

# **Mainstreaming Gender in Namibia's National Budget**

**Prepared by Consultants to Sida on behalf of  
Department of Woman's Affairs, Office of the  
President and the Ministry of Finance, Namibia**

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**Stockholm May 1998**



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## 1. Introduction

### Background

Since independence the importance of integrating gender issues in Namibia's overall economic and social development policies has been recognised. The Namibian Constitution is based on the principle of equal rights and obligations for women and men. The Government has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and signed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action which, in a key paragraph, states:

"We hereby adopt and commit ourselves as Governments to implement the following Platform for Action, ensuring that a gender perspective is reflected in all our policies and programmes.

Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice; and also a necessary and fundamental pre-requisite for equality, development and peace.

Insufficient attention to gender analysis has meant that women's contributions and concerns remain too often ignored in economic structures.

In addressing the economic potential and independence of women, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes, so that before decisions are taken an analysis is made of the effects on men and women, respectively."

In a recently adopted National Gender Policy, developed by the Department of Women Affairs at the Office of the President, the Namibian Government reiterates its commitment to work against discrimination based on sex or any other discrimination criterion. While acknowledging the continued existence of a gender (male) bias in Namibian society, the National Gender Policy "shall support efforts aimed at improving awareness among policy makers, planners, implementers, development agents and the general public of the Constitution regarding the equal status of women and men, and the roles of women and men as equal partners in the country's development process."

As part of its policy to promote gender equality in Namibia's development strategy, Namibia's Ministry of Finance proposed, in 1997, a co-operation with Sweden with the aim of initiating a gender analysis of the Namibian state budget.

As a first step, contact was taken by SIDA with those countries and organisations, which have carried out similar exercises. The South African experience, which was influenced by an Australian pioneering model, was judged to be of particular significance.

In 1994, the South African government required that all government departments should attempt to make a gender-disaggregated analysis of the impact of their expenditures. The South African initiative was based on a close co-operation between NGOs and individual researchers and the government, represented by a parliamentary ad hoc committee on women and the standing committee on finance.

As part of the preparatory work for the Namibian exercise, a workshop was organised in Stockholm in December 1997, with participants from Namibia, Sweden and a number of

countries where a gender analysis of the national budgets has been attempted. The workshop aimed to facilitate exchange of experience and knowledge to guide the process in Namibia.

Two Namibian representatives were selected by the Director General of the Department of Women Affairs and the Minister of Finance to take part in the workshop. The two Swedish consultants (Agneta Stark and Stefan de Vylder) who had been commissioned to assist the Namibian government to initiate the work in Namibia also participated.

In February 1998, the two Swedish consultants visited Namibia. A short visit to gather further information and to discuss a draft report with participants in the task force and representatives from Ministries was made by Agneta Stark in April 1998.

## **2. Purpose**

### **2.1 Purpose of the Exercise**

The long-term objective is to develop methods and tools to facilitate the examination of the Namibian national state budget from a gender equality perspective. The use of the concept "gender" merits a short explanation here. "Sex" refers to women's and men's biology; hence sex differences between women and men relate for instance to the fact that women bear and breast-feed babies, while men do not. "Gender" is used for socially constructed roles of women and men, prevalent in all societies. The normative statement "a real boy does not cry" is connected to gender, since both women and men are physically equipped with tear ducts. Likewise, "girls do not climb trees" is a statement that reflects gender, not sex differences. In all countries, women as a group are disadvantaged as compared to men as a group.<sup>1</sup>

It should be emphasised that the issue in this exercise is not about increasing the total amount of government spending, or of implementing new development programmes targeting women, but about identifying the impact on women and men of different categories of public expenditure. An important part of the exercise is to develop gender-relevant indicators, which can be used for an analysis of who, is actually benefiting from social and economic development programmes, and from all activities financed over the state budget.

The long-term aim is also to make a gender-disaggregated analysis of the revenue side of the budget.

### **2.2 Purpose of the Consultants' Assignment**

The main objective of the Swedish contribution is to assist the Namibian authorities in the preparatory phase of the exercise. The integration of a gender analysis in the Namibian state budget is a long-term undertaking, which will be carried out in Namibia, by Namibians, and Swedish support is only envisaged during the very first step in the process.

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance measures presented in UNDP, 1997, Human Development Report. Oxford University Press, New York.

During the consultants' two-week stay in Namibia, close co-operation was established with a task force with the following members, representing the Department of Women Affairs and various Namibian academic and government institutions:

Marietjie Changuion, Chief Development Planner, National Planning Commission Secretariat

Milly Jafta, Chief Development Planner, Department of Women Affairs, Office of the President

Maria Kaakunga, Deputy Director, General Services, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Chris Masule, Junior Researcher, Gender Training and Research Programme, University of Namibia

Leefa Panehupifo Martin, Control Information Officer, The Parliament of Namibia

The knowledge, the many ideas and the helpfulness, which the members of the task force contributed, were invaluable in our work. However the remaining shortcomings are entirely our own responsibility.

A number of "focal people" from various line ministries were appointed to assist in the continued work with ideas, data gathering and with providing valuable knowledge about relevant subject areas. During the consultants' visits, relevant stakeholders in the Namibian society were identified, and interviewed, to introduce the exercise, to gain further and wider support, to discuss the role of the focal people and the way forward.

More specifically, the Swedish consultants were expected to develop, together with their Namibian counterparts:

- a basic conceptual and theoretical framework for the analysis of macroeconomics and gender equality;
- suggest an appropriate methodological framework for the analysis of the impact on women and men, respectively, based - when relevant - on similar work done in other countries, in particular South Africa;
- illustrate with the help of a more detailed examination of a few sectors from the 1997 budget how the analysis can be applied in practice;
- prepare a similar framework for the analysis of the revenue side of the state budget;
- identify priority areas for the further development of statistical databases which will enable the Namibian Government to elaborate regular monitoring mechanisms as regards the impact of the state budget disaggregated by gender;
- make suggestions on the future mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective in the national budget by the different state departments in implementing the National Gender Policy.

## **2.3 Purpose of the Report**

The present report is the result of a brief visit to Namibia by the two Swedish consultants, and of the follow-up visit mentioned above. The main objective of the report is to present a methodological framework for the carrying out of the exercise.

The report begins with introductory chapters of a conceptual and methodological character, where topics related to gender, economics and the national budget are presented. The budgetary procedures in Namibia are thereafter discussed. To indicate how the proposed methodology can be applied, illustrations from a small number of sectors - basically education and agriculture - are provided.

In the concluding chapters, suggestions as to the continuation of the exercise are presented.

## **3. Gender and Economics**

### **3.1 From Women in Development to Mainstreaming Gender: A Brief Background**

As emphasised in Namibia's National Gender Policy, "gender", unlike "sex", is a culturally and socially constructed concept and includes "social role differentiations, behavioural patterns, social expectations, and general life aspirations". Gender relationships are not constant, but differ from one social setting to another, and change as other social changes occur.

Over the past decade, a drastic shift as regards the analysis of gender and development has taken place. Somewhat schematically, one could say that the early discussion on women in development (WID) focused on women as a vulnerable or even "marginalised" group, for whom women-specific projects were designed in the hope of providing additional income. Often, it was assumed that women's needs and concerns were primarily related to social welfare or to sectors such as health, nutrition, water and sanitation and education. Projects in other areas were tacitly assumed to be gender-neutral.

The shift that has taken place over the last ten-fifteen years from Women in Development to Gender in Development (GID) has challenged the old view, arguing that a gender lens needs to be applied to every aspect of development work, whether social sector programmes or monetary and exchange rate policies. The shift implies that both women and men are affected - albeit often in different ways - by overall economic policies, and also that both women and men should be seen as subjects, not objects or "targets" for outside intervention.

It is true that women were and are subject to discrimination in most parts of the world - including Namibia, as acknowledged in the National Gender Policy and in a large number of other documents and analyses. Many women are, in addition, subject to sexual abuse and violence. However, the "victim image" implicit in the WID approach was not conducive to a view of women as fully capable of participating on equal terms in economic and social affairs. As reflected in Namibia's National Gender Policy, the gender in development approach seeks to empower both women and men in all areas of daily and social life.

### 3.2 Gender and Economic Theory

Conventional economic theory normally takes the "household" as the appropriate unit for family decisions, and for the economic analysis. The household is assumed to be one, homogenous unit with one single utility function. However, in Namibia as elsewhere in the world, there is plenty of diversity in household structure and composition; indeed, the supposedly "normal" nuclear family, with both parents living together with their common children, appears to be the exception rather than the rule in parts of Namibia (see further below).

Even in nuclear families there are conflicts of interest. As pointed out by several authors (see, for example, Palmer, 1991, or Moser, 1993) a household can be regarded as an internal market, where services, money and commodities are exchanged. The "terms of trade" within families largely reflect the spousal bargaining strength, which often leads to unfavourable terms of exchange for women (and children).

Discrimination is often prevalent at home, which compounds the difficulty of achieving gender equality with the help of public interventions. Women have frequently endorsed a gender-based critique of the state, as well as of the market. But they have also repeatedly denounced the male bias of institutions like the family, or the local community.

In today's Namibia, public action, supported by the Constitution which denounces all forms of discrimination, has been in the forefront of advancing towards gender equality compared to the business sector, where a strong male - and white - bias is less challenged than in government policy. It also appears as if civil society in large parts of Namibia is more strongly dominated by men than the public sector at large. Thus, for example, while most legal forms of outright discrimination of women have been abolished in civil law, on the other hand customary law, and traditional norms and values, still give men more *de facto* control over productive resources, and over economic decision-making, than women have.

The gender bias in the family - and the limitations of conventional economic theory - is reflected in the fact that most unpaid work for the reproduction of the family is carried out by women. Women in Namibia - as well as in other parts of the world - first have to pay their "reproductive tax", as Ingrid Palmer calls it, before they can enter the paid labour market. A number of household surveys from both rural and urban Namibia confirm this pattern: the overwhelming majority of all household tasks, including care and upbringing of children, are performed by women.

One effect of this "tax" on women's workload is that it, in the words of Palmer (1991), "channels part of women's labour to where market forces would not direct it, and presents a serious limitation of women's capability to engage in gainful work and entrepreneurship ... and restricts them to activities which are compatible with their home schedule" (for Namibian evidence, see further below, especially the chapter on agriculture).

Moreover, it is women who do the lion's share of all community work, and provide trust and cohesion in civil society. In Namibia and elsewhere, women thus build the foundation of society's social capital, which is of paramount importance for an equitable and sustainable economic development.

### 3.3 Paid and Non-Paid Work: A Multi-Sector Model of the Economy

The above comments illustrate the unsatisfactory nature of the way economists normally look at the economy, with all attention paid only to that part of the work that is registered in national accounts, and enter the calculations of macroeconomic aggregates like GDP (Gross Domestic Product), labour force participation and investment.

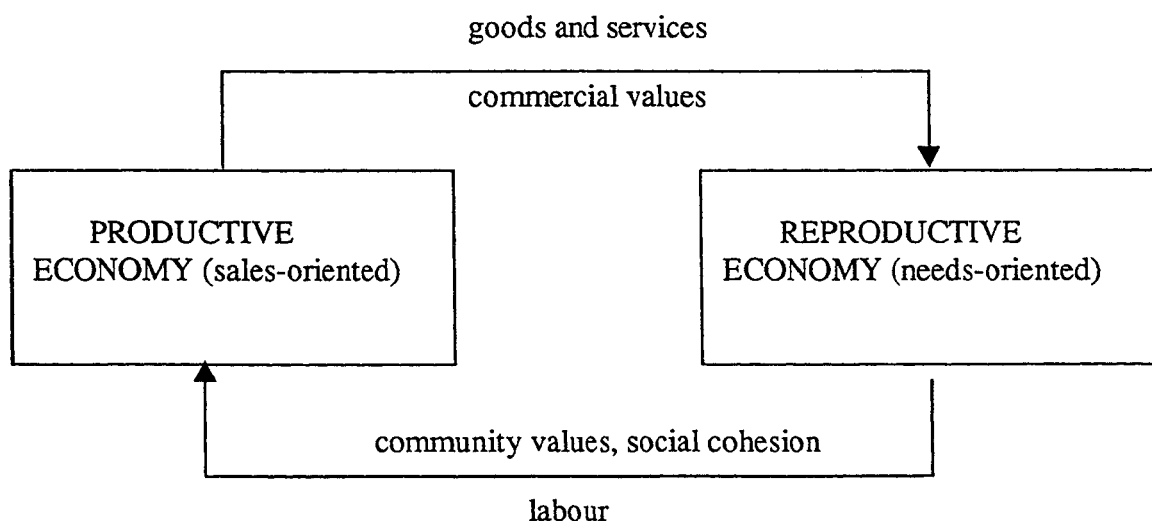
In the world as a whole, it has been estimated that of all work men do, two-thirds constitute paid work, and one-third non-paid work, while the opposite figures apply to women: only one-third of the work women do is estimated to be paid, while the other two-thirds belong to the reproductive or community spheres.

Various household surveys and "rapid rural appraisals" from Namibia indicate that the situation is not different in Namibia. Indeed, it appears as if an even larger part of an average woman's work day in Namibia is spent within the (unpaid) reproductive and community areas of the economy, while the contributions of men in these areas tend to be lower than one-third of their total working time.

A first step to revise our picture of the economy, looking at it through the eyes of women, is to make visible all the unpaid household-based work of caring for others that is vital for the continuing functioning of both the public sector and the market-based part of the economy. As the Indian scholar Gita Sen has put it:

"Women stand at the crossroad between economic activity and the care of human beings...They are workers in both spheres...the most sensitive to the need for better integration between the two" (quoted in Elson/Evers/Gideon, 1997, p. 19).

This vision of the economy is shown in Box 1 below (reproduced from Elson/Evers/Gideon, 1997, p. 20. The comments below are largely based on the comments in that paper). In the diagram, voluntary community work is included in the reproductive economy:



Box 1. A National Economy Through Women's Eyes

The diagram shows the interaction between a sales-oriented productive economy, which tends to be male-intensive, and a needs-oriented reproductive economy, where women do most of the work. The latter is a family and community-based economy, organised at the micro level through households and inter-household networks. The productive economy supplies goods and services through the market to the reproductive spheres, while the reproductive economy supplies labour to the productive economy and transmits community values and social cohesion.

It should be stressed that there are also pronounced gender differences **within** the productive sector, where different activities and positions tend to exhibit certain gender biases. In agriculture, for example, men are often responsible for certain tasks (e.g. management of cattle, land preparation, the sales of cash crops) while women have other tasks (e.g. weeding, rearing of small animals, subsistence crops, etc.). In the formal, paid sector of the economy, men tend to dominate in well-paid and decision-making positions. A large number of other examples could be given.

The system of national accounts measures the productive economy only, and aggregates it into Gross Domestic Product. Even within what is here called "productive sector" there are, however, important lacunae, in particular in areas such as subsistence agriculture and the informal, micro-enterprise sector. In principle, these areas - where women dominate in Namibia - should be included in the national accounts. But their actual importance is, however, seriously underreported and underestimated in official statistics.

The unpaid labour in the reproductive and community spheres was earlier totally excluded, by definition, from the national accounts. Since women do most of the work in these areas, a large part of women's total work thus became invisible by design, and not simply because of difficulties of collecting information. Successively, growing parts of unpaid work have been included in the standards for the SNA (Standardised National Accounts). At the Beijing conference, it was decided to account for also the remaining parts of unpaid household work in satellite accounts to the SNA. In principle, therefore, there should now be a complete visibility of this work in the national accounts. However, there is as yet no country that has achieved this. One of the reasons given is problems with standards for measurements and their applications. Another is paucity of necessary data; time-studies are a necessary tool and they are seen as costly and difficult.

Statistical difficulties thus do exist, but they may be overcome. In principle, the reproductive work can be measured, either in terms of time, through the use of time budget studies, or in terms of money, by imputing a market value to the caring services provided.

To get a true picture of the economy, and of the interaction between the three "communicating vessels" - the productive, reproductive and community sectors - one would thus need to go beyond conventional economic theory and national accounts systems. It should also be stressed that different economies may exhibit different "growth patterns" as the relative importance of the three sectors change over time, thereby making different demands on male and female labour time.

While the long-term objective must be to reduce present gender-based inequalities by, *inter alia*, making men assume more responsibilities within the reproductive and community areas of the economy, the actual division of labour between women and men must be accounted for when development policies are designed.

The multiple roles and responsibilities of women as both caretakers and participants in the market-oriented productive sector must be recognised and addressed. It is imperative to design policies which ease the heavy workload of women, for example by giving priority to projects which economise on the use of women's time; poor women, in particular, are always busy, and time is a severe constraint. Examples could include investments in village water supplies which would save the time spent fetching water, fuel-efficient stoves, small-scale transport, reforestation which reduces the time spent on collecting firewood, and small-scale electrification based on solar energy or biomass. In general, state budgets contain little provision for investments of this kind, which are usually neglected by both the public and the private sector.

The above examples should not be seen as proposals to target projects for women only. The point to stress is that the benefits of time-saving investments are proportional to the time spent on each particular activity. While reduced time for air travel tends to benefit men more than women, the opposite is the case when, say, access roads to local market places are improved.

Time use analyses, in which work in all sectors of the economy is taken into account, could also be a useful tool to assess costs and benefits in a different way than is normally done today. For example, in times of fiscal austerity, it is tempting for hospitals and clinics to reduce the costs of employing doctors and nurses - for example, by early discharge of patients from hospital in the expectation that care during their convalescence will be provided "free" in the community. While such measures would appear to increase the efficiency in resource use, they conceal what is actually happening - a transfer of costs from the paid economy of the hospital to the unpaid sphere of the family and community. In a similar way, an economic analysis of the costs and benefits of introducing clean drinking water would look completely different if the time spent by mothers looking after sick children were fully taken into account.

### **3.4 Gender Equality and Efficiency**

Enhanced equality between the genders is not only a matter of equity - it is also good economics. Discrimination based on gender hampers economic growth, and endangers a sustainable economic and social development. The social and economic losses are greatest when women are denied access to basic education and health care.

A large number of studies from many different countries have demonstrated that reducing gender inequalities provides large societal benefits in the form of lower child mortality, better nutrition, decreased incidence of disease, and slower population growth. Many of these improvements are not recorded in national accounts, at least not in the short term. But in a longer-term perspective, they accelerate growth - and human welfare, which is the ultimate objective.

It is, however, also important to stress that even in a more conventional sense, a discriminatory treatment based on gender is bad for efficiency and growth. For example, studies from agriculture in Africa indicate that if women and men shared the same educational levels and access to modern inputs (improved seeds, fertilisers, extension services, etc.), yields could increase as much as 22 per cent for foodcrop farmers, and that giving women primary schooling alone would raise yields by 24 per cent for maize farmers (see World

Bank, 1995). In modern agriculture, each additional year of education for women brings returns of 2 to 15 per cent (compared to those for men), evidence of the long-term effects of education on women's productivity.

Research on structural adjustment in sub-Saharan Africa has also shown that gender inequality hampers a positive supply response by reducing women's incentives to produce tradable goods for sale on the market. Also, the benefits in terms of increased agricultural production of a weakening of the time constraint for rural women can be considerable; for instance, a study from Tanzania shows that reducing such constraints in a community of smallholder coffee and banana growers could increase household cash incomes by 10 per cent, labour productivity by 15 per cent, and capital productivity by 44 per cent (for further examples, see, for example, Elson/Evers/Gideon, 1997, and various World Bank publications on gender and development).

Discriminatory access to productive assets (land, modern inputs, capital, etc.) has also been shown to have a negative impact on economic efficiency and growth. In the informal sector of the economy - micro-enterprises of various kinds - women often dominate, but their access to credit is, in most countries, limited by both legal constraints (the husband is the registered owner of family property which could be used as collateral, for example) and by norms and values which restrict women's access to capital. It is estimated that women take less than five per cent of all bank loans in the world.

Improvements of the interface between the formal and informal sectors of the economy are also essential. Policies aimed at facilitating the growth of the informal sector through training, improved access to small-scale credit, elimination of bureaucratic restrictions, support to transport and commercialisation of the produce, and others can serve to enhance the opportunities of women, in particular, and help to boost economic growth.

In the market sector of the economy, discrimination based on gender is often hidden, and sometimes difficult to reveal (for an interesting discussion, see Elson/Evers/Gideon, 1997). For example, discrimination on the labour market means that wages paid to women underestimate women's productivity, and thus underestimates the returns to women and society from employing women in paid work. Discrimination in the credit market means that women are either denied credit, or that the rates of interest charged to women overestimate the risks of lending to women, and underestimate the returns to women and to society from lending to female-headed enterprises. Clearly, all such distortions reduce the overall efficiency of the economy.

In education, both formal and informal gender-based constraints are common. While all formal barriers based on sex or race have been eliminated in Namibia's educational system after independence, many *de facto* restrictions remain, not least on the labour market, where women's entry to certain professions is made difficult by prevailing norms and attitudes. In Namibia, there are numerous women who have chosen traditionally "male" educational careers but who, after having completed education, encounter great difficulties in finding jobs that correspond to their training.

Gender stereotypes also hamper men's occupational choices and daily activities. The gender bias in norms and attitudes reduces men's participation in the "reproductive sphere". A more equal distribution of tasks would alleviate the women's heavy workload, which would benefit economic growth. Gender-stereotyped attitudes also reduce men's participation in what are often perceived as "female careers" in, say, primary education or nursing.

As will be seen below (see chapter 6, Basic Education and Culture below), men are also heavily underrepresented in certain educational programmes. In the adult literacy training programme the ratio of women to men is approximately five to one, indicating that men in Namibia - like in so many other countries - are less willing than women to acknowledge their limited literacy skills, and to learn to read and write when they have grown up.

A reduction of formal and informal discrimination based on gender is, to conclude, both a goal in itself, as it enhances the range of individual choice, and a step towards improved efficiency in the use of human capital.

### 3.5 Gender and Macroeconomics: General

As indicated earlier, macroeconomics policies are seldom "gender-neutral", or "age-neutral". Policies, which benefit middle-aged men, can, for example, be harmful for women, and/or for children. It is, for this reason, important to move the issue of gender equality "upstream" in the decision-making process.

To illustrate some of the mechanisms at work, we could look at structural adjustment policies of the kind implemented in most African countries over the past fifteen years. While it is not always easy to trace the impacts of certain policies in a gender perspective, some policy measures typically included in a structural adjustment programme may serve as examples.

To begin with, changes in relative prices - for example achieved with the help of a devaluation of the currency, or through a liberalisation of agricultural prices - normally aim at improving prices of products that are sold on the market. While this may or may not increase employment opportunities for women, the division of labour and control over incomes within the family has to be assessed. For example, in countries where agricultural income from cash crops is normally controlled by the man (when there is one), an increase in cash crop production at the expense of subsistence food production changes the intra-household terms of trade in favour of the man.

The economic structure of a country may also make female producers highly vulnerable to competition from cheap imports. Membership in a customs union, or an overvalued rate of exchange, may, for example, make it impossible for women engaged in small-scale food production, artisanry etc. to compete with imported goods. Many Namibian women who suffer from competition from cheap goods from South Africa might therefore stand to gain from a devaluation, while the men working in the traditional export sectors (mining, fishing, commercial cattle farming) are comparatively less affected by the exchange rate.

Clearly, the gender implications of trade and exchange rate policies cannot be determined *a priori*, without a thorough, gender-disaggregated analysis of concrete conditions in each individual country and sector.

Relative prices of consumer goods also change as a result of structural adjustment policies. It is well known that consumption patterns between women and men differ very much.

The decline in public expenditures on social services, witnessed in a majority of countries undergoing structural adjustment, directly affects the family, in particular women and children. The reproductive and community sectors of the economy absorb the costs.

Often, the need to pay school fees for the children, and to cover other family expenditures when user charges have been introduced or raised in primary health and education, may oblige the mother to seek paid employment. While improved integration of women in the labour market should not be seen as harmful in itself, the fact that women are often "pushed" rather than "pulled" into poorly paid occupations to cover school fees cannot be seen as part of a strategy aimed at gender equality and empowerment of women.

Almost invariably, structural adjustment implies a change in relative "prices" between paid and unpaid work, in favour of the former. Or, put in another way: an improvement of the situation of the productive sector of the economy is sought, at the expense of the other sectors. The reproductive and caretaking burdens normally shouldered by women are thereby devalued, compared with production for the market. As a consequence, the intra-household terms of trade are likely to deteriorate for the woman.

### **3.6 Gender and State Budgets**

A state budget should reflect the overall priorities of the government. It is essentially a political, not a technical, instrument, in which the allocation of public expenditures should be based on political objectives (and, of course, on criteria related to efficiency in the use of scarce resources).

Together with non-financial expressions of government intervention - laws, regulations, etc. - the budget also reflects the overall role of the public sector in a country's economic and social development. What should the state do, and what should be left to the market and/or civil society? Clearly, the overall size and composition of a national budget is an expression of how a particular government sees its role vis-à-vis the market and community spheres of society.

State budgets are not always designed in a way that enables the reader to assess the actual contents of the budget, however. Despite a wealth of data and tables, key questions - Who benefits? Who does not benefit? Who finances the government's revenues? etc. - tend to remain unanswered.

In some respects, most state budgets are transparent enough to enable an analysis of the actual distribution of benefits. For example, budgets often contain regional breakdowns of expenditures, which make it possible to assess the geographical distribution of public sector services and investments.

It is normally more difficult to assess the distribution of beneficiaries of the budget according to other criteria, such as gender, class, race, or age group. While specific programmes may be targeted for specific groups - educational expenditures are meant to benefit children, pensions are designed for the old, etc. - there is, in all countries, a paucity of relevant disaggregated data facilitating a "mainstream" analysis of costs and benefits.

#### 4. Methodology and limitations in the exercise

All governments, as indeed all decision-makers concerned with economic and political issues, spend time and energy on ensuring that budget decisions are carried out as planned, and that money allocated for a specific purpose is used for that purpose in an efficient and effective manner. This is also the basic rationale behind all the different exercises connecting budgets to gender issues, regardless of the budget size or the type of organisation.

Ensuring that accepted gender policies and political goals are expressed and reflected not only in special gender or women projects, but also in the main activity of an organisation and its everyday activities demands a broad approach. This is particularly true when the organisation is a whole country, rather than for instance a company, and the activities examined concern all the citizens in that country.

Exercises similar to "Mainstreaming Gender in the National Budget" have been attempted in several countries. The similarities concern a number of underlying types of issues or questions, as: Who contributes to and who benefits from the state budget? Do budgets address the needs and problems of the most vulnerable? Do budgets reflect public policies accurately? Are priorities made by politicians visible in the structures of the budget, and of the amounts allocated to specific purposes? Do the proportions of budgetary allocations to different purposes change with changing political priorities? As mentioned above, are budgets used effectively and efficiently? And, when cut-backs are performed, what principles are applied?

Comparisons between amounts allocated to different budget areas also have been under debate, as have perceived inconsistencies between treatment of different sub-groups of the population.

The differences between approaches can, for the purpose of this report, be described, using the following characteristics:

*The initiative:* is the exercise an initiative from the government, from stakeholders outside of government, from international organisations or from others?

*The scope:* is the exercise a partial analysis, aiming at identifying specific gender-oriented projects or programs? Or is it a (first step towards) total analysis, analysing or planning to eventually analyse the whole budget?

*The use:* is the exercise designed as a preparation for a specific decision, or to be used by a specific group or groups of stakeholders, or for general use by government decision-makers, or for general non-specified use by larger groups?

*The periodicity:* is the exercise planned as a single endeavour or as a regular recurrent activity?

These characteristics will be used below in describing various attempts at gender analyses of state budgets, as well as form the base for describing the Namibian exercise in this report.

#### 4.1 Theoretical models and tools

Diane Elson (1997, 1997a) has developed six tools for integrating gender into national budgetary policies and procedures. They meet different needs, and define different levels of analysis. They are also connected to different uses and stakeholders, which are indicated below.

**Tool 1.** *Gender-Disaggregated Beneficiary Assessment of Public Service Delivery and Budget Priorities* aims at collecting and analysing the opinions of women and men on how far current forms of public service delivery meet their needs and how far current patterns of public expenditure accord with their priorities. Instruments are opinion polls, attitude surveys etc. The views of women and men should be considered separately, as their needs and priorities often differ.

Users of this tool may be Ministries of Finance and of Women Affairs, when concerned with the full range of public expenditure, and sectoral Ministries when concerned with specific expenditures and services. The instruments can be designed by specialised public or private sector research organisations.

**Tool 2.** *Gender-Disaggregated Public Expenditure Benefit Incidence Analysis* aims at analysing the extent to which women and men, girls and boys, benefit from expenditure of publicly provided services. Instruments are benefit incidence analysis, a quantitative tool that requires the measurement of the unit costs of providing a particular service, and the number of units utilised by women and men, girls and boys.

Users of this tool may again be the Ministries mentioned under tool 1. The instruments can be designed by Central Statistics Offices and Ministries of Finance, perhaps with help from specialists.

**Tool 3.** *Gender-Aware Policy Evaluation of Public Expenditure by Sector* aims at evaluating the policies that underlie the budget appropriations to identify their likely impact on women and men. Are the policies likely to reduce, increase or leave unchanged the degree and pattern of gender difference?

Users of this tool, which is forward looking, may be governments, NGOs, partnerships between both, and independent research institutes and the same bodies can also design the instruments, with specialist help if necessary.

**Tool 4.** *Gender-Aware Budget (Expenditure) Statement* aims at demonstrating the expected implications of the Expenditure Estimates in addressing issues of gender inequality in terms of total public expenditure and expenditure by sectoral Ministries.

The key instrument is disaggregation of projected expenditure into gender-relevant categories. Users could be a wide group, but the tool must be produced and applied by the Ministry of Finance, in co-operation with other Ministries.

**Tool 5.** *Gender-Disaggregated Analysis of Impact of Budget on Time-Use* aims at showing the implications of the national budget for household time use. An emphasis is put on unpaid work in social reproduction (as care for family or community members, cooking, teaching children how to live in society etc.)

The instrument builds on time use data, and the Central Statistics Office is a key agent.

**Tool 6. *Gender-Aware Medium Term Macro Economic Policy Framework*** aims at producing a medium term macroeconomic policy framework which recognises that men and women participate in economic activity in different ways and will thus contribute to medium macroeconomic outcomes, and experience costs and benefits from macroeconomic policies differently.

This tool needs further development, since very little existing macroeconomic work is gender sensitive.

Rhonda Sharp (1997), who has worked with the Australian gender budget for many years, structures gender analyses of the public expenditure in a state budget into three steps:

1. Expenditure on special programs for gender purposes
2. Equal opportunity expenditure in the public sector employment
3. General/mainstream budget expenditures by governmental agencies, assessed for their gender impact.

In her experience, expenditure on special programs for gender purposes forms a very small part of any state budget. In her model, the three steps together cover the total expenditure of the budget, and are then complemented with the corresponding analyses of the revenue side.

A problem arising from Rhonda Sharp's second step concerns expenditures for equal opportunity for public employees. To be able to separate those they must be distinguished from "everyday" or "normal" expenditure, which will only be possible if they are not fully integrated in managerial practice. If equal opportunity is expected as a part of good management, separation of expenditures will be almost impossible, and it could indeed be questioned if equal opportunities would incur extra expenditures at all.

The revenue analyses also consist of three steps, in which the impact on women and men of different ages is assessed:

1. Taxation according to base (personal and corporate income , consumption and wealth taxes)
2. Taxation expenditures (taxation concessions to business, social welfare tax concessions to family/household units etc.)
3. Other revenue (as asset sales, income from public enterprises, user charges etc.)

In the ideal model as described by Rhonda Sharp, the total budget, expenditure and revenue, will be covered. She also advocates that the macroeconomic gender impact of the budget balance be assessed.

## 4.2 Some examples from practice

The Australian women's budget, an initiative which started in 1984 and which has now stopped, was an annual report, presented as a part of the national budget on budget night. It was produced by the Office on the Status of Women (OSW), and in it every government department reported on the impact of its policies and programmes on women. It was stressed that an annual publication would create greater awareness of gender issues in the government bureaucracy. The programmes with the greatest significance for women were quantified, and indicators, which showed progress of gender equality, were highlighted. During the last years the report also included an introduction by the OSW of the current status of women in Australia. This is an example of an initiative from *inside government*, a *wide or total* budget analysis, published *annually*, aimed at a *broad audience*.

The best known and probably the most thorough example of gender budget analyses is the South African "Women's Budget", edited by Debbie Budlender. The two volumes presented so far (1996, 1997) will be followed by a third. The three will together cover all votes in the South African national budget. The initiative to the exercise has come from outside of the government, and it is a joint initiative from parliamentarians, politicians, NGOs, civil servants, academics and others. The different chapters are written by different authors, and do not apply the same type of tools or analyses throughout. Instead, a variety of tools and approaches are used. All are, however, connected to the state budget. The endeavour is possibly a non-recurrent one, because of its size, and since the large amount of work involved has drawn on available time from many stakeholders. The Women's Budget can thus be characterised as an initiative *outside of government*, a *total analysis* of the budget, a *single exercise* (although with possible effects on the traditional budget procedures), aimed at a *wide audience*.

For the exercise presented in this report, the South African work has served as inspiration, background knowledge, and as starting point for discussions with Namibian stakeholders. The problems analysed in the Women's Budget are to some extent similar to those in Namibia. Some of our conclusions are also the same. This is especially true for the need for certain types of data.

One of many similar examples of partial budget analyses, done on one single occasion, initiated by the government, is the gender analysis of the Swedish government's programs for the unemployed, which include education and training. The evaluation of the gender impact of these programs, as well as of the costs allocated to women and men respectively, was carried out by the Swedish Auditor General (RRV 1997:45). The conclusions are that opportunities to participate in the programs are distributed fairly between women and men, that is in proportion to their unemployment rates, but that the traditional patterns on the labour market are conserved. Men also seem to be over-represented in the more expensive activities. This is an example of a *government initiative*, a *single analysis* of a *part of the budget*, aimed at a *bureaucratic and perhaps also wider audience*.

## 4.3 The Namibian exercise

The initiative to and the continuous support to the work from the Minister of Finance and the Director of Women Affairs clearly shows that this exercise comes from *within the government*. The explicit purpose, consistent with the principle, discussed at the Beijing

conference, of mainstreaming, is to make the exercise a regular part of the traditional budget process. Thus it will be a *recurrent work*, aimed at – eventually – analysing *major parts* of or *the whole state budget*. The use of the work partly depends on forms of publication and dissemination of results, which are not at present (May 1998) decided.

However, as consultants, we made a few additional choices of starting points, built on our background experiences. The whole idea of mainstreaming gender in a national budget stems from our firm opinion that gender is an organising principle in society in the entire world at great cost to both women and men. Women, as a group, are however much more disadvantaged than men as a group. This is certainly a value statement, which is basic to this exercise.

But we would not like the budget work itself to include value statements of what proportion of budget efforts or activities should rightly go to women or men with certain characteristics or needs. Instead, we prefer the budget work to reflect what is actually done, at present. If the results shown correctly reflect political decisions, public policy or public opinion are highly relevant questions, which should be answered outside the budget analysis itself. A comparison with traditional budget procedures may be useful; that the budget is correctly constructed and accurately presented is a professional problem for budget makers. But whether the budget shows accurate measures in a specific political, economic and democratic situation is a non-technical, highly political decision, rightly the responsibility of political decision-makers, outside of the budget document itself.

A gender analysis of the state budget consists of several parts. We have chosen to use an adapted version of Diane Elson's "Tool 2. Gender-Disaggregated Public Expenditure Benefit Incidence Analysis", described above. The material analysed will be main activities in the budget. We will accordingly not search for special gender programs, or discuss in depth equal opportunity within the state sector for its employees. However, the gender patterns of employees within ministries – who performs what at what level – can be expected to have an impact on services provided, and is certainly of interest.

A highly relevant example concerns cut-backs and negotiations about priorities when cut-backs are seen as necessary. When these are performed, the personal experience and background of the actors in that particular situation, often under severe time stress, tend to determine outcomes. Gender clearly is an influencing factor on experience and background.

The first question posed is: who performs different types of services? The gender distribution of public employees is a fairly simple matter. Breaking down expenditure according to these results may pose some problems, but they are not of major importance.

The second question is: who benefits from the work performed by public employees? This step necessitates the use of sources outside the traditional budget material, but often collected by ministries, or the central statistics offices. User statistics, student data, data of patients at clinics etc. may be readily available material. But not always will the data be reported in a format, which is immediately useful for gender analyses.

The third question: are the users in proportion to the population, or are certain groups excluded, or over-represented? is more difficult. When it comes to basic population figures (how many girls and boys of school age live in a certain area? How many women and men in pension ages are there?), these constitute quite straightforward data needs. But the gender distribution of unpaid labour in subsistence farming, the gender patterns in access to basic

health services, access to land, housing standards etc. are far more complex. These types of data may not be collected regularly, or at all. If the material exists, it may be contained in research reports, project proposals, in teaching material, in annual reports, in overviews, in articles and finding it can be time-consuming.

It may be expected that many of the problems described here are greater initially. Once an exercise has been carried out a number of times, collection of material will be more of a routine. The sensitisation of ministries to gender issues may also reasonably be expected to ensure that data reporting will be more immediately geared to gender analysis.

A problem not explicitly discussed in other attempts at gender analyses of national budgets is connected to the role of the state. Many needs in society are the immediate responsibility of the state: basic health services, basic education, human rights, the legal system, defence, basic infra-structure etc. In some of these, the people performing the services should be public employees, in others the state could ensure that the services are provided by other organisations, but retains the final responsibility. In other areas it is more questionable who should bear the responsibility. The access to religious services, expressions of culture, housing, media, leisure activities are but a few examples of areas where different countries have developed different mixtures of state, market and other organisations taking up responsibility. Thus we do not think that all society's problems should or could be addressed by state activities.

The budget analysis in this report is not in itself a support for increasing or decreasing spending on any activity or user group. That is a decision, which should be discussed and taken outside of the gendered budget disaggregation.

#### **4.4 Constraints and limitations of the Namibian exercise**

The exercise in this report is, as has been stated before, a first step of a long process. The aim is, eventually, to cover large areas, or all, of the state budget. But due to several constraints, this report mainly covers methodology and tools, with examples from some important areas.

The time available for the exercise consisted of about just over one month each for two consultants, a few weeks for each of the task force members (during which they also had other responsibilities) and of time at disposal for assistance, advice and data gathering by employees at various levels in ministries, departments etc. Another time constraint was constituted by the budget process itself; the main material from the exercise was to be reported by the beginning of April 1998.

Data was obviously also a constraint. Specifying what types of data would be relevant was the first task. Finding if those data were collected, if so where they were kept, if necessary adapting the format of the data, substituting other data if the most desirable type did not exist was a time-consuming but highly relevant activity in the task force.

In all, the decision was taken that the first step of the exercise would consist of two main votes being analysed, with the possible addition – depending on data accessibility – of one or two specific programs within other votes.

A problem, inherent in most gender analyses of budgets, is causality, that is connecting the budget figures to outcomes in society. We would, by necessity, work with the current budget. The data on outcomes – as quantity and quality of services provided, the beneficiaries of those services etc. – would not be the result of this budget, but of earlier ones. All data would not be collected in the same time period. Thus, the connection between what is what is provided, measured in budget terms, and what is accomplished, measured as societal data, is not one of cause and effect. Even conclusions about whether budget measures are appropriate, given the situation described in data collected on beneficiaries and societal needs, must be drawn with caution.

## 5. The Namibian state budget and the areas covered in the present report

The Namibian financial year runs from April 1 to March 31. The budget is presented in two parts: the "Estimate of the Revenue and Expenditure" and the "Development Budget". A revision of the current budget, the "Estimate of Additional Revenue and Expenditure" is presented to Parliament in November.

The budget document's introduction defines the terminology used. An estimate of the financial position at the end of the budget year is followed by the estimate of revenues for the period. The expenditure estimate is then presented in six parts: by functional/economic classification, by number of employees, by standard items (as remuneration, travel, equipment), by ministries, a summary by votes and a detailed budget by votes. As we have mentioned, the revenue part of the budget will not be analysed further in this report.

There are 27 votes within the budget. They differ widely in size in the Revenue and Expenditure Budget, the smallest being that of the Auditor General (53 employees, 7 million dollars) and the largest Basic Education and Culture (24 700 employees, 1 367 million dollars). Basic Education and Culture represents just under 23 percent of the budget.

Within every vote, main divisions and sub-divisions are presented, giving the objectives of each unit, its main operations, its staffing and then a detailed estimate of expenditure. Main categories are:

- **operational expenditure**, consisting of *current expenditure* which is sub-divided into personnel expenditure, goods and other services, subsidies and other current transfers, *capital expenditure*, sub-divided into acquisition of furniture and office equipment, vehicles, operational equipment etc.
- **acquisition of capital assets**, sub-divided as above but belonging to the development budget. Examples are expenditure for planning, feasibility studies, purchase of land, buildings, machinery, construction expenditure, expenditure for improving of assets etc.

The selection of votes to be included in this first part of the long-term exercise was carefully discussed. Advice was sought from participants in the workshop on Mainstreaming Gender Equity in National Budgets, organised by SIDA in Stockholm 17-18 December 1997, building on their experiences from Australia, South Africa and Tanzania, and from their theoretical work. The Namibian participants in the task force were consulted, as were the initiators of the exercise.

It was generally agreed that the exercise should cover at least one "social" area (as health, social services, education, or housing) and one area usually not discussed in gender terms (as transport, agriculture, works or industry). The later extension of the exercise to other areas could then build on the experiences and difficulties met during the first phase.

It was also seen as important that the exercise should cover at least one budget vote that constituted a major part of the state budget, with a substantial number of employees and activities all over the country. The impact of activities on the population, and on its welfare was also considered of importance to the exercise.

The access to data, and prior knowledge of amount and quality of data available, pointed in certain directions. The final selection of votes was influenced by the fact that the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture had well-known good quality data, covering central aspects of basic schooling, collected and reported on a gender base. As this vote is the major vote within the total budget, and the fact that it has an internationally quite unusually high proportion of GDP points to the priority given to this sector by the government.

Other influencing factors were the history of the education system, with the majority of the population getting very little or no education at all, while the white minority had access to publicly funded schools at all levels. The shift of resources of the education system after independence, the fast expansion of the school system and the school budget to amend past exclusion from education all made education a most suitable area for our exercise.

As we wanted to focus on the education system as a whole, we also included the vote Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology, a vote covering 3,5 percent of the budget, with 570 employees. This decision was also supported by the fact that the two education votes were recently separated – earlier they were one vote and one ministry.

The other vote to be included was eventually decided to be Agriculture, Water & Rural Development, with a budget of just under 7 percent of the total budget, and about 3 000 employees. That this sector concerns major factors in the life of the majority of the Namibian population is unquestionable. Nearly 80 percent of the population of Namibia is engaged in agriculture. According to the 1991 census, women account for almost 60 percent of all those engaged in skilled and subsistence agricultural work.<sup>2</sup> Hence, a gendered perspective on the state budget of this sector is relevant.

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<sup>2</sup> The 1991 census underestimates the full involvement of women in the work force, as it overlooks the participation of many “homemakers” i.e. the 22 percent of women who are classified as not economically active, in agriculture and other productive activities. (Source: Women in Development Service, FAO Women and Population Division).

## 6. Basic Education and Culture

### 6.1 Basic budget information

Basic Education and Culture forms, as mentioned above, the largest vote within the Namibian state budget. The Ministry, with a total of 1 335 million dollars, has a budget of 23 percent of the national budget. The approximately 24 700 employees constitute 37 percent of all state employees. The vote is presented in five main divisions, with further sub-divisions.<sup>3</sup> Percentages are computed on the total number of employees and the total budget of the vote.

#### *Education Policy Formulation and General Administration:*

- 01 Office of the Minister,
- 02 Administration,
- 03 Programme Implementation and Monitoring of Education Standards,
- 09 Planning, Research and Development,

#### Education Policy Formulation and Central Administration

| Main div     | Empl.        | Empl. %  | Nam \$             | Budg %      |
|--------------|--------------|----------|--------------------|-------------|
| 01           | 8            |          | 1 235 000          |             |
| 02           | 549          | 2        | 38 765 000         |             |
| 03           | 580          | 2        | 74 898 000         |             |
| 09           | 97           |          | 25 265 000         |             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1 234</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>140 163 000</b> | <b>10.5</b> |

#### *Primary Education Affairs and Services:*

- 04 Primary education,

#### *Secondary Education Affairs and Services*

- 05 Secondary Education,

#### Primary and Secondary Education Affairs and Services

| Main div     | Empl.         | Empl. %   | Nam \$               | Budg %    |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| 04           | 15 951        | 65        | 742 567 000          | 56        |
| 05           | 6 991         | 28        | 370 880 000          | 28        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>22 942</b> | <b>93</b> | <b>1 113 447 000</b> | <b>84</b> |

#### *Non-Formal Education Services*

- 07 Adult and Continuing Education,

- 10 Library and Archives,

#### *Cultural Affairs and Services*

- 08 Arts and Culture,

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<sup>3</sup> The division 06 Tertiary Education, former within this Vote, is now within Vote 27 Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science & Technology.

### Non-Formal Education Services and Cultural Affairs and Services

| Main div     | Empl.      | Empl. %  | Nam \$            | Budg %   |
|--------------|------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| 07           | 234        |          | 39 334 000        | 3        |
| 10           | 193        |          | 13 310 000        | 1        |
| 08           | 119        |          | 29 130 000        | 2        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>546</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>81 774 000</b> | <b>6</b> |

It was decided to focus on education, and accordingly to exclude Cultural Affairs and Services from this first step of the exercise. Within Non-Formal Education Services, Main Division 10 "Library and Archives will also be excluded. The main efforts in this chapter will be concentrated on the delivery of education services to students and learners. Thus, Education Policy Formulation and General Administration is only briefly mentioned.

### Main Divisions Covered in Exercise

| Main div     | Empl.         | Empl. %   | Nam \$               | Budg %    |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| 04           | 15 951        |           | 742 567 000          | 56        |
| 05           | 6 991         |           | 370 880 000          | 28        |
| 07           | 234           |           | 39 334 000           | 3         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>23 176</b> | <b>94</b> | <b>1 152 781 000</b> | <b>87</b> |

Thus, this exercise cover activities carried out by 94 percent of employees within this vote, and 87 percent of the total budget allocated to the vote.

## 6.2 The Namibian education system – primary and secondary education (Main Divisions 04 and 05)

At independence, Namibia had an education system characterised by extreme inequalities. With the terminology at the time before independence, learner to teacher ratios were 13:1 under the "Administration for Whites" as compared to 37:1 under the "Administration for Ovambos" (World Bank 1995 p 131). An imbalance between regions still remains, although diminished.

The lack of recent population data leads to difficulties in assessing the actual number of children in ages when school typically begins, in the different regions. Birth rates in Namibia are high, and not necessarily evenly distributed across groups of population in all regions.

The education sector's proportion of the total government budget is high. In an international comparison with similar countries for 1993 by the World Bank (1995 p 132) Namibia's education (then including Higher Education) formed over 25 percent of the budget, and more than 10 percent of GNP. Comparable figures for South Africa were 24 percent and 7 percent of GNP, Botswana 20 percent of the state budget and over 8 percent of GNP, while Thailand, Mauritius, Jamaica and Chile showed figures that were approximately half of the Namibian figures.

The Namibian main schooling system covers twelve grades, with the majority of schools run by the government. In 1995, out of all learners in grade 1 to 12, 96 percent were enrolled in state schools. The remaining 4 percent were in private schools, concentrated to the Omaheke, Khomas and Karas regions. (EMIS 1996b, p2)

The Constitution of Namibia states in article 20:

“Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.” “Children shall not be allowed to leave school until they have completed their primary education or have attained the age of sixteen (16) years, whichever is the sooner...”

At independence, Namibia had a backlog of children and young people who had not had access to schooling earlier. In 1991, Namibia's schools enrolled over 88 693 grade 1's, which can be compared to 57 377 in 1996 (Mendelsohn 1997, p 7). This backlog has now largely been cleared. (EMIS 1996b p7)

#### *Provision of services – primary and secondary education*

In 1996, there were 1 435 schools in Namibia. On a national level there are more female than male teachers; 60 percent of teachers are women and 40 percent are men. Only in two regions, Katima Mulilo/Caprivi and Rundu/Okavango, are there more male than female teachers. The support staff in schools, mainly cleaners and secretaries, is also predominantly female. (EMIS 1997)

At a managerial level, however, men dominate. 53 percent of deputy principals and head of departments are men, and they constitute 70 percent of all principals.

The teachers' qualifications affect the expenditure per learner, since qualifications have an influence on salaries. Teachers with formal teacher training constitute a majority, 72 percent, of all teachers. Female teachers are a majority, 64.3 percent, within this group. Among the 28 percent of teachers who are without formal teacher training, women and men are equally represented.

The learner:teacher ratio has been one of the important factors behind the unequal expenditure per learner between regions. An effort to move resources from more privileged areas to other areas has taken time. Variations between regions are wide. In 1996 the national average learner:teacher ratio was 28.7. The highest figure, 38.7 for the same year was reported for Ondangwa East, and the lowest, 22.3 for Keetmanshoop. (EMIS 1997) In the latter region, no school reported a learner:teacher ratio above 30. In Ondangwa East 83.7 percent of all schools reported a learner:teacher ratio above 30, with 18 percent of all schools operating with more than 50 learners per teacher.

Expenditure per learner is computed by the Ministry in its Annual Report for the year ending December 1996 (p 9). Figures refer to the financial year 1996/97. The national average spent per learner was 2 076, an increase of 2.9 percent from the previous financial year. However, the regional figures differed. The table below shows the regional figures. The percentage change is computed from the previous year.

| Regional office     | Learners (1996) | Expenditure per learner | Percentage change in exp. per learner |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Katima Mulilo       | 36 578          | 1 869                   | + 6.13%                               |
| Rundu               | 48 438          | 1 446                   | + 1.11 %                              |
| Ondangwa East       | 122 567         | 1 023                   | - 0.58 %                              |
| Ondangwa West       | 137 439         | 1 197                   | - 0.58 %                              |
| Khorixas            | 35 243          | 2 638                   | - 5.46 %                              |
| Windhoek            | 79 330          | 2 467                   | - 15.33 %                             |
| Keetmanshoop        | 33 523          | 3 847                   | + 25.72 %                             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>493 118</b>  |                         |                                       |
| <i>Average Exp.</i> |                 | <i>2 076</i>            |                                       |

Source: Annual Report for the year ending December 1996, Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, p 9

One important factor behind regional differences, besides class size, is that qualified teachers are not equally distributed between regions. Teachers with good qualifications, and thus higher salaries, are more common in Keetmanshoop, Khorixas and Windhoek than they are in Ondangwa East and Ondangwa West.

A problem highlighted in many sources is that of teacher absenteeism. No figures reflecting this problem have been found. Gendered patterns in and reasons behind such absenteeism would also be of interest.

#### *Beneficiaries of services – primary and secondary education*

Children of school age ( 6 – 18 years) in Namibia in 1996 consisted of 50.5 percent girls and 49.5 percent boys. As a whole, the proportion of learners in the school reflects these figures. Thus, girls and boys are equally represented among learners. (EMIS 1997)

If learners in all grades were in exact proportion, it would mean that girls and boys were equally likely to go to school at all levels. Girls are under-represented at lower grades, and boys are under-represented at higher grades at a national level. But there are variations between regions: in Caprivi, Okavango and Kunene proportions of girls are below 50 percent in secondary grades, and could be increased. In other regions, especially Ondangwa East and West, the same figure is higher than 50 percent. This in turn means that in the latter regions the number of boys in secondary grades could be raised.

School age is generally between 6 and 16 years. There is however still a spread of ages in many classes, a spread which now is diminishing, due to decreasing repetition rates, and to

the clearing of the initial backlog of learners. During the first part of the 1990's, the number of children who repeated classes was considerable. The policy for repetition and its application have since been changed, resulting in a reduction of repetition rates.

We have not found quantitative material on absenteeism among learners, and therefore cannot discuss that in a gendered perspective. There are reasons to believe, from experience in other countries, that reasons for absence from school may differ according to gender and age.

The only material we found, in an NPC study (NPC 1994, p 14 ff.), built on respondents speculating on the reasons why some children in their communities might not be attending school. Answers given are not linked to actual non-attendance or absenteeism. They are not reported on a gender basis.

Drop-out patterns for girls and boys respectively differ. Boys have somewhat higher drop out rates than girls have in grade 1-6, especially from grade 1. The highest leaving rate is from grade 10, when 32 percent of girls and 29 percent of boys leave school. Mendelsohn (1997 p 10) reports summarised result from a 1995 survey of why learners drop out of school. About 30 percent of all girls who dropped out of school did it because of pregnancy.<sup>4</sup>

The problem of pregnancies among female learners – and the problems of the fathers of the children and their position in relationship to the education system – is an important one, for several reasons. Teenage motherhood, and the fact that the young mother loses out on education, affects not only the young mother and her future life, but also the prospects and living conditions of her child. Heike Becker et al. (1995) in the report "Teenage Pregnancy and the Right to Education" points to the severe drop-out rate for girls in the Okavango region. There are reasons to believe that regional differences could be large. The report also contains several recommendations on policies on young mothers and fathers attending school, disciplinary measures against teachers who impregnate learners, adult education, sex education in schools etc.

In the report by the Department of Women Affairs on CEDAW (1995), school drop-out rates and teenage pregnancy is discussed, and the draft Policy on Pregnancy Among Learners at Schools is presented. The Policy is criticised for its silence about the parental responsibilities of schoolboys or school teachers who impregnate female learners, aside from payment of maintenance. The implementation of the Policy, results of it, and possible local and regional differences in the implementation are not discussed. This should be a priority.

Although schooling is free according to the Constitution, the costs for having children attend school can be problematic for parents. Such costs may consist of school uniforms, textbooks, transport to school and boarding costs for children living far from schools. Hence, these costs are highest for parents in sparsely populated areas, with long distances to school facilities.

But the principle of free basic education is in some doubt, since it is repeatedly mentioned in many kinds of material, that schools in practice do charge fees (for school funds etc.). Even if there is said to exist provisions for parents who cannot afford such fees, it is not

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<sup>4</sup> The figure is based on an assumption that dropping out of school is equally frequent among girls and boys. The survey report was not gender separated.

clear that such provisions are sufficient for school fees not to be an obstacle for some children's education. The area would merit further examination, also on a regional basis.

In 1996, over 50 000 children (about 10 percent of all learners) lived in 256 hostels. About one quarter of hostels was private, many of which are subsidised by the government. The private hostels accommodated 18 percent of all boarders. The gender distribution of boarders in Namibia is equal. In private hostels, girls are slightly over-represented, while the opposite is true for the government hostels. The majority of boarders are in secondary school. Primary school learners who are in hostels live in the southern, sparsely populated regions.

Efforts to decrease differences in regional expenditure per learner could result in an increase of the number of boarders, as these efforts may include diminishing resources used in the sparsely populated southern areas, which may result in schools there being closed down.

A number of children do not go to school at all, in spite of their being of school age. It is estimated, by officials at the Ministry of Basic Education, that around 16 500 children, in ages 7 to 13, do not go to primary school at all. The biggest identifiable groups among these children are Bushman children, Ovahimba children, children of farm workers in the Otjozondjupa and Omaheke regions, child labourers at cattle posts and street children. (Mendelsohn 1997 p 10) The gender distribution among these children is not reported. However, some indicators point to more boys than girls belonging to this group. (p 15)

### **6.3 The National Literacy Program (Main Division 07)**

The National Literacy Program in Namibia (NLPN) was launched in 1992. It is based on Article 20 of the constitution, which states: "All persons shall have the right to education." The state responsibility not only for education of the young, but also of the adult persons, was targeted on literacy for the adult population. The quantitative goal is to achieve 80 percent literacy among adults by the year 2000.

In 1991, 35 percent of the Namibian population was illiterate, according to the 1991 census. The definition was the total population of 15 and above with no formal education or less than 4 years of school. Total illiteracy rates for women and men were very similar, but regional differences were considerable. In Caprivi and Okavango, a larger proportion of women than men were illiterate. In Oshikoto, Oshana, Erongo, Hardap and Karas a larger proportion of men than women were illiterate.

In the 1993/94 Namibian Household and Income Expenditure Survey (NHIES) the illiteracy rate had dropped to 32 percent. Older people were much more often illiterate than younger people, and the rural population more often than the urban. Older women were more often illiterate than men of the corresponding ages were.

Women have constituted a vast majority of the beneficiaries of NLPN since the program was launched. Only 26 percent of all enrolments in the programs first years have been male.

Preliminary results for the year 1996/97, as reported by the Monitoring and Evaluation Subdivision within Directorate of Adult Basic Education, show that 40 087 adult learners enrolled with the NLPN. 70 percent of those were women and 30 percent were men. The outcomes of tests show no great gendered differences between the results of tested

participants. The efforts to enrol more men have resulted in a slight increase of male participants.

As promoters, women are over 70 percent of promoters at local level. At district level, men form a majority, while the regional level has an approximately equal gender distribution.

The program is using 3 percent of the total budget within the vote. It is benefiting women more than men at present, and has done so throughout its existence. Negative attitudes towards literacy and life long learning among men seem to be a gendered problem, which needs to be targeted for the goals of the program to be reached.

#### 6.4 Conclusions

The basic education system of Namibia is using a high proportion of the state budget, in an international comparison. The system as a whole, and on a national level, seems to benefit women and men as learners about equally. Within the system, however, there are problematic areas from a gender perspective.

Counselling of children when they choose subjects for secondary schooling, and when considering tertiary education does not seem to be well developed. The gender stereotyped course selection and career choice is discussed at some length in the Department of Women Affairs CEDAW Report (1995)

Gendered patterns of absenteeism and dropping out of schools are not well known. The problem of pregnancy among female learners, and the attitudes towards these pregnancies among fellow female and male learners and their families, among teachers and school managers as well as in the local communities is mentioned in several sources, but needs more attention. This also seems to be true for the fathers of the children. A crucial point is following up the recent Policy on Pregnancy Among Learners at Schools, including examining the actual implementation of the Policy in different regions and areas within regions, possible improvements of the Policy and perhaps also highlighting good practices where such are to be found.

Attitudes among teachers and their effects on learners motivation to be at school and to continue to higher education levels in many countries show a gendered pattern. We have not been able to find material on such patterns in Namibia. It is reasonable to assume that the patterns exist.

Absenteeism among teachers and its interaction with learners attitudes is another area which would merit attention, also from a gender perspective. Promotion of teachers to managerial posts seems to favour men and disfavour women, in spite of the fact that female teachers on average have more formal education than men. Patterns of remuneration of female and male teachers are areas where we have not yet found quantitative material. There is clearly a risk that female teachers, a majority of which are well educated, are not given possibilities to contribute fully as managers on higher levels.

The NLPN program is clearly under-used by illiterate men. Men are also under-represented as local promoters. If this reflects an attitude among men to education, the concept of life-long learning needs to be better explained to men. That women are more positive than men to education, and that women are quick to grasp possibilities to take part in

education programs offered, is a growing phenomenon in many countries. It is important to point out that women are the role models, and that the problem does not consist of too many women, scaring the men away, but of male attitudes towards learning. This problem needs to be addressed by change both within the NLPN program and in local society.

A main problem, outside this exercise but influencing attitudes towards the school system, is the difficulties finding paid work for female and male school leavers. It would lead too far to discuss unemployment here. It is clear, that at least reasonably good prospects at the labour market after leaving school would encourage learners to do well at school. It would also be easier to encourage less traditional choices of subjects and careers for female and male learners.

## 7. Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science & Technology

### 7.1 Basic budget information

This vote, separated in 1995 from Basic Education and Culture, is dominated by Tertiary Education. In total its budget is over 217 million dollars, which is 3,7 percent of the total state budget. The 570 employees constitute 0,9 percent of the total number of state employees.

The vote is presented in two main divisions

#### *Education Policy Formulation and General administration*

01 office of the Minister

02 General Services

| Main div     | Empl.     | Empl. %     | Nam \$           | Budg %     |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|------------|
| 01           | 3         | 0,5 %       | 1 680 000        | 1 %        |
| 02           | 55        | 9,5 %       | 4 971 000        | 2 %        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>58</b> | <b>10 %</b> | <b>6 651 000</b> | <b>3 %</b> |

#### *Tertiary Education Affairs and Services*

03 Higher/Secondary Education and Human Resources Development

04 Vocational Training

05 Bursaries and National Qualifications

06 Research, Science and Technology

| Main div     | Empl.      | Empl. %     | Nam \$             | Budg %    |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 03           | 356        | 62,5 %      | 145 896 000        | 67 %      |
| 04           | 140        | 25 %        | 30 972 000         | 14 %      |
| 05           | 13         | 2 %         | 32 456 000         | 15 %      |
| 06           | 3          | 0,5 %       | 1 331 000          | 1 %       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>512</b> | <b>90 %</b> | <b>210 655 000</b> | <b>97</b> |

In this exercise, we have focused on education and training in the first step reported here. Hence we exclude the Main Division of Education Policy Formulation and General Administration. Due to the small extent of activities, we also exclude Sub-Division 06 Research, Science and Technology.

#### Main Divisions Covered in Exercise

| Main div     | Empl.      | Empl. %       | Nam \$             | Budg %        |
|--------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 03           | 356        | 62,5 %        | 145 896 000        | 67 %          |
| 04           | 140        | 25 %          | 30 972 000         | 14 %          |
| 05           | 13         | 2 %           | 32 456 000         | 15 %          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>509</b> | <b>89.5 %</b> | <b>209 324 000</b> | <b>96.5 %</b> |

## **7.2 Higher/Secondary Education and Human Resources Development (03)**

The main activities are financing the University of Namibia (UNAM), the Polytechnic of Namibia, and running the Colleges of Education in Rundu, Caprivi, Windhoek and Ongwediva. The personnel at the Colleges of Education form the majority of the employees within this budget division.<sup>5</sup>

The University of Namibia in 1996 had about 4 500 students, of which 58 percent were women and 42 percent were men. The dominance of women among students increases in the third and fourth year. The gender division of students over faculties is the same as seen in large parts of the world. Women students were about half of all students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, as in Education, while they were 85 percent of students in Medical and Health Sciences (which offers nursing). Men students dominated in science with 66 percent. (EMIS 1997)

The Department of Women Affairs CEDAW Report (1995 p 85) shows the distribution by gender of full time students at UNAM in 1993. The gendered patterns are very clear. Men dominate in Economics and Management Science, in Science, and within education in Higher Education Diploma. Women dominate in Nursing, Midwifery, bot at University Diploma level and in Advanced Diplomas in Nursing Science.

The same report (1995 p 89) describes the gender pattern of the UNAM employees in 1994. In administration, all senior managers were men. Of middle managers, 76 percent were men and 24 percent were women.

14 percent of professors were women and 86 percent were men. Among lecturers the gender distribution was more equal; 45 percent of lecturers were women and 55 percent were men. Two thirds of junior academic staff were women, one third was men.

The pattern of gender representation among academic staff did not correspond with that of students. One common explanation is that the University is a young organisation, and that the gender distribution on higher posts will change automatically with time. International experience of this situation, which is prevalent in many countries, shows that this pattern can not be expected to change without specific and systematic action to ensure that both women and men are promoted in the academic system. Encouraging female students to continue their studies at higher levels, gender sensitive tutoring, curricula revision etc. are possible actions which have shown results elsewhere.

## **7.3 Bursaries and National Qualifications (05)**

The main item in the budget of this Main Division is Bursaries and Scholarships, with a total of 28 million dollars. We have not had access to gender disaggregated material on applications and what proportion of these that were granted and turned down respectively.

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<sup>5</sup> UNAM employees are included in the Annual Reports from the University, and not as Ministry Employees.

The three first criteria will be selected through the computer system, while the three last will be decided in committees. The regional quota is based on enrolments in grade 12 of the previous year in the political regions

For a student to be considered for a grant/loan, rather than a loan only, at least three of the following criteria must be met: priority field of study, marginalisation, biological orphan or disabled, poverty.

The figures for 1998 show that available resources for the Students Financial Assistance Scheme will allow assistance to be provided for 7.4 percent of those who sat for grade 12 examination in 1997, and to 39 percent of the total of 3 705 who applied for assistance.

The combined effects of the criteria in the new system, especially those for priority fields of study, marginalisation and gender, should be followed closely from a gender perspective. The work of the committees in applying and balancing different criteria is also important in this respect.

#### **7.4 Vocational training (04)**

There are six vocational training centres in Namibia, offering technical subjects at a junior secondary level to a total of 464 learners. The enrolment of females is 19 percent and of males is 81 percent. The highest proportion of female students is attracted by the Zambezi Vocational Training Centre in Caprivi, which offers dressmaking and cloth technology, commercial and secretarial training. In this centre there are 25 female students, 61 percent. The other centres focus on building, metal- and wood-working, motor mechanics electrician work, and fitting and turning. These other centres have a vast majority, 85 percent, of male students. (EMIS 1997)

The majority of employees within the Main Division are employees at the vocational training centres.

The vocational training on offer is very small, both in relation to the potential number of learners and especially in relation to the problems of finding paid work which young women and men face. It is very clear that females are disadvantaged by the choice of subjects on offer, taking into account the traditional and gendered choice of study subjects and the gender segregation of the labour market. This could be influenced by counselling at primary and secondary schools, even if the obstacles are difficult. The rate of unemployment among young women and men does emphasise the need for improving and enlarging both counselling and vocational training services, both for female and male learners.

#### **7.5 Conclusions**

A problem of higher education in many parts of the world consists of the matching between student's choices of subject areas for study and the labour markets needs for people with different education, training and skills. As Namibia is a country in which education available for all is a recent phenomenon, it is to be expected that this matching is particularly difficult. Efforts to guide students, a continuing dialogue between labour market actors on the one hand and entities of higher education on the other, and mechanisms for facilitating this

matching therefore are crucial. Unemployment, and sometimes a simultaneous shortage of labour in other sectors are outcomes of a matching failure.

The influence of the new Student Financial Assistance Scheme on gendered patterns of subject choice, and of access to higher education for women and men with different backgrounds and achievements need careful attention.

Role models from different parts of the society are well known to influence students' subject choices. The lack of role models in higher positions within the private sector in Namibia for large groups of students is apparent. On the other hand, many admired women and men who were active in the liberation struggle are now in high positions within public administration - taking an active part in building the new democracy – and serve as strong role models for the young. As the need for new employment within this sector will not grow, this imbalance of role models is reflected in present, and very likely also future, difficulties for students finding jobs, and thus in unemployment.

## 8. Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development

The main responsibilities of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development include the provision of farm support services, such as training and extension services, veterinary services, and research, support to rural water development, and the planning and implementation of development projects concerning crop production and livestock.

While there exists - sometimes - good data on the distribution of these services and development projects by geographical regions and categories of farmers, there is virtually no gender-disaggregated data at all available. It is therefore impossible to make an accurate quantitative assessment of the distribution of beneficiaries by gender.

Given this paucity of data, the only method that can be applied is of an indirect nature. For example, agriculture services which are supporting activities which are dominated by men - cattle rearing, for example - can be assumed to benefit men rather than women. Improved water supply, on the other hand, tends, given the prevailing division of labour in rural Namibia, to benefit women more than men, since women are normally responsible for tasks related to water: fetching water, washing and cleaning, cooking, etc.

This method may sometimes be misleading, however. For example, the fact that men have the major responsibility for heavy physical work related to land preparation, such as clearing and ploughing, does not necessarily mean that men are the main beneficiaries from tractor services; rather, it may be poor women in female-headed households without access to male labour who benefit most from such services.

Any attempt to make a gender-disaggregated analysis of the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (hereafter MAWRD) must, however, begin with a proper understanding of the different roles of men and women in Namibia's agriculture: who does what, and who benefits from what.

Of the six theoretical models and tools discussed in Chapter 4, only a few can thus be applied. Tool number one, a "gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessment of public service delivery", requires gender-disaggregated opinion polls, attitude surveys, etc. which are not available at present - but which could be carried out, without major cost.

Tool number 2, a gender-disaggregated benefit incidence analysis, is the dominant methodology used by international organisations like the World Bank. This method also requires data that is not available, but which could be collected through a relatively simple addition of statistics on the distribution by gender of, say, beneficiaries of extension services.

The impact of the state budget on time use is one of the most relevant tools in a gender analysis of agricultural services. In agriculture, a rather strict division of labour between women and men makes it possible to assess, in very broad terms, how certain government services impact on women's and men's allocation of time between and within the productive and reproductive sectors. While the lack of data, again, makes it impossible to carry the analysis very far, an attempt will be made to make a few observations.

The present chapter begins with a general description of Namibia's agricultural sector, with emphasis on the different roles played by women and men. After this discussion, the overall agricultural policy of the Namibian Government is presented, in order to enable an

assessment of the degree of correspondence between objectives as regards gender equality and budgetary allocations.

The last budget available, covering the fiscal year 1997/98, is thereafter presented, and discussed from a gender equality perspective. The major - and unfortunate - conclusion is that few conclusions can be drawn, since virtually all information in the budget is "gender-blind".

## **8.1 The Agricultural Sector: A Brief Overview**

### *The Commercial Sector*

After independence, Namibia inherited a highly dualistic agricultural system. On the one hand, we have the so-called commercial sector, which is dominated by some 6 300 very large farm enterprises (more than 7 000 ha, on average), owned by some 4 200 mostly white farmers. This sector covers 43 per cent of the country's total land area, and employs around 35 000 farm workers.

Somewhat schematically, one could say that Namibia's agricultural sector is composed of two entirely different parts: black subsistence farming in the communal areas in the north, in which women constitute the majority of producers, and white commercial cattle ranching in the centre and south, in which black farm workers provide the bulk of the labour force.

Commercial agriculture plays a rather important role in the national economy - it accounts, for example, for around six per cent of GDP, and some ten to fifteen per cent of Namibia's total export earnings (live animals, meat, wool, hides and skins).

In the past, commercial farmers enjoyed a wide range of privileges, such as access to subsidised credit and to state-financed extension services. Apart from direct support from government, a number of parastatal enterprises catered for the needs of this sector in areas such as price stabilisation and marketing.

After independence, most state subsidies to the commercial sector have been phased out, and although commercial farmers may benefit indirectly from various government services - research, for example - they do not appear as direct beneficiaries from services financed over the MAWRD budget.

While Namibia's commercial farmers belong to the white, wealthy part of the population, the economic and social situation of the 35 000 farm workers, and of their around 100 000 family members, is deplorable. All available indicators reveal that farm workers belong to the poorest part of the population, with average incomes below fifty per cent of the national average (see, for example, NHIES, the 1993/94 Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey, or Devereux et.al., 1996).

Most farm workers receive their income partly in cash and partly in rations, which reinforces their severe dependency on their employers. According to the NHIES data, 63 per cent of farm worker households are classified as "poor", as against a national average of 29 per cent, and the level of education is extremely low: in 1993, 44 per cent of Namibia's farm workers had never been to school at all, while 37 per cent had attended primary school only.

A relatively small number of all farm workers are women. According to one survey (Devereux et.al., 1996), women represent 13 per cent of all farm workers. Of these, only 12 per cent are employed as permanent workers, the rest as casual or seasonal workers. Both women and children of male farm workers are, however, expected to contribute some work, in particular during peak seasons.

While it is important to highlight the difficult situation of farm workers - men, women and children -, developments as regards labour relations and social and economic conditions on the large-scale commercial farms are not the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, and the Ministry's budget contains no support to this sector. In the remainder of this chapter, we will therefore concentrate on that part of agriculture which receives virtually all attention from the Ministry, i.e. the communal sector.

### *The Communal Sector*<sup>7</sup>

#### **General Characteristics**

While commercial agriculture contributes some six per cent of Namibia's GDP and employs close to ten per cent of the total workforce, the communal sector contributes about three per cent to GDP, but employs as much as 35-40 per cent of the total workforce.

According to representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture (personal communication to the consultants), around 80 per cent of all government services in support of agricultural development today goes to the communal sector, and only some 20 per cent to the commercial sector.

The communal areas directly support the bulk of Namibia's farming population, and are heavily concentrated to the northern and north-eastern regions, which are the only parts of the country where average rainfall permits rainfed crop production. Elsewhere in the country, communal farmers are concentrated in small pockets: around seasonal rivers and floodplains, and along human-made pipe-lines and water systems.

Farmers in the communal areas are mainly engaged in subsistence cropping and livestock production. The dominant crop is mahangu (pearl millet), which accounts for over 75 per cent of all cropped area, followed by sorghum and maize (the latter crop is almost exclusively grown in Caprivi). Virtually all households own some cattle or, at least, small animals (goats, sheep, chicken, etc.).

Although economic and social differentiation is increasing in communal areas, the sector is, by and large, characterised by extremely low levels of productivity, high variability of

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<sup>7</sup> This section is largely based on the following papers and articles: Central Statistics Office, "1994/95 Namibia Agricultural Census"; FAO, "Women, Agriculture and Rural Development. National Sectoral Report for Namibia", 1995; FAO, "From Farmer to Planner, and Back: Lessons from Namibia", 1997; Eunice M. Ipinge et.al, "Women in Development Country Profile: Namibia", University of Namibia, 1997; National Planning Commission, "Integrated Poverty Reduction Strategy for Namibia: A Discussion Document", November 1997; The World bank, "Namibia: Raising to the Challenge of Poverty Reduction", 1997 plus a number of specific surveys, evaluation reports and technical documents from the MAWRD.

output - largely as a result of very large variations in rainfall from one year to another - and a high degree of poverty, household food insecurity and malnutrition.

According to the 1994/94 agricultural census, Namibia has approximately 300 000 land holdings in the communal sector, distributed among some 113 000 households. The overwhelming majority of households have between one and five hectares of land at their disposal. Average farm size is 2.9 hectare; 14 per cent of farmers have less than one hectare. 65 per cent have 1-4 hectares, and the remaining 21 per cent have more than four hectares.

While land is becoming increasingly scarce as a result of population growth, shortage of labour - in particular for weeding and land preparation - is probably still the most limiting factor in crop production. The labour shortage is most apparent among low-income households, especially those which are female-headed (see further below). The main method of field preparation is still hand hoe, with only around 25 per cent of all households using animal traction.

While subsistence agriculture is the dominant occupation in terms of workload, and a major source of food for the family's own consumption, a majority of communal farmers derive most of their income from a wide variety of other sources: petty trade, formal and informal employment, pensions, cash remittances, and others. Any long-term improvement of the situation of communal farmers must be based on a combination of enhanced productivity of farming and a diversification of the rural economy.

### **Gender and Communal Agriculture**

Of the total population engaged in subsistence agriculture, slightly more than 60 per cent were, in the 1991 census, women, and of all women employed in agriculture and fishery work, 76 per cent worked mainly with subsistence agriculture (Department of Women Affairs 1994). Although minor changes may have taken place during the last few years, it is still legitimate to regard subsistence agriculture as a predominantly female activity, and commercial agriculture as predominantly male.

It falls beyond the scope of this report - and, certainly, beyond the competence of its authors - to attempt an analysis of gender aspects of Namibia's traditional rural society, with all its complex norms and values. Suffice it here to stress a few points which are always highlighted in the available literature on the subject.

To begin with, Namibia is, despite its small population, a highly heterogeneous society. For example, the authority which women wield in community groups differs very much from region to region. According to a FAO Report on Women and Agriculture (FAO, 1995), women in the Owambo regions in the North, where the war and the labour system have torn households apart, are seen to be more independent, and willing to take on positions of responsibility and decision-making within the local community. "In contrast", observes the report, "it was noted that in other rural areas, such as the communal areas in the East, women who do attend meetings sit on the sidelines and speak infrequently" (p. 11).

While the large diversity as regards history, tradition, etc. among Namibia's many different ethnic groups makes it difficult to generalise, an unanimous opinion is that women in general do face discriminatory access to capital, modern inputs, as well as to government

services of various kinds, and that women are underrepresented in decision-making bodies - whether "traditional" or more modern political and administrative institutions.

The latest local elections, held in February 1998, did, however, result in a substantial increase in the female representation at local authority level.

Previous discriminatory marriage law under both civil and customary systems limited women's control over property and land. Most civil law marriages are in community of property, and married women cannot register property in their own name, which gives the husband control over the purchase and disposal of property. This also means that married women cannot use common property as collateral for loans.

As regards customary law, it has been observed that "a confusing web of legal provisions continues to govern marriage for most rural women, as colonial marriage laws have been overlaid onto the customary system. Women in customary marriages are also dependent on husbands' authority to sell property or to enter into contracts" (FAO, 1995, pp. 15-16). Women's access to land is often threatened by their husbands (and former husbands), and even by their brothers and sons.

Many more examples of a lack of legal or *de facto* equality between women and men could be given.<sup>8</sup>

It should also be stressed that the very notion of a nuclear family - with a married couple living with their common children - is largely irrelevant in certain rural areas, where official marriages are rather uncommon, and where "families" can look in many different ways.

As regards agricultural services, much has been done since independence to improve the lack of gender balance in the delivery of government support (see below). However, women are still severely discriminated against in access to inputs and services of various kinds. For example,

- only a very small share of all credit goes to women;
- most of the veterinary services are concentrated to cattle, rather than to small animals such as goats and chicken;
- agricultural research still tends to give higher priority to commercial agriculture than to subsistence production;
- advice on improved production techniques often takes for granted that draught animals are available;
- very little technological development and training is directed towards easing the heavy workload of women in traditional female activities such as firewood collection and the construction of improved stoves, small-scale grain- pounding techniques, weeding, small-scale forestry, etc.

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<sup>8</sup> For good discussions, see, for example, FAO (1995), FAO (1997), Ipinge et.al. (1997), and Department of Women Affairs, Office of the President (1995).

### Time Use Patterns in Communal Agriculture

According to common estimates, between 55 and 65 per cent of all agricultural work in Namibia is performed by women. Of the total population in communal areas, slightly more than 53 per cent are women.

Officially, some 64 800 communal households are headed by a man, and around 48 800 by a women.<sup>9</sup> All households with a husband present are registered as "male-headed households" - even if the woman does most of the work, and even when husband is only marginally present. All female-headed households are, in actual practice, households where men are almost entirely absent, and women perform almost all tasks (with the help of relatives and, occasionally, hired labour).

It is therefore important to make a distinction between *de jure* heads, women officially recognised as the official head, and *de facto* heads, women who are in charge of the household in the absence of a male head. Although comprehensive data is limited, regional figures and the national census suggest that some 30-50 per cent of rural households are effectively female-headed (for data and a discussion, see FAO, 1995).

As regards the concrete tasks performed by women and men, respectively, there is little data available, but various surveys and farm management studies may indicate a broad pattern.

A survey<sup>10</sup> from a northern village summarises typical activities of women and men in the following way:

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<sup>9</sup> The very notion of "head of household" is, however, being increasingly questioned by Namibian women, as it reflects and conserves prevailing male attitudes.

<sup>10</sup> MAWRD, "Social and Gender Issues in Agricultural and Livestock Production Systems. A Training Case Study. Okahitua Village, Otjozondjupa Region", n.d.

Table 8.1. Typical Activities of Women and Men

| <b>Women's activities</b>    | <b>Men's activities</b>                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Productive</b>            | <b>Productive</b>                                  |
| <i>At home</i>               | <i>At home</i>                                     |
| Milking                      | Supervising women, children and hired labour       |
| Butter-making                | Productions of crafts (i.e. rope or saddle making) |
| Food processing/pounding     |                                                    |
| Catering                     |                                                    |
| Sewing                       |                                                    |
| <i>In the fields</i>         | <i>In the fields</i>                               |
| Ploughing                    | Ploughing                                          |
| Sowing                       | Some gardening                                     |
| Weeding, harvesting          |                                                    |
| Storage                      |                                                    |
| <i>Livestock</i>             | <i>Livestock</i>                                   |
| Herding smallstock           | Herding cattle                                     |
| Watering smallstock          | Movement to better grazing                         |
| Weaning calves               | Vaccination, castrating, selling, slaughter        |
| <b>Reproductive</b>          | <b>Reproductive</b>                                |
| Water collection             | Collecting wood (with cart)                        |
| Wood collection (if by foot) | Cleaning yards (boys)                              |
| Cleaning, cooking, childcare | Building houses (structure and roof)               |
| Building houses (walls)      |                                                    |
| Collecting wild fruits       |                                                    |
| <b>Community</b>             | <b>Community</b>                                   |
| Committees                   | Committees                                         |
| Funerals (cooking)           | Funerals (organising)                              |
|                              | Village meetings                                   |

To illustrate the division of labour within agriculture proper, we could take data from a farm management survey of the Okavango region in the north. This study confirms what appears to be a common pattern in communal areas: while men do most of the work related to land preparation (clearing, tilling, etc.), women perform the lion's part of all other tasks related to crop production (mainly planting, weeding and harvesting). To illustrate this division of labour, data from a couple of villages, Nzinze and Nkata, which appear to be rather representative is shown in Table 8.2 below:

Table 8.2. Labour Inputs by Activity and Category of Worker. Percentage of total.

|                        | <i>Nzinze</i> | <i>Nkata</i> |                       |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Total land preparation |               |              |                       |
| HH member              | 87 %          | 67 %         |                       |
| Non hh member          | 13 %          | 33 %         |                       |
| Male                   | 71 %          | 63 %         |                       |
| Female                 | 29 %          | 37 %         |                       |
| Total row planting     |               |              |                       |
| HH member              | 99 %          | 100 %        |                       |
| Non hh member          | 1 %           | 0 %          |                       |
| Male                   | 6 %           | 0 %          |                       |
| Female                 | 94 %          | 100 %        |                       |
| Total replanting       |               |              |                       |
| HH member              | 100 %         | 88 %         |                       |
| Non hh member          | 0 %           | 12 %         |                       |
| Male                   | 0 %           | 0 %          |                       |
| Female                 | 100 %         | 100 %        |                       |
| Total weeding          |               |              |                       |
| HH members             | 95 %          | 85 %         |                       |
| Non hh members         | 5 %           | 15 %         |                       |
| Male                   | 43 %          | 33 %         |                       |
| Female                 | 57 %          | 67 %         |                       |
| Total harvesting       |               |              |                       |
| HH members             | 94 %          | 89 %         |                       |
| Non hh members         | 6 %           | 11 %         |                       |
| Male                   | 43 %          | 9 %          |                       |
| Female                 | 57 %          | 91 %         | HH = household member |

Source: MAWRD, Directorate of Planning, "Farm Management Survey of the Okavango Region", Windhoek March 1997

Other surveys (see, for example, the 1994/95 agricultural census, "Basic Tables of Communal Agriculture") also confirm certain general features of the division of labour between women and men in communal agriculture. For example, men are more likely than women to engage in livestock as well as in non-agricultural activities, more men than women use animal traction for land preparation. Also, men's sources of income are more diversified than those of women.

In households headed by men, the average area under cultivation is, as could be expected, higher than in female-headed households, and average income is also higher (although not as much higher as could perhaps be expected, given the larger availability of labour on male-headed holdings).

A more detailed assessment of women's and men's workload is provided in a couple of "Participatory Rural Appraisals", PRAs, commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture. What is of particular interest in the present context is the attempt made in the PRAs to identify how much time women and men spend an average work day in the productive, reproductive and community spheres. While data from PRAs should, of course, be taken with a grain of salt - the sample is usually very small, social pressure on the respondents often makes the answers biased, and the estimates are highly subjective - the studies do confirm, however, that rural women are very busy, and that they do far more work than men in the reproductive area of the economy.

Additional information was also collected during a field trip to the northern provinces undertaken by one of the two consultants. From interviews with communal farmers, and discussions with teachers and students at the Ogongo Agricultural College as well as with staff at the Agricultural Development Centre in Ongwendiva, the picture of the division of labour in communal agriculture that emerged largely corroborated the pattern briefly discussed above.

The dominance of male extension workers was also confirmed during the field trip. This dominance was particularly pronounced among the senior, more experienced professionals. Very encouraging, from the point of view of enhanced equality between the genders, was, however, the high ratio of female students who have entered the Ogongo Agricultural College during the last few years. While there are 51 men and 39 women among all students at the college, fifty per cent of this year's new students are female. In the curriculum of the College, considerable attention is paid to gender issues, and a special course on gender and agriculture is offered all students.

## **8.2 Agricultural Policy since Independence: General**

### *The Role of the State*

The role of government in agricultural development can be thought of as a wide continuum. At one extreme, we have completely free markets for both inputs and agricultural products, and only a minimum of government provision of basic law and order and macroeconomic stability. At the other extreme, we find pervasive price controls and subsidies, agricultural parastatals and restrictions on domestic and foreign trade.

Before independence, Namibia's commercial agricultural sector was heavily supported, and protected, while the communal sector was neglected, controlled and discriminated against in a variety of different ways.

After independence, the government has reduced the overall degree of government intervention in the agricultural sector, and lifted a number of restrictions which served to protect the white commercial farmers. The thrust of the new policies is not to **control** markets, but rather to give support to market development.

In line with the overall market-oriented policy, the nature of services has also changed, away from subsidies of various kinds towards the provision of public goods (such as agricultural research) and other services related to so-called market failures, for example education and training.

The new policies - as expressed in a series of statements such as the 1995 Water Supply and Sanitation Policy and the 1995 National Agricultural Policy - also imply that the role of government will mainly be that of a facilitator rather than direct provider of services, and that the government intends to achieve its objectives through a close co-operation with other partners in development, basically the private sector, non-governmental organisations and civil society at large.

### *Policy Priorities*

The Namibian government's agricultural strategy emphasises the need to correct the historical imbalances between the commercial and communal farming areas, and gives priority to equity objectives, i.e. to improve food security and living conditions for the poorest sectors of the rural population. As noted in the 1998 draft chapter on agriculture in the National Development Plan, "prominence is also given to gender issues".

The new policy orientation is summarised in the following manner:

"The Government's agricultural strategy has developed rapidly since Independence, but more particularly since the adoption of the NAP (National Agricultural Policy). Two separate changes, in particular, have been taking place since the start of the plan period: firstly, on grounds of both equity and efficiency, the provision of Government services to farmers, hitherto limited to those in the private-tenure farming areas, has been extended more widely - to producers in the communal-tenure areas. Secondly, the scope, management and delivery mechanisms of public sector activities in the communal-tenure areas is being reoriented from being directive and subsidised to being responsive and cost-covering.

The first change - the broadening of Government services to producers in communal-tenure areas - has involved a reorientation in research, extension, training and credit service provision. This reorientation is expected to make public investments supporting farmers both more equitable and more efficient. Because of previous neglect, the potential for productivity gains is greatest for the communal-tenure areas. ...The second change - involving the method of delivery of services - is expected to result in a development process which is more inclusive of the private sector (both farmers and service providers) and, therefore, more sustainable."

### **8.3 Agricultural Policies and Gender**

As formulated in the Namibian government's recently adopted National Agricultural Policy:

"The Government acknowledges the constraints and discriminatory practices facing many female-headed households and youth in rural areas throughout Namibia. The crucial role of women and the youth in agricultural development needs to be re-emphasised, and their participation in agricultural organisations and related institutions ensured. Existing social norms and values relating to women and gender

discrimination must be changed. Women will be assisted in overcoming constraints to their participation in development efforts related to their lack of knowledge, limited access to land, lack of security of tenure, discriminatory laws, shortages of labour and poor access to services and finance."

The National Agricultural Policy contains a large number of references to the need to address the severe gender-imbalances in rural Namibia, and mention is repeatedly made of the importance of gender-sensitive policies. There is also a recognition of the fact that policies must go beyond the delivery of agricultural services, and explore ways to enhance women's legal and *de facto* control over land and other resources, and ability to utilise the services offered.

It is against these broad goals - i.e. the government's explicit objectives of enhancing gender equality and socio-economic equality in agricultural policies - that actual policies should be assessed. If the budget accurately reflects the government's intentions, priority should be given to women rather than men, and to poor women over rich.

#### 8.4 The 1997/98 Agricultural Budget

In order to avoid possible misunderstanding, it should be stressed that not all public activities in support of agriculture are financed over the budget of MAWRD. For example, the Ministry of Public Works play a very important role for infrastructural development in rural areas, the Ministry of Trade and Industry facilitates loans for small-scale agro-industries, as does the parastatal Namibia Development Corporation (NDC). The Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing (MRLGH) implements a number of development programmes in rural areas, including projects explicitly targeted to women: pottery, basketry, bakeries, sewing, small-scale gardening, and others. The Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation is responsible for land questions. Many domestic and foreign NGOs are also carrying out important rural development work - sometimes, but not always, in close co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture. For the purpose of the present report, however, we will only look at the budget of MAWRD.

The overall allocations to agricultural development have declined during the past few years, in both absolute and relative terms. The budget should be seen in the context of market-oriented policies, trade liberalisation and contracting state expenditures.

##### *The 1997/98 Budget: Major Expenditure Categories*

The budget allocations to the MAWRD for the last three fiscal years are shown in table 8.3 below.

**Table 8.3** Budget Allocations to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development 1995/96 - 1997/98. Votes (in millions of current Namibian dollars) and percentages of total expenditures over the state budget. Rounded figures.<sup>11</sup>

| <b>Budget allocation to MAWRD</b> | <b>1995/96</b> | <b>1996/97</b> | <b>1997/98</b> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| In millions of current N \$       | 397            | 350            | 375            |
| Share of total expend.            | 9.1 %          | 6.9 %          | 6.5 %          |

There are many different ways of categorising state expenditures. If we look at the 1997/98 vote we can, to begin with, make a distinction between recurrent expenditures of 253 million (approximately two-thirds of total), and 112 million allocated to development expenditures.

We can also look at the presentation of the budget according to standard items such as personnel expenditure, subsidies, vehicle costs, etc. A very rough categorisation would result in the table below:

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<sup>11</sup> Note: Because of transfers of certain funds from MAWRD to the parastatal NAMWATER in 1996/97, the 1995/96 figures overestimate the vote to MAWRD with a couple of percentage points.

**Table 8.4** The 1997/98 Budget According to Standard Items. Vote no. 20, Agriculture, Water and Rural Development. Millions of Namibian dollars, rounded figures

| Standard item                                            | Current exp. | Capital exp. | Total      | % of total   |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Personnel                                                | 105          | 2            | 107        | 29 %         |
| Goods and serv.<br>(transp, maint.<br>Utilities etc.)    | 103          | 16           | 119        | 32 %         |
| Publ enterpr., private<br>industr., NGOs,<br>individuals | 45           | 0            | 45         | 12 %         |
| Acq. of capital assets<br>and capital transfers          | 0            | 100          | 100        | 27 %         |
| Lending and equity<br>participation                      | 0            | 0            | 4          | 1 %          |
| <b>Total</b>                                             | <b>253</b>   | <b>118</b>   | <b>375</b> | <b>100 %</b> |

What the above table shows are primarily the costs, not the benefits, of public expenditures. A gender-disaggregated analysis of the budget using the overall standard item classification shown above as our point of departure would basically show who are benefiting from employment, procurement contracts, etc.

In order to carry this analysis further, a good knowledge of what is behind each item is required. Since the authors of this report lack this knowledge, the discussion that follows is of a highly tentative character; it should be seen as a methodological rather than factual exercise.

The single largest category of expenditure is "goods and services". Within this item, "transport" accounts for approximately one-third. It can be assumed that a very high proportion of transport costs represents imports (vehicles, fuel, etc.), and that relatively little accrues to Namibian women (or men). A similar pattern is likely to be found within the category of "materials and supplies", although domestic production can be assumed to account for a higher share of total procurement.

Most other important items under "goods and services" ("other goods and services", "travel and subsistence expenses" and others) are likely to benefit men more than women - most industries supplying goods are controlled by men, more men than women have a driver's license, etc.

The second largest is "personnel". Here, it would be comparatively easy to collect data on the Ministry's own staff, i.e. the distribution of women and men at different levels of responsibilities and salaries. While such data does not exist for the Ministry as a whole, we have obtained data from two of the key departments - see Table 8.5 below - which may illustrate the general picture.

As is shown in the table, men tend to dominate at higher managerial posts, despite minor improvements during the last few years. As a legacy of the past, white men, in particular, are strongly over-represented in leading positions, which is a reflection of the educational system of the past, as well as of the almost exclusive focus on white, commercial agriculture before Independence.

Table 8.5. Gender Distribution of Staff 1998 at two Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development.

| Position                | Agriculture<br>and Rural<br>Development |       | Water Affairs |      |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------|---------------|------|
|                         | Female                                  | Male  | Female        | Male |
| Top Management          | 1                                       | 21    | 0             | 13   |
| Middle management       | 32                                      | 114   | 7             | 39   |
| Technical/ Professional | 88                                      | 256   | 22            | 62   |
| Skilled                 | 97                                      | 573   | 191           | 500  |
| Unskilled               | 125                                     | 653   | 8             | 357  |
| Total                   | 343                                     | 1 617 | 228           | 971  |

As regards "acquisition of capital assets", this item is absent in the current budget, while it represents over 80 per cent of the capital budget. Within this item, construction activities dominate completely.

Given the structure of the construction sector in Namibia, it may safely be assumed that most contracts go to industries controlled by (white) men. As regards the composition of the workforce, the fact that the private contractors who do most of the construction and maintenance work bring their own people makes it difficult to collect data on the distribution of women and men in the construction teams; the Ministry does not even have the names of the people working for private contractors under government contracts.

The fourth largest cost item is dominated by subsidies to parastatal and private enterprises. While the overall share of subsidies in the agricultural budget has gone down over the past years, a number of mainly large enterprises still require subsidies. Since these enterprises mainly work with commercial agriculture, there is likely to be a strong male bias in the distribution of these subsidies.

This item also includes subsidies in the form of emergency relief, where women and children are the main beneficiaries.

Another way of categorising the budget is by making a breakdown of the budget according to major divisions of the Ministry of Agriculture. The attention is then shifted towards concrete activities, and from the cost to the benefit side of the budget. In what follows, the 1997/98 budget will be discussed from this angle, and although very few quantitative conclusions can be drawn, a gender-disaggregated benefit incidence analysis must be based on an analysis of gender implications of the services provided. .

There are no major votes in the budget specifically targeted to women. Within the different programmes there may be activities which have an explicit gender-relevant dimension - gender-sensitising workshops for extension staff, for example - but these can be assumed to be of marginal financial importance.<sup>12</sup> In order to assess the gender impact of the budget, "mainstreaming" is therefore necessary, i.e. to assess direct and indirect impacts on women and men, respectively, of services which are not earmarked for one of the two genders.

It should however be observed that while affirmative action and earmarking of funds for "women's projects" are lacking in the overall national budget, the procedures used to allocate resources and evaluate development project proposals are not entirely "gender-blind". For example, each Project Implementation Form (PIF) which must accompany a request to the National Planning Commission for funds from the capital budget should contain at least a brief comment on "gender impact". While most PIFs are rather vague as regards this impact - usually, the PIFs only make some general remarks, such as "Both men and women farmers will be targeted to receive assistance under the project" - a number of PIFs we have had the opportunity to look at also contain interesting and relevant comments on the likely impact on women and men of the proposed development project. Sometimes, affirmative action is suggested, for example in a co-operative project: "In order to promote the participation of women in the co-op movement, the project will ensure that at least 30 per cent of people trained by the project are women, and that an element of gender awareness is included in all training course, where relevant."

As always in this chapter, the discussion that follows is mainly, in the absence of reliable data, of a methodological and qualitative nature.

#### *Main Divisions:*

**Main Division 01: Office of the Minister (1.6 million N \$) and 02: Administration (51 million N\$).<sup>13</sup>**

These two divisions employ a total of around 300 staff, and account for only around 1.5 per cent of total expenditure of the Ministry. The main functions are related to policy

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<sup>12</sup> A large number of initiatives aimed at supporting participatory, gender-sensitive approaches to agricultural development have, however, been taken. For an overview of some of these initiatives, see FAO (1997).

<sup>13</sup> Figures on budgetary allocations are taken from the original budget. Naturally, many estimates were revised during the fiscal year, but for lack of comprehensive data, we use the original Votes.

formulation, supervision and co-ordination of the Ministry's activities, and the provision of administrative support services.

While the composition of higher staff is strongly biased in favour of men, actual policy formulation - as expressed in the National Agricultural Policy and a number of other official documents - gives, as indicated earlier, a very high priority to the goal of gender equality.

### **Main Division 03: Veterinary Services (31 million N \$, size of staff 580).**

In the past, veterinary services were almost exclusively benefiting the large-scale commercial white farmers. At present, far more services - basically vaccinations, but also general tasks related to the monitoring, control and combating of livestock diseases - are provided to communal farmers.

In communal areas, vaccinations are carried out free of charge, while in commercial areas, they are done at the farmers' own expense, with the Directorate of Veterinary Services playing a monitoring role.

The strong emphasis on controlling cattle diseases such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Lumpy Skin Disease is understandable in a country like Namibia where cattle, and livestock exports, play a very crucial role. The fact that cattle belong to the male domain of the economy gives veterinary services a strong male bias. This is also reflected in the dominance of men among the staff.

Small animals receive more and more attention, however. Although not explicitly motivated by concerns about gender equality, the gradual shift in attention towards communal areas and small animals also implies a less unequal distribution of veterinary services, in favour of poor women rather than rich men.

### **Main Division 04: Research (21 million N \$, size of staff 422).**

As in the case of veterinary services, the emphasis in agricultural research has been reoriented away from its almost exclusive emphasis on commercial agriculture and livestock in the past towards a more balanced allocation of resources. Entirely new activities, such as farming systems research and research on social agroforestry, have been taken up.

While research related to the subsistence sector is still under-funded, and suffering from a severe lack of qualified Namibian staff, some progress has been made, not least in developing new, more high-yielding breeds of mahangu, which is the major crop cultivated by female subsistence farmers.

### **Main Division 05: Agriculture Development and Extension (70 million N \$, size of staff 636).**

This is the second largest division of MAWRD (after Rural Water Supply), accounting for almost one-fifth of the total budget.

The extension services provided are today almost exclusively directed to communal areas, with a heavy dominance for the previously neglected northern regions.

While the Division is responsible for a large number of different activities, the main emphasis is on providing the farmers with advice on production, trade and marketing. The Division also implements a number of development projects.

In line with the overall agricultural policy, and in order to avoid a disruption of private distribution channels, the costly distribution of subsidised inputs and technical services - subsidised seeds, fertilisers, tractor services, etc. - has been greatly reduced during the last few years.

The number of field staff - little more than 200 agricultural extension technicians - is grossly inadequate for the needs of the farmers. The average extension worker to farmer ratio in 1994 was, according to a report from the Ministry, almost 1:2 000 in the country as a whole (MAWRD, Directorate of Planning, 1995). The situation has improved slightly since 1994, but even with optimistic assumptions, appreciably less than ten per cent of all farmers are reached each year. Many extension workers complain about a heavy administrative workload, which takes time from the field work. Lack of transport facilities also reduces the time in the field.

According to the 1994 survey, approximately half of the farmers reached with extension services were women. Since women constitute the majority of farmers, this may indicate a male bias in the provision of extension services. Unfortunately, however, the extension workers do not register, in a systematic way, gender-disaggregated data on the farmers they visit.

A large majority of extension workers are male, and male extension workers have, on average, much more experience than their female counterparts. However, in view of the fact that the intake of female students to the agricultural colleges has increased rapidly in the last few years, the situation is likely to improve in this respect. A necessary condition, however, for this development is that women graduates from agricultural colleges are accepted and hired.

An increasing proportion of the extension work is today directed to groups, rather than individual farmers. One problem often encountered is that men tend to dominate the meetings, and in order to enhance women's participation, extension services are sometimes provided to groups of female farmers only.

#### **Main Division 06: Agriculture Engineering (17 million N \$, size of staff 13).**

This is one of the smallest divisions of the Ministry in terms of staff. The Division's main tasks are to render engineering services, promote appropriate technology and provide irrigation infrastructure and equipment. Capital expenditure accounts for most of the funds requested. The main development projects carried out are all related to irrigation schemes in communal areas.

While the staff of the Division is predominantly male, the emphasis on irrigation facilities in communal areas in the north indicates that a large number of female farmers will benefit.

**Main Division 07: Planning, Pricing, Marketing and Co-operation (46 million N \$, size of staff 37).**

The largest item in this Division's budget has a pronounced "male profile": rehabilitation of abattoirs in the northern regions. There are, however, also a number of projects and activities which make specific reference to the key role of women. A large millet sector support programme, which includes support to both production and processing of mahangu, can, for example, be expected to benefit women more than men.

Other examples of "female-biased" projects are

- a food security and nutrition programme;
- a pilot vegetable scheme for undernourished children;
- a horticulture production and marketing development project.

At central level, the Division of Planning is severely understaffed. Of particular interest in the context of gender analysis is the shortage of trained statisticians. The unit responsible for the agricultural statistics is too small to carry out its present tasks, and an improvement in the collection and processing of gender-relevant statistics would require a drastic strengthening of the unit. There is also a severe shortage of human resources available for planning, monitoring and evaluation.

**Main Division 08: Agricultural Training (33 million N \$, size of staff 258).**

The teaching and research staff at the three agricultural colleges in Namibia are predominantly men. At Ogongo Agricultural College, for example, which one of the consultants had the opportunity to visit, only three of seventeen teachers and researchers are women. Among students, however, the balance is better: 51 male, and 39 female students. In recent years, the number of female students has increased appreciably, also in careers such as forestry, where there used to be only male students. Some affirmative action in the intake of students is practised; to improve the gender balance, female students can sometimes be accepted even if they have slightly poorer grades than their male competitors.

It may also be stressed that the curricula at the agricultural colleges contain several courses with a special emphasis on gender issues.

**Main Division 08: Emergency Relief (10 million N \$, no permanent staff).**

The emergency relief programme is dominated by drought relief operations, and the funds that are needed cannot be determined in advance. In the fiscal year 1995/96, a year of severe drought, over 100 million Namibian dollars were spent on emergency support in the form of fodder subsidies, compensation for crop losses, distribution of free seeds to the poorest household in the northern communal areas, food-for-work programmes, and others.

In view of the multiple roles of women in the productive as well as reproductive and community spheres of the economy, it can be assumed that women and children are the main

beneficiaries of emergency relief. In general, more women than men also participate in food-for-work programmes during drought years.

### **Main Division 10: Resource Management (14 million N \$, size of staff 182).**

The main tasks of this Division are all related to water: to collect and analyse statistical and other relevant information regarding the water resource situation, to be responsible for strategic water resource planning and development, to develop regulations on the use of water, to advise in negotiations with neighbouring countries on the use of Namibia's three border rivers, etc.

The Division also provides technical and drilling support to the Division of Rural Water Supply (see below).

### **Main Division 11: Rural Water Supply (80 million N \$, size of staff 625).**

In terms of funds and staff, this Division is the largest division under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development.

While water is a key, but scarce, resource for all Namibians, irrespective of age and sex, women have more water-related responsibilities than men. We will not repeat everything that has been said earlier about rural women's multiple tasks related to water - only emphasise once again that women spend far more time than men in activities related to, for example, fetching water, cooking, caring for children (not least when they are sick because of lack of safe water), rearing small animals, washing and cleaning, irrigation, and others tasks. Any improvement in the access to safe water is therefore of obvious relevance from the point of view of workloads and gender equality.

Namibia's overall water strategy is formulated in a comprehensive "Water and Sanitation Sector Policy" (WASP), elaborated by the Ministry of Agriculture. Given the intersectoral nature of management of water resources, the government has established a so-called "WASP Committee", with high representatives from a number of line ministries (Health, Local Government, Work, and others).

The major objectives and priorities of Namibia's water policies can be summarised with the help of a few key paragraph from the WASP:

"Water supply:

Provision of water supply should:

- i) Contribute towards improved public health
- ii) Reduce the burden of collecting water
- iii) Promote community-based social development
- iv) Support basic needs for subsistence
- v) Promote economic development.

#### Sanitation:

Provision of improved sanitation should:

- i) Contribute towards improved public health
- ii) Ensure a hygienic environment
- iii) Protect water sources from pollution
- iv) Promote the conservation of water
- v) Promote economic development

#### Irrigation:

Development of irrigation should:

- i) Promote improved nutrition and surplus production at household level
- ii) Improve sustainable national food self-sufficiency
- iii) Promote economic development

The following priority ranking was given in the allocation of water for competing demands:

First priority: Water for domestic purposes, including livestock watering for both subsistence and commercial farming.

Second priority: Water for economic activities such as mining, industries and irrigation.

...

Where possible, it should be left to the community itself to decide on internal priorities and the division of responsibilities. Community ownership and management of facilities should be adopted as the strategy of choice for the water supply and sanitation sector in general.

Government support services should be seen as a medium for self-sufficiency and not be extended free of charge, but be priced according to a pricing policy to be worked out and agreed upon.

...

Payment by the community should as a general rule cover operation and maintenance costs although there may be cases where a subsidy may apply."

The priorities established in the WASP are very clear: social objectives are ranked highest. Whenever there is a trade-off between social and economic/commercial objectives, the former should be given priority.

The overall thrust of government policies is also reflected in the fact that the role of government should be that of a facilitator rather than direct provider. While the government remains responsible for larger water schemes - the construction of major pipelines, for example - as much as possible of the actual management of water supplies should be taken over by the communities themselves. The public sector's main commitment is said to be to facilitate access to safe and sustainable water in communal areas and to provide training, covering the entire range from community management skills to technical training and health education.

A key element in present water supply policies is "community based management". Each community should form a "water committee", responsible for maintenance and repair, collection of fees, etc.

The key role of women is highlighted in a number of policy documents. As an example of "affirmative action" in the establishment of water committees, the following paragraph from the constitution of the Regional Water Committee (RWC) of Caprivi could be quoted:

"In recognition of the under-representation of women in decision-making bodies of the Caprivi region the 12 constituency representatives are to be comprised of 6 men and 6 women. If a constituency fails to elect a woman they forfeit that position on the RWC. They cannot send two men...Failure to elect a woman will reduce the constituency's representation to one man only and vice versa."

## 9. Conclusions and the way forward

### 9.1 Conclusions

In this report, we have attempted to discuss how overall economic policies, as well as individual votes in the state budget, can be interpreted from a gender-equality perspective. While we have concentrated on only a few sectors - basic education, higher education and agriculture - similar methodologies and procedures can be used in other areas as well.

Our point of departure was the explicit goal of the government to give high priority to gender equality in its overall economic and social policies, and to compare the stated objective with actual patterns of government spending. Is equality between the genders reflected in the allocation of public expenditure?

The conclusions are admittedly vague. In basic education women as teachers do not seem to be allowed to contribute fully as managers, especially at higher levels, although the female teachers on average have better formal qualifications than the male teachers do. The existence of a possible untapped resource for recruitment of managers should be realised, and made visible to existing managers and recruiters, as well as to those female teachers showing managerial potential. Specific training for these potential managers could be considered.

The prevalence of and reasons for absenteeism, both among learners and teachers, should be explored, also from a gender perspective. The specific problem of pregnancy among female learners, especially in relation to the recent policy of this phenomenon, must be addressed and followed closely. Finding out what happens to mothers and children, as well as to fathers, after the birth of the child, and providing necessary assistance would need co-operation between the education system and other social actors. Spreading examples of good practice could be a useful tool.

How learners are motivated in their studies, and in thinking about their future, is important. This concerns role models, career counselling and teacher attitudes, as well as attitudes among parents, and actors on the labour markets. The major efforts in Namibia to provide education for previously disadvantaged groups are impressive. The need to include men also in the programs for adult literacy has been highlighted.

In higher education the gendered choice of subjects, the distribution of women and men in different parts and at different levels of the higher education system are important issues. The new system for financial assistance to students should be followed up carefully.

In agriculture, the overall direction of policies since independence can be characterised as a giant step in the right direction: a reorientation from white male commercial farmers to black female communal farmers. But the pace of this reorientation differs greatly between different activities and divisions, and we have been unable to conclude that x per cent of the budget has a female bias, y per cent has a male bias, while z per cent of total expenditure is gender-neutral.

We have also observed that the gender distribution of staff at the Ministry of Agriculture and among extension workers has become appreciably less unequal during the 1990s. The rapid increase in the number of female students at the agricultural colleges that has taken place in recent years also indicates that the gender balance will improve further in the future.

Among top management staff, men still dominate, however. At the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, for example, 21 and the 22 highest posts are occupied by men.

## 9.2 The Way Forward

To advance further, we strongly recommend that simple statistical tools and survey methods be introduced in all areas related to the provision of public services.

Certain kinds of data are already available, and only need to be aggregated and presented in a systematic way. The distribution of the various Ministries' own staff by gender at different areas and levels of responsibility should be a key indicator of this kind.

As regards an assessment of beneficiaries, a large number of services are of a kind which makes a gender-disaggregated collection of data relatively easy. In our view, all Divisions within the various line ministries should be asked to register the sex of the beneficiaries, when they can be identified individually.

In other cases, the procedures that can be used are more complicated. Time-use analyses can be very valuable in areas related to, for example, the amount of time spent by women and men in the three areas of the economy: the productive, reproductive and community spheres. Within each sphere, the gender division of labour can also be analysed with the help of time use surveys. Indirectly, such studies can also help to shed light on the gender implications of a wide range of government services in, say, health and education, public works and transportation, rural water supply, support to small and medium-scale enterprises, the development of market infrastructure, and many others.

There is also a need to advance in the area of gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessments of the various services provided. Such assessments based on questionnaires have been made in, for example, health and education, and could be carried out in other areas as well. There is good reason to believe that there are important differences between women and men in the way they perceive the usefulness, priority and quality of various government services.

Another area where little work has been done is the question of costs of using various services. The costs can be of various kinds - user fees paid in cash, voluntary contributions of labour in state-supported community work, time spent getting access to various services, etc. The implicit assumption that all services are "free" for the beneficiaries is clearly wrong - and increasingly so, given the new direction of government policies, with more emphasis on cost recovery and community participation.

As regards the continuation of the attempt to mainstream gender in the national budget, it is, in our view, necessary to follow a gradual strategy. The analysis could "rotate" between different ministries, to make sure that the expenditure of every ministry is eventually subjected to gender scrutiny. To make a thorough analysis of a portion of the budget each year is, at this early stage of the exercise, preferable to the unrealistic task of trying to cover the entire budget.

We have in this report abstained from suggesting how the future development of mainstreaming gender in Namibia's national budget could be organised. We feel that there are actors with necessary knowledge and experience in many areas, who would be better

equipped for making such recommendations. However, for gender to be mainstreamed in the ordinary budget work, there seem to be strong reasons for the Ministry of Finance having an important part of the responsibility, as it leads and co-ordinates the major parts of the budget preparation and the formats used for contributing and presenting data. The Department of Women Affairs' involvement and expertise in the area is obvious.

It may also be observed that there is no country in the world where a comprehensive, reliable quantitative analysis of the gender impact of government services has been carried out. Such an exercise would require a sophisticated methodology which has not been developed as yet, and a huge apparatus of social scientists and statisticians collecting data of all kinds. To attempt such an analysis in Namibia would be to misuse the country's scarce human resources. But it is our conviction that much can be done with relatively simple tools.

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ISBN 91 586 7631 7