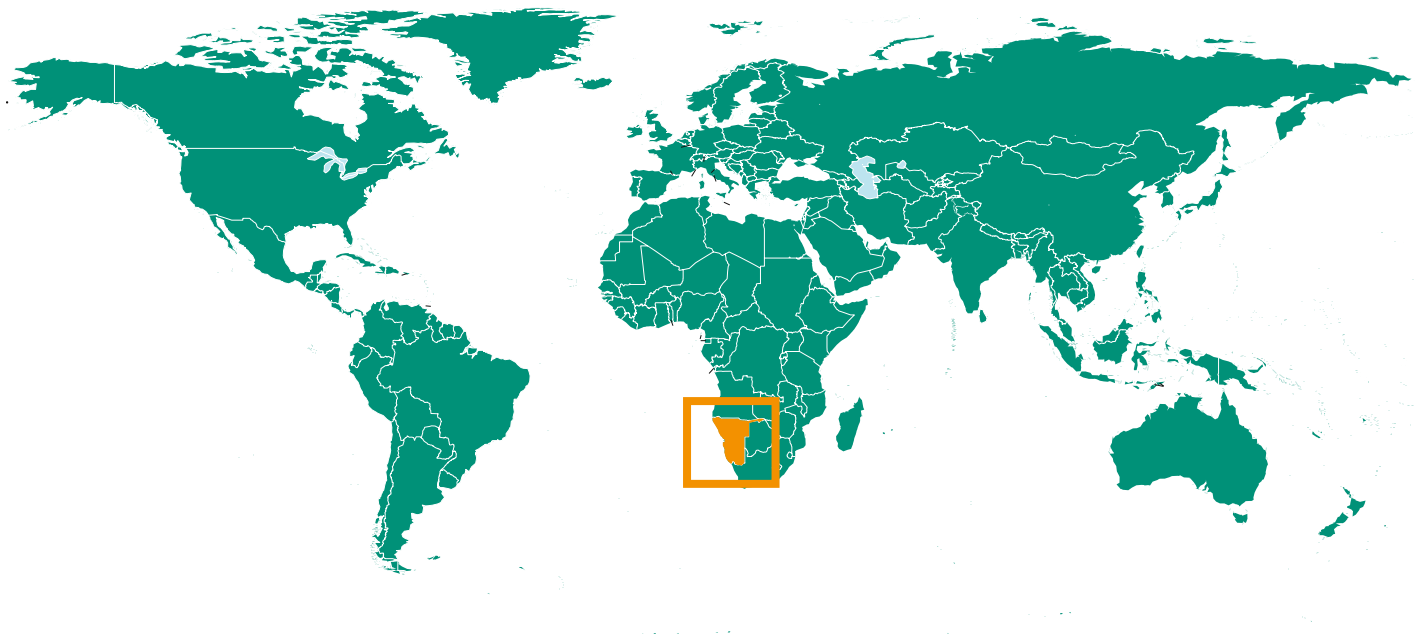


COUNTRY
PROGRAMME
DOCUMENT
2008 – 2009

NAMIBIA





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FOREWORDS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In April 2007, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT approved our 2008-2013 Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan. This plan intends to promote the alignment of UN-HABITAT normative and operational activities at country level.

The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents (HCPD) are tangible components of this Plan

as well as a genuine endeavour of UN-HABITAT to better coordinate normative and operational activities in a consultative and inclusive process involving UN-HABITAT's in-country focal points, UN-HABITAT Programme Managers, national governments, UN country teams, sister-UN agencies, development partners and all divisions of our Agency. The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents are strategic tools meant as a guide for all UN-HABITAT activities over a two-year period. A major dimension of the UN-HABITAT Country Programme Document is to advocate UN-HABITAT's mandate and address the urban challenges facing the world's developing countries.

The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents identify national urban development goals and priorities including shelter, urban governance, access to basic services and credit. Important cross-cutting issues such as the environment, gender, responses to disasters, and vulnerability reduction

are also addressed. The UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents focus on UN-HABITAT country programming. They serve as a work plan for UN-HABITAT Programme Managers and a reference tool for national and local actors involved in sustainable urban development. According to the Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Action Plan adopted by the UN-HABITAT Committee of Permanent Representatives on 6 December 2007, twenty UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents were completed during 2008, including the One-UN Pilot countries where UN-HABITAT is active.

In line with the United Nations reform process, UN-HABITAT Country Programme Documents seek to strengthen the role of the United Nations and to demonstrate our commitment. I wish to thank our UN-HABITAT Programme Managers for their input and dedication and for putting together these documents under guidance of the Regional and Technical Cooperation Division and with support from all branches and programmes of the Agency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Anna K. Tibaijuka'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anna K. Tibaijuka
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

MINISTER



The Government of the Republic of Namibia, through the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD), appreciates UN-HABITAT's gesture of generosity through putting in place a Habitat Country Programme Document (HCPD), as approved by the Governing Council

of UNHABITAT. We are also thankful for the full funding of the Habitat Programme Manager and we appreciate the continuation of this programme as it helps Namibia to address the development of human settlements, which is a priority for the country. The Government of the Republic of Namibia would like to reaffirm its commitment to the ideals set forward in the Habitat Agenda and other international habitat declarations.

The Habitat Country Programme Document (HCPD) will help the MRLGHRD in its efforts to facilitate the addressing of housing related issues; which will in turn promote sustainable development of human settlements across Namibia; create an enabling environment in terms of the policy and legislation framework; and assist in capacity building for Regional Councils, Local Authorities and staff members of MRLGHRD with regards to human settlements.

The Namibian HCPD focuses on UN-HABITAT Country Programming. It serves as a work-plan for the Habitat Programme Manager and a reference tool for national, regional and local actors involved in sustainable urban development in line with the Medium Term Strategic Implementation Plan (MTSIP), as approved in March 2007 by Governing Council of the UN- HABITAT.

Gratefully, Namibia has been fortunate to benefit from UN-HABITAT's initiative of securing the Habitat Programme Manager. Thus, the Government of the Republic of Namibia herewith pledges its support towards the biennial implementation of the HCPD.

Hon. Jerry Ekandjo
Minister; Regional And Local Government, Housing
And Rural Development

SITUATION ANALYSIS

NATIONAL URBAN POLICY CONTEXT

Namibia has a total area of 824 268 square kilometres and it supports a small population of approximately 2.1 million people. The average annual rate of population increase is 2.96%. The distribution of this population has been determined to a large extent by the prevailing climatic conditions. About 60% of inhabitants live in the less arid northern regions, 7% in the south and approximately one third of the population live in the central regions.

Namibia gained independence in 1990, after more than a century of colonial rule. Namibia's constitution assures fundamental human rights and freedoms including the right to own property, the right to move and settle anywhere, fair trial and free speech. Four national elections have thus far been held in 1989, 1994, and 1999 and 2004.

Namibia has three levels of government: national, regional and local, whilst the country is divided into thirteen administrative regions.

Although the country is classified as lower middle-income, it is ranked 126 of 177 on the Human Development Index. According to recent data, the country has a gini coefficient of 0.65, which is regarded as one of the most skewed in the world.

Since independence, the economy has been registering positive growth. During the National Development Plan 1, between 1995 and 2000, the economy grew by 3.8% on average. The recent data during the review of National Development Plan 2 indicate that the economy grew by 4.7%.

Part one of the HCPD is divided into the mutually reinforcing focus areas of UN-HABITAT's Medium-Term Strategic Institutional Plan for 2008-2013, as approved by the Governing Council in 2007.

FOCUS AREA 2: PARTICIPATORY URBAN PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Namibia has been involved in the process of local government reform since independence. In 1992, the Namibian government passed the Regional Council's Act (Act 22 of 1992) and the Local Authorities Act (Act 23 of 1992) as the legal framework for institutionalising decentralised government through regional and local bodies.

In 1996 the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development, engaged in a policy dialogue to assess whether or not decentralisation was meeting set expectations, and discovered that it was not delivering on several aspects due to a lack of resources.

The Decentralisation Policy was officially launched on 30th March 1998. The Policy identifies functions and powers to be devolved to regional councils and local authorities. It was designed to be phased in gradually by the local authorities. It was envisaged that by 2002, the bulk of the activities that were undertaken by national government would be decentralised to the regions and to the local authority councils. Progress during the initial phase was slow and most of the ministries that had been mandated to prepare sector devolution were not completed.

STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

Urbanisation (2008)

- Total population: 2.1m
- Urban population: 773 000 (37%)

Annual population growth rates (2005-2010)

- National: 1.3%
- Urban: 2.9%

Population of major cities (2008)

- Windhoek: 250 000
- Rundu: 58 000

Source: UN DESA/Geonames.org

Slum indicators (2000)

- Slum to urban population: 33.9%
- % urban population with access to:
 - Improved water: 98%
 - Piped water: 97.9%
 - Improved sanitation: 82.2%
 - Sufficient living area: 84.4%
 - Durable housing: 85%

Source: UN-HABITAT

FOCUS AREA 3: PRO-POOR LAND AND HOUSING

LAND REFORM

The Government of Namibia is fully committed to improving the living conditions of and extending the rights to land ownership to residents of informal settlements. Since Independence in 1990, the government has been engaged in land reform to redress historical injustices brought about by 'apartheid' and to create a more enabling policy environment to alleviate poverty.

The land reform programme initiated by the government stresses the profound connection between poor people's rights to land, services and housing. The programme is only part of a broader strategy to 'alleviate poverty'.

A key policy innovation to respond to the demand for land reform, notably within urban areas of Namibia, has been the development of a Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS: 2004). The Flexible Land Tenure System, a component of the overall land reform programme, has three main objectives:

1. To create alternative forms of land title that are simple and cheaper to administer than the existing forms of land title.
2. To provide security of title for persons who live in informal settlements and/or who are provided with low income housing.
3. To empower the persons concerned economically by means of alternative land rights.

The Flexible Land Tenure System has not yet been promulgated. However, the new types of tenure will be introduced within the system and added to the existing freehold tenure systems, namely, starter title and the land hold title. Starter title schemes and land hold title schemes may only be established on land situated within the boundaries of a municipality, town or village council or within the boundaries of a settlement area. The Ministry of Lands & Resettlements has the overall responsibility for managing the Flexible Land Tenure System and registration of land titles.

The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development is largely responsible for the administration of the Namibia Planning and Advisory Board and Townships Board. Namibia Planning and Advisory Board is responsible for the provision of advisory services on the overall town planning and development control measures through

the evaluation of large-scale subdivision of land and/or township establishment; the Townships Board is responsible for the evaluation of small and medium scale subdivision of land. The two pieces of legislation anchoring the activities of these institutions include the Town Planning Ordinance.

If it is an Ordinance it can be (Ordinance 18 of 1954) amended by the Town Planning Act and Town Planning Amendment Act [1993], Act 27 of 1993 and the Townships and Division of Land Ordinance, Act 11 of 1963.

The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development has the oversight for town and regional planning, housing and municipal service delivery as well as local government administration. The delivery of land tenure needs to be articulated through decentralised planning, management and service delivery processes of local government. As a result close cooperation between the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement is a pre-condition for the successful implementation of the new Flexible Land Tenure System.

In summary, the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development is responsible for approving the key spatial development frameworks, in the form of urban structure plans, town planning schemes, planning layouts and subdivision applications within which all forms of planning will have to be implemented. The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development also provides national oversight for the delivery of housing and municipal services (water, sanitation, roads, storm-water drainage and refuse collection) at the local level.

The Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development drives the National Habitat Agenda, which in a nutshell is the policy framework for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal 7 with its focus on 'ensuring environmental sustainability', but more specifically Targets 10 (water and sanitation) 11 (achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020).

The National Habitat Committee, established in 1995, provides oversight to the National Habitat Agenda. A sub-committee on secure tenure was formed subsequent to the Namibian version of the UN-Habitat Global Campaign launched in 2002 at the World Habitat Day Celebrations.



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The Habitat Agenda is relatively well integrated into the key functions of the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development. However, training and capacity development are needed, particularly in the Habitat Division. In addition, there is a need to build the capacity of municipal authorities to improve their capability for urban management, participatory planning, and financial management.

FOCUS AREA 4: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND BASIC URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND MANAGEMENT

(period 1995/6 – 2000/1). A wide range of actions have been taken into account, carefully designed and integrated. These include amongst others:

- (i) Environmental Management Act of December 2007, which establishes a set of fundamental environmental plans such as sustainable use of natural resources, etc.
- (ii) Draft Pollution and Waste Management Act, which adopts an integrated pollution control approach and establishes a multi-sectoral Pollution Control Board.
- (iii) A Concept note was developed for an urban Agenda 21 programme, which a phrase thereof was included in the National Vision 2030 – a detailed strategy of implementation needs to be

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