

Land reform in Namibia: Land transfers and/or development?

An explorative research on the organisation and implications
of the land redistribution programme.

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Summary

Land redistribution in Namibia is perceived to be an important way to redress parts of the imbalances incurred by the consecutive periods of German and South-African rule. The black majority has been systematically deprived of a 'fair' development while the white minority accumulated a certain degree of wealth. At independence in 1990, the first Namibian government inherited a country with the greatest income disparities in the world. The skew distribution of wealth is very apparent, and perceived as such in landownership.

Namibia's independence created a new socio-political context; a shift of powers requires adaptation of the relations between man and land, otherwise political and economic instability are allowed space to arise. The Commercial Land Reform Act and the National Resettlement Policy were designed to lawfully execute land redistribution to members of previously disadvantaged communities.

The market-based approach of land acquisitions, based on the notion of "willing buyer-willing seller", has proved not to be satisfactory. The amounts of land offered to the Ministry of Lands are too small to reach an acceptable pace of redistribution. Budgetary constraints also put pressure on the process. The government decided to use its right of expropriation more frequently in 2004, in order to accelerate the acquisition of suitable land for redistribution purposes. Donor funding could also help to accelerate land acquisitions; an example are the possible reparation payments by the German government, explicitly enabling groups that were hurt by the colonisation process in the first years of the 20th century to re-acquire the land that they were chased away from over a century ago.

The execution of resettlement by the Ministry of Lands does not always reach its goals. Especially resettlement schemes that were realised without the involvement of other (non-)governmental institutions, like the Ministry of Agriculture, have been found not to reach the goals as set in the Resettlement Policy, livelihood improvements, economic productivity and employment creation often are not evident. In some cases the potential appears to be much higher than the actual production. Maintaining productivity is of high importance to the agriculture-based economies in many rural areas.

The resettlement areas that were involved in this research showed big differences. One resettlement farm has great potential but the settlers are not able to exploit this. Better planning and infrastructure development could have delivered a stronger basis for developments on this farm. Many settlers here complain about lacking government support and deteriorating circumstances as a result of this. The settlers did not seem to have the means or the capabilities to meet the economic goals of productivity. However, the settlers are very proud of the fact that

they 'own' land now, although their land rights are not consolidated so no access to credit is present.

Another resettlement scheme proved to be far more productive. This settlement had a background of comprehensive planning, well-developed infrastructure and capacity-building, funded by a Spanish non-governmental organisation. Other relevant government institutions (Agriculture, Health, Education) were involved in the development of this site. A research conducted by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism also concluded that resettlement schemes developed with the assistance of NGO's are far more successful.

The Resettlement Policy acknowledges the notion that co-operation between relevant government institutions is necessary for a successful execution of the land redistribution process, but the Policy does not elaborate on the role of other institutions and on the way the co-operation could best be organised. Land reform is and seems to remain an isolated, government-led process.

Several analyses have shown that land redistribution can not offer large-scale poverty reduction. However, the land issue remains sensitive and the peoples' call for land is still there. Other factors, besides the economic ones, seem to play an important role. However, arguments based on a sense of freedom, self-determinacy and independence are not mentioned in the policies, despite the acknowledgement of this phenomenon in history as well as in the contemporary land issues in Southern Africa. The interviews with settlers in Namibia confirmed the importance of non-economic means of owning/having access to land. The acknowledgement of the importance of such arguments to land redistribution could help to make well-balanced (and more realistic) policy decisions. Non-governmental organisations can assist in the execution of resettlement schemes, if they are allowed space in the sensitive, heavily politicised process.

Preface

This research took place in an environment where landownership and its distribution have a strong historical, cultural and political context. Land use and –ownership differ greatly from Europe: In semi-arid central Namibia 10,000 hectare (100 square kilometres) farms are no exception and landownership is a concept imported by the European settlers after 1890. One hundred years after the start of the colonisation by white settlers democracy was introduced, and since then the government has been trying to give back access to land to the previously disadvantaged communities (the black people) while maintaining economic and political stability. Because of the different context (from the European situation), the research did not get a strong focus on the spatial planning aspects; political and geographic aspects received stronger attention. This entirely different setting forced me to construct the context in which the lands discussion is taking place, in order to get some degree of understanding of the problem Namibia (like some other countries in the region) is dealing with. This has been a very fulfilling exercise. No concrete answers for solving the problems of land reform can be given, but I have tried to get an insight in the issue, its restrictions and possibilities.

I am very happy that I have had the opportunity to do a research project in such a different environment. A number of people have helped to make this a very special experience; first of all Susanne Albl, for the introduction to the University of Namibia, the provision of shelter for the first weeks and the essential help in ‘getting to know the way around’. I also would like to thank Prof. Fritz Becker, the dean of UNAM’s Department of Geographical and Environmental Studies, for the support, advice and back-up. The same goes for Pierré Smit.

Furthermore, the open and helpful attitude of the families in the resettlement areas has provided some memorable encounters, the same counts for the people of the Agricultural Union, especially Oliver Horsthemke, and Prof. Gerhard Töttemeyer. Also the importance of the willingness of the three white commercial farmers to co-operate is hereby acknowledged. I am also grateful for the friendliness and housing provided by the Voigts family. Finally, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Ir. Gerard Linden for his supervision, and last but not least I thank Marjolein de Haan for her companionship and motivation.

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List of abbreviations

AALS	Affirmative Action Loan Scheme
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
DLA	Department of Land Affairs (South Africa)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NAU	Namibia Agricultural Union
NAFWU	Namibia Agricultural Farm Workers Union
MAWRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development
MLR(R)	Ministry of Lands, Resettlement (and Rehabilitation)
NEPRU	Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NID	Namibia Institute for Democracy
NNFU	Namibia National Farmers Union
PTO	Permission To Occupy
PTT	Permanent Technical Team
SWAPO	South-West Africa Peoples' Organisation
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

1 Introduction

The Republic of Namibia is a different country than the Netherlands, in many ways. Namibia was decolonised only in 1990 and the periods of German and South African rule left their marks in the country and its people. Suppression of the coloured people caused great inequalities in terms of wealth and development.

These factors create a totally different context than in any western country and therefore issues like the land question have to be viewed from a very different perspective. This research is about the skewed access to and ownership of land, and measures that are taken to redress these imbalances, focusing on the resettlement programme that is carried out.

Since the research took place in such a specific environment, a broad introduction is essential. Therefore, not only subjects directly related to the research topic are discussed but also some general features, history and physical geography of the country are mentioned in this outline.

1.1 Namibia at a glance

Namibia is situated on the west coast of Southern Africa, surrounded by neighbouring countries Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa. Former German South-West Africa measures about 825,000 square kilometres, about twenty-five times the surface of the Netherlands. The population figure has recently exceeded the two million, of which about 88% is black, 6% white and 6% mixed. Like all countries in the region, Namibia faces major problems due to infections with HIV/AIDS: The life expectancy dropped from 61 years just after independence to 41 in 2003, and a further decline is expected, despite extensive prevention programmes (The Namibian, March 22, 2003).



Map 1.1: Namibia (source: www.sahistory.co.za).

1.2 History of dispossession

In 1884 German colonisation of the area we today call Namibia commenced; The German tradesman Adolf Lüderitz acquired a very large area in the South-Western area of the country from the coastal area from the Orange River to the 26th meridian. The land was sold by Josef Frederiks, leader of the local Nama tribe, the Bethanie-Namas, to a price of 500 English Pounds and 60 rifles.

To protect his new property against other interested people or other European powers Lüderitz received protection from the German Empire (Sippel, 2001).

1.2.1 Demarcation of colonial territories

Between 1884 and 1895 several colonists and German government officials met many so-called Protection and Friendship agreements with local leaders. Exclusive access for the Germans to the area nowadays called Namibia was the outcome of the Berlin Africa Conference of 1870, where the colonial powers divided the African continent into countries by drawing lines along rivers and meridians.

Numerous land and mining companies were founded in the first years after the establishment of the colony German South-West Africa. These mining activities initially did not accelerate the development of the colony. It would last at least until the first discovery of diamonds in 1908 for real investments to take place.

In the mean time the colonial government had taken measures to control the living areas of the indigenous peoples. Different reserves were established for Witbooi-Nama and Herero. The reserves were officially established to facilitate the protection of the people and the common property against other interested communities. However, in practice the reserves were a predecessor of the politics of separate development, later called Apartheid. The land inside the reserves was common property of the community.

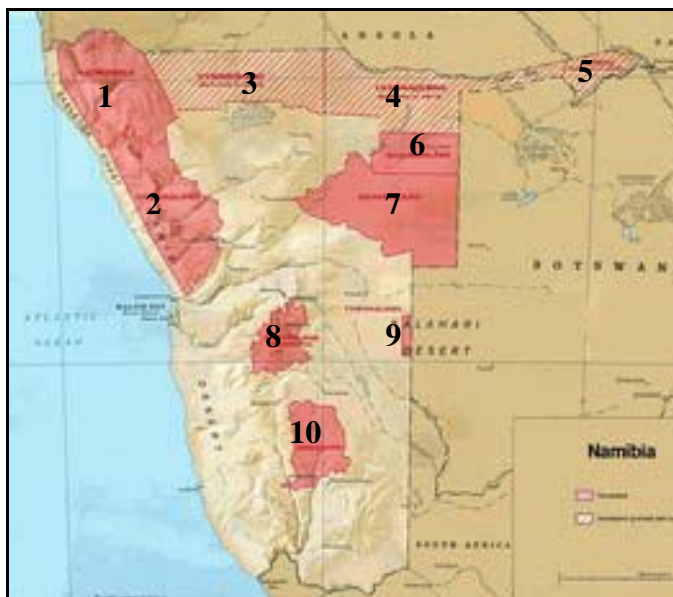
After a short war of resistance, and the violent suppression thereof (in which over 60% of the Herero population was slaughtered), the “friendly” relations between the colonists and the indigenous groups were history. The land outside the reserves became Emperor Wilhelm’s Crown Land and was to be given out only to German settlers, mostly for the purpose of agricultural development.

After the end of World War I the Peoples’ Union handed over the mandate of South West Africa to the South African Union, as named in the peace treaty of Versailles. This marks the beginning of a seventy-year period of Namibia being governed by South Africa. During this period, many laws of South Africa were transferred to South West Africa as well. From then on also land rights were handled the way they were in South Africa.

1.2.2 Apartheid

From 1967 the recommendations of the Odendaal-commission were brought into practice. For this purpose the 21 existing “reserves” had to be modified and moved into ten *homelands*. For large communities this meant forced migration from the ancestral lands. For further execution of the Apartheid ideology every ethnic group would be given its own possibilities for development, within the homelands. Each would have its own political organisation and the goal would be to achieve exchange between the different units, in political and economic sense. This all would be

done under guidance of the “most advanced group”, i.e. the whites (Werner, 2000). Between 1968 and 1975 the following homelands were established: “Owamboland”, “Okavangoland”, “Hereroland”, “Damaraland”, “Kaokoveld”, “Tswanaland”, “Namaland”, the “Rehoboth area” and “Bushmanland”. The consequence was that the indigenous population of 500.000 people had 39% of the country at its disposal, while 90.000 white settlers had 44% of the country at their avail. In 1978 all land inside the homelands was declared communal land, so no individual ownership could be established inside them. The Government of the Republic of Namibia inherited the described situation at independence. Figure 1.2 shows the situation according to the recommendations of the Odendaal commission.



- 1) Kaokoveld
- 2) Damaraland
- 3) Owamboland
- 4) Okavangoland
- 5) Caprivi
- 6) Bushmanland
- 7) Hereroland
- 8) Rehoboth
- 9) Tswanaland
- 10) Namaland

Map 1.2: The position of the homelands according to Odendaal's commission (source: wikipedia.org)

1.3 Independence

After a long process of preparations and under the guidance of the United Nations, on March the 21st 1990 Namibia gained independence. South Africa was reluctant to abandon the strong economic zone of Walvis Bay, the only deep-sea harbour in the country, but after four years of pressure from the UN the whole of Namibia became independent.

The new democracy inherited many effects of the Apartheid regime that ruled “South West” for decades. A new era had begun, with equal rights and possibilities for all citizens. But nearly all means of development and production were still in the hands of the previously privileged category of citizens, the whites. The white population had had the possibilities to accumulate a certain degree of wealth, while the other peoples had been structurally and systematically limited in their development. A way had to be found how to deal with the injustices committed by the colonial powers in previous decades.

1.3.1 National Reconciliation

In the early 1980's, as a step in the long process to independence, constitutional principles were adopted as the foundation for the new constitution. One of these principles was that ownership rights would be guaranteed after independence. The former opponents agreed that political and economical stability had to be secured (Hunter, 2004).

To create a framework for stability in the new country a policy of National Reconciliation was adopted in Namibia and South Africa. However, Namibia did not walk the same road as big brother South Africa, where a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, lead by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, was established. In exchange for admitting their crimes against humanity, the former leaders were granted amnesty. Such process was seen as the best way to establish a transition to a democratic and human rights culture, the only alternative being civil war (Ellian, 2003). Next to ideological reasons forgiving also had a practical side: The prospect of evading punishment prevented a "white flight" which probably would have had strong economic consequences.

According to Namibia's first government, resurrecting the past would serve no common purpose. A successful transition could only be achieved if the different parties cooperate. Emphasizing the injustices and wrong-doings of the past would only incite a desire for vengeance and this would not be a solid basis for building a new state (Dobell, 1997). So the Namibian version of national reconciliation was the establishment of a status quo, predominantly the guarantee of ownership of accumulated wealth. No efforts were made to assess, and forgive, the crimes committed by the whites during Apartheid. This question was ignored, for the sake of social stability.

1.4 Climate and land use

Namibia is the most arid country in sub-Saharan Africa, which means that the potential annual evaporation is much higher than the annual precipitation of rainfall. There is a lot of variability in climate characteristics within Namibia. Annual rainfall is not the only important feature, the variability of rainfall over the years is of greater importance, creating restrictions for agriculture and making sustainable land use a requisite.

1.4.1 Regional climate differences

Differences in rainfall are great, in the North of Namibia annual rainfall of over 500 millimetres is present, with a variability of about 40 millimetres, i.e. less than 10% variability.

In the South the average quantity of rainfall is about 200 millimetres, with a variability of about 70 millimetres, meaning a far higher variability than in the North thus resulting in a far more vulnerable situation (Cologne University, 2000).

The coastal region, composed by the Namib Desert and the Skeleton Coast, is of less importance to agriculture; the economic importance of this region lies in a few seaports, fish processing in the towns of Swakopmund, Walvis Bay and Lüderitz and on- and offshore diamond mining. The entire coastline with its famous dunes receives its annual rainfall mainly through fog from the cold gulf stream from the Atlantic Ocean. Around the towns of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund 100% variability in rainfall is reported, meaning that in some years no rainfall is reported.

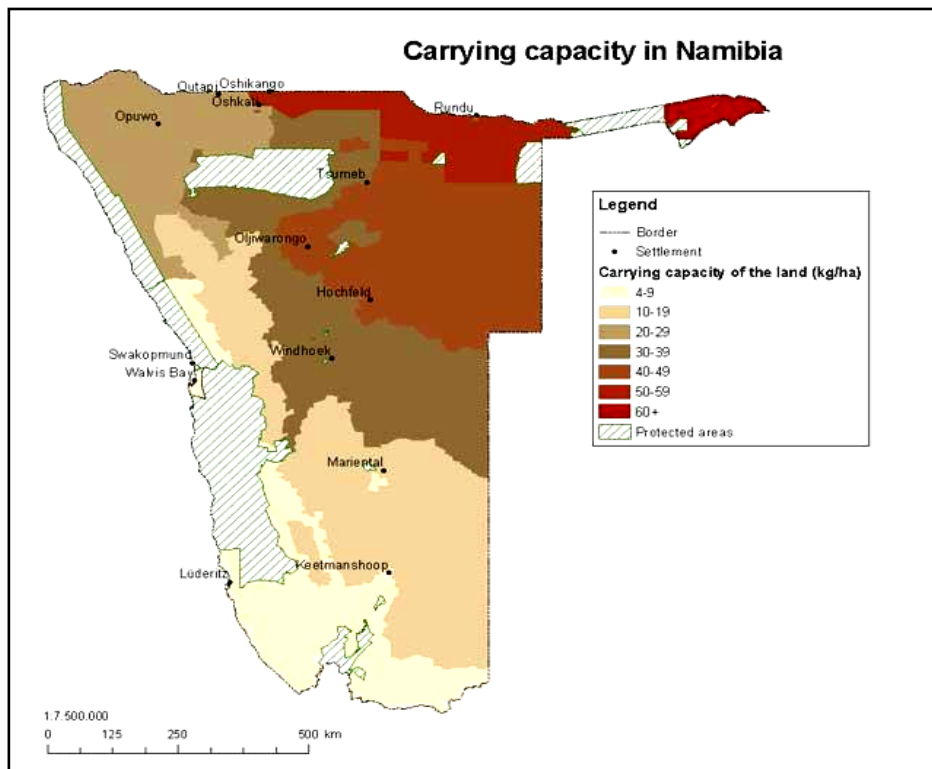
These climate circumstances, in combination with a limited availability of groundwater, are strongly determining the possibilities and restrictions of agriculture. Therefore in central and southern Namibia extensive livestock farming is the most important land use. There are some exceptions; Along the southern border (on the banks of the Orange river) and along the downstream of a few (drinking water) dams with irrigation systems (Green Schemes) were developed, some as early as in the 1920's. These areas produce different sorts of grains, vegetables and fruits.

1.4.2 Carrying capacity

A common way to show the agricultural potential of livestock farming is to calculate the carrying capacity, which is the maximum quantity of animals per hectare so the quality of the soil and its vegetation do not deteriorate on the long term. Figure 1.2 shows the carrying capacity of rangelands in Namibia.

As the map on the next page shows, the carrying capacity of the entire South of Namibia lies below 20 kilos of livestock per hectare. This means that even a small sheep needs more than a hectare in order not to cause environmental degradation. Therefore it is no surprise that some farms in this part of the country measure over 15,000 hectares.

To the North, carrying capacity increases. Vegetation is denser here, making the soil less vulnerable. In Central and Northern Namibia cattle farming is more common, sometimes in combination with small stock farming (goats and/or sheep).



Map 1.3: The distribution of carrying capacity in Namibia (source: Cologne University website).

1.4.3 Importance of agriculture

If the importance of agriculture for the Namibian economy were to be derived from the Gross Domestic Product solely, the conclusion would be that agriculture is not the most important economical activity. Between 1990 and 2000 around 10% of the GDP was agricultural production, of which 6% in the commercial farming sector (Worldbank.org). The production of the fishery sector and mining is much larger. The most important component of the mining revenues, i.e. diamond mining, contributes about 35% to the GDP.

However, the importance of agriculture should not merely be derived from its contribution to the gross domestic product. Agriculture maintains a spectrum of downstream economic services like transport and veterinary services, which are a lifeline to many rural communities in vast areas with a fragile economic structure (Werner, 2000).

Furthermore, farming is the largest employer in the country. The Namibia labour force survey of 1997 pointed out that a number of 42,277 farm workers make a living in the commercial farming areas (RoN, 2001). When this figure is combined with the average family size of 5.1, it can be estimated that about 211,000 people find employment or subsistence in the freehold areas only. When the communal areas are included it is estimated that 80% of the population (about 1.6 million people) is engaged in agriculture (FAO, 1996).

1.4.4 Landownership: A dual tenure system

Namibia has a dual land tenure system. Land tenure can be described as the collection of rules and relations that exist between the land and the people, which constitutes the system of land occupation (Kuhnen, 1998). The North mainly consists of communal land where customary land rights are used; Traditional authorities (Chiefs) take care of land allocations. Title deeds are non-existent here and formally all the land is state property. Agricultural activities here consist of small-scale crop and livestock farming. Crop farming is quite important in the communal areas. Higher rainfall figures facilitate the production of traditional grains like maize, pearl millet (mahangu) and sorghum. Generally, produce is for family consumption and small-scale trading on local markets.

The centre and south of Namibia consist of freehold farmland, with the exception of three former homelands, Namaland around Keetmanshoop, Hereroland in the North-East and Bushmanland in the central East, where traditional authorities are in charge of the allocation of farmland utilisation.

The rest of the agricultural areas is commercial freehold farmland, meaning that title deeds have been issued at some time in history. These rangelands are tradable. The border between the communal North and the commercial South is a very sharp one. It is constituted by a veterinary cordon fence, the so-called Red Line. It was erected to prevent animals from migrating in southern direction, to prevent diseases (foremost foot-and mouth disease) from being transmitted to the south. Meat which is produced south from the Red Line is permitted to be exported to the European Union. For farmers north of the fence export is restricted to countries within the region.



Map 1.4: The position of the Red Line (based on map from www.augsburg.edu).

The fence is not only the border between North and South in an economic sense. The area north of the fence really is a different world. You find most people living in traditional houses or huts here and the fences that mark the large commercial farms are no longer there.

The position of the fence has a reason; The colonial forces never got to dominate the Northern part of Namibia, because of low expected economic viability, the inaccessibility of the area and the large, combative, population in this part of the country. Therefore the German and South African ruling could not impose its customs and systems in the North. However, the South

Africans did utilise the northern area for contract labour purposes, for example in the Tsumeb copper mines and the diamond areas in the Southwest.

1.5 Economic disparities

Independence of Namibia and the abolition of Apartheid put an end to the unequal chances of development. Through the promotion of entrepreneurship by the government, so-called Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and other measures the previously disadvantaged people would be able to improve their socio-economic circumstances.

However, at independence ownership rights were guaranteed through the policy of National Reconciliation. This puts a great restriction to the aspired equal access to economic resources. Thus a revolutionary transfer of economic resources to the previously disadvantaged groups of society has not taken place and great income disparities are still present.

1.5.1 Income inequalities

The extent to which income disparities are present can be measured by the Gini-coefficient; when the figure is 0.0, incomes are perfectly equally distributed, a 1.0 score meaning one group receives all the income. Namibia has a 0.67 score, the highest in the world (European Commission, 2003). This figure was even higher in 1993 (0.70), so thirteen years since Independence no great income redistributions have taken place. It is often argued, however, that the black/white division no longer equals the poor/rich division, but that the newly arising black elite of senior black administrators, politicians and business people, already signalled by Tapscott in 1993, is not diminishing the skew income distribution.

1.5.2 Black Economic Empowerment

A general tool to actively involve previously disadvantaged groups in the mainstream economy is so-called Black Economic Empowerment or BEE. The purpose of such program is to promote the presence of members of previously disadvantaged groups (referred to as black) in management positions in private and government organisations. Companies and government institutions are requested to submit BEE plans in which they put down their plans for increasing the involvement of black employees.

According to Mihe Gaomab of the National Economic Society, the not yet formalized BEE policy is centred on six themes:

- Direct ownership, management, control of enterprises and productive assets.
- Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) development.

- Human resource and skill development achieving employment equity.
- Preferential procurement or balanced tendering.
- Corporate social investment in HIV/Aids prevention programmes and community development initiatives.

Gaomab recognises the fact that such a process requires a lot of coordination. Lack of monitoring caused the collapse of some BEE investment companies due to self-enrichment practices. Formalisation of the BEE Law and Policy will have to offer possibilities to structure the empowerment.

1.6 Land Reform in Namibia

Another way to diminish the income disparities and to promote social equity is redistributing predominantly white-owned commercial farmland. In June 1991 the “National Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question” was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Namibia in the capitol Windhoek. All stakeholders within the process were given the opportunity to express their needs and formulate their points of view. The Lands Conference was a starting point for the Government to start a process of land reform.

1.6.1 Ancestral land rights

The outcome of the conference was the reaffirmation that restitutions on the basis of ancestral land rights are impossible (Hunter, 2004). Claims of historical land rights could not be harmonised; Migration of different ethnic groups during pre-colonial and colonial times and the forthcoming continuous change of control over Namibian territories made it impossible for the policy makers to let the historical right play a role.

1.6.2 Redistribution

Another very important conclusion was that land reform should not just change ownership structures, but that it had to strive towards a holistic approach, emphasizing the role of land and agriculture in national economic development (National Planning Commission, 1995).

A land reform process should recognise the regional differences in Namibia, also within the communal lands. Equity in and access to –and control over- natural resources, and efficiency in the use of Namibia’s resources can only be achieved through a consistent and integrated set of policies.

Box 1.1: Quote from the First National Development Plan, NDP1 (National Planning Commission, 1995).

For a long time the power over economic and natural resources had been concentrated within a small, racially determined group, meaning that the whites had the possibilities of accumulating wealth until independence. For land, the skewed distribution is quite easy to catch in figures; the white people who account for 6% of the population own about 86% of the commercial farmland (in 1998). A radical change of land tenure was not to be expected, because of the chosen path of national reconciliation and the acknowledgement and consolidation of property rights in the Constitution (art. 16).

However, there was a consensus among parliamentarians and agents of civil society that a way had to be found to redistribute some of the wealth, starting with the land. Regaining authority over and access to land also has psychological dimension, of which more will be told in chapter 3. Within the legal framework of National Reconciliation and the outcomes of the Lands Conference the Government started developing ways of providing for access to land for the previously disadvantaged groups.

1.6.3 Instruments

To achieve redistribution a few instruments were developed. The Affirmative Action Loan Scheme, The Commercial Land Reform Act and a Resettlement policy were consecutive measures taken to facilitate previously disadvantaged groups in acquiring land or access thereto.

- The Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) was introduced in 1992 to enable members of previously disadvantaged groups to do investments and start playing a part in the economy. In agriculture it was primarily meant to encourage large communal farmers to move to a commercial farm in order to make space for smaller communal farmers. Loans are granted (not only in agriculture) for a period of 25 years and under favourable conditions, mainly because the Scheme is heavily subsidised by the State since 1997.

From the moment the State started subsidising the AALS its size increased considerably. Since 1997 an average of 55 loans per year were granted, with an average size of N\$ 900,000 (Sherbourne, 2004).

Favourable aspects of the AALS are the fact that transaction costs for



Picture 1.1: A non-white owned commercial farm: Loerkop farm in the Hardap region (picture by author).

government are low and the low risk because of a well-understood farming system which is taken over by the beneficiaries (Adams, 2000).

An important criticism to the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme is that it may not entirely achieve its goals. An argument that raises doubt about the efficiency of the AALS is that persons that are already doing well in an economic sense are the persons that were the first to acquire land under the loan scheme (Werner, 2000). In 2004 a discussion was held in Parliament to exempt the new farmers from paying land tax. During the discussion the Minister of Lands stated that a general exemption should not be made, since some of the AALS-farmers are already “very well-off”. This phenomenon is explained in chapter three.

- The 1998 National Resettlement Policy (revisited in 2001) provides for resettlement of vulnerable members of the society, to enable them to make a living off the land. Groups on which the policy focuses are:
 - Members of the San community.
 - Ex-soldiers of the former opposing forces.
 - Displaced, destitute and landless Namibians.
 - People with disabilities.
 - People from overcrowded communal areas.

Providing people from these categories with a means of living and helping them to acquire functional life skills should help them become self-sustaining, so less vulnerable. An outline of the National Resettlement Policy as well as the Commercial Land Reform Act, which enables the government to acquire commercial farm land, is given in the fifth paragraph of chapter 3.

1.6.4 Progress of Land Reform

Figure 1.4 shows the regional distribution of acquisitions of farmland by the Government until 2002. Under these circumstances, about one percent of all commercial farmland is annually transferred to previously disadvantaged groups.

A quantity of 710,000 hectares has been acquired for redistribution purposes since independence. The second National Development Plan of 1995 had targeted an amount of 500,000 hectares for the period until 2006. NDP 2 aimed at resettling 15,000 people within the same period; the actual figure is 22,000 (August 2002), resettled on freehold and communal land. The conclusion is that the quantitative aims of the resettlement have been largely achieved.

Region(no.map)	Number of farms	Total area (ha)	% of total	Total cost	%of total cost
Oshikoto (12)	10	53.113	7	7.068.855	7
Otjozondjupa (13)	13	77.957	11	19.807.236	9
Kunene (7)	17	91.385	13	12.254.877	12
Erongo (2)	2	21.612	3	2.161.225	2
Khomas (6)	4	24.914	4	6.600.822	6
Omaheke (9)	32	159.410	22	36.252.254	34
Hardap (3)	22	129.100	18	14.431.749	14
Karas (4)	18	152.977	22	6.550.452	6
Total	118	710.468	100	105.127.469	100

Table 1.1: Land acquisitions by Government until August 2002 within the framework of the Commercial land reform Act of 1995 (Source: Namibia Agricultural Union, 2003).

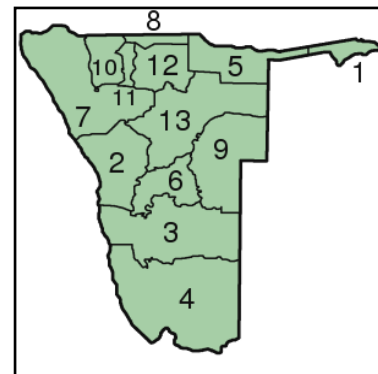
Despite the fact that the goals were met, satisfaction about the speed of land reform was not present. The realisation that it will take about thirty years to transfer half of the farmland to non-white people caused a call for measures that would accelerate the pace of land redistribution.

The Government’s preferential right for buying land and the “willing buyer, willing seller” principle were established in the Agricultural Land Reform Act of 1995. This Act provides for expropriation as well, a right firstly used in August 2005.

The Resettlement Policy estimates the number of people that is thought to be eligible for resettlement (i.e. the landless) to be 240,000. The Permanent Technical Team on Land Reform prescribed a farm size of 1500 hectares to be the absolute minimum (Werner, 1999). At an average family size of 5.1, the amount of land that is required to resettle all landless people is 72 million hectares of land, which is twice the amount of commercial farmland. The observation that resettlement of all potentially eligible people is simply impossible, is not made in any policy document.

1.6.5 Expropriation and the public interest

According the Land Reform Act, expropriation must be ‘in the public interest’. The Namibia Institute for Democracy in 2004 made a legal analysis of expropriation. It concludes the expropriation to be in line with national and international legislation. The expropriation policy should be transparent, so that criteria on the basis of which expropriation of farmland can be anticipated (Treeger, 2004). Evaluating the criteria should determine whether the effects are to



Map 1.4: Numbered regions corresponding with figure 1.4 (source www.wikipedia.org).

the benefit of the Namibian society as a whole. When these requirements are met and just compensation is paid, expropriation is legitimate.

1.6.6 Socio-economic implications

A more equal distribution of economic resources is meant to enhance the livelihoods of members of groups that were discriminated in the era before independence. To preserve the local economies, maintaining productivity and a sustainable way of farming are requisite. Large-scale ownership transfers should not have negative repercussions on the livelihoods of the rural communities.

A UN assessment report from 2003 recognises that “things often go so wrong in resettlement operations unless managed with meticulous care, otherwise creating humanitarian and ecological damage”. Although this report was written within the context of food security in Ethiopia, it can be applied to the situation in Namibia as well: Maintaining (and/or expanding) productivity is requisite in both countries.

In September 2004 the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics, Natural Resources and Public Administration presented a research report after visiting a number of resettlement farms. The conclusions were very negative. The report was never made public but some findings were made known by the announcing speech of the Committee’s chairman Ponhele ya France.

Apart from the non-public report, not a lot of research has been done to evaluate the effects of resettlement on rural communities or the economy as a whole. This observation is confirmed by Wolfgang Werner (2001), a well-known lands expert in Namibia.

Evaluations of the effects and the process of land redistribution could help to make adjustments to the process, identifying possible weaknesses and formulating adjustments.

This research tries to draw a picture of the execution of the resettlement programme and of the development of the settlers’ situation. It could serve as a basis for further research on this very complicated topic, further research which will prove to be useful.

Review

The first government of the Republic of Namibia inherited a country shaped by more than a century of colonial rule: The indigenous people were excluded from large parts of semi-arid central and southern Namibia, grazing lands were fenced off and the white settler communities introduced exclusive ownership and title deeds.

The exploitation of the indigenous people by the settlers enabled the whites to acquire wealth. Great differences of socio-economic circumstances between Namibian citizens urged the government to introduce a Land Reform process.

The envisaged redistribution of land is limited by environmental vulnerability and the constitutional guarantee of ownership, which causes large-scale land transfers to be very expensive. Despite these constraints, a considerable amount of farmland has actually been transferred to previously disadvantaged people.

The socio-economic implications of resettlement, on which this research focuses, do not seem to be monitored. This research aims to sketch a picture of the way the processes of land redistribution is developing, resettlement in particular, and the way it changes the livelihoods of its beneficiaries.

In chapter two the research design is outlined, all phases that were gone through are explained here. The complexity and theory of the land issue is discussed in chapter three and four, respectively. In the fifth chapter the empirical observations meet the theoretical part in the analysis, after which the conclusions are drawn; those will be outlined in the sixth and final chapter. Some recommendations will be given as well.

2 Research outline

In order to design a consistent research process, the construction of this research project starts with the formulation of the central problem, which is the result of a background description of the situation. The definition of the research question(s) is the next step, after which appropriate methods are selected for answering these questions, also outlining the ways the outcomes will be interpreted.

2.1 Background

Namibia's independence on the 27th of March 1990 meant a great shift of power; Democracy was introduced while the apartheid era had ended. Kuhnen (1998) argues that whenever power relations change in countries where agriculture plays an important role, the relation of its people with the land has to change as well. When the change of relations is not sufficiently accommodated (preferably by the national government), instability is given space to arise, socially as well as economically. In this respect Zimbabwe set a bad example in 2000; President Robert Mugabe encouraged the people to invade farms, in order to regain political power on the eve of parliamentary elections, by focusing the frustrations on the land and the still-dominating white ownership thereof (Younge, 2004).

The South African government was reluctant to radically restructure ownership structures. Although there was a consensus that redistribution had to take place, maintaining the existing productivity and efficiency also seemed to be of great importance (Hall, 2004). It was in the aftermath of the Zimbabwe farm invasions that the government realised the land question was a potential threat for political power of the ruling ANC party as well as to social and economic stability (Lahiff, 2001). A further outline of the countries' policies and performances is given in chapter three.

The Namibian government developed two instruments for de-racialising landownership structures. The first was the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme which creates favourable conditions for taking over existing commercial farms, whereby not changing the agricultural structure and maintaining the efficiency potential. The second instrument is resettlement on smallholdings through the subdivision of government-acquired commercial farms. In order to maintain environmental sustainability and productivity, a fragile equilibrium, resettlement schemes have to be very well-planned (Kuhnen, 1998).

Lahiff argues that in South Africa no comprehensive reviews are made on the impact on beneficiaries' livelihoods, of which the promotion is the most important argument for restitution of land. Some studies have shown poor infrastructural development and low levels of service

provision. In Namibia Reports from the MET (1998), the Permanent Technical Team on Land Reform (unpublished) and the Parliamentary Committee on Economics, Natural Resources and Public Administration (unpublished) came to similar conclusions: Many resettlement schemes are not functioning according to the goals which are set in the 2001 Resettlement Policy; productivity is low and over-population has been reported.

These considerations seem to lead to a preliminary conclusion that equity and productivity are contradictory goals of resettlement; it seems impossible to foster both goals. Ruth Hall (2004) formulated four conditions under which resettlement can encompass social equity as well as productivity, equity could even foster productivity. These conditions are:

- avoid landlessness
- consolidate ownership rights
- beneficiaries should have enough interests to do investments
- farms should be manageable in a sustainable way

These considerations are made in the South African context; the potential of resettlement in Namibia is considered to be smaller than in its southern neighbour, since climate circumstances generally only allow for extensive livestock farming. Therefore the notion of equity fostering productivity may not be applicable on the same scale, however the underlying basic notions can be upheld.

Next to the productivity issue, the pace of land redistribution also is a big problem. The responsible government institutions do not manage to spend their budget on land acquisition. The market-led approach taken by the Namibian as well as the South-African government does not deliver enough land to reach the (quantitative) goals of resettlement. At the current pace, it will take 150 years to settle all claims for land in South Africa. The Namibian government acquired 550,000 hectares of farmland for resettlement up to 2004 and it plans to acquire 10 million hectares the next fifteen years. Expropriation should provide acceleration of the land acquisitions by the government (the Namibian, 2005).

Summarising, the pace of land restitutions as well as the impact thereof (socio-economically and environmentally) are not uncontested.

This research is aimed at exploring the settlers' situation, their expectations and perceptions of their resettlement. Observing their situation and perceptions, a picture is shaped on how the goals of resettlement and the actual situations relate. Also some observations on the institutional organisation of land redistribution are made.

Evaluation of the process of resettlement and identifying factors that hamper a successful execution of land redistribution could serve as a basis for further research which could possibly have a positive influence on the execution of land redistributions, benefiting all Namibians.

2.2 Problem definition and research questions

Redistributing economic resources to groups that were deprived of any capital accumulation for a long time may be a good way to engage these groups in the mainstream economy and to become productive. Many people are believed to be eligible for resettlement on government-acquired land; the 2001 Resettlement policy estimates the number of eligible persons to be 240,000.

Furthermore, the existing resettlement schemes are not considered to be very productive, whereby the national and regional economies can be negatively affected. So in many ways resettlement on government-acquired land is inefficient and could harm the regional and national economy. However, there is a consensus that land redistribution has to take place; the call for land reform from within the population is loud; on the eve of the 2004 elections all political parties promised to address the land question adequately. The government is confronted with the interests of the national economy and of those who were deprived of fair economic development before independence.

2.2.1 Research goal

The goal of this research is to explore the complexity of land reform in post-apartheid Namibia, concentrating on resettlement of landless people, the perceptions of their situation and development. Combining the findings of a series of case studies in resettlement areas with the goals set in the policies and interviews with some experts, a number of factors are identified that hamper the resettlement process.

2.2.2 Research questions

The main question that is to be answered is as following:

“To what extent do the socio-economic goals which were set in the policies for land redistribution work out in practice, how do beneficiaries perceive their new situation/development and in what way are governmental institutions involved in planning and evaluation of the process of resettlement?”

To determine how this complex question can be answered it has to be divided into four component questions which can be answered separately. A synthesis will integrate the answers into a comprehensive conclusion in the final chapter of this report. The research questions are:

1. What goals for socio-economic improvement are set for the beneficiaries of resettlement in Government policies and publications?
2. What socio-economic development did the beneficiaries experience since their resettlement?
3. How do beneficiaries of resettlement perceive their new existence, being 'farmers'?
4. What can be said about the management of the redistribution process by various government institutions and their co-operation, and what is done with the outcomes of possible evaluations?

2.3 Methods

In order to answer the research questions from paragraph 2.1.2, appropriate methods are selected, depending of the nature of the question and the possibilities. These methods, and the interpretations of their outcomes, also have limitations, which are acknowledged.

2.3.1 Literature studies

The complex nature of land redistribution in a post-colonial context requires extensive literature studies, enabling a degree of understanding the issue. The introducing chapter, the aforementioned research background and the next two chapters are products of this literature studies.

The literature was obtained from the Africa Studies Centre Library in Leiden, the Netherlands, and from the Namibian National Library and the library of the University of Namibia, both in Windhoek, Namibia. Government publications like the Land Policy and the Commercial Land Reform Act were obtained from the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation in Windhoek. Finally, the internet proved to be a valuable source of information.

The first research question about the actual goals of resettlement could be answered by analysing the corresponding policies.

2.3.2 Case studies (interviews) in resettlement areas

The second and third research questions are about the settlers' opinions on the development of the circumstances in which they have been settled. Next to factual information on when their settlement took place, family size and so forth, an important part of the studies was to find out

what changes the settlers went through, their opinions about these changes and their expectations on their future development.

The case studies method is the best way to obtain this information. The research objects are studied in their 'natural' environment with which they interact and the combination of observing and interviewing enables the researcher to shape a holistic picture of the situation (Swanborn, 1996).

The data were obtained through open/semi-structured interviews. A number of topics is to be discussed, the formulation of answers is not standardised. This open type of interviewing takes place in a participating-observing way; the interviewer sees the respondent in interaction with his/her environment. This method is considered to be very useful, it meets the requirement of the method being in accordance with the goal of the research question (Billiet, 2001), which is not to obtain scores on fixed questions in order to measure their opinions but to get a picture of the settlers' perceptions and views on their history, situation and development.

2.3.2.1 Selection of settlement areas and respondents

The respondents of the interviews are the inhabitants of two resettlement areas which were selected at random. The areas were visited in October and November 2004 and are situated in two different regions. To account for different climate circumstances in the research, one area in the central North was selected, near Tsumeb in the Oshikoto region, and one in the central South, between Maltahöhe and Mariental in the Hardap region. A more extended description of the different environments is given in chapter 5. Before visiting the areas, an appointment at the regional office was made in both cases, where some information about the areas was obtained, as well as permission to go and speak to the inhabitants of the areas that were under their supervision.

2.3.2.2 Language

A total of eleven respondents were interviewed in the resettlement areas. There were a few younger respondents with whom the interviews were done in English. The older respondents barely spoke any English, but most of them did speak Afrikaans. Because of the similarities between Afrikaans and Dutch, the mother tongue of the interviewer, and the interviewer's ability to bend his language towards Afrikaans, no significant language problems were encountered in the process of interviewing. This was an unexpected advantage; the expectation was that respondents would be able to communicate in English, but the way the conversations developed in Afrikaans was above expectation.

The goal of the interview with the settlers was to obtain information on their perceptions on their situation and development. In the reports of the interviews in chapter 5 the researcher's interpretation of site and situation is given. Because of the difference in background between the researcher and the settlers, there may be differences between the reports and the actual perception. Obtaining qualitative data in a (for the researcher) unusual environment automatically entails such limitations (Swanborn, 1996), which are hereby recognised.

2.3.3 Interviews with experts

In order to get a fuller understanding of the societal context of the land issue, some expert interviews were conducted. Expert interviews are done with “persons who are well informed on specific issues and/or who are well integrated in certain locations/social situations” (Billiet, 2001). Interviews were held with a representative of the commercial farmers' union NAU and with an ex-deputy minister. Attempts to arrange a meeting with representatives from the farm workers' union NAFWU proved to be idle. The same setback was met contacting commercial farmers, but after all a number of respondents in this group of stakeholders was willing to answer some questions.

The interviews with the commercial farmers were done the same way as the settler interviews; next to some factual information about their farms they were asked about their perceptions and expectations. The expert interviews were unstructured and aimed at obtaining a broader understanding of the issue, to discuss the way land redistribution is taking place, its strengths and weaknesses, and to a smaller extent to discuss the findings of the visits to the resettlement areas.

2.3.4 Interpretations

The answers of the respondents to the interviewer's questions are used to formulate answers to the research questions. However, the representation and analysis of the answers in this report are to some extent the product of the researcher's interpretation. Most of the respondents are from a very different background (social, economical, environmental) than the interviewer; the meanings of their answers are not uniform and however the interviews are reported as well as possible, influence of the interviewer/researcher's 'western' bias can not be ruled out, and this restraint is hereby acknowledged.

2.4 Analysis and conclusions

After outlining the context and existing theories on redistributive resettlement and focusing on resettlement, the findings of the interviews are combined with the goals that were set in the

policy papers and research reports/publications dealing with land issues, the latter focusing more on the process and organisation of the land redistribution and resettlement.

An interpretation of differences between objectives and achievements of the process finalises the analysing chapter. The result of this analysis leads to conclusions from which a number of recommendations will be formulated.

The research process can be visualised as following:

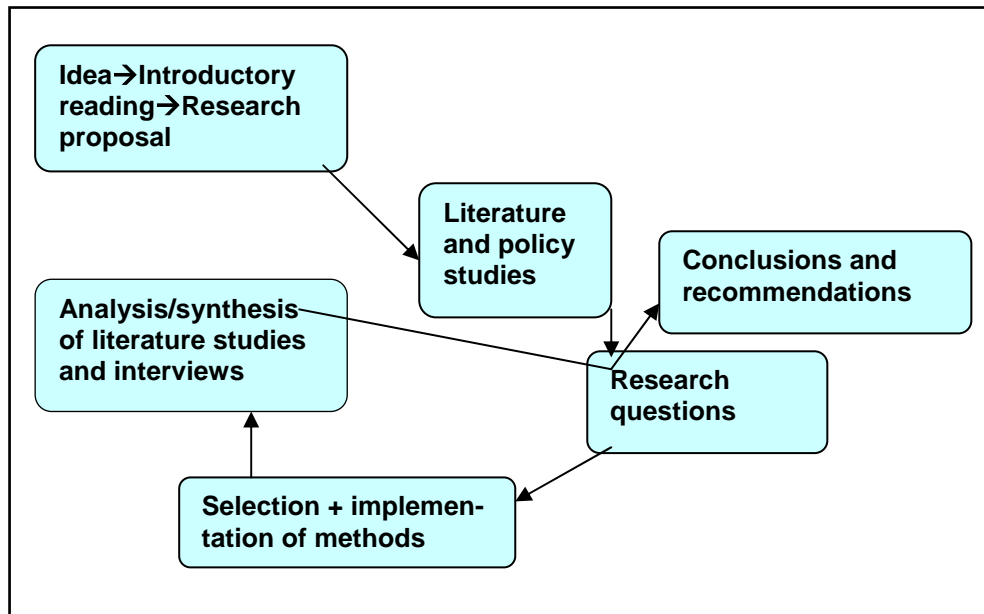


Figure 2.1: The research schedule.

The next chapter will show the complexity of the issue of land reform. A range of factors will be mentioned, with which the land question is interrelated. Economic and socio-cultural factors are mentioned and the policy and legal framework of land reform/redistribution is outlined. Furthermore, the development of land reform in two countries with a comparable background, i.e. Zimbabwe and South Africa, will be discussed.

3 Context

In order to describe the reach of the land reform process in Namibia the important factors that influence, and are influenced by, the programme are discussed here. Political and economic factors are mentioned. An enumeration of stakeholders and a description of their role in the land reform programme in Namibia concludes this chapter.

3.1 Politics

Since its independence in 1990 Namibia has been governed by the SWAPO party. This party has a history of being dominated by Owambo/Kavango-speaking people, a result of the northern-led independence struggle. It has had a political monopoly since independence (Bayer, 1999). This factor can be earmarked as an important reason for political stability, subsequently creating economic stability.

Also after receiving full sovereignty, the SWAPO Government has not turned to a radical fast-track land reform (like Namibia's friendship state Zimbabwe did), but it maintained a moderate attitude towards land reform for the sake of stability and safety.

It is often argued that the SWAPO Party does not need to emphasise its urge to reduce white landownership to maintain its political hegemony. The party's principal centre of power is in the North of Namibia, a region that was never affected by the land grabs by the whites (Werner 1999).

3.1.1 Recent political developments

On the eve of the 2004 elections various competing political parties spearheaded the land question in their campaign in an attempt to gain support from the population, condemning the moderate SWAPO policy (see figure 3.1). An answer to this was the introduction by the Government of an active expropriation policy. In July 2004 eighteen farmers received a letter from the MLRR that told them the Ministry had the intention to take over their farm. The farmers were invited to make an offer and to enter into negotiations with the Government subsequently.

Further developments in the expropriations are not easy to find; the process is not very transparent. However, in July 2005 the newspapers in Namibia announced the completion of the first expropriation.



Figure 3.1: Newspaper articles on the eve of the November 2004 elections (source: The Namibian newspaper, various dates).

3.1.2 Foreign relations

Namibia follows an independent foreign relations policy, although it advocates regional integration. This vision is expressed by the dynamic role Namibia plays in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). President Nujoma, who stepped down in 2004, was one of the last political friends of president Mugabe of Zimbabwe, after South Africa's president Thabo Mbeki heavily criticised the economic and land policies of the Mugabe Government. It remains to be seen how the relation develops under rule of Nujoma's successor, Hifikepunye Pohamba. Furthermore, there are loose connections with the countries that supported SWAPO during the independence struggle, Libya and Cuba. Despite the fact that the independence movement abandoned socialism at the end of the 1970's, the connections are still there. An important outcome of the cooperation is the employment in Namibia of a few hundreds of Cuban doctors and nurses. The shortage of nurses in Namibia has two causes: The high figures of HIV/AIDS-infections have taken their toll among medical staff as well and many educated nurses go to the United Kingdom, attracted by the "greener pastures" there (blackpressusa.com).

3.1.3 Reparation negotiations with Germany

In August 2004 the German minister of development cooperation Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul officially apologised for the crimes committed by German soldiers in the Nama and Herero wars of 1904, saying "We Germans accept our historical and moral responsibility and the guilt incurred by Germans at that time" (Irinnews.org, 2004). This was an important event, the starting point for negotiations between both governments about reparation payments to compensate for the wrongdoings of one century ago.

Money may seem an inappropriate way to make up for these wrongful acts, but international law recognises reparations (payments) as the only legal way of a nation compensating crimes against humanity (Holliday et al., 2005). Germany has ruled out lump-sum reparations, but Wieczorek-Zeul said Berlin would help Namibia tackle the challenges of development, "in particular assistance for the necessary process of land reform".

Germany has been Namibia's largest donor until today: Since independence about N\$ 650 million (US\$100 million) were invested in education in medical aid, education development etcetera. The Government views the negotiations as an opportunity to obtain the means to realise a development jump.

The representative of the Herero-speaking population, Chief Kuaima Riruako, has filed a lawsuit in the United States against the German government to force it to come across with reparation payments. The Herero chief wants to use the money to buy back land that his people's ancestors were driven away from. The case was turned down by the Columbia State Court. The case was turned down by the Superior Court in December 2004 (The Namibian).

Riruako tries to make the reparations discussion a Herero case while the Nama and Damara populations were hurt by the colonisation process of the Germans as well. Furthermore, when the Herero entered Namibia a few hundreds of years ago, they chased away the San. Should the Herero start negotiations about reparation payments to the San now?

Taking these arguments into account a central settlement of the issue seems obvious. Transparent negotiations on a national level seem the best way to determine how the reparation payments should be spent.

3.2 Economic factors

Land redistribution has a broad spectrum of economic linkages, from the local to the national level. As mentioned before, the local economies of the vast rural areas largely depend on activities related to agriculture. Negative changes on the local and regional level will have repercussions on the national level: An important recognised threat of declines in regional economies is urbanisation (Bernstein et al., 2004). This is just one example how regional economic changes create problems on the national level. The rural-urban migration effect is recognised in the Agricultural Land Reform Act.

However, it is hard to dimension the effects of land reform on economics since the performance of the beneficiaries of the AALS and resettlement scheme, and the implications thereof, is hardly measured.

3.2.1 Land reform in a world-historical economic perspective

The accumulation of wealth by large-scale land owners at the expense of cheap labourers can be put in a world-historical perspective. The emergence of capitalist farming through forced expropriation of land from peasants (enclosure) in England started in the late 15th century, as Karl Marx reports in his well known “The Capital” (1867). The accumulation of wealth by landlords was facilitated by increased consumer prices and lasting cheap inputs.

The privatisation of common land and cheap labour inputs is similar to the 20th century process in Namibia as described in the introducing chapter. The white farmers hired blacks from the ‘reserves’ who were forced to engage in this type of wage labour since it was their only chance of earning any income. The differences in prosperity have been observed earlier in this report. Differences are that in former South-West Africa race was the determinant and in England the social class people belonged to. Furthermore the English process was not stemming from a colonial past but was an effect of the emergence of the capitalist economy.

The privatisation of land seems necessary for agricultural production in a capitalist economy/society; Land becomes a scarce economic resource and for efficiency purposes privatisation occurs. This may be different in industrialised economies where land (and its production) is of relative smaller importance. This consideration is supported by Neeson (1993) who examined England’s transition from common lands to private property in the context of socio-economic change.

3.2.2 Profitability of farming in Namibia

Under the current Affirmative Action Loan Scheme individuals can obtain a loan to buy an existing farm in the commercial farming areas against market prices. However, under the current circumstances buying land for livestock farming (instead of inheriting a farm) is not profitable because market prices greatly exceed the economic value of rangelands.

An example shows the influence of the high land prices on the profitability of livestock farming:

Area of farm	5,000 ha
Price per ha	300 N\$
Investment in land	1,500,000 N\$
Number of cattle	400
Price per head	2,000 N\$
Investment in cattle	800,000 N\$
Infrastructure	50,000 N\$
Vehicle	150,000 N\$
Total initial investment	2,500,000 N\$
AA interest rate	11,75%
Repayment period	25 years
Annual repayment	313,000 N\$

Table 3.1: Example of farm financing under the AA Loan Scheme (Sherbourne in Hunter, 2004).

At an annual take-off of 25% at a price of N\$2800,- a revenue of N\$280,000 is realised. Under these realistic conditions not even the annual repayment is generated, let alone a disposable income for the farmer or money for further investment.

3.2.3 Inflated land prices

At current land prices (2004), live stock farming does not seem a viable business for new farmers. Reason for inflated land prices can be that farms are used for other/more purposes than farming only. Sherbourne (2004) observes that farming is becoming a life-style choice of the urban rich (lawyers, doctors and politicians), a view supported by the fact that 40% of the AA loans is issued to part-time farmers, under which high Government officials and ex-President Nujoma (Werner, 2002). Sherbourne also identifies hunting and tourism purposes as possible causes of inflated land prices.

3.2.4 Poverty alleviation and land reform

Next to redressing the imbalances from the past, land redistribution is aimed to improve the livelihoods of the rural communities and to reduce poverty. Furthermore, access to land is considered “a prerequisite for the provision of opportunities to sustainable means of livelihoods and the enhancement of dignity, well-being and economic empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups and communities” (RoN, 2001).

However, a broad explanation how land redistribution can cause structural improvement is absent. Moreover, an other Government publication, the Poverty Reduction Strategy for Namibia (1998) clearly states that little can be expected from land redistribution of the commercial areas on the long term, a conclusion shared by a study by the World Bank (1997). Most of the freehold farmland is not suitable for intensified land use so subdivision into smallholdings will not provide an efficient or self-sustaining situation. The agricultural base is considered too weak to offer a basis for prosperity.

Perceptions of the extent to which redistributive land reform in the freehold areas can reduce poverty do not seem to correspond with the actual possibilities.

3.3 Socio-cultural aspects

Besides economic factors the land redistribution issue in Namibia undeniably has many cultural aspects in it: The shift to ‘fairer’ land redistribution between the original inhabitants of the country and the settlers’ descendents in a post-colonial setting is a very complex matter.

However, cultural aspects of land reform and resettlement are hardly recognised in literature and legislation. A few aspects are highlighted here, taking in account some reservations.

3.3.1 Beneficiaries' features

Most ethnic groups have been deprived of equal development until the collapse of apartheid and the independence of Namibia. While a commercial farming sector was developing the black people were isolated from this “first world” development.

Through land redistribution the Government aims to redress some of the imbalances caused by the discriminatory policies. Redistributing farms to previously disadvantaged members of society may have a (temporary) influence on productivity; farming methods of the new farmers may differ from the general commercial sector. This influence could be assessed and/or controlled by the government through selection procedures and the provision of specific training as pointed out in the Resettlement Policy. Another important criterion for resettlement mentioned in The National Resettlement Policy is that beneficiaries “should have a background or interest in agriculture or other related activities on which the resettlement is based”.

It is not a surprise that the Land and/or Resettlement Policy do not mention a possible backlog of potential beneficiaries; land reform is designed to redress the effects of systematic discrimination of certain groups. Emphasising possible imperfections of the beneficiaries (members of previously disadvantaged groups) clearly is a sensitive operation.

3.3.2 Traditions

The different ethnic groups have different (agricultural) traditions: Before the settlers' emergence, the South of Namibia was inhabited by Nama and San (Bushmen), who respectively were nomadic small-stock herdsman and hunter-gatherers. The North was, and is, inhabited by the Owambo, Kavango and Herero which have a tradition of crop farming and small-stock/cattle herding. Furthermore these peoples do not have a nomadic tradition but are to a certain extent tied to a certain place, represented by the presence of villages (Bayer, 1999).

Analysing the traditional attitudes towards land of different communities is a difficult matter. The non-white communities do not have much of a written history. Nevertheless, a different source of historical, sociological, anthropological and literary research has proved to be important in the last decade: Oral history not only contains a great deal of information about history, but also a great deal of interpretative, metaphorical and controversial from the perspective of the community concerned (Förster, 2005).

“...Namibia’s Herero speaking community is not the only one to have an oral culture that preserves the memory of land use and ownership and strengthens their symbolic ties with the land. Even Namibian communities of European descent who own the land of the dispossessed African communities nowadays maintain such symbolical and emotional ties with the land. Even those who are not part of dispossessed communities, but more generally count among the historically disadvantaged members of Namibian society, have right of access to the land”.

Box 3.1: Fragment of an assessment of social and cultural aspects of land in Herero oral culture by L. Förster (2005).

These traditions may be of influence on the actual perceptions/attitudes of beneficiaries towards land and landownership. The Land and Resettlement Policy do not take in account these agricultural customs. An illustration of the different perceptions of land ownership/ land allocation can be derived from the NEPRU briefing paper that preceded the 1991 National Conference on Land Reform. It represents the regional variety in institutions that should allocate the land according to the inhabitants of the respective region.

	Ovambo Cuvelai	Ovambo Rest	Cavango	Caprivi	Other com. areas	Land- owners	Farm- worker	Urban
Government	60	49	48	17	65	17	67	63
Tribal authorities	28	30	43	80	26	21	16	8
Ministry of Agriculture	9	21	13	1	7	26	11	16
"People should purchase land"	1	0	0	0	1	33	3	10
Other	2	0	7	2	1	4	3	3

Table 3.2: Regional variety of answers to the question how the land should be allocated (source NEPRU, 1991).

The table shows that tribal authorities play a very important role in the Caprivi region and that existing land owners had various opinions on how the land should be allocated.

3.4 Land reform in the region

Through the AA Loan Scheme and the Resettlement Policy the Government tries to realise a redistribution of an important natural resource, the land. As mentioned before, Namibia’s political stability, often applauded by Western countries, resulted in a cautious approach towards land reform. Recent developments show a move towards forced expropriation, driven by disappointment about the slow pace of land redistributions.

The post-colonial land dealings of South Africa and Zimbabwe happen against a similar background as their Namibian counterpart. The three countries are dealing with a settler minority that, mostly due to colonial dispossession, owns a large part of the commercial agricultural land.

3.4.1 South Africa

The South African government introduced the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant to assist the poor and the disadvantaged to purchase land for residential and farming purposes (Department of Land Affairs, 1997). Cooperation of groups of people should enable them to acquire larger units of farmland.

However, budgetary constraints and the fact that the DLA does not even completely spend its budget of 0.35 percent of national expenditure show that a market-based approach to land reform (similar to Namibia) does not lead to the desired speed of land redistribution: at current spending patterns it will take 125 years for 30% of the land to be handed over to black people. At the end of 2001 2% of the agricultural land had been transferred into black hands. The DLA had by then received 69,000 'land restitution claims' of which 12,700 cases were settled, benefiting about 40,000 households of which 40% received monetary compensation instead of land restoration (landaction.org, 2005).

At the same moment as Namibia, South Africa finished its first expropriation in August 2005: a white-owned farm in the North-West Province was bought by the government and given back to the family that was evicted from it in the 1960's.

3.4.2 Zimbabwe

The first phase of land reform in Zimbabwe was quite similar to the Namibian and South African counterparts: Settlement of black people on land acquired by the Government (co-funded by the British Government) on a willing buyer- willing seller basis. In 1992 the Land Acquisition Act was passed which enabled the Government to buy land through compulsory acquisition, i.e. expropriation. By 1997, 3.5 million hectares of land had been acquired and 71,000 people had been resettled from the crowded communal areas, while a figure of 162,000 had been targeted.

After the failure of the 1998 plan for Phase II Resettlement, due to donors not being convinced of the plan's potential, and two years of little activity, the Mugabe-led government announced the next phase, the Fast-Track Land Reform Phase (UNDP, 2002). Between July 2000 and December 2001 9 million hectares were to be made available for resettlement of the 162,000 persons from the first phase as well as the settlement of 51,000 small- and medium scale commercial farmers.

Despite a pro-active attitude of the Commercial Farmers' Union cooperation with the Government failed to take shape. Prior to the Fast Track Phase there were 4000 commercial farmers in Zimbabwe, after a few rounds of farm seizures between 500 and 700 had left.

In the first months of the year 2000 the Mugabe government encouraged groups of so-called war veterans and others to attack owners of these farms and their employees, inflicting serious injuries to many and even killing some, and burning crops in fields and stores. This has created a climate of fear amongst the farmers, many of whom have abandoned their farms and left their livestock unattended and fled to the relative safety of urban areas (FAO, 2000).

Zimbabwe has had a flourishing economy and agricultural production since independence, a success that ended at the time the Fast Track phase was introduced. Since 2000, agricultural production collapsed and the former food-exporting country is lacking foreign currency to buy petrol. In 2003 about one-third of the population is believed to suffer from famine (European Commission, 2003).

3.5 Legal framework of land redistribution in Namibia

Since ownership rights are guaranteed in the Constitution, the government of Namibia had to design a legal framework to realise a much wanted redistribution of farmland. The 1994 Commercial Land Reform Act and the (revised) National Resettlement Policy of 2001 are the most important governmental instruments to acquire and redistribute land.

3.5.1 The Commercial (Agricultural) Land Reform Act

The 1995 Commercial Land Reform Act enabled the Government to acquire farmland in the commercial areas on the basis willing buyer-willing seller. The government has a preferential right; land that comes onto the market has to be offered to the government. Land owners who offer their property to the State are visited by a commission that would decide on the quality and suitability of the land for redistribution (RoN, 1995). The Act also introduced land tax which was meant to encourage unproductive farmers to sell their land to the government. However, it was only in 2002 that the necessary procedures for the tax collection were formalised and the actual state of this measure is unclear (FAO, 2004).

The Land Reform Act states that the potential beneficiaries of land reform are:

“Namibian citizens who do not own or otherwise have the use of agricultural land or adequate agricultural land, and foremost to those Namibians who have been socially, economically or educationally disadvantaged by past discriminatory laws and practices”(RoN, 1995).

Land which is targeted for acquisition by the government is:

- Land adjacent to communal areas;
- Land owned by absentee landlords;
- Underutilised land;
- Excessive land (over two commercial farming units);
- Land owned by foreigners;

The Commercial Land Reform Act also gives the government the possibility to expropriate farm land. However, until 2004 the willing buyer – willing seller approach was the most important way for land for expropriation. Expropriation enables the government to acquire land when the willing buyer – willing seller approach does not work out. This is not a precondition, but just another possibility for acquisition.

In March 2004 the government announced a policy change: Due to the unsatisfactory pace of land redistribution, the possibility of forced expropriation would be used more extensively. Not only farms under the above-mentioned conditions would be targeted but also farms of owners who “had done wrong in the past” which were put on an unofficial list (The Namibian, March 4, 2004). An important feature of expropriation is that compensation is not determined by market prices, but it has to be “just”, whenever the Lands ministry and the landowner can not meet an agreement, a judge will decide on the size of the compensation. Just compensation is likely to be lower than compensation based on market prices.

3.5.2 The National Resettlement Policy

The Resettlement Policy is the formulation of the goals and ways of settling previously disadvantaged citizens on government-acquired land. The Ministry of Lands and Resettlement defines resettlement as “a movement of people from an area with insufficient resources to the one which is more likely to provide a satisfactory standard of living”. The policy acknowledges the great complexity of resettlement: It requires rigorous application of social, agricultural as well as physical planning within a framework of institutional, economical and environmental sustainability.

The two main aims of resettlement are (a) To enhance the welfare of the people through improvement of productivity and (b) to develop destination areas where they are supposed to earn a decent living. Combined with the sustainability requirements the six objectives of resettlement are:

- To redress past imbalances in the distribution of natural resources, particularly land.
- To give an opportunity to the target groups to produce their own food with a view towards self-sufficiency.
- To bring small-holder farmers into the mainstream of the Namibian economy by producing for the open market and to contribute to the country's Gross Domestic Product,
- To create employment through farming and other income generating activities.
- To alleviate human and livestock pressure in communal areas.
- To offer an opportunity to citizens to reintegrate into society after many years of displacement by the colonisation process, war of liberation and other diverse circumstances.

Through resettlement the government offers secure tenure to landless Namibians, some without income or livestock and some with livestock who need land to graze their livestock. The five main target groups for resettlement are:

- Members of the San community: Uplifting of these exploited and marginalised people by providing them with the means which enable them to become self-supportive.
- Ex-soldiers: Reintegrating members of former opposing forces into society by providing them with life skills.
- Displaced, destitute and landless Namibians: Persons returned from exile, people who were political prisoners before independence and people who have been evicted from farms where they were employed.
- People with disabilities: Supporting this particularly vulnerable group with acquisition of skills and helping them to become self-supporting through which their human and civil rights will be respected by society.

In co-operation with the Regional Councils the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement is responsible for the selection of persons eligible for resettlement. Different models of resettlement (individual, group, or co-operative holdings) may require different settler characteristics, but the general selection criteria are:

- Beneficiaries should have a background or an interest in agriculture or other related activities on which the resettlement is based.

- Beneficiaries should be prepared to hold land under a leasehold tenure arrangement and to relinquish any agricultural land rights elsewhere.
- An applicant intending to engage in animal husbandry should not own more than the number of livestock determined by the carrying capacity of the farming unit he/she has applied for.
- Settlers should be prepared to support cost recovery measures, such as lease and water fees, whenever they are introduced.
- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.
- Applicants should adhere to the stipulations of the lease/resettlement agreement and utilise the land allocated to them productively. Failure in this regard can disqualify the incumbent beneficiaries.

99-year leasehold agreements will be provided to the settlers, which enable them to obtain credits from lending institutions for agricultural production purposes (emphasised).

After a period of a few years, depending of the circumstances, beneficiaries must be able to use their experience to become self-supportive. They have to commit themselves to meet some basic requirements like “*maintaining the property that was allocated to them and to use the fields productively*”.

The policy notes that the success of the process also depends on the dedication and commitment of the respective key players and their provision of financial and human resources and tools and equipment.

3.6 Stakeholders

In Namibia the land redistribution is led centrally by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, but other government and non-government institutions also try to influence the process, in different ways and to different extents.

Ministry of Lands and Resettlement

The *MLR* is the co-ordinator of the land redistribution process. Acquisition of farms and redistribution and resettlement of selected beneficiaries are the prime responsibilities of the Ministry.

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

The *MAWF* was also the ministry of Rural Development until the 2004 cabinet formation. It takes care of drought management, irrigation regulations and develops agricultural co-operatives fresh water fish farms in the north of Namibia. It does not actively participate in the land redistribution process. The Ministry of Agriculture published a report of its findings of the situation in resettlement areas, which was quite negative. This may not have favoured a co-operation between the ministries.

Namibia Agricultural Union

The *NAU* represents the (mainly white) commercial agricultural sector. It recognises the need for a land redistribution programme and tries to emphasise the importance of the maintenance of agricultural production. The *NAU* tries to foster transparency in the process of land reform, also supporting the process through research, of which more will be mentioned in chapter 4.

Namibia Farm Workers Union

The *NAFWU* has been outspoken on the land issue, condemning white farmers who mistreat their workers (including government officials). *Nafwu* tries to inform farm workers about their rights. The union has trouble consulting its members because of their dispersion throughout the country and lack of means of communication (Hunter, 2004). Its General Secretary Alfred Angula has never been reluctant to mention the possibility of forced take-over of farms if white farmers were resistant to the expropriation of land.

Non-governmental organisations: NID/IPPR/NEPRU

Non-governmental organisations like the Namibia Institute for Democracy, the Institute for Public Policy Research and the Namibia Economic Policy Research Unit are supporting the lands discussion, by promoting democratic values and the publication of legal and economical analyses, also dealing with land and agriculture.

Review

Despite the never-threatened political hegemony of the SWAPO party the call for speeding up land redistribution is continuously present, from inside as well as from outside the party. Economic development is not the sole objective of land reform, however. A number of studies have shown that land redistribution will not be an important tool for the alleviation of poverty. Cultural and social aspects seem more important than acknowledged in policy papers. More

attention for cultural-historical aspects of landownership has been arising in the past decade. The first part of chapter 4 will discuss the notion that land reform is also restoring sovereignty and transferring a sense of power to the people who were systematically deprived of 'fair' development in many senses. The second part of the chapter contains considerations on resettlement, focusing on the organisation of this redistribution.

4 Reflections on land reform and resettlement

Different types of land reform have taken shape around the world in the past centuries, depending on the background of the process. This chapter will elaborate on the concept of land reform and consequently discuss different ways of land redistribution, working towards resettlement, the application of redistribution this research is focussed on.

4.1 The concept of Land reform

The most basic and broadly accepted definition of land reform is *the redistribution of property or rights in land for the benefit of the landless, tenants and farm labourers* (Warriner, 1969). Two types of land reform are distinguished:

- Evolutionary land reform: Aimed at improving access to and security of land tenure for small farmers under forms of individual and communal tenure which do not involve expropriation and/or compensation.
- Revolutionary land reform: Centrally led redistribution of privately owned land. Such a process often opposes vested interests, resulting in a costly process with budgetary constraints due to expropriations and/or compensation.

The shape land reform takes differs per country, depending on land types, farming methods, the history of land acquisition, general social and economic conditions and political aims (Adams, 1995). Furthermore, considering land reform in developing countries, Shepherd (1998) finds a paradigm shift in the end of the 1980's, moving away from a dominantly technical approach towards a more holistic approach. The characteristics of both approaches are collected in table 4.1.

	old paradigm	new paradigm	
goal:profit maximisa- tion	industrial	organic	goal: overall/ sustainable development
	technocratic	participatory	
	exclusive	inclusive	
	large organisations	local management	

Table 4.1: The paradigm shift in the approach of land reform (derived from Shepherd, 1998).

4.1.1 Evolutionary land reform

The concept of land reform is not only applicable to post-colonial states that use land reform to reduce the implications of unequal distribution of scarce resources. Many countries in South-East Asia, South-America and Africa have policies of redistribution and change of tenure systems in order to come to an improved efficiency of the use of land. To picture the context of evolutionary land reform, a description of Egypt's land reform is given now.

In "Land reform in relation to social development" Saad M. Gadalla describes tenure change in Egypt in the 1950's. He describes the way in which an elite minority owned most of the land. The conflict of interest between the haves and the have-nots had dominated the social, economic and political scenes for many years (Gadalla, 1962). He states that land is not just valued for its production possibilities: Landownership is a form of security, a symbol of prestige and a source of power. He also mentions the conflict between the demand for greater social equality and the improvement of agricultural efficiency. Large-scale landownership creates a situation with a group of landowners and a large group of landless, a setting in which social classes are constructed.

"Nothing can be called land reform which does not have as its basic and primary concern the improved welfare of the man who works on the land. The economic and social institutions surrounding his life on the farm must be improved to bring him a higher standard of living and increased psychological satisfaction. There are many who think of land reform primarily as redistribution of the land – as the breaking up of large holdings into small ones. This may be a part of a land reform programme but certainly only one part, and not the most important one at that".

Box 4.1: Speech addressed by Willard L. Thorp, Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs of the USA at the Conference of World Land Tenure problems hosted in Madison, Wisconsin (USA) in 1948 (source:: Gadalla, 1969).

4.1.2 Non-economic meanings of land

In a country where a considerable part of the population lives in rural areas the land tenure system does not only determine the basic economic laws of the nation, it also forms the framework for the social system. The tenure system affects the level of living of farm people. A satisfactory tenure system can be helpful in providing the farmer with an income as stable as feasible under local conditions, at a level that permits him to meet his needs as a human being and to become a valuable and responsible member of the social system" (FAO,1953).

The land reform process in Egypt is different from the Namibian issue. Egypt was not dealing with (skewed) ownership structures remaining from a colonial history. Land reform was meant to decrease the concentration of landownership in a few hands. Several decades earlier Sismondi

and Saint-Simon had the same opinion on the same situation in France. They called for widespread peasant proprietorship “to assure happiness and virtue” (Bliss, 1908).

“This land does not merely signify ownership but symbolises your freedom, the freedom of your sons and grandsons. This dear land assigned to you is not only a means of improving materially your conditions but elevating you morally and spiritually, imbuing each individual with a sense of dignity, freedom and equality”.

Box 4.2: Fragment of the speech addressed by Egypt’s President Nasser at the enactment of the Agrarian Reform Law on September 9, 1951 (source: Gadalla, 1969).

In the cases of Egypt and France land speculations also were an argument to execute programmes of legislation to limit large-scale landownership. Land speculations are probable when higher land prices are to be expected. Those who have the means to buy land only get richer by the rise of land prices. A feudal-like system of large-scale landowners and subordinate workers is a basis for an unfavourable social system, in the sense of social equity, like the English in the 18th century (Gadalla, 1969).

4.1.3 Land is Power

Karl Marx denominated the landless as the “*lumpen proletariat*”; the category of people that does not have any access to land is forced to engage in wage labour to stay alive. Consequently, the land-owning class has got the tools to suppress the landless and to exploit their labour at very low remuneration.

The lumpen proletariat can be compared to the situation of the inhabitants of the homelands in the apartheid era; the homelands were used as sources of cheap labour (Lahiff, 1997) for the exploitation of farms, mines et cetera for the benefit of the dominant minority.

Marx’ view supports the notion that land is vested into peoples’ soul as a sense of self-determinacy and freedom, which can be an argument to redistribute land even when agricultural efficiency could be negatively affected by it.

4.1.4 Man-land relations in a changing world

Frithjof Kuhnen provides more theories on the relations between Man and Land. He mainly did his research in South-East Asia, but he puts the changes of the man-land relations in the perspective of global changes, which makes his observations applicable to other regions as well. He states that man-land relations must be seen as dynamic relations, whereby the changes are interrelated with the natural, economic, social, political and technological conditions (Kuhnen, 1998). When these conditions change, the relationship has to adapt to the new situation. When

this adaptation takes a lot of time, problems exist with respect to the efficiency of land use as well as to social balance and environmental acceptability.

For example: In Zimbabwe, a new political setting was established in 1980, at independence. The adaptation of man-land relations to this new environment has been known to be very hard. At the end of the 1990's, social and economic imbalances have certainly occurred and enlarged by the government-incited farm invasions of the year 2000 (read chapter 3.4.2).

4.1.5 Policy integration

With respect to the socio-economic development of a country Kuhnen states that land issues can not be dealt with in the way they used to be handled, i.e. by the formulation of an isolated land policy in which is mentioned which people should own what land in what way. The land policy should be incorporated in a general policy for social and economic development.

In order to obtain a level of policy integration, Kuhnen identified a number of factors that are essential for a land policy to achieve its goals of increased production, social development and protection of the environment.

These factors are as following:

- Consideration of differences in conditions of production between regions.
- Consideration of different needs of cultural groups within the country.
- Anticipation of socio-economic changes that are expected in the near future, for example by technological changes.
- Increasing urbanisation.
- Increasing occupational mobility of the population.
- The need to bring production, living and ecology into harmony.

When these requirements are met, we can speak of a comprehensive land tenure plan, taking into account specific conditions and other developments of society. Chapter 5 will analyse to what extent these requirements are met.

The first factor mentioned by Kuhnen is a very important one in Namibia. Namibia is Africa's most arid country south of the equator (Seely & Zeidler, 2002). As mentioned in the introducing chapter rainfall varies greatly over the country, resulting in differences in production environments throughout the country. These regional differences are recognised in the various policies that shape land redistribution.

Except for the exceptional position of the San community which is earmarked as a target group for resettlement, no distinction is made in the policies between the different cultural groups. Although differences in traditions could have implications on the groups' desires and needs, the fact that these factors are not considered is not a surprise. The goal of redistribution is to move away from the effects of formalised segregation that Apartheid was.

An important socio-economic factor which has repercussions on agricultural production and social relations is HIV/AIDS. The effects on crop production in the communal areas, where crop production is traditionally the women's concern, are thought to be considerable (FAO,2000). The prevalence of the virus is larger in the Northern regions than in the rest of the country (Caprivi 40% vs. 11% in Karas (The Namibian, December 4th 2004)).

Kuhnen's sustainability criterion of balancing production, life and ecology is developing through the Community Based Natural Resource Management programme. The CBNRM programme, guided by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in co-operation with a number of NGO's, combines natural resource management and conservation, rural development and an empowerment/capacity-building programme to construct regionally co-ordinated sustainable development.

4.2 Resettlement

Resettlement in the context of redressing imbalances that were caused by colonial developments is a phenomenon which is not extensively explored yet, probably because of the short history of this type of land reform. Resettlement on formerly white-owned land first took place in the 1980's in Zimbabwe. The way in which resettlement is carried out heavily depends on local socio-cultural, economic circumstances and requirements (Kuhnen, 1999).

4.2.1 Resettlement as a part of regional development

Settlement activities are usually incorporated in plans for regional development. Skilled people are moved to the areas which are planned to be developed, these settlers are the true executives of development, and they have to make the investments in development worth while. In exchange for their work, the settlers are equipped with sufficient infrastructure (roads, schools, health care) to provide a basis for a satisfactory life (Kuhnen, 1999).

Furthermore, it is of prime importance that the process of development and resettlement is well-planned and carried out from the beginning until the end. The investments per settler probably are greatly exceeding the expenditure on education, health and infrastructure per capita of the rest of the population.

In the Namibian context a slightly smaller emphasis on development could be justifiable; the process is also focused on redressing the imbalances in access to land and landownership which is perceived to be a big problem, hindering equal chances of (economic) development. Thereby the land redistribution would partly become a 'per se' process with less emphasis on the bigger picture of regional and national development.

4.2.2 Example of comprehensive resettlement: the Karoi initiative

Before the farm invasions early 2000, some NGO's initiated mediations between war veterans, communal and commercial farmers, settlers and local government in the Karoi area. Michael Jenrich (2002) describes how the involved parties came to realise that a complementary approach to land reform was compulsory if a satisfying result were to be achieved, therefore the parties entered into a constructive dialogue.

The discussions led to the provision of over 20,000 hectares of farmland for the purpose of the resettlement of 1300-1500 households. The costs of improvements were to be covered by foreign donors and the government, while the settlers were to be provided with lease-hold contracts for the lands, offering clear tenure security.

The most affected groups of land reform, i.e. the old and the new settlers, seemed to have reached a mutual satisfactory solution to the lands issue. Unfortunately, before the initiative reached its implementation phase, it was overtaken by political developments; the general objective had moved from finding a resolution to the land question to a struggle for political power. The situation escalated and many white farmers were forced to abandon their farms and some were killed.

Jenrich stresses that if similar initiatives had been taken two years earlier, it certainly would have had a good chance of becoming a success. It would have become a more widespread way of handling the land issue. The positive atmosphere in the aftermath of the 1998 donor conference would have been a good starting point for this initiative; no comparable plans had been made up to then, however.

He also acknowledges the applicability of an approach like the Karoi initiative in the two countries in the region where the land issue is not developing in a satisfactory way, South Africa and Namibia. Great disparities in land ownership patterns are still present there, despite redistribution measures undertaken by the countries' governments. The great complexity in both countries (for example non-universal land tenure systems and land rights) demand a well-negotiated solution for the provision of access to land to the landless.

4.2.3 A model for land redistribution/resettlement

The Cape Town based *Developmental Service* provides for one of the few models for land redistribution/resettlement (page 41). Kuhnen's criteria can be integrated into this model and the model has got an ongoing character, through the integration of an implementation-monitoring-evaluation-adjustment, also known as the Planning Cycle (De Pater, 1982).

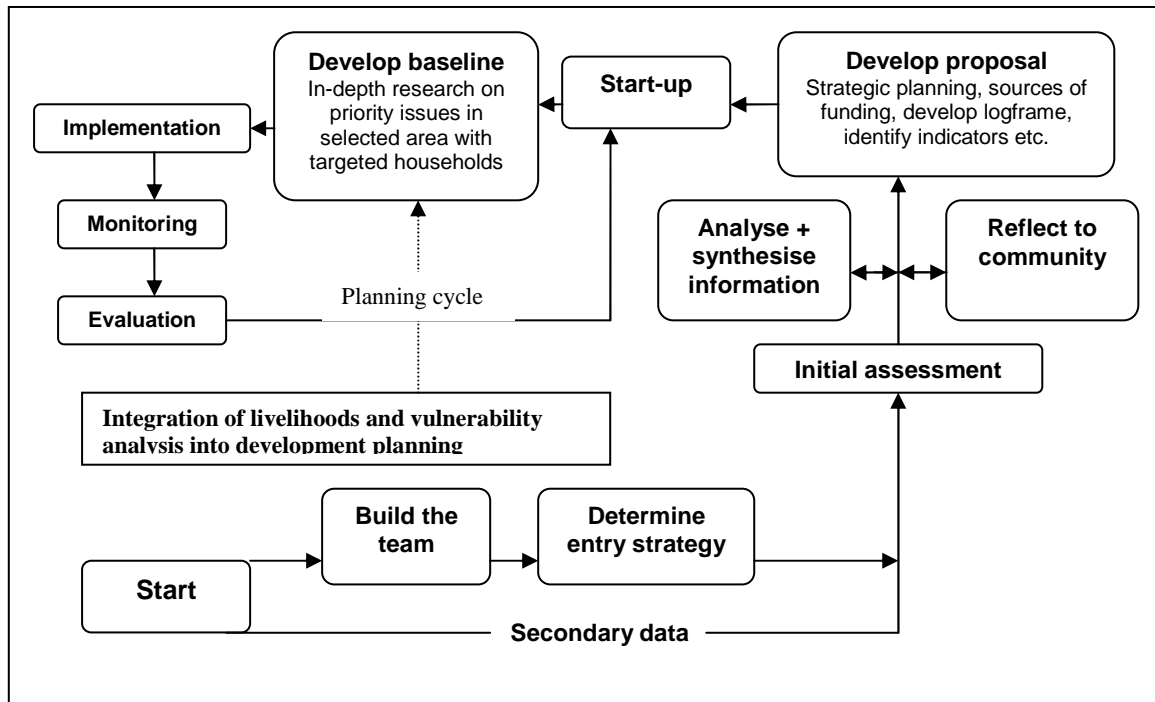


Figure 4.1: The Developmental Service model for sustainable land redistribution and resettlement (www.devserve.co.za).

The model incorporates the in-depth assessment of the needs and the abilities of the potential beneficiaries of resettlement and it encompasses the involvement of comprehensive strategic planning as well as monitoring and evaluation, in order to cater for adjustments in the execution of resettlement.

Review

Although land redistribution plans do not put a great emphasis on the importance of issues like restoring people's dignity, a sense of freedom and self-determination, these complex and sensitive matters can not be neglected, especially in a country where the skew ownership of economic resources, the land in particular, is racially determined.

If a government aims to construct a complementary and integrated process of redistributing land these factors have to be taken into account, as well as regional socio-cultural and environmental varieties. Furthermore, it should also be incorporated into regional development schemes.

A regional land redistribution initiative in Zimbabwe showed that the involvement of a neutral party can offer opportunities. When the (central) government is not the only party in the process, it can become less politicised, whereby a non-governmental organisation can function as an assisting, organising actor. This initiative died prematurely when the farm invasions of the year 2000 took place.

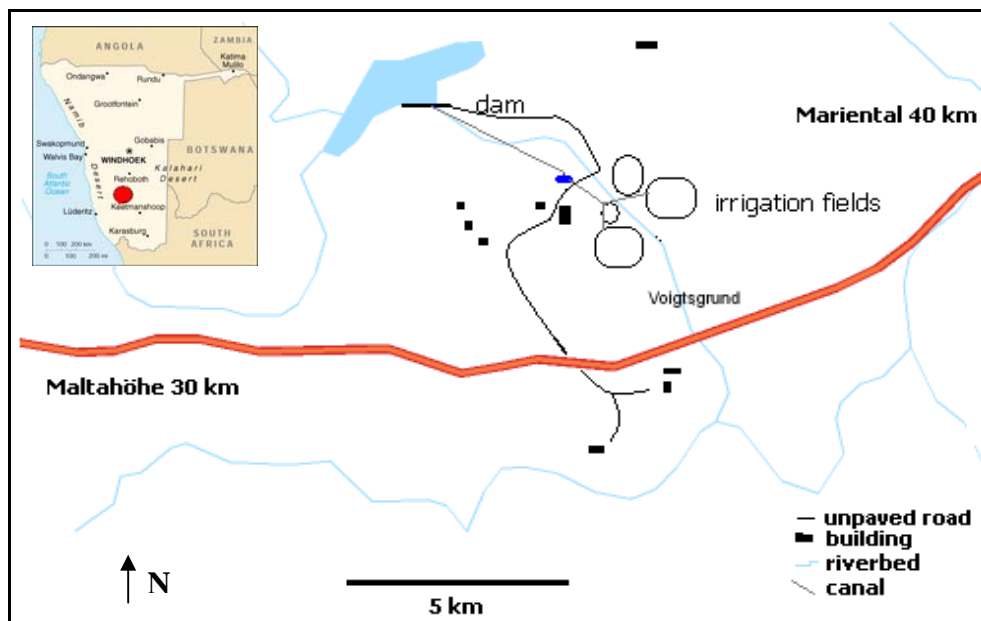
5 Analysis

This analysing chapter contains the interviews that were held with inhabitants of both resettlement areas and with other experts dealing with land reform. The first part focuses on the Voigtsgrund area in Hardap region, after which the dealings of settlers on the Excelsior farm in Oshikoto region are discussed. The chapter is concluded by the interviews that were held with experts.

5.1 Voigtsgrund

Voigtsgrund farm was established in 1906 when Albert Voigts' settler family bought a 20.000 hectare piece of land in the semi-arid South of Namibia. The family established the largest dam of South-West Africa in the Tsub River and connected irrigation fields to it. Corn and fruits were grown on the farm for decades; A Mariental resident told that in the 1960's a truck loaded with oranges left the farm every day.

In 1978 Voigtsgrund was sold to the then Karas Administration for the enlargement of the Nama homeland as determined in the Odendaal plans (see chapter 1). At independence the farm was transferred to the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation for the purpose of resettlement. During the second half of the 1990's a number of previously disadvantaged families was settled on Voigtsgrund.



Map 5.1: Map of Voigtsgrund resettlement farm (basic map taken from www.multimap.com).

5.1.1 Regional representative of the MLR

Mr. Engelbrecht is the regional representative of the Ministry of Lands. He has been in this function for the past five years. Due to incompleteness in the files he can only give some general features of Voigtsgrund resettlement area.

The area measures 11,000 hectares used for extensive livestock grazing. The dam-fed irrigation fields are partially still in use. Twelve families have been resettled on Voigtsgrund, half of which are part-time farmers residing in Mariental and Maltahöhe, where they have other activities. Furthermore the farm has not been subdivided into individual smallholdings but the settlers are farming in a communal setting. The regional office is working on updating the settlers' documents of ownership. They will receive permission of ownership (PTO) documents in the near future. Lease agreements will be met later.

The ministry and the Hardap Regional Council anticipate on expanding crop farming on Voigtsgrund in the future. No further developments are taking place at this stage, except for monitoring the area to prevent overuse of the grounds, which is a serious threat. The determined numbers of 1500 small stock and 250 pieces of cattle are not to be exceeded.

5.1.2 Mr. Diergaardt Jr, neighbour farmer of Voigtsgrund

Mister Diergaardt Senior bought a 7300 hectare part of the Voigtsgrund farm from the first Government in 1990, the other part of the farm was later used for resettlement. Diergaardt belongs to one of the previously disadvantaged groups, i.e. the so-called Coloureds.

Diergaardt praises farming conditions on his farm: The Tsub river bed runs through his land, causing a good level of vegetation. The family, consisting of Mister and Miss Diergaardt Senior, Junior and a grandson can make a living off the land. The family watches that the number of 1100 goats is not exceeded, a precondition for maintaining the favourable farming conditions.

The family does not have much to do with the resettled families that live on the other side of the Mariental-Maltahöhe road. One family also lives south of this road; the members of this family sometimes work for Diergaardt when he is very busy. This family, which was not willing to be interviewed, lives in the old dwelling house near the river bed. The family, consisting of about eight persons, owns some goats for their own consumption. The head of the family receives a pension from the government which is their source of income.

In exchange for the family's work, Diergaardt sometimes does emergency reparations on the house the family is living in. The factual owner of the house (the Ministry) never shows any interest in maintaining the buildings.

For further information about the settlers Mister Diergaardt advises to go and speak to “Opperhoof” (headman) Swartbooi, who functions as the leader of the settler community.

5.1.3 Frederik Swartbooi

After losing his job as a caretaker at Maltahöhe Primary School, Mr. Swartbooi applied for resettlement at the Ministry. His request was accepted and the entire Nama family moved to Voigtsgrund in 1999. Nowadays his three children live and work in Mariental, Walvis Bay and Windhoek, where their children go to school. Three of his grandchildren, who finished secondary school, his wife, father-in-law (who is believed to be 95 years old) and brother-in-law are permanently living at Voigtsgrund.

Besides watching the goats of the occupants that live in the nearby towns, the Swartboois are engaged in small-scale crop farming in the fenced irrigation garden that is still in use, maize and onions are the most important produce in the garden which is just enough to feed the family, additional feeding is provided by the few goats the family owns and the grandsons’ fishing activities in the dam. The garden is shared with the other settlers, but they do not show a great interest in crop farming.



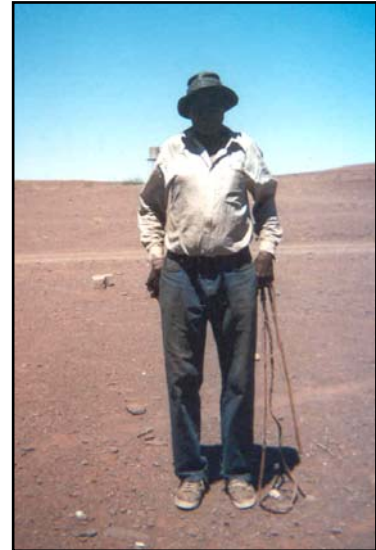
Picture 5.1: A small part of the irrigation gardens is still in use (picture by author).

Producing food is hampered by baboons that enter the garden at a spot where a falling tree has ruined the fence, it is estimated that around 200 baboons are living in the riverbed. Swartbooi complained at the Ministry’s office, and he was promised to receive rifles to scare/shoot the maize-robbers. No rifles have arrived so far.

The settlers are deprived of the means to do necessary repairs: they are not able to move the fallen tree and re-erect the fence. There is one tractor in the old shed, but it has been out of order as long as the family lives on the farm. Swartbooi is disappointed about lacking support from the government, for example because he never received the vegetable seeds that he was promised repeatedly in the past few years.

The family has official documents which allow them to farm on the land, but no use has been made of credit facilities to do investments to increase production. There are no concrete plans to do so in the near future.

When Frederik Swartbooi gets too old to farm, one of his children will move to Voigtsgrund to take care of him and to take over his farming activities. When he dies he wants to be buried at the existing graveyard across the road: The land was given to them by the government and his family worked the land for years already, so it is their land.



Picture 5.2: Proud farmer Swartbooi on his land (picture by author).

5.1.4 Stephanus Swartbooi

Stephanus is the grandson of the headman Frederik Swartbooi. He moved to Voigtsgrund in 2000 when he had finished secondary school in Maltahöhe, where he lived with his mother up to then. He moved to Voigtsgrund because the chance of getting a job was considered to be very small.

Nowadays most work is being done in the garden, but another important activity he is engaged in is fishing in the farm's dam; together with his two brothers and another settler he is engaged in the catching of barbel (catfish) and next to eating the fish, they sell the produce to a shop in Maltahöhe and sometimes to a tradesman in Mariental. A disadvantage of living on Voigtsgrund is the distance to the towns and the absence of transportation; when they want to go to a shop or take away the fish they have to walk for an hour and then get a ride from a passing motorist on the Mariental-Maltahöhe highway.



Figure 5.3: The Voigtsgrund fishermen with a day's catch (picture by author).

The money they earn is spent on fishing equipment (hooks and lines) and on groceries. The yield of the fishing has risen the last year because they were given a boat and life-jackets by the Ministry of Lands, a gesture the young men are really grateful for.

Swartbooi Junior estimates that the yields of fishing will not increase much; he acknowledges the danger of overusing the lake. The production of the garden should increase the coming period so that they really have enough to feed themselves. Expanding their herd of goats also is an option.

If he could get a job in one of the towns he would certainly accept it, but he would want to return to Voigtsgrund when he gets old. His brothers agree to this. Stephanus also hopes that his future children will grow up here.

5.1.5 Mr. da Costa

Mister da Costa is a 60-year old Ovambo man of Portuguese-Angolan ancestry. His family was resettled on Voigtsgrund in 1998, after he lost his job as a farm worker on a farm 80 kilometers north of Mariental where he had worked for over 35 years. He received 50 goats at his dismissal, but he did not have any land to graze the animals. With some help from the SWAPO-party office he wrote a request to be resettled, which was accepted. He now lives in a model resettlement house, a prefabricated polyester house. His wife and some of his grandchildren are still living in Mariental, because the children need to go to school. His children are working in Cape Town, Walvis Bay and Windhoek.

The past years Mr. da Costa has had about 25 goats, which are predominantly used for his own consumption, he occasionally sells a few goats to tradesmen that come by. He might increase the number of goats the coming years. His neighbours sometimes give him some fish to eat.

He once bought some seeds to plant in the garden, but another settler, who lives in Mariental permanently, told him not to do so because the garden was not part of Mr. da Costa's property. This person does not even use his part of the garden.

Mr. da Costa also has two neighbours, a Nama woman and her mother-in-law. Their husbands live near Mariental where they have got employment as farm workers. The women, who did not want to participate in an interview, have a few goats for personal consumption.

When Da Costa gets too old to work on his land one of his children will come and take care of him and the goats. Mr. da Costa is very happy at Voigtsgrund and just like his neighbour Swartbooi he wants to be buried there after his death.

5.1.6 Simon Nangolo

Simon Nangolo is the fourth Voigtsgrund fisherman next to the Swartbooi brothers. His grandfather was resettled in 1997 after giving up his job as a farm worker. In the meantime his uncle has taken over the farm and his grandfather has moved to Mariental, which was more comfortable, because the shops are much closer.

Simon and his uncle moved to Voigtsgrund in 2001 when his uncle lost his job in the Tsumeb copper mine. Together with his uncle, Simon has about 150 goats, nowadays. The goats are for their own consumption as well as for trade. They are not engaged in crop farming in the irrigation gardens, they live on the other side of the lake.

Thanks to the boat that the fishermen were given last year the production has increased considerably but a further increase is not to be expected, nor from gardening or the goats.

If he were offered a job, Simon would certainly accept, but he would like to come back to Voigtsgrund when he gets old. He also hopes his future children will grow up here.

5.1.7 Images from Voigtsgrund

The interviews with the settlers included their development on Voigtsgrund, their goals of farming on Voigtsgrund and their prospects. Their perceptions are now joined by some visual observations on Voigtsgrund.

The first thought that comes to mind when visiting the farm is the oasis-like situation this place must have been in more prosperous times. An extensive water guiding system that is attached to the dam (pictures 5.5, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10) leads to tens of hectares of irrigation fields, of which one garden of maybe half a hectare is still in use (and harassed by baboons, read par. 5.3).

Large corn-storage facilities in the old barn, the dehydrated date palms (picture 5.4) in the former fruit gardens and the once dignified farmhouse are indicators of different times.

The farm has been underutilised (neglected) from the acquisition by the Karas administration in 1978 until the arrival of the new settlers in 1997, a 20 years' period in which the production facilities were neglected. Observations and the interviews show that the settlers have not been able to restore a significant part of the farm's potential, apart from extensive small stock farming on the surrounding rangelands. Neither settlers nor government institutions have been able to redevelop Voigtsgrund to any extent.



Picture 5.4: Dehydrated date palms in the former fruit garden (picture: author).



Picture 5.5: The valve that feeds the irrigation system (picture: author).



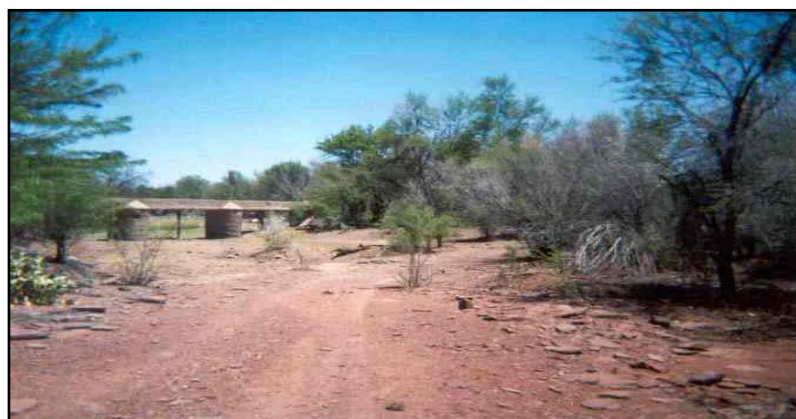
Picture 5.6: One of the resettlement houses (picture by author).



Picture 5.7: The old farmhouse and adjacent sheds (picture by author).



Picture 5.8: Some goats along the canal that feeds the irrigation scheme (picture by author).



Picture 5.9: Irrigation canal crossing the dammed river bed (picture by author).



Picture 5.10: Water intake of irrigation fields in the background (picture by author).

5.2 Excelsior

Excelsior is situated 35 kilometres north of Tsumeb and 25 kilometres south of Tsintsabis, where the gate to the communal areas of the North is situated. Climate circumstances are much more favourable here than at Voigtsgrund, about 500 millimetres of rainfall is received annually and vegetation is much denser. Settlement activities took place in 1997, but the Excelsior resettlement project was officially opened in 2000 after the farm (as well as four others) was donated to the government by the late Werner List, the founder of a few great companies (for example Namibia Breweries).

The project was financed by a development organisation of the Spanish embassy, *la coopération espagnole*, and it was officially inaugurated by King Juan Carlos. The project is commonly known as the success story of resettlement in Namibia.

In contrast to Voigtsgrund, Excelsior farm has been subdivided into smallholdings of 500 up to 1350 hectares, on which the beneficiaries are engaged in crop farming and extensive cattle farming, crop farming being the most important activity.

The beneficiaries of the project are working on a 'Food for Work'-basis, meaning that they are provided enough food throughout the year in exchange for a substantial investment of their time in the farming activities. Under this regime the beneficiaries are not paying lease fees. The production of the crop gardens is sold on the market, mostly in Tsumeb. The revenues are used to maintain the project's tractor, machines and to buy diesel.

A further introduction is given by the project's administrator.

5.2.1 Miss H. Amutenya, project administrator

“Meme” Hileni Amutenya has been the project’s administrator for five years now. She has some experience in resettlement; she helped destitute Tswana people that had fled into Botswana return to Namibia.

Miss Amutenya explains that most families that are now living here used to be employed as farm workers on Excelsior before it was sold to the government. So an important goal of resettlement is achieved here; ex-farm workers are given access to land for making a living and becoming independent.

Next to making sure the produce of the gardens is sold, an important role of the administrator is to prevent overgrazing

of the smallholdings; most of them contain a small number

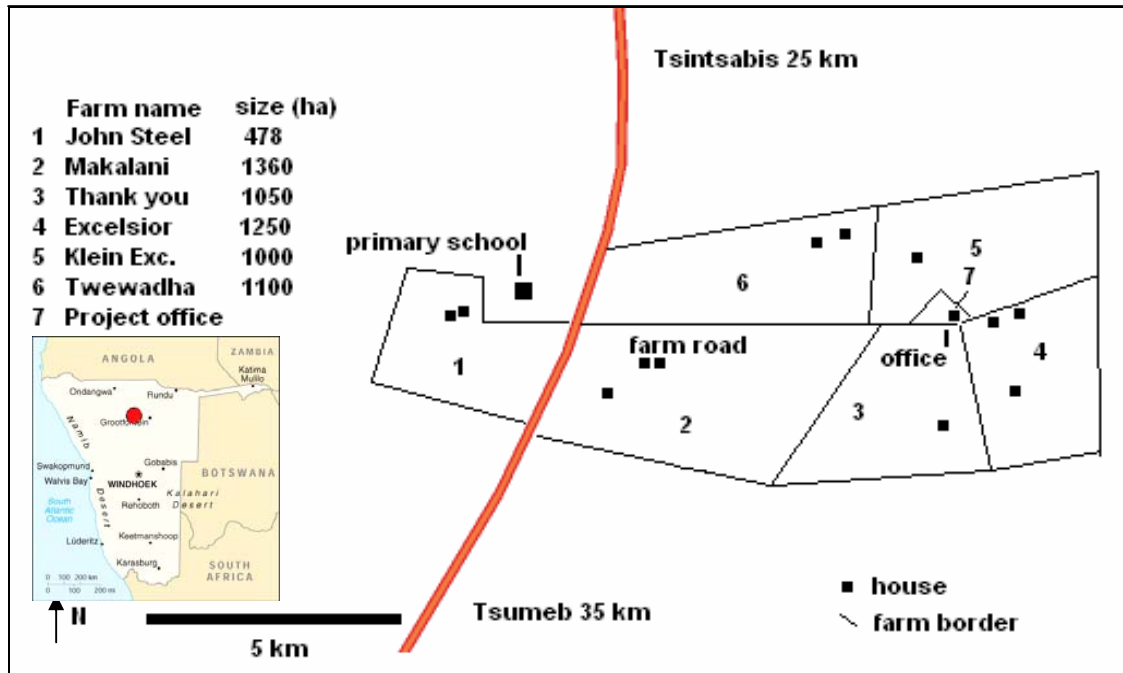
of cattle. This number is not to be exceeded because degradation of the soil is a serious threat on smallholdings like Excelsior’s.

The marketing of the products of the gardens has not been easy the past two years. The pick-up truck that was provided at the start of the project broke down two years ago and it has been at the workshop in Tsumeb ever since. The office of the Ministry would take care of the repair but this does not seem to have worked out so the families have to hitchhike their way to the Tsumeb market to sell their produce. Since the central selling of the produce stopped, the families keep the money of their sales themselves to buy food, clothing et cetera.

Another development has been the informal settlement around the school that was built when the project started. The school has a very good reputation for the past years, which has resulted in the informal settlement, mainly in small huts, of many children and some parents, predominantly from Tsumeb. The school has got about 130 learners now, about 55 children are inhabitants of the project. The settlement of the other people does not have an influence on the project’s activities.



Picture 5.11: The project’s entrance (picture by author).



Map 5.2: Map of Excelsior resettlement project. (based on map from www.multimap.com).

5.2.2 Elias Awaseb

Elias Awaseb is living on the 1250 hectare Excelsior smallholding together with his sister's family. Their father has worked for many years on the previous Excelsior farm before Namibia's independence. The Awasebs are members of the San community, also known as Bushmen. Elias' family consists of himself, his wife and four children. The Awaseb family owns 13 pieces of cattle, about 40 small stock animals and some chickens, but the vegetable garden is their vegetable garden. Their most important products are onions, spinach, carrots and pumpkins which grow in the garden of



Picture 5.12: Awaseb's cattle (picture by author).

approximately two hectares. Thanks to pretty good rainfall and additional water from the borehole, farming circumstances have been good the past years. The only negative aspect is that sometimes, when they run out of diesel, they have to wait for a few weeks before a fuel delivery takes place. Elias is responsible for the maintenance of the tractor, he received training to expand the technical knowledge he had acquired working on the commercial farm before 1991. He says he fulfils this responsibility quite well as the tractor is in good condition.

Although they have got proper ownership certificates, no use has been made yet of credit facilities yet, because no investments have been necessary yet. Awaseb and his family are very happy, they are independent and they have enough to eat, they can pay for school fees, school uniforms et cetera. He hopes he can stay here for the rest of his life.

5.2.3 Mr Ketro

The Ketro family has farmed on the Makalani-smallholding since the start of the project. The San family consists of Mr and Mrs Ketro and their eight children. The family has a long history on Excelsior, Mr Ketro's grandfather already worked on Excelsior many years ago. Mr Ketro farms on Makalani together with his brother's family and another family. During the conversation the oldest son is functioning as an interpreter, since his father does not speak Afrikaans or English. The son is starting his final year on the Tsumeb Secondary School, after which he would like to the University of Namibia, but he does not know whether he will have the possibilities yet.

The family has a big garden in which they produce onions, tomatoes and pumpkins. The revenue from selling the produce enables them to pay school fees, uniforms and additional food. They only have a small number of small stock and cattle for their consumption. Saving money enabled them to extend their house. No loans have been taken by the family.

The family has a strong feeling it is their land now, because it worked on it for many, many years now, and Mr Ketro hopes some of his children will stay on the farm and take over the work. Ketro Junior expects to search for a job after finishing school, maybe University will not be a possibility.



Picture 5.13: The Ketro family on their property and the project's tractor (picture by author).

5.2.4 Miss Urikos

Christine Urikos shares the relatively small 'John Steel'-plot with the family of Mr Sixpence, both Damara families who were living and working on the farm before the project. She lives in a house with her five children and her sister and her sister's daughter. Her husband is working on a nearby farm to generate some extra income.

The Urikos family has a few cows and some chickens. They have a great vegetable garden in which they grow maize, onions and pumpkins, which she sells in Tsumeb twice a week. The gardening is not easy because the soil contains a lot of rocks and sometimes the borehole does not provide sufficient water for the large families (and the settlers near the school!) and the garden. She would like it if a borehole were realised at the school and if the school's electricity were extended to her house, a distance of only 50 meters.

Maybe the Urikos will use the credit possibilities to extend their house, which is too small now. In general the family is very happy at Excelsior, they have sufficient food all children can go to school. When the children (2-10 years old) grow up they will probably find a job somewhere and one or two will help her at Excelsior when she gets old.

5.2.5 Mister Sixpence

Mr Tigi Sixpence's family also has a history of farming on Excelsior, his father worked on the farm for a long time before it was subdivided. His father now lives in Tsumeb. Together with the Urikos the Sixpence family has a large vegetable garden on the John Steel-smallholding where most of the work is done. His large family of nine children can live off the farm easily and they are very happy. In the near future he hopes to attach a few rooms to the house (picture 5.13) because there is not enough room for all the children. They have to save some money first. Maybe the family will take a loan.



Picture 5.13: The Urikos and Sixpence families in front of the project's houses (picture by author).

There will not be enough work for all children to stay on Excelsior in the future, they will look for a job in Tsumeb or Windhoek and some of them will certainly return to the family's property to take over the vegetable production.

5.2.6 Observations on Excelsior Resettlement project

The first thing that comes to mind visiting the settlers on Excelsior is that quite some planning must have been involved. All the families have got identical houses; all smallholdings (as well as all the gardens) are properly fenced off and have their own borehole. The gardens are used intensively (very tasty tomatoes) and the farmers seem very committed.

The initial Food for Work-structure does not seem entirely intact. The families sell their produce on the Tsumeb market and it remains unclear what the project's financial household looks like. The settler families are self-supporting but the investments that have been done by the Spanish co-operation do not seem to generate repayments. This is not a very big priority of the resettlement policy, however.

5.3 Objectives and achievements

The two resettlement schemes were visited in order to obtain information about the settlers' perceptions and achievements. The two schemes were picked at random, one of the two is known as a success story. There are no signs that circumstances are much better or much worse on other resettlement schemes than those that were visited. The outcomes of these two resettlement schemes cannot be extrapolated and lead to hard conclusions about the whole process of resettlement, but some indicators can be identified.

The conversations with members of settler communities have provided quite some information on their perceptions of their achievements, their thoughts about government support and self-supportiveness. This information is now joined with the objectives as formulated in the 1998 Resettlement Policy.

The six objectives as formulated in the National Resettlement Policy, mentioned in chapter 1.6, are now evaluated in a table. For all objectives, a positive or negative judgement has been given for the extent to which the achievements are similar to the objectives. The judgements are derived from the interviews and observations that have been outlined earlier in this chapter.

Objectives	Achievements	
	Voigtsgrund	Excelsior
Redress past imbalances in the distribution of natural resources, particularly land.	People from previously disadvantaged communities have been allocated land. +	People from previously disadvantaged communities have been allocated land. +
Give an opportunity to the target groups to produce their own food with a view towards self-sufficiency.	Low food production, hardly reaching subsistence level, much higher potential. -	Food production, exceeding subsistence level. +
To bring small-holder farmers into the mainstream of the Namibian economy by Producing for the open market and to Contribute to the country's GDP.	Apart from the fishing, no production for the open market. -	Sales of produce for the open market, generating income. +
To create employment through farming and other income generating activities.	No employment creation. Some settlers employed elsewhere. -	No further employment creation. All settlers active in project. 0
To offer an opportunity to citizens to Reintegrate into society after many years of displacement by colonisation process, war and other circumstances.	Beneficiaries did not become more active in society, neither socially nor economically -	Beneficiaries involved in economic production and project management. +
To alleviate human and livestock pressure in communal areas.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Achievements according to objectives?	No	Yes

Table 5.1: Objectives and achievements.

The first objective is not very useful; In the Namibian context, resettlement *is* redistribution, so in the analysis a negative score at this point is not possible. The final objective of alleviating human and livestock pressure in the communal areas is not applicable since none of the respondents in the research was from these areas.

There is a big difference between the achievements on the exclusively government-planned Voigtsgrund scheme and the inclusive, comprehensive NGO-negotiated and –constructed Excelsior. On the basis of the investigations on these two resettlement schemes we can say that a comprehensive approach towards the construction of resettlement areas is more successful than a resettlement which is executed exclusively by the Ministry without involving other parties, a conclusion shared by Blackie et al. (1999).

5.4 Other interviews

In order to get a fuller understanding of the complex land issue, interviews were held with a NAU executive, a former deputy-minister and three white commercial farmers, the latter also serving as a reference to the resettlers' perceptions.

5.4.1 Mr Horsthemke

Oliver Horsthemke is an agricultural economist working for the NAU, the union of commercial (mainly white) farmers. Non-white commercial farmers have set up their own union, the NNFU. Mr Horsthemke was a member of the Permanent Technical Team on land reform, which was induced by the government in order to gain information and advice on the technical execution of the land redistribution that has been going on. For this purpose he visited resettlement projects in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Brazil, especially in this last country he saw some positive examples of resettlement.

In Namibia, the resettlement is often less successful. For his work for the Permanent Technical Team he visited some resettlement areas and there were some places where the Team was asked if they had a job for the people, because they had no money and nothing to eat. Many people told them they did not have a history of agricultural activities. When they applied to be resettled, many of them thought they were offered a job.

He also spoke to groups of farm workers and many of them told him they did not feel the urge to own their own land and live from the harvest from it; they preferred the wage payments from their boss and the privileges of owning some livestock and living on their employer's premises.

Another issue is tenure security. Beneficiaries often receive a document which says they are entitled to occupy the land but it does not say that it is their land. People do not have access to credit, and considering the notion that these people do not have a lot of money, investments will not take place on a large scale, which could mean a slow-down of development.

According to Horsthemke, a critical assessment should be executed to find out how many people are suitable and motivated to be resettled. They should be asked about their abilities and the circumstances under which they want to be resettled. There are cases where beneficiaries do not get along with each other because they are from different ethnic groups. This can lead to trouble like low productivity, for example if the owners of smallholdings have to share a borehole which is located on one smallholding.

The NAU would be very happy to assist in finding a sustainable solution to the lands discussion. The assessment should clarify the real size of the demand for land for the benefit of resettlement, as well as the regional distribution of the demand. The NAU acknowledges the need for

redistribution of economic resources and a comprehensive assessment of the real needs would be a good starting point for negotiations with the Agricultural Union.

Horsthemke emphasises that owning a farm in Namibia will not make you a rich man. Farming conditions are quite harsh and the costs have risen strongly the past years. Many farmers have managed to survive by diversifying their activities, for example setting up game hunting activities. Another important issue in providing for access to land is the creation of tenure security for farmers in the North. The fast-growing population in the communal areas, especially the former Ovamboland, is putting a growing pressure on the land in these areas. Some of the local, powerful leaders own a few thousand pieces of cattle, chasing away the less powerful far into the Kavango-area. Government has instigated Land Boards to provide for co-ordination of the land-use in communal areas, but the same powerful farmers are often member of these Land Boards. Government and everybody else should realise that agriculture is a major player in the national economy of Namibia. Many rural communities are depending on the agricultural production of (often white-owned) farms. A fast-track land reform could ruin big parts of the rural economy. Zimbabwe is a very obvious example. Luckily the Government seems to realise that it should not follow President Mugabe's example. He showed that land reform can be good politics but bad economics.

The best would be if there were a neutral platform on which Government, Agricultural Unions, farm workers' organisations and other stakeholders could bring to the table their demands and preferences. All stakeholders could meet on a regular basis so that the plans dealing with land reform could be adapted continuously and transparently. It is of paramount importance that the process keeps on evolving, the train must keep on going, a standstill can cause instabilities.

5.4.2 Professor Töttemeyer

Prof. Töttemeyer is the son of a missionary family which was based in the North of Namibia. He has been a SWAPO-member and deputy-minister of Finance. He describes the changes that are going on in the communal areas that are a threat to socio-economic circumstances and food security. Agricultural production is under pressure here for different reasons:

- Privatisation of services: After the abandonment of State tractor rentals the prices for renting production equipment have risen some 300%. This is a serious threat to small and medium scale crop farming in the communal areas.
- The phenomenon of "extended families" puts a pressure on food security and efficiency; families that do not have an income or land depend on their family, and the use of pastures is inherited by ever-growing families.

Another development that Töttemeyer points at is a growing wage-orientation of people in the North. The traditional leaders are receiving remuneration for their land managing activities and many people engage in, predominantly temporary, migration to Windhoek and Walvis Bay to find a job. These are signs that the communities in the North are ‘modernising’, while land use and ownership are still organised in traditional ways, based on customary rights.

He furthermore emphasises the importance of dealing with different preferences and abilities that different categories of people can have. As an example he mentions the Aussenkehr fruit farms on the southern border along the Orange River. Sixty percent of the labourers on these farmers are from the Kavango region (1500 kilometres from home), while the southern region is mainly inhabited by the Nama who have a semi-nomadic tradition.

These considerations should be taken into account in the design of the land redistributions.

Obviously, land reform and regional development should be closely interrelated. Töttemeyer proposes the establishment of growth points of rural development. An example is the development of fresh water fish farms in the Kavango and Ovambo regions, a development initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture, but not incorporated in any vision of developing the northern areas.

5.4.3 Danie Steyn, ex-commercial farmer in the Gobabis District

In 1980 Mr Steyn bought his farm near Gobabis (Omaheke region) for 30 Rands per hectare, nineteen years later he sold the property for 250 Rands per hectare. He decided to focus on expanding his business of producing mineral-enriched cattle feed, for which he even has customers across the border in Botswana. His small factory is situated on the 210 hectare plot “Wegbreek”, which he bought when he sold his farm. Seven men are currently employed by Steyn, one family is living on the premises, the others live in Gobabis.

Mr Steyn understands that redistributing some wealth to people who have been disadvantaged in the past is a good idea, but it should be done in a way so that production stays on an efficient, i.e. high, level, otherwise everybody will get poorer in the future. Under the current land prices you have to produce at the maximum level to even fulfil your mortgage payments.

Mister Steyn has the opinion that people from the previously disadvantaged groups do not have sufficient knowledge or the right mentality to use commercial agricultural land in a productive way; a nearby farm was sold to a Herero-speaking man some years ago, a well-equipped 26,000 hectare farm that can carry about 2000 pieces of cattle. The current owner, who bought the farm under the AALS, has got about 100 pieces of cattle on the land, and the small number of cattle is not growing very fast. Mr Steyn once asked him why he did not expand the number of animals or

feed the animals better, the new farmer replied by stating that nature would take care of the growth of the animals and his herd. Obviously, this man is not using the land in a productive way.

The new farmers should be extensively trained in agricultural skills as well as in managing a business in an economically healthy way, this would be real empowerment. After the training they could be resettled on smallholdings. The government should also look at developing smallholdings on underutilised land in the former Hereroland and in the communal North.

5.4.4 Nico Pretorius

Mister Pretorius is the owner of the metal processing company Swachrome in Windhoek. The profitability of his company enabled him to extend his farm, 150 kilometres north of the capital, to a 21,000 hectare property. This size is necessary to exploit a commercial farm under the current conditions. His two sons will take over the farm when he retires.

Ten families of farm workers are permanently living on the farm, consisting of about forty persons.

Pretorius has about 1300 pieces of cattle on his rangelands and he carefully watches that this number is not exceeded. The efficient use of the lands is achieved by maintaining the right level of extensive grazing.

He also thinks that redistributing land to the black people is absolutely necessary. Having some land makes you feel good; it gives a sense of wealth. Land redistribution has to be managed very well, because maintaining productivity is of prime importance to the national economy.

5.4.5 Riaan Laubscher

Mr Laubscher is a part time commercial farmer and financial and investment advisor with his own firm in Windhoek. On his cattle farm, that is situated about 70 kilometres outside Windhoek, seven families are employed. The families live permanently on his farm.

Rising costs and lower export prices (caused by the high value of the Rand) have not made cattle farming very profitable the past years, let alone if you start farming at the current land prices.

Laubscher explains that many white people think the ability to run a farm productively is a matter of skin colour, a great misconception. The groups that were suppressed during the apartheid era just are culturally different from the white group, resulting in different ways of land use and other perceptions of farming. Therefore, the productivity argument can not be an absolute condition for land redistribution.

However, settlers should receive some training so that they are able to reach the goals that are set for resettlement. A problem for land reform is that the Namibian government does not have a lot of money, and the land is more expensive than ever. The favourable conditions of the Affirmative Action loan scheme put a lot of pressure on the land prices. Under the current circumstances, the government is being part of the market, it should try to organise the market. Every person seems to want some land in Namibia. Laubscher believes this is something deeply enclosed in peoples' souls and a form of security; if you lose your job or you are out of money, your land will always provide something to eat.

6 Conclusions

The process of land redistribution, commonly known as land reform, can hardly be judged a good or a bad process. The issue of transferring land to previously disadvantaged categories of the community is such a complex matter so no simple answers can be given. However, when historical, economical and socio-cultural components of the context of land redistribution are well-considered, some judgements can be made on how the process is developing in Namibia. In these judgements, the limitations of this research are acknowledged; the outcomes of the interviews that were held in the two resettlement areas can not be considered to be generally applicable, but some judgements are derived from it.

Firstly, the research questions from chapter 2 are answered, taking in account their limitations. After that some recommendations are given how the implementation of the land redistribution process, resettlement in particular, can be improved.

6.1 Answers to the research questions

The goals that have been set in the Resettlement Policy do not always correspond to the actual circumstances and developments that were found in the resettlement areas. Differences in circumstances between the schemes were large. The research questions from chapter 2.1 are answered now, taking in account the complex nature of the issue and the limitations of this research.

6.1.1 What goals for socio-economic improvement have been set for the beneficiaries of resettlement in Government policies and publications?

-In the 2001 Resettlement Policy the objectives of redistributing land to previously disadvantaged citizens mainly have an economical character: The central goals are self-sufficient food production, bringing small-holder farmers in the mainstream of the Namibian economy and creating employment. The argument that is not of an economic kind is that people who have been displaced by the colonisation process or the liberation war should be given an opportunity to reintegrate into society through the provision of land.

6.1.2 What socio-economic development did the beneficiaries experience since their resettlement?

-On Voigtsgrund no obvious positive developments were observed; the settlers barely had enough to eat, there were no food supplies and no improvements in living conditions could be

observed. Some settlers live in the nearby towns because they have employment there. Although the settlers clearly had a sense of pride being farmers, the negative developments which are not in line with the Resettlement Policy.

Circumstances were better at Excelsior; machinery and houses were in good condition, some houses had been extended, the beneficiary families had sufficient food supplies throughout the year. The NGO-assisted scheme showed signs of positive development.

The favourable climate circumstances of the northern-situated Excelsior are not the (only) reason for the big difference in socio-economic circumstances between the two resettlement schemes. The project's settlers were equipped with well-developed infrastructure (fencing, boreholes, houses) as well as skills (training). Climate circumstances are determining the size of subdivisions, environmental sustainability is to be secured. The project seems well-monitored through the full time presence of the project administrator.

6.1.3 How do beneficiaries of resettlement perceive their new existence, being 'farmers'?

-All settlers were grateful for getting the opportunity to become self-sufficient and to make some money. Pride also plays an important role in the settlers' perception: Whenever they were asked whether they were happy on their farm, the general answer was a proud "yes, very happy!", whereby the arguments of self-determination (freedom), dignity and power can be acknowledged. On Voigtsgrund, farming conditions were perceived very harsh, due to animal hazards and lack of government support to solve this problem. Uncertainties about some settlers' land rights also hamper food production.

The Excelsior farmers are proud of being part of the project, they are producing food for the open market, are well-facilitated and supported and their tenure rights are clear.

The well-planned nature of this resettlement scheme can be said to be the catalyst to an environment in which good production circumstances are experienced.

6.1.4 What can be said about the management of the redistribution process by various government institutions and their co-operation, and what is done with the outcomes of possible evaluations?

-The Ministry of Lands does not seem to co-operate very well with other ministries, despite the acknowledgement of the great importance of the integration into rural development strategies, responsibility of MAWRD. Turning this around, the latter is developing fresh water fish farming initiatives in the North, this could offer opportunities for resettlement, but no integral vision can be discovered.

A Spanish donor/NGO has been assisting actively in the planning of the Excelsior project; various ministries were involved (Lands, Agriculture, Education, Health) in order to construct a coherent, integral execution of the project. Subdivision into smallholdings took place, necessary facilities were realised and the beneficiaries were equipped with skills to become productive farmers. Furthermore, a project administrator is still present to monitor developments and to support the sales of the produce of Excelsior.

Evaluations of resettlement schemes mainly consist of preventing the overuse of rangelands by monitoring the vegetation and the quantity of grazing animals on the fields. This threat of environmental sustainability does not seem to be a problem, a conclusion previously found by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (1999), but contradicted by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics, Natural Resources and Public Administration (2004). In this research no signs of overuse were found.

The social and economical condition of resettlement schemes is not centrally monitored (the Excelsior project administrator reports negative developments to the regional MLRR office). Although these evaluations seem necessary, encounters with ministry officials learned that monitoring the settlers' development is not considered the MLR's duty. The Directorate of Resettlement is responsible for resettling selected beneficiaries, and when they are allocated land the ministry's work is done. This also is an indicator that no integral approach towards resettlement is present.

6.2 Further considerations

In order to formulate some recommendations, some summarising remarks are made on the financial side of land redistribution, the capabilities of government institutions and the factors that cause the urge of redistributing land.

6.2.1 Financial considerations

Resettling people on government-acquired land is very costly. When the beneficiaries are not paying lease fees, which seems to be the case in general, the investments do not generate any returns. Furthermore, the national agricultural production, and so the Gross Domestic Product, could be negatively affected because of different objectives of farming the beneficiaries may have. However, the goal of resettling black people is not to maximise agricultural production, but to reduce imbalances in access to land, and to give people the opportunity to make a living off the land. Maximising agricultural production does not necessarily have to be of prime importance.

The budgetary constraints that hamper the acquisition of sufficient amounts of land can be overcome by the involvement of (foreign) donors. The German government has pledged to support land reform financially, by reparation payments for the atrocities that were committed during German colonial rule. This is a legitimate way to partially reverse the negative effects the colonial era brought, while the burden of investments which do not generate returns is taken off the Namibian government.

6.2.2 Capabilities of government institutions

The conclusion that the lands issue requires an integral approach and the importance of incorporation into regional and rural development plans has been broadly acknowledged in history as well as in government publications like the National Resettlement Policy. Nevertheless, the government has not been able to develop these development plans, nor structure plans how the ministries and regions should co-operate to construct development plans. In the meantime the ministries of Lands and Agriculture each take their own initiatives, which are closely interrelated, but no significant co-operation can be detected.

The realisation of large-scale integration of various institutions policies and activities is a process which requires high institutional capacities. No swift improvements can be expected in this respect, however the acknowledgement of the potential benefits of initiatives for cooperation and integrated approaches could benefit the country.

6.2.3 The urge of redistributing land

Land reform is a sensitive issue; it seems to be the only way to satisfy the people that were affected by the decades of colonial rule. However, some examples have shown that many people would prefer to engage in wage labour, when they reach the age of retirement they would like to settle down on a piece of land.

The real demand for farmland among the target groups has not been examined. Assessing the differences in preferences between cultural groups, peoples' goal of farming, their abilities and expectations could help to adjust the resettlement programme, objectives and achievements could be harmonised to a certain extent.

Redistributing farmland will not be the solution for poverty in Namibia. A thorough examination of peoples' perceptions could help to make well-balanced policy decisions in which monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits can be assessed. But as long as the lands issue remains politically sensitive, rationalising the process could be a great step to take.

6.3 Recommendations

The findings of studying the organisation and the effects of resettlement have resulted in the formulation of some recommendations. Recognising the usefulness of these recommendations could help to adjust the redistribution process so it meets socio-cultural and economic requirements.

6.3.1 Assessment of demand (the need) for land

The identification of emotional motives for the demand for land, differences between preferences of the cultural groups and the assessment of the potential beneficiaries' goals and perceptions of farming can help to construct a realistic land reform programme.

Clarifying non-economical motives (and the acknowledgement of their relevance!) can be a great step in bringing objectives and achievements of land redistribution closer to each other.

6.3.2 NGO involvement/neutral platform

Several examples have shown the positive effect of a regionally co-ordinated resettlement scheme: The Zimbabwe Karoi initiative and the Excelsior resettlement scheme showed promising results. Through these donor-funded organisations the threat of political sensitivity was by-passed, because the Lands ministries were not the leading party in the organisation.

The NAU has been pleading for the introduction of a neutral platform on which all stakeholders can participate in realising a process that is in the general interest, based on regional requirements and possibilities. The government should acknowledge the potential of this kind of organisation, and maybe even facilitate or invite foreign parties to engage in the process. NGO's could also assist in formulating regional development plans, of which resettlement schemes could be a result.

6.3.3 Evaluations

Existing resettlement schemes should be evaluated; The performance of the beneficiaries should be examined and compared to the goals of resettlement. Clear shortcomings in resettlement areas (like on Voigtsgrund) should be signalled and fixed, necessary support must be given so a level of productivity can be maintained.

Implementation of a thorough assessment as mentioned before should result in the formulation of conditions under which resettlement is desired, after which the performance should be measured, so adjustments can be made on a local as well as on the regional and national level.

6.3.4 A model for the design of a comprehensive redistribution programme in Namibia

The aforementioned recommendations can be integrated in a model that has great similarities with the Developmental Services model from chapter 4.2. This model recognises the ongoing character of such a process through the inclusion of shift backs to facilitate adjustments. It also stresses the importance of a large-scale assessment of the needs of the people and regional differentiation of development plans. The most important element of the model, pictured on the next page, is the acknowledgement of the regional community-based design of redistribution which could be applied on a large scale in Namibia, whereby economical, social and environmental sustainability can be fostered.

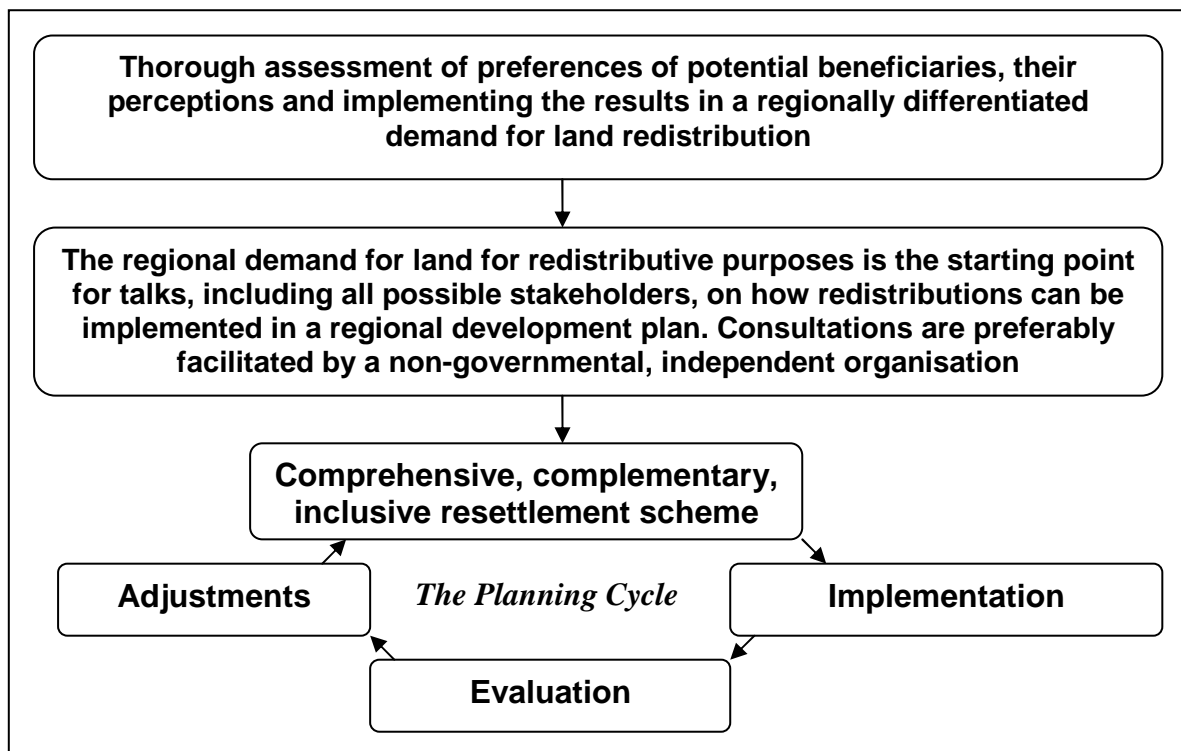


Figure 6.1: A model for the design of an integrated redistributive resettlement program in Namibia.

The implementation of this rational model for land redistribution will not easily be done, but the considerations that have been used in it could help to make balanced policy decisions. But as long as the land issue remains politically sensitive and the government is unable (or unwilling) to create a consensus based on rational considerations, social and economic instability will remain potential threats.

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