 kilometres to the East, and the other about 4 kilometres to the West. Thus no surface water is available during the dry season, except for the dam built by the local inhabitants is water is primarily used for cattle and the other life-stock and not for domestic use.

2.2.3 Population

The 1991 census gave a figure of 440 inhabitants, 189 males and 251 females, for the enumeration area Onambome (Republic of Namibia 1994b).

Onambome had 298 homesteads in April 1994, according to the local headman (interview with Johannes 1994). A precise population figure is difficult to obtain, because of the high fluctuations in the number of people residing in the area. Many can only be considered as semi-permanent, as they come to Onambome for certain periods of time during a year, such as the ploughing season, harvesting, or holidays. Thereafter they stay in other places to work or to look for work.

2.2.4 Infrastructure

The village is a conglomeration of homesteads, with some small shops and public facilities such as a small school, the Sheetekela Combined, with grades 1 to 10, 801 pupils and 20 teachers (Friedrich Ebert Foundation 1994:121); a church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; and the Osheetekla clinic which provides health services to the area.

Vehicles are the only available means of transport to the area, using multiple tracks. But the tracks to Onambome become impassable after heavy rains, because
the tracks become muddy and the oshanas are filled with water. During this time transport to the area is difficult to maintain.

Each homestead has its own well for drinking water provision, although a dam provides water for the cattle of the residents. The depth of the wells differ. To build a new well with a depth of about 5 meters, costs about R800.00 and takes one and a half week to dig (interview with Johannes 1991). In the old days the wells were lined with wooden poles, placed on one another to leave a square opening as access. Due to the lack of wood this is not longer practice. Nowadays holes are dug on spots where anthills were removed, as water did not easily seep away. But, due to the heat which is becoming more intense due to the lack of surrounding trees, water cannot be stored in this way for a very long time, as the high evaporation increases water losses (interview with Johannes 1991).

2.2.5 Housing

Traditional homesteads form the largest percentage of the housing stock. Very few conventional built "modern" brick houses have been erected, including a few cuca shops. In those cases where a brick dwelling is erected, it is located inside the homestead, thus sharing it with the other traditional huts and structures. Some residents have started using selfmade clay blocks for the building of walls of their huts instead of wood. A few made use of a cement/clay mixture in order to obtain stronger and longer lasting blocks (interview with Johannes 1992).

Throughout the study area, including the vicinity of Onambome, fenced-in fields in the communal land, still have tall grass towards the end of the dry season (personal observations since 1992). This grass is used either as a fodder reserve or to have enough grass available to repair or renew thatched roofs in the region. According to local inhabitants (1992), a bundle of grass is sold for between R1.00 and R2.50 to people in those areas without grass, or to people without their own supplies. During the dry season, the grass is collected and stored safely on high platforms inside the homesteads until required. It must be pointed out that mainly rich farmers fence in part of the communal land for their private use, which is illegal, but the Namibian government has up to now not stopped this practice.

2.2.6 Economy

Figure 6.4 shows the widespread locations of cultivated fields (green) around the village. The major crops grown are mahangu, sorghum, mealies, beans, peanuts, pumpkin, and watermelon. In addition to grown crops, other food is found in the veld, such as wild spinach and wild berries. Livestock consists of cattle, donkeys, goats, pigs, poultry, and some horses.
2.2.7 Local resources

Local trees are the mopani, marula, and palm trees. Deforestation is evident everywhere in and around Onambome. Nobody has until now started the planting of new trees. Until some years back, people hired a lorry to drive into Angola to chop wood, but this had to be stopped, because the inhabitants of those areas in Angola prohibited this practice as they feared a deforestation similar to the one in Ovambo (interview with Johannes 1991).

The palisades have to be replaced every seven to eight years. Grass roofs last about the same, six to seven years (interview with Johannes 1991). Thatch can be purchased in nearby Oshikuku for R2.50 a bunch. In the past, after the rains enough grass was available for thatching. But this has changed recently, and it is feared that the situation can deteriorate further due to overgrazing. The availability of grass and water are the main problems in Onambome (interview with Johannes 1991).

Clay bricks are manufactured in the traditional way, by using wooden moulds, for walls of huts. Some builders use a cement/clay mixture to stabilise the material. The clay is obtained from the vicinity of anthills (interview with Johannes 1991). Prefabricated roof structures are placed on top of the walls and are covered with grass.

2.3 Onankali
2.3.1 Location

Onankali is situated about 50 km to the south east of Ondangwa, along the main tarred road between Tsumeb and Ondangwa.

2.3.2 Physical context

The area is characterised by dry woodlands on deep greyish sands in the east and the open palm and marula savannah to the west (DRFN & SIDA 1992:11). The nearest centre is Omuntele to the south west of Onankali, about 15 km away.

2.3.3 Population

As the area is not geographically defined, no population figures are available. The enumeration area for the 1991 census in which Onankali is located, provides a figure of 696 inhabitants, consisting of 299 males and 397 females. The enumeration area includes Onankali and Onakwathola (Republic of Namibia 1994).
2.3.4 Infrastructure

The settlement consists of the area alongside the major road artery through the Ovambo-speaking region and the main connection to the south of the country. It is a relative privileged section, because a major water pipe is running parallel to the tarred road. At intervals, tapping points have been established, legally and illegally, enabling the residents to tap potable water. Also running parallel to the road are the telephone lines from the end point at Ruacana, connecting the north to the south.

Those living not too far from the tarred road, have the advantage of easy access to drinking water. The main pipeline from Ruacana to the south of Ovambo, runs parallel to the tarred main road. However, a lot of water is wasted around the tapping points, turning the vicinity into a muddy pool which also creates health hazards. As no charges are paid by the communal inhabitants for the consumption, nobody regards water as a precious resource. Communal users are subsidised by 100%. Private individuals, who have obtained a connection from the Department of Water Affairs, have to pay R500 for the connection, and R1.10 per cubic meter after entering in an agreement with the department, according to an official of the Rural Water Supply Department (personal communication 26/11/93). However, the cost price of delivering water to the region is R2.50 per cubic meter, therefore a huge subsidy has to be paid by government.

Near the locality a church is situated to the east of the road. The local school, Oshilungi Combined School, has 261 pupils in the grades 1 to 6, and 22 teachers (Friedrich Ebert Foundation 1994:129).

2.3.5 Housing

The main transportation route has a definite impact on the roadside economy and the housing situation alongside this road reserve. Three dwelling types are evident, the first are conventionally built residential and business buildings; the second traditional homesteads, and single roomed huts made out of corrugated sheeting. Businesses, such as the cuca shops, are built according to the modern square design and with conventional materials, i.e. brick walls and a corrugated steel roof.

The large number of rectangular huts made out of steel sheeting, could be regarded as a sign of the increasing application of modern building materials the people use, because of the advancing scarcity of the natural resources. Most of the roofs are mono-pitched steel roofs. Only larger houses, with at least 4 rooms, have a double pitched roof. Most of these houses are located near the tarred road.
and are not enclosed by means of a fence. They are placed closed together forming a small group of houses.

The homesteads alongside the main tarred road, display typical examples of vernacular architecture mixed with modern designs and materials. Many "modern" houses comprise of a single room, with walls and roof made out of corrugated metal sheeting, fastened to a wooden frame. The better-off inhabitants live in conventional brick houses with roofs made of corrugated metal sheets. Wire fencing is common around these more formal properties.

2.3.6 Economy

Except for the traditional agricultural economy (similar to the one described under 2.2.6) in the area, some small shops and garages are active. Some wood work is executed to provide several local items, such as clay pots, woven baskets and wooden artefacts, for example pestles and platters carved from soft wood. Some of these objects are sold near the road side to local residents or occasional tourists, thus providing cash to the inhabitants.

The pre-independence administration, started with a forestry project in Onankali. It was planned to provide wood for the area for poles, fuelwood, and construction purposes (interview with Hornsbein 1994). Eucalyptus trees were planted on a trial basis. But the project did not perform as planned as the trees grew slower than anticipated.

Around Onankali, wooden roof structures and building materials from the plantation, such as sticks, grass and poles are offered for sale. The sellers live largely in houses made out of corrugated steel sheets, near the market place.

2.3.7 Local resources

Soft wood, millet stalks, and calabashes are available plant materials. Clay used for pottery is obtained from termite hills. The previous administration started a eucalyptus forest in Onankali in order to provide wood to the local population (see section 2.3.6).

3. CONCLUSION

As in other rural regions the study area faces problems such as urbanisation and its accompanied housing shortage, unemployment or the lack of infrastructure. The rural character will not change in the foreseeable future as traditional homesteads and the way of life of the inhabitants will remain part of the formal
town. The problem of unequal standards of living in urban and rural areas, will probably not be resolved by the present government, which also contributes to the widening gap of living standards between the various groups in the country.

In order to find solutions for the housing sector, a new housing policy, which should also include the issues of rural housing and urbanisation, has to be considered. Thereafter, strategies can be developed to find ways to implement the policy. Urbanisation has not been addressed as an important issue relating to housing. The concentration of government and donors on urban areas will exacerbate the problems in urban areas, not solve them. Large sale infrastructural projects also do not necessarily improve living conditions in rural areas. Supplying water by pipe, does not necessarily make the rural areas self-reliant. A major water pipeline makes the inhabitants of the vicinity dependent on this modern source of water supply. Local knowledge of water sources and traditional water supply measures are not longer supported, particularly if the supply of the water, in this case from the Cunene river, is in danger of becoming unreliable as it is in the case of droughts.

The role of rural housing should be recognised as an important factor in the life of rural inhabitants, by those involved in development efforts in the northern regions in Namibia. The various factors of housing have to be integrated in a comprehensive rural development programme as rural development should be a multifaceted approach. Local knowledge, participation by the inhabitants and resources could play an important role in this endeavour. This could help to decrease the migration to rural centres. Furthermore, the upliftment of living standards in rural areas through an integrated development approach could improve the economic and environmental as well as the housing conditions in these areas.

* * *
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

1. SUMMARY

When Namibia became independent on 21 March 1990, the fulfilment of the ruling party’s promises during the election campaign in 1989 were anxiously awaited. The population in the north of the country, but also in the urban areas to the south, expected the government to begin immediately to address their problems and demands. However, a large number of former freedom fighters, professionals and intellectuals, is becoming increasingly disappointed with the growing differences of incomes, benefits and living standards between the population and the rulers. It was expected that the new government would seriously tackle the question of inequalities and the distribution of benefits to all. The allocation of very large salaries, luxuries, and benefits to the members of the ruling class, became a theme repeatedly discussed since it appeared in 1990, for example in letters written to newspapers. Especially in the light of the tight financial situation of the country, it is implausible how the rulers can live in affluence, whereas not enough funds are available for the needy groups of the population to address basic needs.

SWAPO’s election manifesto (1989:17-18) states that a SWAPO government will endeavour to eliminate the wide differences between urban and rural standards of living by initiating development programmes designed to improve income earnings of rural communities. It goes on: "It will do this through equitable allocation of investment funds... Since there will be limits to the availability of investment funds, independent Namibia will emphasise the use of labour-intensive methods". Furthermore, the abuse of power and public office, the squandering of public funds by holders of public office as in the past, will be stopped by introducing stringent measures to curb corrupt practices (SWAPO 1989:24). SWAPO promised to reduce the inequalities of income distribution (1989:26). However, after gaining independence, it became clear that government officials and leader’s living standards will receive huge boosts due to their salaries and benefits. The Windhoek Advertiser (September 27,1990:1) commented on this issue:

"The injustices of the past will be addressed by the leaders of the present - and those leaders will be the first to have their injustices addressed".

This study explored the situation of housing in a rural area in Northern Namibia to investigate the living standards in post-independent Namibia. Three main aspects were discussed: 1. rural development in general, 2. the particulars of rural housing in Northern Namibia as a important facet of rural development, and 3. the policies of the Namibian Government with respect to rural development and
rural housing. The discussion confirms that rural development and rural housing are both multi-sectoral and multi-functional.

Since independence no integrated rural development policies have been implemented in Namibia. Uncoordinated development efforts of governments agencies and NGOs prevail. At present, projects aiming at the improvement of living standards take place mainly for two groups in the major urban areas. The first are those living in informal or squatter settlements and the second group includes the ruling elite and its bureaucracy. In rural areas, large scale infrastructural projects introduce modernisation components into a traditional society. However, comprehensive government policies and strategies regarding rural development and rural housing are not available. Despite SWAPO's promises of reducing the inequalities of income distribution, the opposite occurred - the gap between the privileged and the masses is widening, not narrowing. One reason is the lack of policies, another that the list of government priorities does not include rural housing.

In a semi-arid country such as Namibia, priorities of investments in the natural environment and the inhabitants are essential. Both form part of the improvements of the quality of life. As the example of Eritrea shows (see chapter 5, section 9), a committed government can do so without having to rely or to becoming too dependent on outside sources. According to Dube (1988:83), true development involves investment in people to enable them and society first to meet their basic needs and then gradually to improve their quality of life.

The MLGH (1991b:2) acknowledges that in order to meet the housing demand, the communities and the private sector have to be involved. This can be interpreted as having a much broader spectrum of the society involved in this issue, and also to facilitate a more equal distribution of the country's wealth and benefits of development. To achieve this, participation of local communities has to be stressed and also the utilisation of local knowledge and skills. This has to be supported by relevant research efforts. Keya (1991:88) supports the strengthening of research in arid countries to provide information that can be used in the formulation of projects and extension services. He concludes that research input should be at every level of the development process. Arnesen (1991:91) stresses the need to be able to foresee a researcher's position and ideological and practical consequences of research. If this is not done, he argues, the plea to integrate nature and man on one holistic theory will not only be hollow, but also threaten the local population, especially the poorest section of it. Research should also include an assessment of the availability of local knowledge and
practices, as innovations which are in accord with indigenous modes of perception and local practices are likely to be understood and utilised (Baxter 1991:10). Those innovations based on unfamiliar, abstract, Western scientific practice are frequently ignored or misapplied. Van Niskerk (1994:13) supports this view: "Development agents who do not take the African cosmology and thought-patterns fully into consideration become part of the problems in Africa." Therefore, he argues, development models have to be designed that are functional in the context of social processes in the African community, and only then a contribution to the improvement of the quality of life will be made.

2. FINDINGS

1. Improving the living standards in general and in rural areas in particular is occurring on a limited scale. Large scale projects such as electricity supplies or the construction of new roads, could have a certain impact on living standards. Many of these projects are donor funded, thus dependent on these sources. The capability of maintaining the expensive modern infrastructure after the donors have withdrawn, could represent a serious problem in future if no funds become available. Accessibility to these new services is limited in a low-income area, as only few inhabitants can afford the services, i.e. become consumers and beneficiaries. That means others (taxpayers), must pay for the maintenance, although they are not using the services.

With respect to infrastructural development, the question is whether in rural areas small scale local projects, which are less prestigious, would have been more appropriate? In the case of the urban areas, the high density of population makes the modern infrastructure a necessity, but again most inhabitants do not have the income to pay for all the services.

The Namibian government's projects with respect to rural housing matters in the study area since independence can be summarised as follows: a Roads Master Plan has been drawn up; rural electricity projects are implemented, rural water supply network was and is expanded and improved in certain areas, a forestry policy is being implemented on a limited scale, thus lacking the impact necessary to rescue the habitat in which the majority of people in Namibia live.

If the number of envisaged houses by the MRLGH shortly after independence are reviewed (see chapter 5, section 3), it is clear that the target to build 100000 (conventional) houses until the year 2000 is an illusion. The rising costs of constructing conventional houses, including core houses, is increasingly out of
the reach of low-income households. In 1995, the NHE is building core houses costing between N$573 to N$959\(^1\) per m\(^2\). This is considered to be a very high price tag for low-income groups.

2. An urban bias in development projects is becoming apparent. This will in future increasingly contribute to the growth of urban areas. Urban areas are already unable to absorb all the newcomers. Consequently social problems such as crime will increase rapidly. Furthermore the existing urban infrastructure is in danger of becoming overloaded. The potential of the rural areas is not considered. Therefore the degradation of the study area's environment and the lack of the government commitment to tackle this problem, will also lead to an increase of the migration flow from rural to urban areas, as land becomes less fertile and the desertification of the study area becomes worse, putting pressure on the authorities to prioritise the urban areas even more. In both the rural and urban areas, the quality of life for the majority of inhabitants will decline.

The Desert Research Foundation of Namibia states that Namibia is 97\% arid or semi-arid (in Namib Times 16 September 1994:1). As most people in the country live off the land, environmentally sound land management is crucial to achieve sustainable development. The Foundation goes on that Namibia has a low human and livestock carrying capacity (in Namib Times 16 September 1994:19). It is not enough to address desertification once the damage is done, but the process of cause and effect must be examined as a whole, from its socio-economic origins to the final stages of degradation. Therefore this is an important issue in the study area which is not perceived as an important rural development goal by the Namibian government.

3. If political commitment is measured in terms of clearly defined and spelled out policies which are adopted by government, the government is displaying limited commitment for development in Namibia. This is a special shortcoming in the case of the first post-independent government, which is supposed to pave the way for development after the discontinuation of South African rule. In order to guide development efforts in all the relevant sectors of the country, policies have to formulated by the government of the day. Government policies set the economic and legislative environment in which to operate (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991a:48). Policy instruments that can stimulate the building industry include fiscal, industrial, technological, training, trade and pricing policies (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991a:48-49).

\(^1\) construction price, excludes erf
Available policy documents of the Namibian government show that rural housing is not a priority, in spite of the fact that the majority of the population still lives in rural areas or has links to these areas. The lack of policies is disappointing if viewed in the light of nearly five years of independence and the international assistance Namibia received and is receiving since independence. As Ruthenberg (1981:14) puts it: "Both levels are involved [in policy decisions]: local action without national policy is blind and policy without action is empty".

The National Housing Policy was formulated and approved in 1991, which shows that more policies could have been formulated and approved for those areas identified as priorities by the government. Once a policy has been formulated and approved, its relevancy must be assessed regularly. The present National Housing Policy is an example of an out-dated policy document. Consequently, institutions and organisations active in the areas of rural housing and related areas, often do not have clear guidelines to follow.

4. The potential for the improvement of rural housing within framework of rural development is not being recognised. The theoretical framework of rural development provides a basis to work on, i.e. to make use of the available potential in order to improve living standards. Since 1992, few changes have occurred if the following statement is considered with respect to housing in Namibia (UNDP 1992:9): "The country has so far adopted a conventional approach, that is to say direct provision of housing as opposed to creating the necessary environment for people to house themselves - to the problem of housing as a result of which the performance of the sector has been poor and uncoordinated. The needs of the low-income groups in urban and rural areas have remained largely neglected...".

3. THE PROSPECTS OF RURAL HOUSING

3.1 Rural housing

This study established that neither a rural housing policy nor a rural development policy exists in Namibia and will not exist in the near future, which indicates that these sectors are apparently not on the priority list of the MRLGH and the government in general. The National Shelter Strategy (1993:13-14), which is in the process of being formulated, points out the major areas of interest, namely access to shelter and shelter related services such as finance for housing, serviced land and infrastructure.
A new approach with respect to rural housing is necessary, based on the principle: "Find out what people are doing and help them to do it better (Schumacher quoted by Burrows 1987:5). This is the only way to improve living conditions on the scale and at the cost required according to the Executive Director of Habitat (quoted by Burrows 1987:5). The view supports the concept of unfolding the potential of people or communities, which happens slowly, over time, stage by stage until a higher level of perfection is achieved. A basis for this approach can be the use of the knowledge and expertise of the people themselves. Theodore Roszak (quoted in Newsweek, December 26, 1994:38) says:

"You cannot mass-produce knowledge, which is created by individual minds, drawing on individual experience, separating the significant from the irrelevant".

The reasons given by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements for the lack of attention that rural housing received (see chapter 1, section 3), is no longer true in the case of the study area. Rural people often build their own houses with modern materials which are locally available, such as corrugated steel sheets, although these materials are not always appropriate for the climatic conditions and usually are expensive. Rural housing is not only the provision of houses, but involves a number of other aspects such as environmental issues, infrastructure, and government structures. The perception that rural areas do not have serious environmental problems, as shown in this study, is no longer accurate. Serious environmental problems are prevalent, and they are influencing the quality of life in rural areas.

Referring to quality of life, Dobzhansky (quoted by Gopalakrishnan 1988:457) remarked:

"Man, and man alone knows that the world evolves and that he evolved with it. By changing what he knows about the world man changes the world that he knows; and by changing the world in which he lives man changes himself... the hope lies in the possibility that changes resulting form knowledge may also be directed by knowledge".

Although the National Housing Policy (see chapter 4, section 5.2) acknowledges that standards and by-laws usually make conventional houses expensive, no changes to the existing standards have been introduced officially, especially for low-income groups. The conventional type of housing remains expensive, thus not affordable, to low income groups. According to an NGO official (November 1994) active in northern Namibia, most people cannot even afford R200-300 for the construction of a pit latrine.
The potential for low-cost housing available in rural areas is illustrated in the way people have housed themselves for centuries by using local materials, skills and knowledge. The Zenzele system (see chapter 5) shows that traditional building methods can be adapted to suit urban requirements. Windhoek's more affluent townships show that the wealthy make extensive use of natural materials, e.g. thatch, local and imported natural stone, and wooden products. In the study area, products made of "European soil" are regarded as superior. This confirms Nyerere's view that mental blocks must be overcome before a society can progress more rapidly.

The housing process in general and for rural areas in particular should be supported by the following processes: government should formulate a policy which demarcates the development areas or problems which should be addressed; in other words what should be done, in this case with respect to rural housing. The various line ministries develop strategies for implementation. These strategies must be co-ordinated at a certain level, in the case of Namibia it is the task of the National Planning Commission. This enables any interested agency or organisation to become involved in the implementation process, such as the construction of rural houses or the supporting infrastructure.

The strategy defines standards, building materials, and in general support indigenous construction and skills. Encouragement can be given to the local production of building material, such as brickmaking, and the use of local materials, for example soil, wood, and whenever available stone products. It is necessary to look at possibilities to supply on a sustainable basis locally produced building materials such as timber. This requires more commitment to forestry and the environmental issues, which have to be more successful than the project in Onankali. The problem of not having local materials available, means that the people use modern, often inappropriate and expensive materials.

3.2. Proposals with respect to rural housing

To achieve integrated rural development in Namibia, policies which spell out the objectives the government wants to achieve, are needed. In 1995 the National Planning Commission was engaged in the formulation of a national development plan. This development plan is based on the policies of the various line ministries. Policy making should result in the formulation of clear objectives, "first by establishing the priorities of the government of the day and second, by establishing programmes that will contribute towards development" (Hanekom 1987:5-6). The programmes should be based on strategies, i.e. on how the objectives can be achieved. An example is the NHE, where on a yearly basis a strategic planning
document is compiled. The strategies of the corporation are revised annually to take changes in the social, political and economic spheres in the society into account. After the strategies have been set, operational objectives are identified by each department which aim at achieving the overall objectives of the NHE, as set out by the policy of the board of directors. On the central government level this process would also be useful to have up-to-date policies to avoid visualising the future on grounds of fiction or unachievable utopian ideals, but on factual evidence (Hanekom 1987:5).

In most developing countries, the role of the state is dominant (Renaud 1981:6). Therefore it is of importance that attention is given to rural development and also urbanisation. A national urbanisation policy is important for developing countries, because the location of new economic activities and the movement of the population affect the efficiency of the national economy and the stability of the political system (Renaud 1981:5). Urbanisation influences the provision of services by the various line ministries, such as education, health, transport, housing, and infrastructure. The line ministries should formulate the strategies and on departmental level, the operational planning to implement the strategies in urban and rural areas.

Housing does not consist of a house only, but of a large variety of factors such as socio-economic aspects, building material production, services, land, environmental aspects, the structures of the various levels of government, and finances. The different components should be integrated into a holistic approach towards housing to achieve improvements in the living standards of the majority of the population.

To address rural housing, the following aspects have to be considered:

1. A new integrated development approach with respect to housing, which has to include a appropriate policy on urbanisation in Namibia, is needed. Furthermore, the future sustainability of the housing sector, which has to start with the formulation of a policy by the relevant government institutions, has to be taken into account. "A key component of sustainable development is the institutional framework within which activities are conceived, planned, funded, implemented, and managed" (Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith 1990:4).

Cernea (1991:20) supports the incorporation of socio-anthropological knowledge into development policies. This body of knowledge can have a multiplier effect produced by the institutionalised recognition of socio-cultural variables in
programmes that follow policy formulation. As Uphoff (1991:467) describes it: "Putting people first in development projects comes down to tailoring the design and implementation of projects to the needs and capabilities of people who are supposed to benefit from them".

2. A housing policy has to take into account aspects such as urban and rural housing, rural development, infrastructural developments, and environmental factors in the diverse parts of Namibia. Policies must take particularities of each region into account, as no single strategy is suitable to accommodate all the diverse conditions in Namibia.

The United Nations definition of rural housing (1978:13) gives an indication of the variety of components playing a part in housing development, such as roads, water supply, sewerage disposal, electricity and fuel. Furthermore, the definition includes markets, health centres, social and cultural areas for education, religion, recreation, community participation and management. Facilities for agricultural and agro-industrial activities and services also form part of the housing system.

3. Namibia's housing sector needs more research to find alternatives and solutions, especially with respect to renewable resources. Some suggestions were made in National Housing Policy (MLGH 1990:42). Among the issues relating to housing to be researched are the following:

- community participation
- local knowledge and skills
- water storage and sanitation
- alternative building materials / construction methods
- environmental factors.

Research should move away from basic research or developing technologies, to applied and industry oriented research which concentrates on improving existing production processes for increased fuel efficiency, labour productivity, or quality assurance (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1991a:40). This includes the introduction of semi-mechanisation to traditional processes such as brick-making, builder's woodwork, roofing tile manufacture. Furthermore the adaptation of imported technologies could also be another area that would yield immediate dividends.

2 Examples are listed by the National Research Development Corporation in their Catalogue of Technological Opportunities
Research could also assist in the identification of suitable local raw materials and technologies suitable for rural areas. This became clear after a visit of the writer to Botswana and the Rural Industries Innovation Centre and the Botswana Technology Centre (October 1995), which are positive examples of what could be achieved if government support is available to invest in research and development, in order to develop appropriate solutions in the fields of urban and rural housing, agriculture, and small rural enterprises. Furthermore, the dissemination of information forms part of the overall objectives of these centres (see also Swanepoel 1989:44).

The emphasis on inappropriate "solutions" could be illustrated in the case of the rural electrification programme, which throughout the northern regions reaches only a small minority of potential users. To regard the supply of electricity as a solution to fight deforestation is an inappropriate response to the problem. What is needed in this case, is the planting of trees or tree substitutes to supply building materials to the rural population on a sustainable basis. Another major usage of wood is as firewood. In Namibia about 93% of the 1.8 million cubic meter of wood goes into fuel and construction material (DRFN 1994:91). A more sustainable solution is the introduction of small bio-gas plants, which is suitable for individual homesteads. One type of bio-gas plant is being introduced to peasants in the eastern Omaheke region. This would provide a lasting solution, as the bio-gas plants produce gas for cooking purposes by using local resources (waste materials) and also produce high quality fertilisers which could be useful to increase the yields of the fields.

Scientific and technological research in Africa, inter alia, failed to improve the living standards of the people, according to Forje (in CSD Bulletin, March 1995:22). Other contributing factors are poor policy formulations, inappropriate strategies, domestic political and economic environments. To address the existing situation, "Expertise and supportive government policies, as well as a determined pooling of political will are needed to develop national potentialities in science, technology, education, research and infrastructures" (Forje quoted in CSD Bulletin, March 1995:22). Therefore, the author advocates inter alia the establishment of a concerted and comprehensive science and technology policy, the involvement of scientists in national planning, provision of avenues to disseminate information, and the establishment of a viable Research and Development base for selecting, adapting and developing technology.

Namibia is lacking R&D programmes focusing on housing matters such as appropriate technologies and building materials, despite the fact that a wealth of
knowledge is available inside and outside Namibia, for example in neighbouring
countries such as Botswana. Those individuals and institutions in Namibia involved
or interested in technical alternatives to the conventional building methods, are
living in a cocoon (Wienecke & Martin 1995). Therefore the establishment of ties
with institutions and individuals in the Southern African region and outside the
continent\(^3\), should be an important objective for the future in order to realise
international co-operation as an instrument to strengthen and further develop
endogenous capacity and to keep abreast of mainstream scientific and technological
advancement (Forje quoted in CSD Bulletin, March 1995:23). The major science and
technology challenge requires an economic and social revolution to give Africa's
population a decent standards of living (Nyiira quoted in CSD Bulletin, March

4. EPILOGUE

The influence of the so-called modern world in the form of modernisation on
rural areas, differs from country to country. But these influences are often far-reaching
once they infiltrate a certain region. For example Western types of
housing are regarded as superior to the indigenous buildings or traditional
building methods. In some of the Western societies, new tendencies emerge, which
originated in the past. For example, in the USA the alternative to the urban
sprawl is described as "the New Urbanism", which is a movement that "seeks to
redesign the American landscape on a model that is neither city nor suburb but
something we have almost forgotten how to build: the village" (Newsweek, December
26, 1994:59). It is an example of "small is beautiful" in an urban environment.
Projects developed according to this model are mostly successful, although tiny.
Larger projects are planned in the USA.

In some of Namibia's modern urban areas, similarly to some developed countries,
the tendency towards "European traditional" designs, such as bay-windows, columns,
costly portals, gables with half-timbering, as they have been built in Europe,
America and the colonies during the last century and the beginning of this
century, are constructed again (Namibia Nachrichten July 15, 1991:15). It is
called post-modern architecture. The newspaper regards this as documentation of
the civilisation tiredness of the modern man, who longs to snuggle up to adorning
scrolls and a home close to nature. This is the opposite tendency of the majority
of house owners and house aspirants in Namibia, who demand modern houses with all

\(^3\) see also United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (1991a)
the modern amenities, not African traditional homes. This attitude has lead to the point where these traditions are regarded as inferior and as not appropriate.

Another phenomenon in the Third World is the population growth over the past decades which contributes to poverty, environmental destruction, and squatting in urban locations. To provide houses to all the needy is an impossible task if the conventional approach is followed. This situation is very different from what Wang (1991:11) describes: Prior to the last two centuries humans "have been able to survive in more or less salubrious circumstances, finding their own food, clothing and shelter employing diverse techniques which often have evolved gradually over millennia". With the arrival of modern times this situation changed within a short period of time, and now many people are apparently not longer in a position to cater for themselves, therefore hope that the government can help them. The result is mass poverty, a major problem of modern times, whereas the elite lives in affluence. The Windhoek Advertiser (September 29, 1990:10) commented that the arduous process of elevating the masses to better levels, does require from the political executives sacrifice and austerity. This is not the case in Namibia. Karl Marx once wrote (quoted by de Silva 1982:11):

"Over certain epochs people live by plunder.... But in order to be able to plunder, there must be something to be plundered, and this implies production. Moreover, the manner of plunder depends itself on the manner of production, e.g. a stock-jobbing nation cannot be robbed in the same way as a nation of cowherds."

Dube (1988:30) argues that "the modernizing elite and the early beneficiaries of the modernisation process do not necessarily spearhead the diffusion of its gains to the entire society". Thus the Western analogy does not hold true in the case of developing countries. Furthermore, the historical experience of the West in which urban pressures were instrumental in raising the living standards of the non-urban population, is not repeated in Africa's developing countries. The stress of the modernisation approach is on material gains (Dube 1988:30). Psychic rewards are not adequately considered. Provision of basic material needs is necessary, but beyond these people also require comfort and creative pursuits. Appropriate psychic rewards always motivates people, but the rewards have to be devised carefully and invested with acceptable meanings and sanctions.

In Africa, family planning is an indispensable part of achieving sustainable development, because Africa is the only continent where food production is being outpaced by population growth (Tolba 1987:104-105). He goes on, "Fewer mouths to feed each year will enable governments to focus on the problem of improving the quality of life of those already born". The author (Tolba 1987:117) argues, man's
success in conquering many diseases and providing more food, has lowered mortality rates. "So when we consider the problem of how to deal with population increase it should be remembered, first and foremost, that the recent increase in human numbers is a product of our success". Under the low-input farming systems that dominate most areas of Africa there is a small chance that sustainable development can be achieved at present, because almost half the total land area of Africa cannot support even its 1975 population with low inputs (Redclift 1987:30). A former president of Tunisia (quoted by World Development Forum in Otherwise vol.2, no.3, 1990:4) advised his countrymen thirty years ago:

"We are a small country with poor resources. If we continue to have such a high population growth rate, we will not be able to feed our people. Many husbands, however, continue to think that to have lots of children is proof of their manhood. That is not manhood, but rabbithood..."

The 1991 census shows that in Namibia 254389 households have a total population of 1409920 members, which is an average of 5,18 people per household. The average number of children per woman is 6.1 (Republic of Namibia 1994c:10). The outcome of such a high population growth rate is described by Jessica Mathews (quoted by World Development Forum, January 1991:1): "A young woman today who bears three children instead of the six her mother may have borne will have 27 great-grandchildren instead of 216". The Transitional Development Plan (NPC 1993:237) states that Namibia's high population growth rate will mean that in the year 2014, the Namibian population will have doubled to 2,4 million. Namibia's environment is unlikely to be able to support this number of people under present conditions. Therefore, the standard of living of future generations is unlikely to improve compared to that of the present generation. The environmental support system will likely be further degraded with all its consequences.

An improvement in the housing conditions in rural areas cannot be separated from rural development as a whole (T'Gilde & de Jonge 1987:37). Higher incomes enable people to build better houses, but other possibilities can also promote this goal, such as environmental improvements promoted through suitable policies. But in Namibia suitable policies, especially relating to rural housing, are scarce or non-existing. Present difficulties in most developing countries demand that new directions for shelter policies and programmes must be determined. Van Huyck (in Rodwin 1987:343-344) considers feasible choices to be made by Third World governments concerning shelter. Some of the factors to be considered include the growth of the debt of Third World countries and the future borrowing capabilities of many countries; the collapse of the world's commodities prices which have reduced earning capacities, and the protectionism of the industrialised states which limits export potentials; these factors retard economic growth and can
create negative real growth rates particularly in Africa; the failure of the
internationally sponsored economic 'basic needs' concepts to alleviate poverty or
stimulate economic growth; frequent mismanagement of Third World economies and the
misuse of massive commercial borrowings which did not contribute to sustained
economic development.

With reference to Western achievements such as modernisation, industrialisation
or technological advancement, the Third World should not take the West as a model
in order to find out what is good and what is bad for the so-called developing
countries. The mistakes of the developed world should not be repeated, or in other
words, it is not necessary to re-invent the wheel. Use should be made of the
knowledge accumulated in the West and in Third World countries to achieve
development without imitating Western development, because the differences must be
taken into account. In a programme on NBC TV (17/12/1992), it was stated that
developed countries had a majority of people working on the land. Only after
industrialisation, time and resources became available to pursue the non-
agricultural way of life. In the USA during the last century, 50% of the people
worked on the land, now only 3% do, but enough food is produced by these to feed
the population.

In Europe ecological building possibilities are explored (see Das Haus no. 9,
1992:30), where environmentally conscious building materials and methods are
promoted to protect the environment. This is a lesson for countries facing serious
environmental problems, such as the semi-arid parts of Namibia. Encouraged are the
use of grass and other renewable resources, non-toxic materials, the reuse of
rain-water, to save resources and to keep up a high standard of living. Other
examples of renewable building material resources are found in the USA where most
houses are entirely or to a large extent built out of timber. In Southern Africa
some of the most expensive dwellings have thatched roofs. Therefore, if Western
societies are encouraging the usage of stone, clay products, wood and grass for
example, these materials cannot be regarded as inferior or as not modern.

According to Dube (1988:35), the distinction between modernisation and
development is becoming increasingly blurred. Modernisation is rooted in the
behavioural sciences, but takes economic factors into account as a major variable.
Development drew its main sustenance from economics, although institutional and
motivational dimensions have been discussed. In both approaches, the emphasis on
the diffusion of their benefits, the distributional dimension, has narrowed the
gap between both. Therefore, the author, argues, for the lay audience the two
notions mean one and the same thing.
Development goals have to be redefined, as a result of the non-performance of the "old" approaches such as the trickle-down effect or the pursuance of economic growth. The new slogan of "redistribution with growth" is articulated by Seers (Dube 1988:38), who relates development to a country's achievements in the areas of poverty reduction, fight against unemployment and decline in inequality. Seers concludes, that if all three have decrease from the present high levels then the country concerned experienced development. If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, "it would be strange to call the result 'development' even if per capita income doubled" (Seers quoted by Dube 1988:38).

After the first post-independence elections were held in December 1994, it was announced that the state is buying another jet for the government to the tune of N$20 million, despite another drought in Namibia. Cabinet approved a 20% salary increase for the top government officials (The Namibian 24 February 1995:1). All this takes place after SWAPO secured a more than 70% election victory, with about two thirds of the votes coming from the Ovambo-speaking section of the population, which is now used as evidence that the people approve the government. However, job advertisements, published by the Public Service of Namibia in local newspapers during the first years of independence, seem to be true for a few only:

"Your partner on the road to prosperity".

McKinley (1994:21) asks: "How many times must 'the people' be disillusioned before they figure out the need to be constantly critical, to be actively involved in charting their own liberation? We will surely not get there if we leave things in the hands of politicians of any stripe". Despite SWAPO's pre-independence promises, the reality is different from that dreamt of by the former exiled leadership. There is a gap between reality and what has been achieved. Living standards or the quality of life for the majority of people have not been improved since independence. Tiglao (1991:18) summarises such a situation, that people are: "Poorer but free". Solving the housing problem is as far away as before independence, although more solutions are becoming available. But the government is not giving enough attention to start at the grassroots levels in rural areas. "It is the current fashion to speak in the name of the common people; but what they really get are a few crumbs of development. There is a reluctance to carry out meaningful and far reaching structural reforms" (Dube 1988:65). The ruling party has to be careful to avoid what the Scottish writer John Arbuthnot (quoted in Newsweek November 30, 1992:5) predicted:

"All political parties die at last of swallowing their own lies".

* * *
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary sources:

1.1 Interviews

Mr Engara, Ministry of Mines and Energy, 14 April 1992

Mr Karl Gowaseb, Director of Housing, MRLGH, 11 August 1994

Mr V. Hailulu, Town clerk, Oshakati. 16 September 1993
Mr V. Hailulu, Town clerk designate of Windhoek. 02 February 1994

Mr S. Hekandjo, Deputy major, Ondangwa. 07 September 1993

Mr J. Hoejgaard, Townplanner MRLGH. 1993a. 07 September 1993 in Ondangwa
Mr J. Hoejgaard, Townplanner MRLGH. 1993b. 09 September 1993 in Ongwediva and
Oshakati
Mr J. Hoejgaard, Townplanner MRLGH. 1993c. 16 September 1993 in Oshakati

Ms Dagmar Hornsbein, Forester, Department of Forestry, 9 August 1994

Mr J. Ingram, Rural Development Center, Ongwediva. 10 September 1993

Mr Michael Johannes, non permanent resident of Onambome, in Windhoek. 23 December
1991 and 2 January 1992. Additional information was obtained during 1993 and 1994

Mr Kahuure, Director Rural Development, 18 September 1992, and telephonic
conversation 31 August 1994

Mr H. Koch, Department of Water Affairs, 14 April 1992

Mr E. Maasen, Project Manager IBIS. Oshakati. 17 September 1993

Mr T.N. Mbaeva, Deputy Director Local Authorities, 18 September 1992

Mr G. Merrington, Managing Director, NBIC, October 1991

Mr Fred Moths, Telecom Namibia, involved in Rural telecommunications project in
Ovambo, April 1994

Mrs T. Mushelenga, Mayor of Ondangwa, Teacher, 7 September 1993
Mr T. Rudd, General Manager, NBIC, October 1991

Mr F. Shigwedha, Town clerk Ondangwa. 07 September 1993

Mr S. Shivute, Chief Control Officer/ Regional Council Administrator), 16 September 1993, Oshakati

Mr Shomongula, Labour inspector, Department of Labour, Ondangwa. 08 September 1993

Mrs N. Taanyanda, Town clerk, Ongwediva. 09 September 1993

Mr J. Vakkari, Project leader: Clay brick factory, Ongwediva. 09 September 1993

Mr R. van Rooyen, Technical Services, Directorate Regional and Local Government Coordination, MRLGH, Windhoek. 11 August 1994

Mr F. Viljoen, Deputy Director - Town and Villages, MRLGH, Windhoek. 01 February 1994

1.2 Government Documents and Publications


Department of Water Affairs 1993. Rural water supply sector coordination. Proceedings of the one day workshop on sector coordination held on 26/11/93. Windhoek


Ministry of Local Government and Housing. 1991b. *Budget speech*

Ministry of Local Government and Housing. 1992. *Budget speech*

Ministry of Regional Local Government and Housing. 1993. *Budget speech*

Ministry of Regional Local Government and Housing. *Budget speech 1994*


Republic of Namibia. 1995. Declaration of Oshakati to be an approved township. Government Gazette, Nos 90-95, 1 June 1995


2. Secondary sources:

2.1 Books and articles:


Bembridge, T.J. 1987. An overview of the capacity of existing institutions and structures in the less developed areas of Southern Africa to achieve rural development. *Development Southern Africa*, vol. 4, no. 4, 665-687


Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN) 1994. Proceedings of Namibia's national workshop to combat desertification. Windhoek: Desert Research Foundation of Namibia


Erler, B. 1985. Tödliche Hilfe. Freiburg: Dreisam Verlag


Fair, T.J.D. 1982a. South Africa: Spatial frameworks for development. Cape Town: Juta


Freeman, D. & Norcliffe, G. 1983. The rural nonfarm sector: development opportunity or employer of last resort? *Ceres*, vol. 16, no. 1, 28-34


IBIS - (WUS Denmark) 1993. Oshakati Human Settlement Improvement Project. Progress report no. 1


IMLT (Institute for Management and Leadership Training) no date. Personnel Management. IMLT : Windhoek


Keramin, J. 1990. Site and service housing for the very poor - an example. Paper delivered at the Namibia Housing Conference 19 - 20 April 1990. Windhoek


Möller, V. & Schlemmer, L. 1981. *Quality of Life: What does it mean and what does it relate?* Background paper delivered at the meeting of the Committee for human adaptability held in Pretoria, September 1981


Muller, A.M. 1988. *Housing as part of the process of change in Namibia.* Unpublished MArch dissertation, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne.


National Building and Investment Corporation 1982b. *Low income housing development in South West Africa/Namibia: Baseline study report vol.1 Appendices*. Windhoek : NBIC


NHE/Sum Consult. 1994. Feasibility study (draft)


Richardson, H.W. 1987. Spatial strategies, the settlement pattern, and shelter and services policies, in Shelter, settlement & development, edited by L. Rodwin, Boston : Allen & Unwin


Weitz, R. 1983. Rural-urban relations in developing countries. Pretoria: CSIR


2.2 Periodicals:

African Business. Monthly
African Farmer. Quarterly
Building, incorporating Building Products and Services. Monthly
Das Haus. Monthly
Die Republikein. Daily
The Namibian. Daily
Namibia Nachrichten. Weekly
New African. Monthly
New Era. Weekly
Planning. Bi-monthly
Times of Namibia. Daily
Vrye Weekblad. Weekly
Windhoek Advertiser. Daily
Windhoek Observer. Weekly
Weekly Mail. Weekly

* * *