



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**FINAL DRAFT NATIONAL
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
POLICY**

MARCH 2012

**MINISTRY OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
HOUSING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

FOREWORD

Since independence, concerted efforts have been devoted towards bridging the gap between rural and urban areas. However, rural development remains a challenge that requires significant improvement to bring the status of the rural areas' living standard close to that of urban areas. Two third of the Namibian population lives in the Rural areas with social and economic exclusion that are in dire needs of social and economic service delivery from the Government and the private sector.

In effort to tackle the situation fairly, the Namibian Government, in consultation with a wide range of Key Stakeholders, is now launching a new stage of and rigorous effort to improve opportunities and well-being for the rural communities. The consultation process includes Policymakers and staff members at the national and local government levels, staff of Non-Governmental Organizations, Research Institutions, Universities, and Donor Agencies, hence a National Rural Development Policy. The Policy would focus on eighteen key challenges identified in rural areas.

In taking this step, the resulting National Rural Development Policy is idealistic in its vision and practical in its focus on mechanisms of implementation and its Policy directives conform to the requirements and meet the priorities defined under the National Developmental Goals (NDP). The purpose of the National Rural Development Policy is to guide rural development practitioners, including service providers and the rural communities, towards the adoption of efficient and effective, equitable and sustainable approaches to rural development, to raise the matter high on the national agenda, and to broaden public perception on the issues involved. It will form the basis of a comprehensive Rural Development National Strategy and Action Plan. It also reflects the priorities defined under the government priorities for the development of Agriculture and Food Security, Reduction of Extreme Poverty as well as protection of the rural environment as in conformity with the high strategic documents of Millennium Development Goals and Vision2030. The Government is

building on experience of the existing rural development programmes, as well as assimilating key lessons from similar efforts worldwide.

The National Rural Development Policy does not seek to replace the existing sectoral Policies governed by various National Institutions, however, it seeks to integrate them and amplify their efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services to the rural communities. The Policy can be considered as having a Complementary Function in relation to Sectoral Policies. It addresses those issues that are not best dealt with at the sectoral level, and that, if they are not addressed, make sectoral actions less effective. The National Rural Development Policy is designed to realize a vision that will attain; *“socially cohesions, stable rural communities with viable institutions, sustainable economies and universal access to social amenities, able to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable people, who are equipped to contribute to growth and development”*.

The implementation of this Policy will use and develop existing institutional, planning, management and funding mechanisms to focus the expenditure of government for efficiency and effectiveness, response to needs and opportunities in rural communities. It is not predicated on additional funding from government, however, reallocation of resources to various programmes and projects may be indispensable and inevitable. Increased Good Governance of the application of public funds in rural areas would create appropriate outputs in the places, where they are most needed. The structures and procedures of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework will provide the mechanism for realizing regional and national budget structures to meet the Policy objectives. Additional funding may be derived from the structures of services delivery relationships that will be established with sources such as the Private Sector, Public-Private Partnerships, Organs of State, Individual Citizens and the Donor Community.

With a proper implementation framework, and an inclusive Monitoring and Evaluation System at all levels of representation, guiding this Policy, I have no doubt that National Objectives engulfed in the National Developmental

Plans (NDPs), the Millenniums Development Goals and Vision 2030 would be attained.



JERRY EKANDJO, MP

**MINISTER OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
HOUSING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community Based-Organization
CDC	Constituency Development Committee
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
MLR	Ministry of Lands and Resettlement
MoHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MRLGHRD	Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NDPs	National Development Plans
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRDC	National Rural Development Council
NRDSSC	National Rural Development Standing Sub-Committee
O/M/As	Offices/Ministries/Agencies
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
RDCC	Regional Development Coordinating Committee
RDTC	Rural Development Technical Committee
RRDMC	Regional Risk and Disaster Management Committee
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNAM	University of Namibia
VDC	Village Development Committee

1. RATIONALE FOR THE NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Rural areas in the Namibian context, refer to all of the countryside other than those Municipalities and Townships proclaimed by the government. These include freehold and State owned communal and resettlement land, which support activities ranging from capital intensive commercial to low-input subsistence farming as well as various forms of conservation area. These rural areas exhibit a diversity of ecological conditions and Natural Resource Endowments, Languages and Cultures, and Human Settlement Patterns, including variable proximity to Urban areas and Markets. Rural areas support a wide range of activities related to Primary Production and Secondary Processing, Trade and Services that serve both rural and urban populations. Rural Development involves strengthening linkages between Rural and Urban Areas for their mutual benefits.

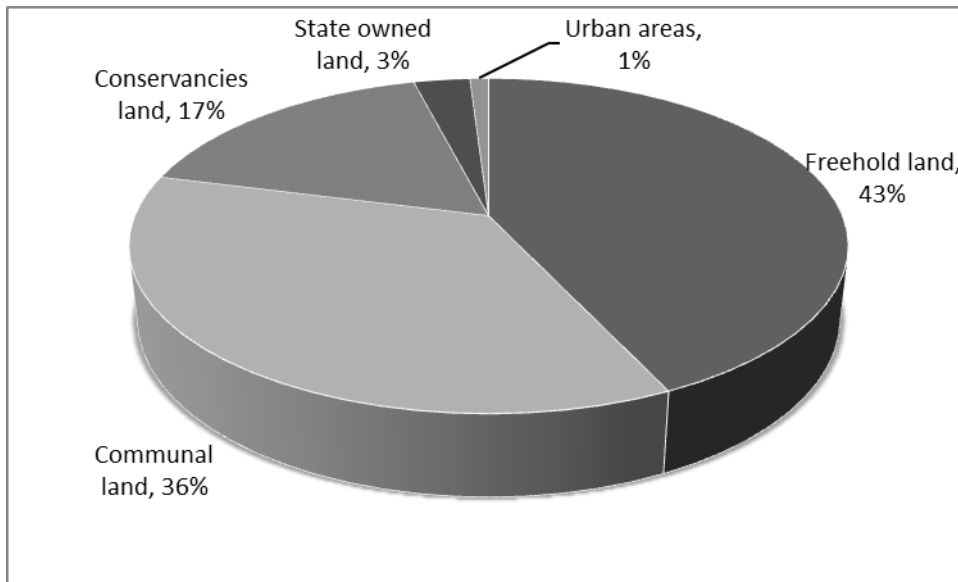
Rural development, therefore, refers to actions, which aim to improve rural people's standards of living by providing basic social and economic services and by creating a political, legal, economic and social environment, which empower them to take charge of their own development. Rural development is complex and an overarching concept covering nearly all Sectors and therefore the National Rural Development Policy is necessary to ensure a systematic coordinated development planning and implementation in order to guide rural development processes and to respond to a variety of situations and issues affecting the lives of the rural populations. The Policy is therefore seeking to integrate sectoral Policies and amplify their efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services to the rural communities.

The current situation of Namibia's rural areas is influenced by the following factors:

1.1. Demographic

The Population Census of 2001, registered some two thirds (67 per cent) of Namibia's population as rural dwellers (down from 72 per cent in 1991). The rural population mainly occupies about 82 per cent of the country's total land area of 824,011 square kilometers as indicated in Figure 1. Farming is the main economic activity in the rural areas. State protected conservation areas make up 17 per cent of the country and urban areas about 1 per cent. Combined with state protected conservation areas which make up 17 per cent of the total land area, Namibia's land area is thus 99 per cent rural.

Figure 1: Types of land tenure in Namibia (Source: NPC; 2001).

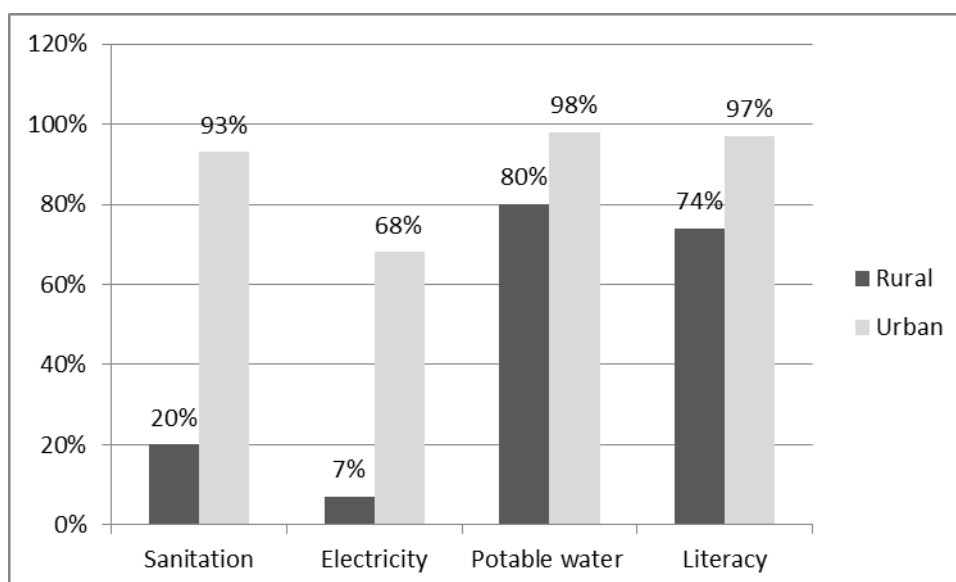


In addition, Namibia has sparse population densities, vast areas and in places poorly developed infrastructure are other reasons for the weak manufacturing base and services in many rural areas.

1.2. Socio-Economic

Development of the rural areas is a major concern of the government of the Republic of Namibia partly, because of its commitment to fight poverty and inequality. Rural residents across the country are worse off in terms of incomes and employment opportunities and access to public services, than their urban counterparts as illustrated in Figure 2. They also spend relatively more on basic needs such as Food, Water, Shelter, Energy, Health, Education and Transport and communications services. The Namibian Household Income and Expenditure Survey, of 2003/04, revealed the information presented in Figure 2, which clearly shows a significant difference in access to public services between rural and urban communities. Rural people have less access to public services compared to their urban counterparts. For example, 80 per cent of rural households did not have access to a toilet as compared to 7 per cent of urban households; 93 per cent of rural households did not have access to electricity compared to 32 per cent of urban households; 20 per cent of rural households did not have access to safe drinking water compared to less than 2 per cent of urban households, while adult literacy was 74 per cent in rural areas and 92 per cent in urban areas.

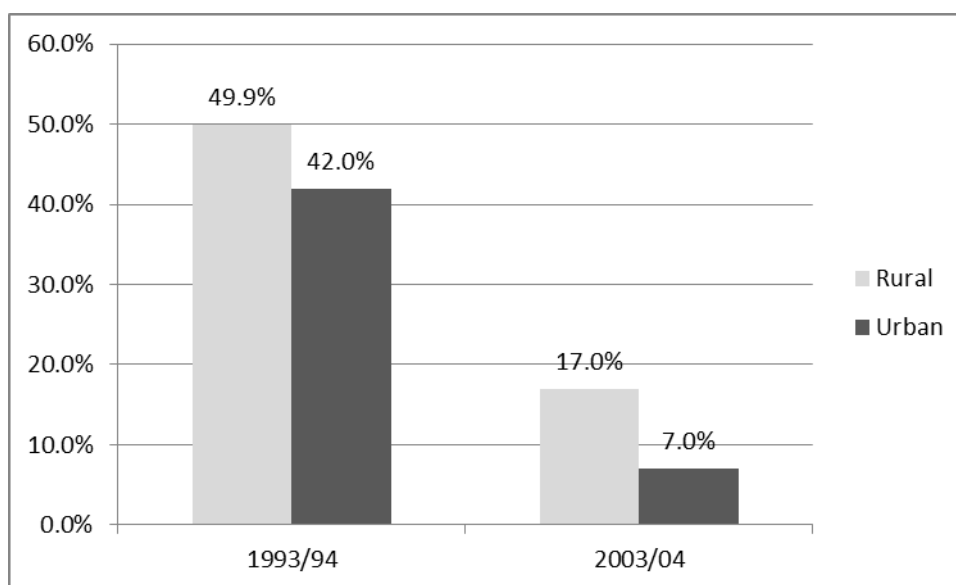
Figure 2: Communities' access to public services



The cost of delivering goods and services, both public and private, to the rural areas is exceptionally high. Partly because of the small numbers of relatively poor rural people they serve, rural markets are small and sometimes uncompetitive. The survey found that 85 per cent of the country's poor people (defined as those living in households that spend 60 per cent or more of their total income on food) lived in rural areas and about 42 per cent of rural residents are poor (compared to only 7 per cent in urban areas, Figure 3)¹. Further, poverty reduction is taking place more slowly in rural areas as compared to urban areas. The number of poor rural people declined by 14.3 per cent from 49 per cent in 1993/94 to 42 per cent in 2003/04, while the number of poor urban people declined by 58.8 per cent from 17 per cent to 7 per cent. The northern regions had the highest incidence of overall poverty and rural poverty; with more than 40 per cent of households being classified as poor in the Kavango, Caprivi and Oshikoto regions. Rural areas are diverse, however, with concentrations of relative prosperity.

¹ According to another measure of poverty used by the Government, the Cost of Basic Needs approach, the incidence of poor households in rural areas was 38.2 per cent compared to 12 per cent in urban areas.

Figure 3: Trend on people living in poverty level (Source: NPC; 2001)



Severe poverty (defined as those living in households that spend more than 80 per cent or more of their total income on food) was being experienced by 6.1 per cent of rural households and 0.6 per cent of urban households in 2003/04². This amounted to some 82,300 rural and 4,350 urban individuals. Although this is about half of the numbers surveyed in 1993/94, the situation is unacceptable in an upper-middle-income country such as Namibia.

Rural poverty remains high with extremes in marginalized areas and amongst certain vulnerable groups such as female and youth headed households. Related to this, rural unemployment and underemployment are increasing, again with extremely high levels amongst women and the youth. About 51% of the Namibian workforce is unemployed. Infant and under-five malnutrition and mortality rates are also unacceptable reflecting problems of Poverty, Nutrition, basic Sanitation and Hygiene, and Housing amongst other things. The main shocks to the livelihoods of the poor that often lead to hunger include crop failure and insufficient Grazing due to Drought, Flooding, Crop and Livestock Pests and Diseases; Environmental Degradation and Crime leading to loss of livestock and crop income; and family member mortality and morbidity leading to loss of labour and farm incomes, employment and pensions. The impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic on household labour resources and income streams is perhaps the major cause of vulnerability currently.

² According to the Cost of Basic Needs approach to poverty, assessment the incidence of severely poor households in rural areas was 19.1 per cent compared to 6 per cent in urban areas.

Apart from being the focus of government's poverty reduction efforts, it is also recognized that rural areas are vital for Namibia's overall development. Considering that they are the location of most Mining, Farming and Tourism activities, it is safe to say that they account for the majority of the country's income generation and foreign exchange earnings, and support the livelihoods of the majority of the population. Given this economic significance, a robust rural economy is necessary to realize the national vision of becoming an industrialized nation by 2030.

Economies generally grow by moving human and capital resources out of the primary Sectors (e.g. Agriculture and Mining) first into the industrial Sector and later into the Services Sector. In Namibia, this process has been distorted by apartheid Policies, which excluded large numbers of rural people from the benefits of growth. For example, infrastructure provision was skewed in favour of the Commercial Farming Areas, as was the Agricultural Marketing System. Commercial Agriculture has followed a more capital-intensive growth path, while agricultural resources in the Communal Areas remain not fully utilized economically. The income-earning potential of communal farmers was suppressed by their exclusion from the commercial land market, and, in the north, by livestock marketing restrictions in the form of the Veterinary Cordon Fence. The cost of living for communal rural people is also generally higher than it need to be, because of lack of access to transport and communications infrastructure, basic amenities such as Water and Electricity, and social services such as Health and Education. Furthermore, this growth path has meant that upstream and downstream industries related to Agriculture in communal areas were hampered in their development, thus depriving people of further opportunities.

Namibia has experienced moderate economic growth since independence. However, growth has mainly taken place in capital and technology intensive industries and has not translated into increased jobs (except in the Public Sector and some service industries). Meanwhile agricultural output and employment have been on the decline.

So far, this Section has described some of the social, economic and other factors characterizing Namibia's rural areas and which form the context of the government's rural development interventions. It is evident that there are numerous instances of market distortion and market failure in terms of economic development and delivery of services to rural people. This means that the role of the State in relation to the Private Sector in fostering development, generating

employment and increasing incomes is of greater importance than it would otherwise be.

The Namibian Vision 2030 is the national strategy to realize the country into an industrialized nation with its people enjoying a high level quality of life. The document has four objectives to ensure the realization of the nation's dream of becoming an industrialized country. Vision 2030 is implemented through a series of successive National Development Plans (NDPs), which highlight the need to support rural development through a range of sectoral Programmes and Projects. The NDPs went further and adopted the Theme: "Accelerated Economic Growth and Deepening Rural Development". The NDP3 includes rural development as one of the main Sub-Sectors under the Goal of Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger. It also recognizes rural development as "a Cross-Cutting issue", stating that "In a real sense, virtually all programmes in the NDPs have some impact on rural development, though obviously some have more than others". It also states that: "while a plethora of policy statements are available to guide rural development practitioners, to date Namibia has no over-arching rural development strategy, based on consolidated and up to date policy statements. Therefore, NDPs aims to address firstly the challenge of developing a National Rural Development Policy and Strategy including promoting mechanisms to coordinate rural development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation at both the national and sub-national levels."

1.3. Political

The Colonial South Africa's homeland Policy deliberately maintained rural poverty at levels that would foster the cheap Migrant Labour System. Families were left at subsistence level, while men worked for meager wages far from their homes. Many urban Namibians today are still essentially migrants working in urban areas and suffer high cost associated with maintaining social and economic ties in far away rural areas. The proportion of rural households' incomes coming from non-rural sources (including remittances and social transfers) is often very high. The consequent interdependence between rural communities and urban areas presents both challenges and opportunities. Other

Colonial Policies also distorted the growth of Commercial Farming. Local markets for Crops, Horticultural and Dairy Products were swamped by cheap South African imports, leaving Namibia to focus on extensive beef and mutton production to supply South Africa's urban markets. Diversification of local production and export

markets, despite notable achievements since independence, remains an opportunity for growth today.

The early post-independence years saw vigorous implementation of Public Policy Reforms aimed at redressing the legacy of inequity between regions and between rural and urban areas that resulted from Colonial and Apartheid Policies. Such Policies include the Agricultural Policy, the Forest Policy, Communal Land Reform Policy, the Environmental Management Policy, Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations and Sanitation Policy.

Significant new public investment went to rural development initiatives in communal areas. However, there has been a decline in the proportion of public funding going to rural development in recent years, for instance in support of Agriculture, Environment, Housing and Tourism services. These budget constraints must be seen in the context of the increasing rural population and the fact that costs of servicing rural areas are higher than those for urban areas.

The SWAPO Party Manifesto 2009 and Guidelines for implementing the SAWPO Party Manifesto outline the intended programme of the Government of the day towards rural development.

1.4. Legal

The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia has provided for protection of fundamental human rights and freedom of the people (Chapter 3) and the promotion of people's welfare (Chapter 11). Article 95 of the Namibian Constitution has made provision for the promotion and maintenance of people's welfare through the adoption of appropriate Policies.

In addition to the Namibian Constitution, there are series of Legislations that support the promotion and maintenance of people's welfare including the Regional Council Act of 1992 as amended, the Traditional Authorities Act, The Forest Act of 2001 and its amendments, the Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007, the Land Reform Act, the Decentralization Enabling Act.

1.5. Environmental

Namibia is a semi-arid country in Sub-Sahara Africa with low rainfall in the south, and high rainfall in the northern part of the country. Its rainfall varies from less than 50mm in the Southwestern coast to 700 mm in the Northeastern parts of the country. This rainfall has

influence on the three main vegetation types which are desert, savannah, and woodlands.

During the colonial era, natural resources, especially Forest and Wildlife have been managed and protected by government and people had no user rights. This resulted in illegal harvesting of wildlife and forest resources and consequently species extinction and deforestation.

The other factors led to land and environmental degradation includes expansion of the population, climate change, uncontrolled human activities, frequent forest fires and increased bush encroachment severely affecting the agricultural production.

Management of natural resources in communal areas is complex due to lack of ownership and competition over limited resources.

The government of Namibia has introduced several management initiatives including Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) such as Community Forest and Communal Conservancies. However, more coordination with the different Stakeholders is needed in order for those initiatives to be more effective.

2. KEY CHALLENGES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1. Weak planning and monitoring systems;
- 2.2. Poor coordination of rural development interventions;
- 2.3. Limited access to development funding;
- 2.4. Insufficient infrastructure facilities and services provision including access Roads, Electricity Supply, Water Supply, Rural Development Centres, Rural Markets, Rural Housing, Transport Systems, National Documents, Banking and Credit Facilities in rural areas;
- 2.5. Slow pace of Decentralization implementation process;
- 2.6. High level of poverty in rural areas;
- 2.7. High production cost;
- 2.8. High level of unemployment and unskilled labour force;
- 2.9. Rural-urban migration;
- 2.10. Limited capacity at Regional Councils levels;
- 2.11. Limited knowledge and skills on modern technologies;
- 2.12. Poor community participation and ownership in rural development interventions;
- 2.13. Poor statistical data;
- 2.14. Low level of agricultural technology and diversification;
- 2.15. Climate change and weak environmental management;
- 2.16. Cultural diversity;

- 2.17. Household food insecurity;
- 2.18. The impact of epidemics (e.g. HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis).

The above-stated Key Challenges have resulted in fragmented and overlapping activities without harmonized guidance. Poor coordination, poor consultation, and weak participation are common refrains. Front line services are delivered by a number of government and non-governmental Agencies without reference to each other. At the same time, service delivery capacity in some instances is diminishing due to resource limitations and increasing costs, for example of transport. Overall, there is a sense of inefficiency and wastage of scarce resources due to uncoordinated action.

At the regional level, the process of Decentralization of identified functions to Regional Councils and Local Authorities has proved more complex and is therefore taking longer than expected. Regional and Constituency level efforts to coordinate Line Ministries and encourage them to reflect local priorities for rural development are constrained by a number of factors including:

- Limited access to development funding at Constituency and Regional levels;
- Weak participation in coordination efforts of some regional Line Ministries (e.g. non-attendance, participation of junior staff and limited information sharing);
- Financial constraints in supporting participation of some Stakeholders in coordination meetings;
- Limited programmes and project implementing capacity at the regional level on the part of both the Regional Councils and Line Ministries.

The stalling of reforms can be partly attributed to budgetary constraints. Weak public service management has also limited the implementation of some reforms as well as service delivery in general. These factors have also limited the government's ability to respond to lessons learned by initiating new programmes. Gaps in the government's rural development investment and services portfolio include, for instance, Micro-Finance Services, Sanitation Support Services, and some labour-intensive works. Likewise, the challenge of improving access to urban markets, facilitating access to financing and technical skills, and ensuring that the rural economy is linked to the new engines of economic growth, such as

Tourism, Agriculture, Transport, Housing, Sanitation and Public Works, need greater Public Sector attention.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The *overall objective* of the Policy is to achieve a sustainable economic and social advancement in rural areas.

The Policy consists of *four specific objectives* derived from the Vision 2030 objectives, which are most closely related to rural development. These are to:

- 3.1. ensure participation of all role players in the formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans;
- 3.2. develop a diversified, competent and highly productive human resources and institutions in rural areas, fully utilizing human potential and achieving efficient and effective delivery of customer-focused services;
- 3.3. accelerate a broad-based rural industrialization and economic growth through enhanced rural infrastructure development, research and appropriate technology development, income generation and employment creation; and
- 3.4. ensure the sustainable management and development of natural resources found in Namibia's rural areas and its sustainable utilization for the benefit of the country's social, economic and ecological well-being.

4. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The following strategies have been identified for the implementation of rural development interventions.

4.1. Coordination and Integration of Rural Development Action

The “*heart*” of the rural development process is *coordination* in terms of integrated planning, collaborative implementation and joint monitoring and evaluation. This is what pumps blood through the process to optimize its efficiency and effectiveness.

Rural Development embraces all the elements of Public and Private Sector activities that affect economic and social advance in rural areas. Coordination is needed to ensure that services are complementary, synchronized and comprehensive. It is also needed

to ensure equity in the use of government's limited resources given the widespread distribution of rural target groups and the high transaction costs incurred in reaching them.

The Policy mandates that the overall coordination of rural development interventions be the responsibility of the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination.

Coordination requires:

- 4.1.1. Development Needs Assessment and Integrated Planning
- 4.1.2. Institutional Rearrangement and Capacity Development
- 4.1.3. Resources Mobilization and Reallocation
- 4.1.4. Collaborative Implementation
- 4.1.5. Joint Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1.1. Development Needs Assessment and Integrated Planning

All O/M/As and other Institutions with interest in conducting development need assessment pertaining to rural development shall do so in consultation with the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination.

Reports generated from needs assessment shall be shared with the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination and that Ministry is expected to develop and implement an information system/database for storing and supply such information to interested Development Partners.

All O/M/As and other Institutions that have a role in rural development shall plan in consultation with the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination.

All regional Rural Development and Action Plans shall be developed through existing coordination structures such as RDCCs, CDCs and VDCs.

All O/M/As shall involve the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination in their budgetary planning and allocation of resources on issues related to rural development through platforms such as budget hearings.

4.1.2. Institutional Rearrangement and Capacity Development

All O/M/As and RCs shall appoint a focal person/desk officer responsible for the coordination of rural development interventions for strengthening the capacity of existing coordination

structures/mechanisms for rural development interventions at national and regional level.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination and RCs shall ensure that the existing RDCCs, CDCs and VDCs structures are strengthened, active and functional. There shall be a budgetary provision for incentives such as allowances of non ex-officio members.

4.1.3. Resources Mobilization and Reallocation

There is a need to mobilize additional resources from local and external sources to address rural development challenges. Once the Rural Development Strategies and Programmes are in place, Development Partners and other Stakeholders will then be expected to invest in the Rural Development Programs identified and sector budget support will be the preferred modality for channeling funding to the Rural Development Sector.

In addition, Individual Citizens under full employments are expected to make financial contributions towards the Rural Development Intervention Fund and certain amount shall be defined in terms of low income and high income earners. The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall establish a Trade Account for the management, control and allocation of rural development funds.

4.1.4. Collaborative Implementation

All O/M/As and other institutions shall continuously involve all Stakeholders in the implementation of Rural Development Programmes/Projects through regional development coordination structures.

4.1.5. Joint Monitoring and Evaluation

There shall be established Monitoring and Evaluation System, which will include those of the responsible Line Ministries as well as the overall Monitoring and Evaluation System to be established to cater for the National Rural Development Policy's directives.

Monitoring and Evaluation of rural development activities shall be conducted in consultation with the Ministry responsible for rural development coordination and feedback be provided promptly to all stakeholders.

Reports generated from monitoring and evaluation shall be shared with the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination and that Ministry is expected to develop, implement and maintain a Monitoring & Evaluation System and related Information Database and supply such information for use by rural development Stakeholders.

4.2. People's Empowerment and Civic Participation

Promoting people's empowerment and participation involves building the capacity of rural people and Civic Society Organizations to express their socio-economic, political, cultural and spiritual aspirations and needs. It also involves Building Institutions and Platforms for them to express themselves and to interact with government and participate in guiding rural development.

4.2.1. Training and Skills Development

The Policy shall promote people's empowerment and participation in rural development management to gain from local knowledge and skills, to generate ownership of and commitment to Rural Development Policies, Strategies and Plans by rural people, and generally to benefit from the strengths of the citizenry, Civic Organizations and the Private Sector.

Provision of demand driven training to rural communities in all Sector include tailor made programmes.

4.2.2. Community Participation and Ownership

All Rural Development Initiatives shall be identified from the grass root level with the involvement of rural communities. All O/M/As shall ensure that local communities own and understand the development processes and initiatives being implemented in their areas.

The National Rural Development Policy will strengthen the Key Institutions to enable their voice to be heard and for them to participate in guiding rural development. Institutions such as Constituency Development Committees and Regional Development Coordination Committees provide a platform for people to participate directly and indirectly in the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of rural development, as well as coordinated and integrated rural development.

The National Rural Development Policy also recognizes and encourages the significant role played by traditional leaders in influencing rural development as they have significant social legitimacy in rural communities and can exercise a profound informal influence on the direction of rural development.

All rural development innovations shall be preceded by baseline studies and shall take note of indigenous knowledge. The Ministry responsible for rural development shall ensure the documentation, protection and nurturing of indigenous knowledge and other traditional based innovations and creations.

Rural development interventions shall recognize and mainstream HIV/AIDS and gender issues.

The exploitation of rural-based resources shall be done with direct participation and ownership of local communities. The Policy therefore, provides for the direct ownership in bid to share in national resources of our country.

4.3. Rural Infrastructure and Services Development

The Policy seeks to promote additional gains from investments in infrastructure, services and utilities by adopting integrated approaches at both national and regional levels. It calls for a revival of regional development plans, including regional land use plans, as the main vehicle for integrated infrastructure planning. Regional development plans will feed up through the submissions of the Sectors that have contributed to drawing them up to future national development plans. Such regional development plans will deliberately locate rural services in clusters or growth points to achieve economies of scale and reduce transaction costs for those accessing services.

Integrated spatial planning requires close coordination between Planners in different Organizations, Agencies and Ministries responsible for services and infrastructure development. It also requires good information about demographics, access to services, economic development potential, and other factors. Collaboration in integrated support services to enable the extension workers to be able to respond to a range of development needs shall be strengthened.

4.3.1. Roads network and Transport Logistics

The Policy seeks for the decentralization of decision-making processes to the Regional Councils to prioritize rural communities' needs for access roads and initiate mechanisms for improving the

public transportation systems. As such distribution of national resources shall consider the need for improving rural roads and the public transport systems.

4.3.2. Telecommunication network

There is dire need to improve the communication networks in rural areas to enhance the flow of information in such areas. Government and private sector shall invest in the development of telecommunication network system in rural areas.

4.3.3. Rural Electrification

Electrification programme shall be extended to cover all rural residence. Where grid electricity is difficult to provide, other energy sources such as Solar and other sources can be promoted. Private sector shall be encouraged to invest in the energy sector.

4.3.4. Rural Housing Scheme

Housing is one of the basic need, plight to all Namibians. However, the productive labour force of the rural areas is often drained by the effect of rural-urban migration. On the other hand, people working in rural areas are attracted to live in nearby urban areas due to lack of incentive to invest in housing development in rural areas. No Housing Scheme is available to enable rural people to build decent houses on Credit Schemes.

The Policy is therefore directing for addressing this gap by encouraging incentives to people living in rural areas in extending some Housing Schemes existing in urban areas such as Build Together Programme and NHE to rural areas. This Policy is advocating for the amendment of the existing Housing programmes and or the creation of similar programmes for rural areas.

4.3.5. Rural Industrial development

Rural communities shall be engaged in secondary production systems including manufacturing of goods and provision of services in their communities. The Policy shall promote the establishment and formalization of rural business and bring them in the mainstream of the national economy sector.

4.3.6. Rural Development Centre

Rural areas are faced with numerous challenges including lack of alternatives to livelihood, lack of tools and farming equipment, high level of unemployment, lack of information on farming and other economic activities, lack of skills, and lack of Marketing Centers for rural products. The Policy therefore provides for the establishment of Rural Development Centers (RDCs) in all thirteen regions to promote the development of Appropriate Technologies that enhance the agricultural production as well as other economic activities in rural areas. The RDCs shall serve as Centers of excellence in terms of designing and developing Appropriate Technology, information dissemination to rural communities, provision of community outreach programme, providing necessary services to rural communities, and create employment especially to rural youth.

The RDCs shall be equipped with necessary facilities to enable them to play their crucial role of providing goods and services to rural communities.

4.3.7. Rural Products Markets

Provision of markets for rural products is very crucial to encourage rural communities to engage in meaningful production. In addition markets for rural products shall play a vital role in contribute towards job creation and income generation for rural people. The Policy promote the establishment of markets in rural and urban areas to provide platforms for rural communities to display and trade their goods and services easily.

4.3.8. Rural Sanitation Services

The Policy advocate for the promotion of sanitation services and hygiene in rural areas. All O/M/As and Non-Governmental Organizations dealing with the promotion of sanitation, health and hygiene to make necessary contributions to the promotion and development of sanitation services in rural areas and public health education.

4.4. Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

Rural areas are affected by severe environmental problems that threaten rural livelihoods and production capacity. It has become clear that there are close linkages between rural poverty and environmental degradation, and that these problems must be

tackled in an integrated way by encouraging the protection and expanding the environmental assets base of rural people.

The Policy therefore, recognizes and encourages current efforts geared towards addressing the prevailing challenges listed below:

- Management and Conservation of Bio-diversity
- Integrated Land Use Management
- Land Tenure, Ownership and User Rights
- Equitable Use of available Resources
- Benefit Sharing
- Combating Environmental Degradation and Pollution

All role players in rural development shall be encouraged to promote the upliftment of the living standards of the rural communities through sustainable use and management, conservation and/or preservation of Eco-Systems in conjunction with existing Policies and Legislations and the involvement of rural communities.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall ensure an integrated planning on environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of rural communities together with the Key Stakeholders such as MME, MET, MLR, MAWF, NPC, MFMR, MoF and RCs.

All O/M/As and Institutions with a role to play in Natural Resources Management in rural areas shall ensure that the rural communities are arranged and organized in such structures that allow them to manage and benefit from the use of Natural Resources.

4.5. Social Welfare Services

4.5.1. Health

The Health Sector has been identified as a priority by Government, because improving the delivery of its services is seen as fundamental for improving the quality of life of rural people and making rural areas attractive places to live. Therefore, provision of equitable access to quality health services in rural areas is needed to enable rural people to achieve the quality of life they desire.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination and MoHSS shall ensure an integrated planning, reallocation of resources, including human resources and establishment of outreach points in rural areas. Therefore, the MoHSS shall ensure adequate staffing, rural health facilities and the provision of

incentives to attract qualified professionals to work in rural areas. This is necessary to counter the imbalance allocation of resources to rural areas compared to urban.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall ensure the coordination of equitable service delivery on Health Sector through the identification and assessment of the causes and effects of the current imbalances between rural and urban services.

The government shall encourage the involvement of other stakeholders in the provision of health services in rural areas.

4.5.2. Education

Like the Health Sector, Education Sector has been also identified as priority social services, for its fundamental importance for improving the quality of life of rural people and making rural areas attractive places to live. In that regard, provision of equitable access to quality education services in rural areas is needed to enable rural people to achieve the required quality of life.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination and MoE shall ensure an integrated planning, reallocation of resources, including human resources in rural areas. MoE shall ensure adequate staffing, rural education facilities and the provision of incentives to attract qualified professionals to work in rural areas. This is necessary to counter the inequality on allocation of resources to rural areas compared to urban.

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall also ensure the coordination of equitable service delivery on Education Sector through the identification and assessment of the causes and effects of the current imbalances between rural and urban services.

In addition, and having noted the variance of services available in regions, the Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall ensure that an equitable formula for the allocation of resources to various regions is established and implemented.

4.5.3. Security Services

The Ministries responsible for Security and Home Affairs shall ensure that the provisions of security services are made available to all citizens of the rural communities at minimal costs. This would require such services to be availed close to the people to cut on the travelling costs borne by rural people.

4.5.4. Sport and Recreation

The Policy encourages the compulsory conduct of Physical Education and the practice of Sport in all rural Schools, formation of Sports Clubs and provision of recreational facilities in rural areas. Therefore, more resources shall be allocated towards Sport development in rural areas.

The Ministry of Youth, National Services, Sport and Culture shall promote, recognize international sports' codes and promote indigenous sports' codes.

4.5.5. Social Safety Nets

The government shall ensure the establishment of OVC, people living with disability and old age care structures within the rural communities and ensure that benefits reach the intended recipients.

4.6. Support to Rural Agriculture

4.6.1. Marketing Agricultural Produce (Storage and Preservation of Agricultural Produce)

There shall be a marketing Center/Platform to assist with the storage, pricing, packaging, labeling and trading of agricultural produce by rural communities.

4.6.2. Vulnerability Assessment and Early Warning

The government shall conduct regular assessment on Rural Agricultural Production and Early Warning System in the country and provide feedback and support promptly to the rural communities.

The government shall strengthen and decentralize Early Warning System against all disaster risks in the regions.

The government shall activate and capacitate the existing structures on Disaster Risk Management nationally, regionally and locally.

4.6.3. Human Wildlife Conflict Management

All rural development initiatives/interventions in areas inhabited with wildlife shall put preventative measures against wildlife threats.

All wildlife resource based development interventions shall bear costs towards the management of human wildlife conflicts.

Sectoral Human Wildlife Conflict Management Programmes shall be expanded to all affected rural areas; warning and animal repelling systems are developed with the necessary support and improve compensatory mechanism in place. Regional based development planning shall be coordinated through regional planning structures.

4.6.4. Modernization of Agricultural and Agri-industrial System (Appropriate Technological Development)

The Rural Development Centre shall play a vital role in designing and developing Appropriate Technology towards Rural-Agricultural Production and avail it to the rural communities at affordable costs.

Agricultural Extension Officers in collaboration with Rural Development Planners shall keep Communal/Rural Farmers abreast with the latest information and skills on production methods and technology in Agriculture. Regular research shall be conducted to assess the needs of the rural communities and response mechanisms must be put in place.

The government shall mechanize Rural Agriculture with appropriate equipment and implements to the Rural Development Centres.

4.6.5. Increase in the Efficiency in Agriculture Production and Agric-Food System

The Policy encourages the formation of cooperatives to enable increased agricultural output, product diversification and food processing.

The Government shall improve agricultural extension services and application of innovative production expertise and methods in rural communities.

The government shall encourage the production of cash crops in rural areas as part of the rural agriculture diversification drive.

The MAWF shall ensure Food Security and Nutrition through application of farming initiatives such as promotion of commercial farming at household/family levels. The government shall provide incentives to commercial farmers to encourage the utilization of arable land for crop production.

4.6.6. Compensation Allowances and Subsidies

In many occasions rural farmers suffer severe setbacks by natural challenges mainly the effects of disasters such as flood, drought, diseases outbreak and pests. In some cases, such challenges discourage potential emerging farmers to sustain their farming activities and thus terminating their valuable contribution towards Food Security and the economy mainstay. Hence, this Policy seeks for the support of farmers in events of shocks by disasters to be provided with possible incentives such as compensation allowances to encourage them to sustain their agricultural activities. This would ensure sustainable Agriculture and Food Security.

On the other hand, farmers and other producers are faced with a challenge of lack of financial capital to procure the necessary inputs for their production. Furthermore, inputs prices are ever escalating making it even more difficult for producers to afford. This has also a detrimental effect to agricultural production and other economic activities. This has necessitated this Policy to advocate the need for subsidies mechanisms to subsidize production inputs for rural communities.

4.6.7. Agric-Environmental Management

The government shall encourage and promote the use of environmental-friendly methods in agricultural production in line with existing related Policies and Legislations.

4.7. Sustainable Rural Economic Development

Sustainable economic development, which creates employment and income generating opportunities for rural people, is necessary for poverty reduction and for reducing environmental, social and political risks. Economic development requires attention to the micro-economic environment as well as the provision of rural economic support services including financial services such as Savings and Credit Schemes, Agricultural Extension, Research and Veterinary Services, Water and Sanitation Services.

4.7.1 Economic Diversification and Value Addition

Enhancing productivity and competitiveness of rural economy by using local resources and strategic investment in human, financial services and technology.

Rural economies shall strive to exploit unused resources, to introduce value addition activities to agricultural produces and other natural resources and advocate for high yield products in a bid to achieve a high degree of diversification.

4.7.2 Employment Creation

The Ministry responsible for Rural Development Coordination shall promote and strengthen rural community economic support services in terms of Micro-Finance Schemes, Multi-Sectoral Labour-Based Work (e.g FFW and Sanitation) and subsidies for labour intensive technologies (e.g. YES, Grass Harvesting) and create employment opportunities through Rural Development Centres (Appropriate Technology, Skills Development and Community Outreach Programmes).

All O/M/As and Non-State Actors shall strive to expand outreach of their programmes, projects economic support services (Vocational Skills Development, Entrepreneurship Programmes, Financial Services, Extension Services, etc), property rights protection and all other developmental interventions to rural communities to contribute towards employment creation and economic development in rural areas.

Investigation of opportunities for Labour Intensive Works and design sustainable food production programmes to provide income for the rural communities. This may include waste removal, cleaning and planting of trees.

Promoting the development of Rural Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and improve access to credit, government financial support to cooperatives development and market information to rural people, especially Youth, Women and People Living with Disabilities.

Improved coordinated and collaborative approaches to frontline community and household support services such as: Services Supporting Agriculture and other Employment Generating Activities, Land Reform, strengthening and protection of property rights, Micro-Finance and Labour-Based Works.

5. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The National Rural Development Policy can only be used as the basis of developing a strategy, and thereafter of its actual implementation, through a coherent, coordinated multi-sectoral approach. This will be defined in a National Rural Development Strategy, which will elaborate the implementation framework and description of operational functions and resource requirements for the implementation of the Policy. It will be prepared in a highly participatory manner after the adoption of this Policy. This chapter provides a brief outline of the key elements of the Strategy. It focuses on the mechanism to be used for Rural Development Coordination,

Capacity Building Interventions, Monitoring and Evaluation requirements, and the responsibilities of Key Role Players.

5.1. Rural Development Coordination Mechanisms

- 5.1.1. The Directorate of Rural Development Coordination shall convene and chair a Rural Development Focal Person Forum (RDFPF), which will report to the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry responsible Rural Development Coordination on Policy and Strategy Implementation and Review. The RDFPF shall be comprised of Line Ministries, Regional Councils, NGOs, Civic and Private Organizations playing a role in rural development. The RDFPF will oversee all major rural development initiatives including the formulation and review of a National Rural Development Strategy, and thereafter, the horizontal and vertical coordination, and implementation and review of the Policy and Strategy.
- 5.1.2. The Directorate will also be responsible for technical and management aspects of Policy implementation, such as design of programmes, mobilizing necessary human and financial resources, promotion of inter-agency coordination and collaboration, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, research and information dissemination.
- 5.1.3. The Directorate is mandated to organize and conduct an Annual Planning and Progress Review Workshop with RCs and other Stakeholders.

5.2. Capacity Building

The Policy requires that several distinct human resources capacity building interventions are strengthened. Key to the effectiveness of rural development is the quality of rural human and social capital in terms of knowledge, needs and opportunities, technical skills, leadership and so forth. The Policy, therefore, calls for increased capacity building efforts towards the achievement of the key strategies already mentioned: coordination and integration, people's empowerment and participation, and reform of priority sectoral interventions.

Efforts to develop institutional and human resources capacity for Rural Development Coordination have been limited to date. A starting point will be an audit of the existing coordination mechanisms.

Hence, the need for human resources and institutional capacity building to promote people's empowerment and participation is

required. Building the capacity of rural people to express their aspirations and needs will be one of the tasks of the newly integrated and coordinated approach to front line community and household support services. Building institutions and platforms for people to express themselves and to interact with government in guiding rural development is another requirement.

5.3. Role and Responsibilities

5.3.1. Ministry Responsible for Rural Development Coordination

- Oversee integrated implementation of the Policy.
- Propose the Plan of Action for the operation of the Policy. However, appropriate mechanism would be evolved by concerned O/M/As, to implement the Policy.
- Act as the Secretariat to the Rural Development Focal Person Forum.
- Facilitate capacity building and technical assistance for horizontal and vertical operational linkages between Line Ministries, Regional Councils and other Stakeholders to ensure coordinated and integrated planning and interventions.

5.3.2. Regional Councils

The responsibility for the planning and implementing Rural Development Actions at the Sub-National level is vested in the Regional Councils in line with the Decentralisation Policy of 1998. Hence, the Directorate of Rural Development Coordination will work hand in hand with Directorate of Planning and Development Services within the Regional Councils to promote the implementation of the Policy through its structures.

5.3.3. Line Ministries and Other Organizations

All Offices/Ministries/Agencies with a role to play in rural development initiatives are expected to develop their own Development Plans of Action in line with the Policy.

All other Stakeholders such as Civic Organizations, NGOs, Private Sectors, CBOs and Development Partners are encouraged and expected to contribute technically and financially towards the implementation of National Rural Development Policy.

5.4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Effective Monitoring and Evaluation is an integral component of National Rural Development Policy implementation for assessing the overall progress of the Policy and Strategy implementation to ensure effectiveness and accountability.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Rural Development Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes shall be conducted using a Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting System.

All Stakeholders shall be involved in the Monitoring and Evaluation of rural development programmes, projects and activities.