

Namibia National Human Development Report 2019

**Addressing Inequality and Disparities:
Towards a New Dignified Life for All Namibians**

Foreword



Namibia's Vision 2030 is all about people. Concern for the socioeconomic well-being of citizens lies at the core of national development. The planning system in Namibia is anchored on the concept of sustainable development—that is, development that meets the needs of the present without limiting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The concept of human development, which is defined as the process of expanding people's freedoms (capabilities) and opportunities and improving their well-being, resonates very well with Namibia's planning architecture, which is in line with global and regional development planning frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063. The current Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) espouses the four interrelated development pillars of economic progress, social transformation, environmental sustainability, and good governance. These development pillars seek to improve the quality of life of the Namibian people. It is expected that this will be achieved through the expansion of their capabilities

and opportunities to maximise the use of their talents, skills, capital and other resources for innovation, competitiveness, production and trade of goods and services; provision of public goods and services to communities and the cultivation of a culture of human dignity; and suitable use of natural resources without endangering current and future generations, in a more participatory, responsive, accountable, transparent, effective, efficient, equitable and inclusive manner, within the rule of law.

Since independence, Namibia has made tremendous strides in terms of policy reforms to shape the socioeconomic development of the country. Although the results of these policy reforms have begun to show, the development challenges continue to grow in complexity, calling for more innovative ways of addressing them. The country has achieved high levels of human development since independence, when the Human Development Index stood at 0.579, thus placing the country in the Medium Development Countries category. However, the promising levels of human development were curtailed by unforeseen human development challenges, such as the unprecedented HIV and AIDS pandemic around the mid-1990s. Thanks to global efforts accompanied by investments made by development partners and the country itself, antiretroviral therapy (ART) coverage (the percentage of people living with advanced HIV infection who are receiving ART) had reached 92% in 2018. This contributed to a significant decrease in deaths as a result of AIDS-related infections, increasing life expectancy to 65.1 in 2016, above the sub-Saharan average of 58.7 years. This has ultimately contributed to the recovery of the country's HDI, which stood at 0.594 in 2010, and today stands at 0.645.

The economy posted moderate annual growth of 3.90% between independence in 1990, and 2018. While this economic growth, accompanied by social spending, has helped to significantly reduce poverty, it has not created the much-needed employment necessary to allow new entrants into the labour market. This paradox, which is embedded in Namibia's economic structure, has constrained any meaningful

dent on income distribution. A solution to this paradox will go a long way to uplifting the standard of living of Namibian citizens and raising the levels of human development even further.

One critical element of Namibia's human development effort is education. Education is amongst the greatest equalisers and has played a very important role in human development. Namibia has adopted a policy known as "Towards Education for All", which emphasises four goals, namely, Access, Equity, Quality and Democracy. Namibia affirms its commitment to education that cultivates values and attitudes that are essential for personal growth, self-actualisation, and peaceful co-existence. It provides individuals with the potential to make choices and enjoy better lives. Education is thus an avenue for poverty alleviation, human development and social advancement. It is therefore a fundamental human right: all are entitled to receive an education of good quality (Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN), Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action 2002–2015).

Namibia has made significant progress in the realms of access, equity and democracy; however, more still must be done to improve the quality of education in all spheres of the education system. Access to secondary and tertiary education still needs to be improved, and the high demand for vocational and higher education must be satisfied in order to transform the economy into a knowledge-based one.

Inequality in Namibia is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Apart from income or wealth inequality, there are many factors that determine inequalities within Namibian society, including, amongst others, access to and the level of education and health services; ownership of assets such as land; and gender inequality. This report delves into these phenomena in greater detail. While by no means an exhaustive framework, it provides a platform for national dialogue with a view to obtaining national consensus on appropriate solutions and prioritisation.

The theme for the 2019 National Human Development Report, "Addressing inequality and disparities: Towards a new dignified life for all Namibians", is not only relevant but

timely, as inequalities and disparities are two of the major conditions that the government will decisively address in its continued commitment to shape the social and economic foundations of the country in the 21st century.

The contemporary challenges such as climate change, high unemployment, especially amongst the youth, competitive markets, and the outbreak of diseases will require that Namibia embraces the 4th Industrial Revolution and builds its resilience to shocks – otherwise, the country risks being left behind. Similarly, in this quest, Namibia cannot afford to leave anyone behind. Policy makers are therefore working diligently to address the issues of pervasive inequality and socioeconomic disparities that are hindering the progress of every citizen of Namibia towards attaining a dignified new life by 2030, and for the years beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Obeth Mbuipaha Kandjoze'.

OBETH MBUIPAHA KANDJOZE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION

Preface



Development Report (NNHDR) could not have come at a better time: GRN has set as a policy priority addressing the various forms and dimensions of inequality in Namibia, with specific focus on vulnerable groups, including women and children, the youth, people living with disabilities, and the elderly.

The human development approach argues that the aim of development is to ensure that a conducive environment is created for people to enjoy long, healthy and dignified lives, meaning that people should be at the front and centre of development. It is in keeping with this goal that the 6th NNHDR of Namibia, “Addressing Inequality and Disparities: Towards a New Dignified Life for All Namibians”, has been produced by GRN with the support of UNDP Namibia. The report argues that in order to successfully reduce inequality in all its forms and dimensions, a reinvigorated social contract between the government and its people is required. It further recognises that inequality in Namibia is multidimensional, and goes on to establish the current state of knowledge and trends in multiple forms of inequality, to set out an agenda for change, and to call for renewed action to bring about a more equal Namibia that serves all citizens across the length and breadth of the country.

As policy projections that should be adopted to reduce the multiple forms and dimensions of inequality, the report recommends increased investment in human capabilities; the creation of opportunities and a level playing field for women through gender-responsive policies to close the gender gap; the creation and promotion of decent and sustainable work and forms of employment; and sharpening of measurements for and deepening understanding of inequality.

UNDP Namibia is therefore pleased to have collaborated with GRN through the National Planning Commission (NPC) to produce this report, which has raised key policy issues and proposed interventions needed to effectively address inequalities in Namibia. UNDP Namibia is also pleased to advance the dialogue pertaining to the human development approach in Namibia.

As a global development network organisation with its presence in over 170 countries, the UNDP will continue to support the development aspirations of GRN and the people of Namibia. More specifically, it will use its convening power and technical expertise to work with GRN and other development partners including bilateral and other multilateral partners, civil society organisations, the private sector, and academic and research institutions to implement the key findings and policy recommendations advanced in this NNHDR by stimulating dialogue around them through different fora and arrangements.

Alka Bhatia

MS. ALKA BHATIA
UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

In December 2019, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published and launched another Global Human Development Report on the theme “Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: Inequalities in human development in the 21st century”. The report reveals that inequalities are deeply rooted in our societies, economies and politics, and that they can start early and grow, and may be passed across generations. It states that irrespective of the prevailing situation, the future of inequalities in human development in the 21st century is in our hands. The “whole of society” approach under the leadership of governments is needed to address the development challenges that are adversely impacting the human development of citizens. As part of the response to this call, UNDP Namibia has been working with GRN and other development partners on various strategic issues, including the promotion of inclusive growth and sustainable development; alleviation of poverty; environmental sustainability and climate change; and the fight against inequality and exclusion. The Namibia National Human

Acknowledgements

Bringing the Namibia National Human Development Report 2019 to its logical conclusion and publication has required the concerted efforts of many parties. This report is the sixth in the series of National Human Development Reports produced in Namibia. The report follows the UNDP tradition of producing the Global Human Development Report, which is augmented by national reports at a country level.

The report is an initiative of the UNDP Namibia Office in collaboration with GRN, represented by the National Planning Commission (NPC). The report was prepared under the auspices of the National Technical Committee chaired by the NPC – Department of Macroeconomic Planning. The National Technical Committee was comprised of representatives from the following institutions:

- UNDP Namibia Office
- National Planning Commission
- Social Security Commission
- Ministry of Health and Social Services
- Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture
- Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation
- Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
- Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service
- Ministry of Land Reform
- Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)

In view of the above, the NPC would like to thank UNDP Namibia for the technical and financial support for producing this report. The report benefitted greatly from peer reviews of the Human Development Report Office, as well as from inputs from UNICEF Namibia. The work of the National Technical Committee in directing the development of this report is acknowledged.

Sincere thanks are due to our independent contributors who shared their perspective on inequality in Namibia. They are Mr Hebert Jauch, Dr. Romie Nghitevelekua, Ms Rosa Namises, Mrs Nangula Uaandja and Ms Pelgrina Shimanu.

The staff members from NPC and UNDP who worked tirelessly from the conceptualisation

Acronyms and Initialisms

AALS	Affirmative Action Loan Scheme
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	Antenatal Care
ART	Anti-retroviral Therapy
CRI	Commitment to Reducing Inequality index
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IAHDI	Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NDP	National Development Plan
NHIES	Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey
NLS	Namibia Labour Force Survey
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
NSFAF	Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Namibia is a young nation which attained its independence just 30 years ago. Since then, it has enjoyed the fruits of democracy, peace and stability. It experienced moderate post-independence economic growth, which improved its people's standard of living. Despite improvements in levels of human development, Namibia still faces myriad socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty, hunger, unemployment and inequalities.

Like any other country, human development is at the centre of Namibia's national development agenda, which seeks to give its people equal opportunities to reach their full potential and achieve individual goals. Inequalities and disparities within and among different groups of the population challenge human development and damage societies by weakening social cohesion and people's trust in government, institutions and each other. Inequality does not only stand as an affront to human dignity: it holds back progress for everyone. Namibia has recognised the challenge of inequality in all its national development plans. To secure a life of dignity for all its citizens, Namibia is determined to remove barriers, address systemic impediments, and correct historic imbalances.

Inequalities in Namibia

Inequalities exist in Namibia in terms of income, wealth distribution and the available opportunities, between women and men, urban and rural areas, and different groups within the population. When individuals do not have the same opportunities as others, they are hindered from achieving individual goals and reaching their full potential. The historical biases that have skewed the provision of opportunities have negatively affected various segments of society.

Characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographical location, income bracket and/or economic circumstances have been used to determine the provision of and access to opportunities. These indicators have been the main underpinning causes of social and economic disenfranchisement.

Development planning and human development

The challenge posed by inequality is not only about resource control or wealth held by a few. It is in the costs to inclusive and sustainable human development that inequality poses its major challenge. Namibia, in its medium- and long-term plans – Vision 2030 and all NDPs – recognises the challenges inequality poses to the national development agenda, including the threat to national peace and security. Thus far, Namibia has produced five National Human Development Reports since 1996 with the aim of informing, planning and triggering national debate on the socioeconomic development of the country.

Reducing inequality and disparity has been a central goal of development policies in Namibia since independence. To reduce inequality and disparities, GRN initiated several interventions, to the extent that nearly half of Namibia's budget is allocated to social sector priorities. Namibia ranks 32nd out of 157 countries and remains one of the highest-ranked African countries, and fifth among middle-income countries in the world, in terms of commitment to reducing inequality, as reported in the 2018 Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index (CRI) report produced by OXFAM.

The main objectives of the 2019 Namibia National Human Development Report are:

- (a) to understand the policies, actions and trends underlying the level of human development and types of inequalities and disparities prevalent in the country;
- (b) to determine factors influencing human development, and inequalities and disparities in Namibia; and
- (c) to synthesise policy options for future improvement in human development and closing the gap in inequalities and disparities among all Namibians to enable them to lead dignified, healthy and long lives.

Patterns of Human Development in Namibia

Human development is about the expansion of freedoms and well-being a person can enjoy throughout his/her lifetime. It is measured by various composite indices, namely the Human Development Index (HDI), the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IAHDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII), the Gender Development Index, and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

The last 30 years have seen a significant shift in human development in Namibia. In 1990, the national Human Development Index (HDI) for Namibia stood at 0.579. As a result of HIV and AIDS, the HDI declined in the 1990s to 0.558. It has recovered steadily since 2000, and currently stands at 0.645, as reported in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2019 Human Development Report. However, income inequality alone is not a sufficient measure of inequality, hence the use of the MPI measure, which takes account of many forms of deprivation in a society. The MPI shows that 40.6 percent of Namibians live in multidimensional poverty, amounting to over 940 000 Namibians in 2013.

Income inequality and disparities

Key message 1:
There is an unequal distribution of income within the Namibian population, despite the country's classification as an Upper - Middle Income economy.

Income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient declined from 0.701 in 1993/94 to 0.560 in 2015/16. However, this is still one of the highest in the world. In male-headed households, the Gini coefficient decreased from 0.671 in 1993/94 to 0.589 in 2015/16; for female-headed households, the Gini coefficient declined slightly, from 0.547 to 0.544. Regional inequalities are also observed in the Gini

coefficient, with the lowest recorded level being in Omusati Region (0.45), and highest in Omaheke Region (0.66).

In Namibia, there is an unequal distribution of income within the population despite the country's classification as an Upper-Middle Income economy. Nationally, only 12 580 people, or 0.55% of Namibia's population, earn more than N\$ 1.5 million annually. The income of the bottom earners is 30 times less than that of top earners. However, the lowest income earners have seen their share of the population dropping from 78 percent in 2003 to 34.3 percent in 2015, thus increasing the share of the middle-income categories.

All income shares in Namibia experienced positive economic growth, with the bottom and lower categories growing faster than the top high-income categories, indicating some improvement in income distribution. Despite growth in income, however, the economy experienced high levels of unemployment, indicating the phenomenon of jobless growth. This is attributed to the economic structure of the country, where growth is driven by less labour-intensive industries such as mining, at the expense of secondary industries, especially manufacturing. The situation is even more challenging, as the agriculture sector, which employs the majority of the labour force, contributes only about 4 percent on average to GDP (income), albeit with lower wages, compared to mining, which employs a meagre labour force with higher average incomes.

Furthermore, the situation is exacerbated by the labour market structure, which is dominated by informal employees, to the extent that only around 14 percent of the total paid employees earn more than N\$1 353 monthly, which is a minimum wage.¹

Income inequality and human development in Namibia are characterised by a (weak) positive relationship: regions with higher human development levels tend to have higher levels of income inequality. However, there are exceptions in Kunene and Kavango West, where there is high inequality with lower human development levels. Omaheke is an outlier,

with high income inequality but relatively lower human development. Most of the regions in Namibia can be classified as Medium Human Development regions, while Khomas and Erongo can be classified as High Human Development regions.

Inequalities in access to Land

Key message 2:
Disparities in access to land or housing pose a major challenge, despite GRN efforts to address the issue of inequalities.

Land is regarded as an asset that could be used by the poor to gain access to other assets. Globally, the issue of asset redistribution is one of the measures known to reduce inequality, because inequality is found to be higher among the landless laborers and small-scale farmers. Land ownership is defined as the measure that determines who can use land, for how long, and under what conditions. Land reform can therefore be used as a measure to address and reduce inequality between the rich and poor, and between males and females.

In Namibia, the largest portion of land is freehold agriculture (commercial) land (39 728 364 hectares; 48 percent) followed by communal land (28 720 443 hectares; 35 percent). Overall, 75.5 percent of women and 59.7 percent of men do not own land; similarly, 64.9 percent of women and 42.7 percent of men do not own a house. According to the National Statistics Agency, whites in Namibia, including Namibian citizens and foreigners, own 69.2 percent or 27 million hectares; blacks own just 16 percent or 6.2 million hectares; and the government owns 14 percent or 5.4 million hectares of the total 39 million hectares freehold agriculture land. Further disaggregating by gender, males own 77 percent and females own only 23 percent of the freehold agriculture land.

Land ownership in Namibia poses a major challenge to addressing the issue of inequalities. The majority of Namibians lack ownership of land or a house. The majority of black people, women, and youth lack ownership and rights to

this most important asset, and this as a result exacerbates inequalities of opportunities, income and dignity.

Gender-based inequalities and disparities

Key message 3:
Women remain at a disadvantage in income, health and protection.

Women and girls in Namibia hold overall higher levels of human development than men and boys, placing Namibia among only 20 countries in the world where this holds true. However, despite longer life expectancy at birth for females than males, women remain at a disadvantage in income, health, and protection. Despite noticeable achievements regarding gender, gender-based inequalities persist in multiple dimensions in Namibia. These include: gender-based violence and violence against children; gender-based economic inequalities; gender-based inequalities in local representation; and unequal access of women to land rights.

Education disparities

Key message 4: Education disparities in Namibia are defined by the urban/rural divide, regional variations and income/wealth differences.

Developing human resources is a critical component of Namibia's growth and poverty reduction strategy. An educated citizenry is prerequisite for improving economic growth and development, alleviating poverty and enhancing the quality of life. Education plays an important role in reducing income inequality, as it determines occupational choices, access to jobs and the level of pay; it plays a pivotal role as a signal of ability and productivity in the job market. Investing in education has a positive effect on reversing rising inequalities, closing economic disparities among subgroups,

¹ The root causes of poverty, NPC

and enhancing mobility for all. It follows that education is a great equaliser.

GRN adopted a policy of “Education for All” in order to ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes. The level of education in Namibia is high, with only 5 percent of women and 8 percent of men having no formal education. Women are more likely to reach higher levels of education than men. In most regions in Namibia, women tend to complete more years of schooling than men. Education disparities in Namibia are defined by the urban/rural divide, regional variations and income/wealth differences.

Health inequalities and disparities

Key message 5: Despite progress observed in the health sector on overall life expectancy, the distance to the nearest health facilities remains a challenge.

Namibia has improved its health system since independence, ensuring that health facilities are within reach of its people. The system of waiving treatment fees in government health facilities for the vulnerable is being implemented. This is to ensure that every citizen has access to health services. As health is one of the government’s priorities, Namibia is now among the top tier of African countries with respect to health expenditures. However, the country is yet to meet the Abuja target of 15 percent of general government expenditure.

The overall life expectancy at birth in Namibia in 2019 was 64.9 years, which is slightly below the SADC life expectancy of 65.5 years. The Namibian population suffers from HIV and AIDS, which is the leading cause of deaths in the country; it is thus still a factor affecting overall life expectancy. The maternal mortality rate remains high in the country; however, tremendous strides are being made in ensuring that women have access to health services, with close to 95 percent of pregnant women

receiving antenatal care (ANC) from medical professionals, and 82 percent being attended by skilled health workers at the time of delivery. Other factors affecting the effectiveness and quality of delivery of health services include the high prevalence of malnutrition, long distances to health facilities, and low vaccination rates.

Towards a new dignified life for all: An agenda to reduce inequalities in Namibia

This report draws conclusions from the trends and status of inequality in its multiple dimensions in Namibia, and proposes the following recommendations:

- structural economic transformation and an efficient and effective financing mechanism;
- integrated gender-responsive policies and programmes, as well as an effective and efficient social protection system for all; and
- investment in better research and development, measurement, and data collection and analysis, to deepen the understanding of inequality in Namibia.

Chapter 1 Human Development and Inequality in Namibia

**“In the Namibian House, we strive for unity of purpose that lifts the standard of living of the Namibian people, including our men and women, our elderly, our youth, our girls and boys, and our people living with disability. No one shall be left behind, and no one is less important than another.”
Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia**

The sub-Saharan nation of Namibia is a young nation. For thirty years since independence, the Namibian people have enjoyed the fruits of democracy and peace. Rich in natural resources, the country has achieved notable milestones in terms of growth and development. Post-independence economic growth has improved people’s living standards, lifted some out of extreme poverty, and provided job opportunities for others.

However, Namibia still has a long way to go and many goals to achieve as far as human development is concerned. The country is faced with socioeconomic challenges such as poverty, hunger, unemployment and inequalities. According to the UNDP, inequalities in human development hurt societies and weaken social cohesion and people’s trust in the government, institutions, and each other. These challenges have made the road to achieving a high level of human development an arduous one.

Human development is every nation’s goal, and in Namibia, we strive to give people equal opportunities in reaching their full potential and achieving their individual goals. However, this is challenged by inequalities and disparities between and within different groups of the population.

In 2018, 26 people owned the same wealth as the 3.8 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity. What is more, disparities are

growing: the wealth of 2 200 billionaires across the globe increased by \$900 billion in 2018, or by roughly \$2.5 billion a day. As in the rest of the world, inequality also exists in Namibia, and it goes beyond income and wealth.

Inequality does not only stand as an affront to human dignity, but it holds back progress for everyone. GRN has recognised the challenge of inequality, and in its Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), has expressed its determination to address it, specifically in Goal 1, which deals with achieving inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth, measured through a Gini coefficient reduction from 0.572 in 2015/16 to 0.500 by 2021/22.

1.1 Inequalities in Namibia

Inequality is the differences in wealth, opportunities and rights that leave some individuals better off than others in a society. Namibia, like many developing countries, is faced with multidimensional inequalities. The real issue regarding equality is ensuring that all Namibian citizens have access to available opportunities within their nation, and have their rights respected, protected and fulfilled. The society owes it to its citizens to ensure that there are no structural impediments that disadvantage groups within the population. Irrespective of social, political and economic status, inequality should not be tolerated. However, achieving this in Namibia has become a major development challenge: inequality exists along ethnic, and racial lines, and can be found in various forms and dimensions among women and men, urban and rural areas, and different population groups in society.

When individuals are deprived of opportunities afforded to others, it hinders them as they attempt to achieve their individual goals and reach their full potential. In general terms, the World Bank describes “opportunities” as the potential people have to succeed in life. The success that is brought about by opportunities

is what awards people better living standards. In Namibia it is the right of everyone to have access to healthcare, education and basic services. All groups of the population are to be treated equally, regardless of their gender, race, or ethnicity. However, despite these “rights”, certain groups within the population do not enjoy the same opportunities afforded to others. Opportunities are affected by certain characteristics of the population, examples of which are listed below.

1. Gender:

The discrimination against people based on their gender robs them of opportunities they should have access to. Although not true in all cases, men are usually better off in certain aspects of life. Worldwide, it is the norm that men earn more than women.

2. Ethnicity:

Discrimination based on ethnicity disadvantages certain groups and sees some being treated as superior, and others as inferior. This has led to certain ethnic groups having to struggle much more to succeed and live dignified lives, because they have been deprived of the opportunities that would, in a world without prejudice, enable them to reach their full potential and succeed in life.

3. Geography:

People living in urban areas tend to have opportunities that those in rural areas do not. Depending on location, some have better access to information, education and healthcare, and other basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. In Namibia, people living in rural areas, and especially those in particularly remote areas, tend to suffer from a lack of basic services, due to insufficient public investment in infrastructure. Children walk long distances to go to school, and this affects the learning process. Health facilities are also inequitably allocated, and in some cases, are not available at all.

4. Income bracket / economic circumstances:

The lower quintile of the population suffers discrimination when it comes to accessing basic services. They are not able to afford the quality education and good health services that are available to those from

wealthy backgrounds, resulting in increases in disparities between these groups, and an ever-expanding income gap.

1.2 Dimensions of inequality in Namibia

Although there is no clear measurement of what constitutes an opportunity, discrimination based on certain characteristics limits people from exercising their full potential, leading to disparities in income and wealth. Yet income is not the only dimension in which inequality manifests itself in Namibia. Four factors interact and interlock to define the status, trends and patterns of inequality that hold back human development for all. The inequalities that the Namibian nation faces are detailed below.

1. Gender inequality

Although discrimination on the basis of sex is against the law in Namibia, it still exists and remains one of the barriers to human development. Males are usually better off, earning more than females. According to the NSA, in 2015/16 only 43% of female-headed households reported depending on salaries as a source of income, as opposed to 61.8% of male-headed households. Despite the fact that girls and women have longer life expectancy from birth, women remain at a disadvantage in health, income and protection. Gender-based inequality and violence continue to inhibit women’s and girls’ lives, and their fuller contribution to the national human development landscape in the country. However, in comparison with other countries, the human development level of women in Namibia is relatively high, as Namibia is ranked 13th in the top 20 countries where the human development of women is high.

2. Income inequality

This form of inequality is the most dwelled upon, and it is the easiest to measure because of data availability. Namibia has seen improvement in some socioeconomic challenges such as poverty over the years. However, when it comes to distribution of income, the disparity between those who have more and those who have little to nothing (although slightly decreasing) is still very high. According to the Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) 2015/2016,

the Gini-coefficient stood at 0.56, a slight 2 percentage point decrease from 0.58 recorded in 2010. High income inequality is one of the major causes of poverty, and poverty limits the ability of individuals and reduces their living standards. The high level of income inequality cripples the development of those who are worse off and hence leads to weak human development. The reasons for such income inequality are complex, including unemployment, unbalanced economic structure, and incomplete functioning of the planning and budgeting mechanism to adjust the redistribution of wealth.

3. Land distribution inequality

During the German colonial era, Namibian people were forcefully removed from their own land and it was occupied by the white settlers. Land appropriation and resettlement took place until the 1960s. Although colonial rule endured from 1884 till 1990, the unequal distribution and ownership of land in Namibia remains a sociopolitical issue that Namibia needs to overcome. Post-independence, the land issue is still unresolved, and the distribution is no longer solely determined by race but also by ethnicity, gender and level of income.

While over 70 percent of Namibians make their living from communal land, fewer than 5 000 individuals own freehold farmland. The most disadvantaged are women, of whom only 0.5 percent hold land ownership rights, while 26.6 percent of women work in agriculture. As a key property and economic resource, wealth in Namibia remains skewed along the lines of land ownership laid down in the colonial period. Equitable access to land must form the core of a renewed human development effort to reduce inequality in development opportunities for all.

4. Health inequalities

Namibia, as one of the least populated countries in southern Africa, has made some remarkable improvements to its health sector since independence, notably in the primary health sector and service delivery. However, these improvements may overshadow the disparities that still exist in the sector. This is because while availability of health services might have improved and service delivery is free at state hospitals, there still remains a gap

in the quality of healthcare service provision. While those from the high-income category have ready access to high quality health services, the same cannot be said for those who cannot afford private health care. The other disparities in the health sector exist in the gender and geographical demographics. While average life expectancy (females and males combined) in 2019 was just under 65 years at birth, wealthier, better educated and urban-dwelling households have better access to health care. Easy access to health services has not been realised for rural residents, due to there being insufficient health care facilities in these areas. Moreover, the worrying sanitation conditions in informal settlements is an aspect of inequality that cannot be ignored.

5. Inequalities in education

Education is a great equaliser that plays a very important role in human development. It is considered one of the key aspects that can help reduce poverty and increase equality of opportunities in a society. The Namibian Constitution states that primary education should be compulsory and provided free of charge at public schools, and that every Namibian child has the right to be educated. But the urban-rural divide also plays a significant role in determining who enjoys the benefits of schooling in Namibia. The quality of learning also determines different life advantages, where those from wealthier households enjoy the advantages of greater literacy and numeracy than others, thus perpetuating a lifecycle of unequal advantage based on birth and socioeconomic standing. Further, gender disparities exist in the education sector, where females are observed to complete more years of schooling than the males.

Finally, it is worth noting the challenges associated with data capture, storage and management that are experienced in Namibia. This hampers deep research and detailed analysis of the abovementioned inequalities. For example, data related to the informal sector are scarce, which hinders more robust research into the low-income groups, and which consequently further constrains the development of effective and efficient targeted policies.

1.3 Development planning and human development

The heart of the challenge of inequality lies not only in the economic sphere but can be found in the unequal opportunities for Namibians to be or do whatever they value, and believe they are capable of being or doing. The challenge of inequality is not only about control of resources or wealth held by the few, but about the barriers that inequality presents to inclusive

and sustainable human development. Indeed, as this report underscores, the relationship between human development, human capabilities and inequality is complex, but it is critical to understand it to ensure inclusive and sustainable development for all in Namibia (Box 1).

Box 1 Human development, capabilities and inequality

“Human development is the expansion of people’s freedoms to live long, healthy and creative lives; to advance other goals they have reason to value; and to engage actively in shaping development equitably and sustainably on a shared planet” (UNDP Human Development Report 2010 – The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development, p. 2).

The capability approach is grounded in the notion of freedom. According to Sen (1985, p. 36), capabilities “are notions of freedom in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead.” Well-being is a function of resources and the ability to convert them into achievements, or “functionings”.

This approach has particular implications in the case of inequality. Inequality refers to “differences, variation and disparities” in the characteristics of individuals and groups. Inequity adds a moral dimension – it refers to a subset of those inequalities that are considered unjust. Inequity and inequality are integral to the capability approach because of their links to distributive justice.

The case for a focus on reducing inequalities can be made on both intrinsic and instrumental grounds. The arguments for the intrinsic value of greater equality takes equity as a starting point.

Equality of capabilities would be equitable. But the distribution of capabilities typically cannot be observed, because it is concerned with substantive freedoms rather than outcomes (Sen 1985², 1999³). Rather, the extent to which societies are inequitable must be inferred on the basis of inequalities in outcomes, and consideration of the process by which they come about. As argued in the HDR 2011, “Inequalities in outcomes are largely the product of unequal access to capabilities” (UNDP 2011,⁴ p. 19).

If people within a society had equal capabilities, we would not necessarily expect equal outcomes, because people have different preferences and values. But we could be confident that those outcomes arose because of differences in people’s choices rather than constraints on their abilities to exercise their choice.

Namibia in its medium- and long-term plans – Vision 2030 and all the NDPs – recognises the challenges inequality poses to its national development agenda, peace and stability, including human development. For the current plan, inequality effectively cuts across each of the four NDP5 goals, undercutting progress in Achieving inclusive, sustainable and equitable growth (NDP5 Goal 1); Building capable and healthy human resources (NDP5 Goal 2); Ensuring a sustainable environment

and enhancing resilience (NDP5 Goal 3); and Promoting good governance through effective institutions (NDP5 Goal 4). Addressing inequality is also fundamental to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Adopted in 2015 to be achieved by 2030, the SDGs recognise the importance of inequality in multiple dimensions, notably in SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower

² Amartya Sen (1985). *Commodities and Capabilities*. North-Holland.

³ Amartya Sen (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press.

⁴ Human Development Report 2011: *Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All*.

women and girls) and SDG 10 (Reduce inequality across and within countries).

The 2030 Agenda also recognises inequality as a cross-cutting factor in the commitment to “Leave No One Behind”. By identifying groups vulnerable to being left behind, the 2030 Agenda enshrines the commitment to reach those vulnerable groups first. Moreover, the SDGs will only be seen to have been fully achieved when they are achieved for all, which underscores the importance of eliminating inequality in the enjoyment of basic human rights, dignity and human development.

1.4 History of human development in Namibia

The first National Human Development Report in Namibia was produced in 1996, five years after independence. The five National Human

Development Reports have focused on the following themes:

- 1996: Economic Growth for Human Development;
- 1997: General Human Development Report for Namibia;
- 1998: Environment and Human Development in Namibia;
- 1999: Alcohol and Human Development in Namibia; and
- 2001: Gender-based Violence in Namibia.

The last NNHDR, which was produced in 2001, focused on gender-based violence and its impact on Namibian society. The report concluded with an examination of policy issues and offered recommendations for addressing violence against women and girls more effectively within Namibian society, focusing on specific areas such as the prevention of violence, bringing justice and redress to survivors, and support services for violence victims.

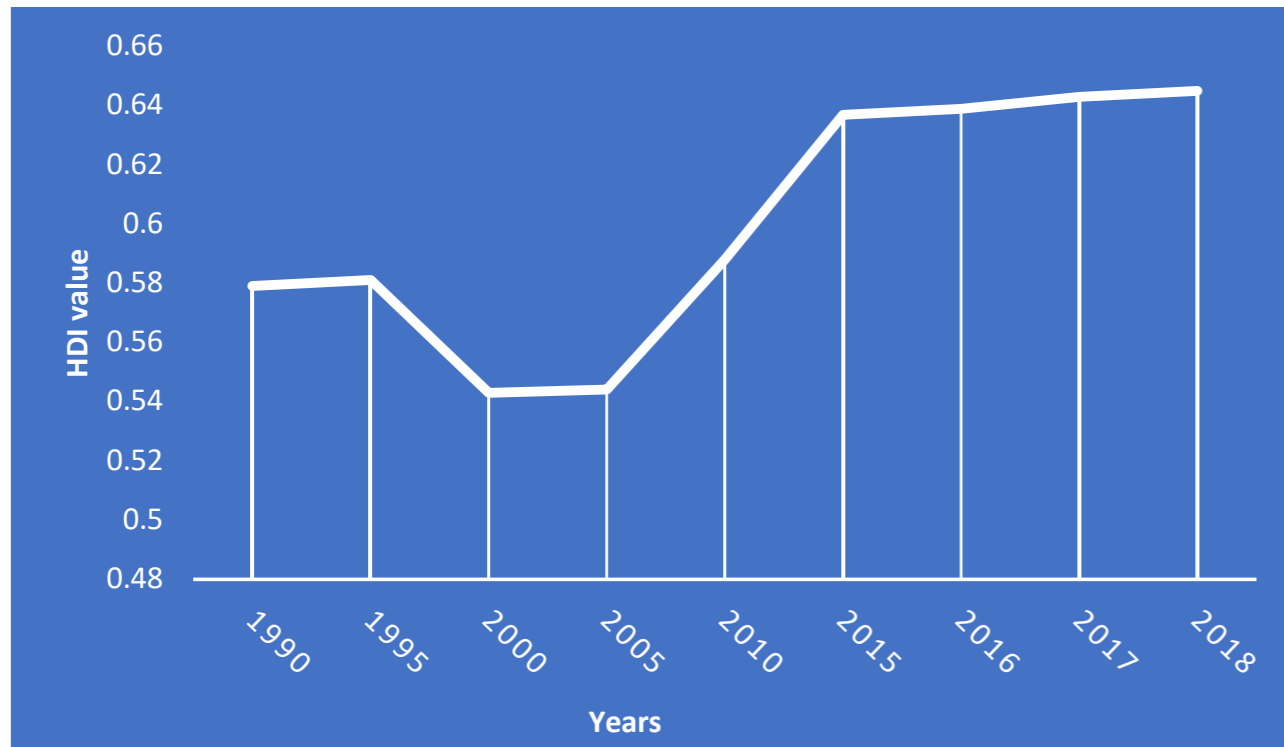


Figure 1.1 Human development trends in Namibia

Source: UNDP-HDR update 2018

The figure above reviews Namibia’s progress in human development during the years 1990 to 2018. In 29 years, the Human Development

Index (HDI) in Namibia has increased from 0.579 in 1990 to 0.645 in 2018. During this time Namibia experienced improved health services,

achieved a better education system, and increased life expectancy. The living standards of the Namibian people also have improved since the first Human Development Report was produced in 1990, with income inequality declining from 0.701 in 1993 to 0.56 in 2016. The trends of the HDI and its attributes will be further explored in the second chapter.

1.5 Namibia’s development policies on addressing inequality

Around the world, the impact and consequences of inequality have focused on income inequality. This chapter puts this major strand of debate into context and assesses how addressing inequality has been reflected in Namibia’s development policy to date.

Reducing inequality and disparity has been a central goal of development policies in Namibia since independence. In 1997, GRN adopted a policy on decentralisation with the aim of addressing inequality within and across regions. The main purpose of decentralisation is to ensure socioeconomic and cultural development and to provide people at grassroots level with the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes (Ministry of Regional, Local and Rural Development, 1997).⁵

The decentralisation process has contributed to bringing services closer to the people, created employment opportunities, and strengthened economic development in regions.

The First National Development Plan (NDP1) placed the eradication of inequalities as a top social welfare priority (National Planning Commission, 1995). NDP2 devoted significant attention to the high level of income inequality in the country, focusing in particular on the legacy of apartheid, the dual economy, unemployment, and differential access to educational attainment, as well as on gender-based and locational (urban versus rural and inter-regional) inequities. The focus on inequalities also featured in NDP3 and NDP4.

The current Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) is being implemented from the financial year 2017/18 up until 2021/22. In NDP5, a

⁵ Decentralisation Policy

target was set to ensure that by 2022 the income inequality coefficient be reduced from 0.572 recorded in 2015/2016, to 0.500. Taking into account that inequality exists beyond income, NDP5 also sets the goal of reducing gender inequality, by ensuring that by 2022 the rate of women’s empowerment would have increased from 68 percent in 2014, to 76 percent, and that women would be free from gender-based violence. Furthermore, NDP5 sets indicators for rural poverty and unemployment rates and sanitation, amongst many more, to trigger policy actions aimed at reducing inequalities among different groups of society.

To reduce inequality and disparities, GRN initiated several interventions. It introduced the minimum wage for workers in low-paid jobs, such as domestic workers, security workers, farm workers and construction workers. It also introduced initiatives like the Financial Sector Strategy, financing of SMEs through the Development Bank of Namibia, the Financial Literacy Forums, and the individuals’ savings products solution developed through the Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority. The latter was established to encourage higher saving rates and to lower the cost of building assets for working- and middle-class households, to provide better economic security for struggling families through financial services. GRN has further been advocating for programmes that enrol workers in retirement plans for retirement savings, which help lower-income households to build wealth. It has also been implementing a progressive tax regime, which includes among others the exemption from taxation of lower income earners below a certain threshold, and the exemption of basic goods included in poor households’ baskets from value-added tax.

In addition to the long-term plans, GRN has been fighting poverty and unequal distribution of resources through social protection. Namibia has a number of cash transfer interventions for vulnerable groups including the elderly, war veterans, the disabled, and orphans and vulnerable children. These are complemented by in-kind transfers, largely towards health and education, as well as by indirect subsidies. For instance, in 2012/13 around N\$ 2.5 billion was allocated to social grants, including over N\$ 1 billion for social pensions, and N\$ 360

million for maintenance grants and foster parent allowances. All these programmes are aimed at eradicating poverty and improving living standards of the targeted groups, and they play a positive role in reducing poverty and inequalities amongst Namibians.

According to NDP5, social safety nets play a fundamental role in reducing poverty and have expanded to cover over 400 000 beneficiaries. Grants for children can be particularly important for women, who generally care for children born outside of marriage in situations where getting adequate maintenance contributions

from absent fathers is often difficult. Figure 1.2 below shows the share of government spending on social welfare in the financial years from 2014/15 to 2019/20.

Nearly half of Namibia's budget is allocated to social sector priorities (as seen in Figure 1.2). During the past three financial years, the share of government expenditure on social welfare has been increasing, from 36.8 percent in 2014/15 FY to 49 percent in 2018/19 FY, and slightly decreasing to 48.9 percent in 2019/20 FY.

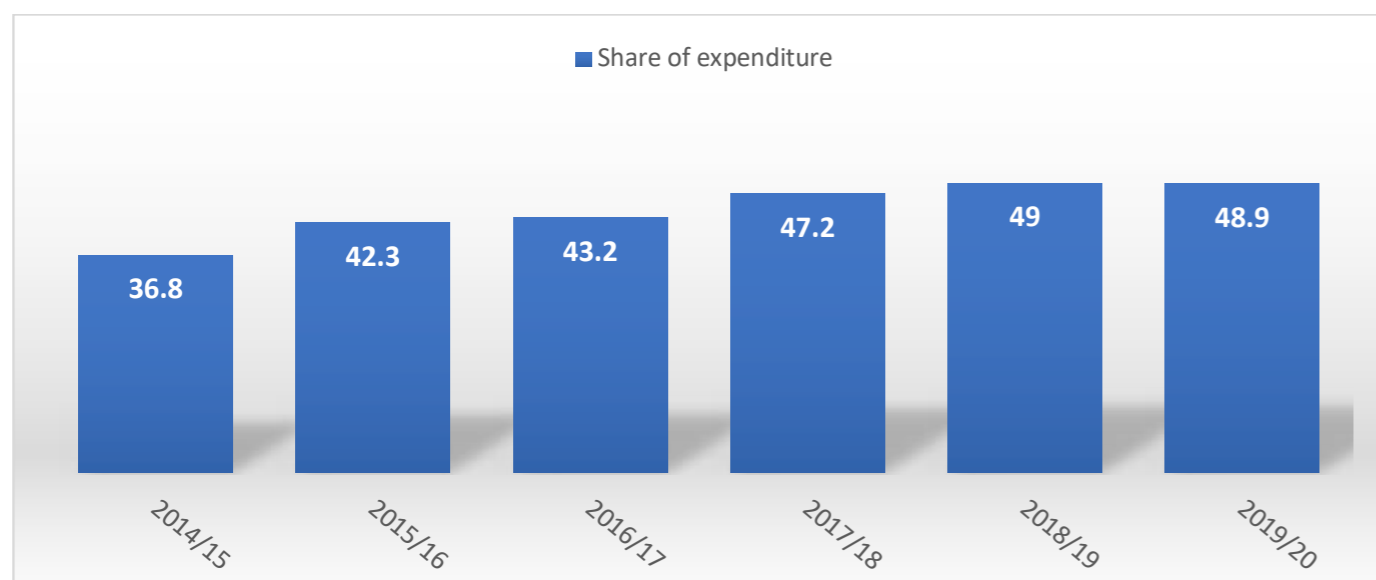


Figure 1.2 Share of government expenditure on social welfare⁶

Source: MOF – Citizen guide to the national budget 2014/15–2019/20

Financing for development: In aiming to bring together financing and related policies, and addressing financing challenges to the achievement of SDGs, including inequality reduction, Namibia is one of the 16 pilot countries that is developing an Integrated National Financing Framework. This Framework will adopt a series of prioritised financing policy actions, including improvements in the income tax system, which will best respond to Namibia's comprehensive development and inequality reduction needs.

Furthermore, in order to reduce inequality, the Bank of Namibia has conducted a study on the viability of establishing a Sovereign Wealth Fund in Namibia. As a government-owned

investment fund, the Fund can be focused on developing domestic infrastructure investments and assisting to fund socioeconomic projects or promote industrial policies that may contribute to the country's potential output growth.⁷

1.6 Commitment to reducing inequality

Analysis of the Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) shows there is no automatic relationship between levels of inequality and the commitment to fight inequality a government may hold. Indeed, for Namibia, very high levels of income inequality co-exist

with a strong commitment to reduce them. In Namibia, as elsewhere, inequality remains a consequence of a set of policy choices. Across the world, governments are taking – or not taking – strong policy decisions to fight inequality. To reflect the levels of commitment to reduce inequalities, Oxfam created the CRI Index, which ranks 157 countries across the world on their efforts in three policy areas or 'pillars': social spending, taxation and labour. It remains critical to not only monitor levels of inequality, but to also measure and monitor government policy commitments as key drivers of change and progress.

The CRI ranks countries based on spending on health, education and social protection, progressivity of tax policy, and labour rights and minimum wages. High ranking countries tend to do well on each of these factors, while the opposite is true for low-ranking countries. A higher rank demonstrates higher levels of commitment to reduce inequalities through this suite of policy tools.

On this index, Namibia ranks 32 out of 157 countries, with the country being one of the highest-ranked African countries (second only to South Africa), and fifth among middle-income countries. The country provides a strong example of the difference between a country's CRI ranking and traditional measures of inequality. Despite being one of the most unequal countries in the world, its high CRI score (0.607) reflects GRN's commitment to reducing inequality, particularly through its high levels of social spending with primary and secondary education free for all students in government schools – and some of the most progressive taxation policies. The government has increased spending on social protection and has also increased the minimum wage substantially. Further, a new study has shown that its taxation and spending policies are reducing inequality significantly, as discussed in Chapter 3.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Namibia ranks 1st on spending on health, education and social protection to reduce inequalities. However, it ranks 8th on progressivity of tax policy and 5th on labour rights and minimum wages. This continues to underscore that inequality harms the potential of growth to reduce poverty and deliver shared prosperity. In effect, as seen

in Chapter 3, it hinders the full emergence of a new middle class. Globally, Namibia ranks 27th on spending, 29th on taxation policies and 56th on labour rights and wages. This means that relative to other countries, Namibia's performance lags further behind on labour rights and wages.

The main objectives of the 2019 Namibia Human Development Report are:

- to understand the policies, actions and trends underlying the level of human development and types of inequalities and disparities prevalent in the country;
- to determine factors influencing human development, inequalities and disparities in Namibia; and
- to synthesise policy options for future improvement in human development and closing the gap in inequalities and disparities among Namibians to lead long, healthy and dignified lives.

1.7 The report ahead

The report is organised in seven chapters. The first chapter sets the stage for the report by sketching the policy environment for human development, inequalities and disparities; and contextualises human development and capabilities concepts in Namibia. It further outlines the objectives of the report.

The second chapter provides an in-depth exploration of the trends and patterns of human development and inequalities in Namibia.

The next five chapters (three, four, five, six and seven) emphasise the different dimensions of inequality, namely Income inequality, disparities in land distribution, gender inequality, education inequality, and health disparities in Namibia, respectively. Each chapter examines the nature of various factors of inequality critical to accelerating inclusive human development for all in Namibia, the human costs of inequality, and the underlying causes that policies must address.

The final chapter synthesises a policy agenda to not only curtail inequalities, but to leverage inclusive human development as an accelerator to achieve national and global priorities for Namibia.

⁶ Social welfare expenditure comprises cash benefits, direct in-kind provision of goods and services, and grants. They target low income households, and the elderly, disabled, sick or unemployed, and young persons. (OECD, 2020)

⁷ The viability of establishing a Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) in Namibia, Bank of Namibia, 2018.

Chapter 2

Patterns of Human Development in Namibia

Human development is about the expansion of freedoms and well-being a person can enjoy throughout his/her lifetime. This chapter explores the key trends in human development across its multiple dimensions in Namibia. Human development reflects a country's resilience and reduces vulnerability. It is a good measure of overall national development, as an indicator for widespread choices, enhanced capabilities and improved opportunities for all. Exploring each of the components of human development below underpins the core message of this report – that understanding the multiple dimensions of inequality is essential to both accelerate human development and to close the gaps between Namibians to ensure progress for all. The chapter provides human development trends as measured by various composite indices, namely the Human Development Index (HDI), the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IAHDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII), the Gender Development Index, and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MDI).

2.1 Human Development Index trends in Namibia

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development – a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Beyond the measure of an economy provided by gross national income alone, the HDI reflects the level of well-being in a society. In the last 30 years, Namibia has seen a significant shift in human development (Figure 2.1). In 1990, the national HDI for Namibia stood at 0.579. But in 2000, the country's HDI declined to 0.543, which can most likely be attributed to the adverse the consequences of HIV and AIDS, the recurrent droughts, and high levels of inequalities in the nation, especially those existing across the three indicators of the human development index (education, health and living standards).

Despite the decline in 2000, Namibia saw an increase of 11.3 percent in its HDI between 1990 and 2018. This is on the back of its life expectancy at birth increasing by 1.8 years, mean years of schooling increasing by 1.4 years and expected years of schooling increasing by 1.5 years, and GNI per capita increasing by about 66.3 percent during the same period (between 1990 and 2018). There was an average annual decline in Namibia's HDI value of 0.64 percent between 1990 and 2000, as indicated in Table

2.1. The annual average value then recovered and increased by 0.78 percent to 5.88 between 2000 and 2010 and 1.17 percent between 2010 and 2018, which is well above the sub-Saharan Africa's average annual HDI growth of 1.03 percent. Indeed, the 2010–2018 average annual HDI growth rate is nearly double the 2000–2010 rate – a sign that Namibia is pursuing policies that are helping to promote human development in the country.

Table 2.1 Average annual HDI growth (%)

Country/region/development category	1990 – 2000	2000 – 2010	2010 – 2018	1990–2018
Namibia	-0.64	0.78	1.17	0.38
Botswana	0.14	1.34	1.22	0.88
South Africa	0.06	0.52	0.78	0.43
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.50	1.65	1.03	1.06
Medium Human Development	1.30	1.48	1.22	1.34
World	0.71	0.84	0.60	0.72

Source: UNDP 2019 Human Development Report

2.2 Regional Human Development Index

Human development entails improved well-being of the people. When development is insufficient to present people with better opportunities to better their livelihoods, these people are bound to remain in poverty and endure impoverished living standards.

Breaking down the figures at the subnational level shows how regions in Namibia performed relative to one another. As shown in Figure 2.2, human development is highest for the most developed regions, namely Erongo, Karas and Kunene. These are also the regions with the lowest poverty rates in the country as per the Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2015/2016. The opposite is true for the least developed regions, such as Kunene (later East and West Kunene), Kunene and

8 Kavango Region split into East Kavango and West Kavango in 2013. References to "Kavango" (without "East" or "West") are to the area occupied by both East Kavango Region and West Kavango Region (former Kavango Region).

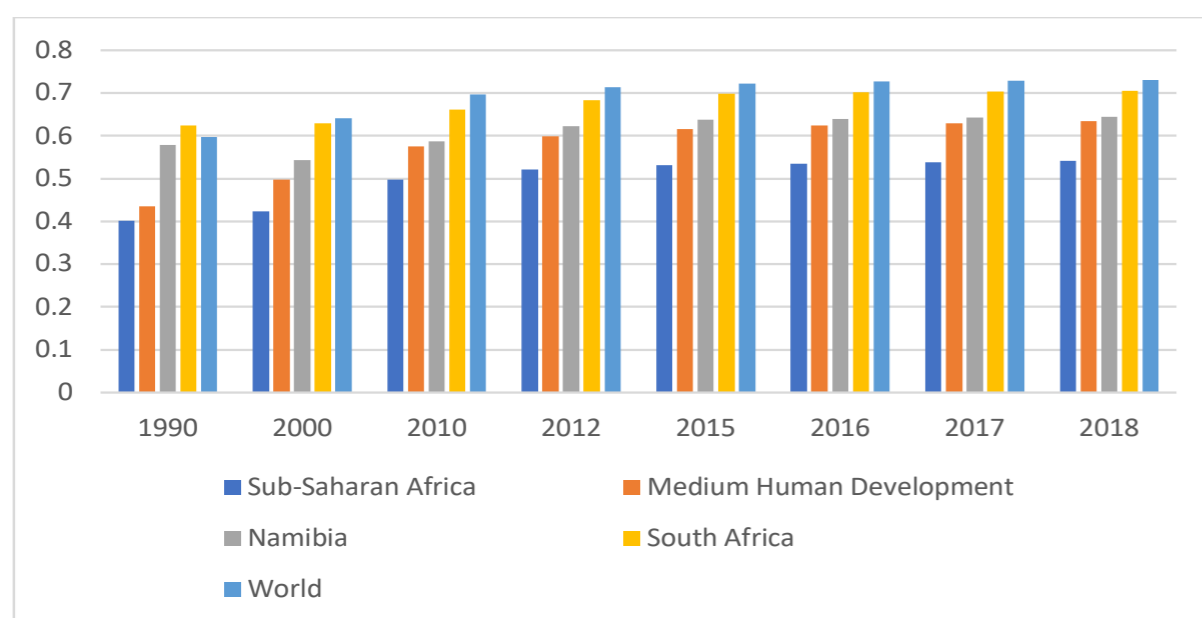


Figure 2.1 Namibia's Human Development Index over time with some comparisons

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2019

Ohangwena, which recorded the lowest HDI values. Overall, all regions' average HDI values fit in the Medium Human Development

category, which is in the range of 0.500 to 0.699.

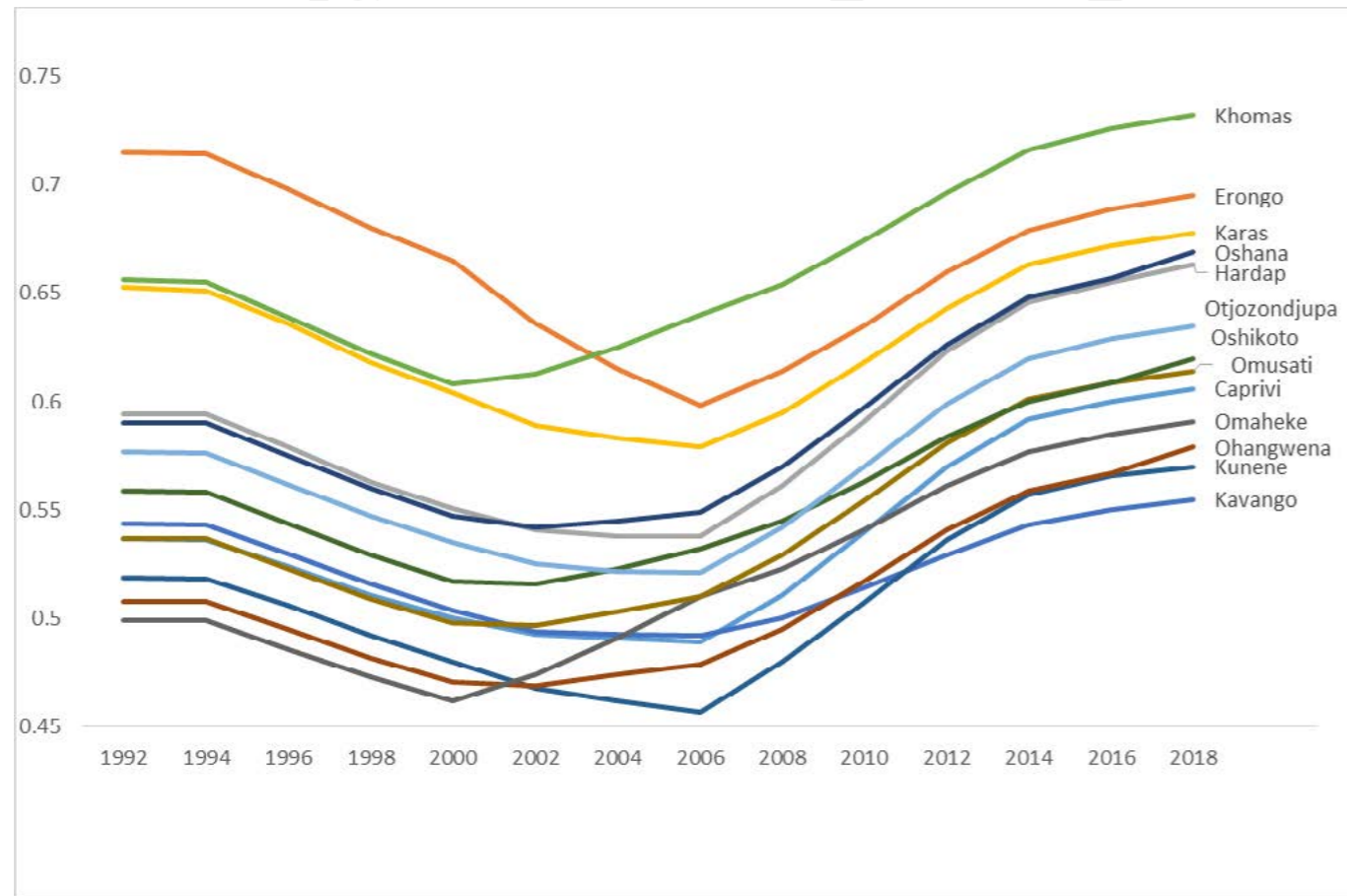


Figure 2.2 Regional Human Development Index, 1990–2017

*Due to limited data availability, the Health Index at the regional level uses the same life expectancy data as is available at the national level.

Source: Global Data Lab, <https://globaldatalab.org/>

2.3 What drives human development in each of the regions?

Over the last 30 years, the twin engines of human development expansion have been education and health, shown in Figure 2.3. The major recovery of life expectancy at birth from the 1990s reflects these improvements in health measures. Meanwhile, the education index has also experienced expansion as literacy and enrolment have strengthened in recent years. Improvements in income levels are generally higher than the achievements in both education and health. The next chapters explore these patterns in more detail.

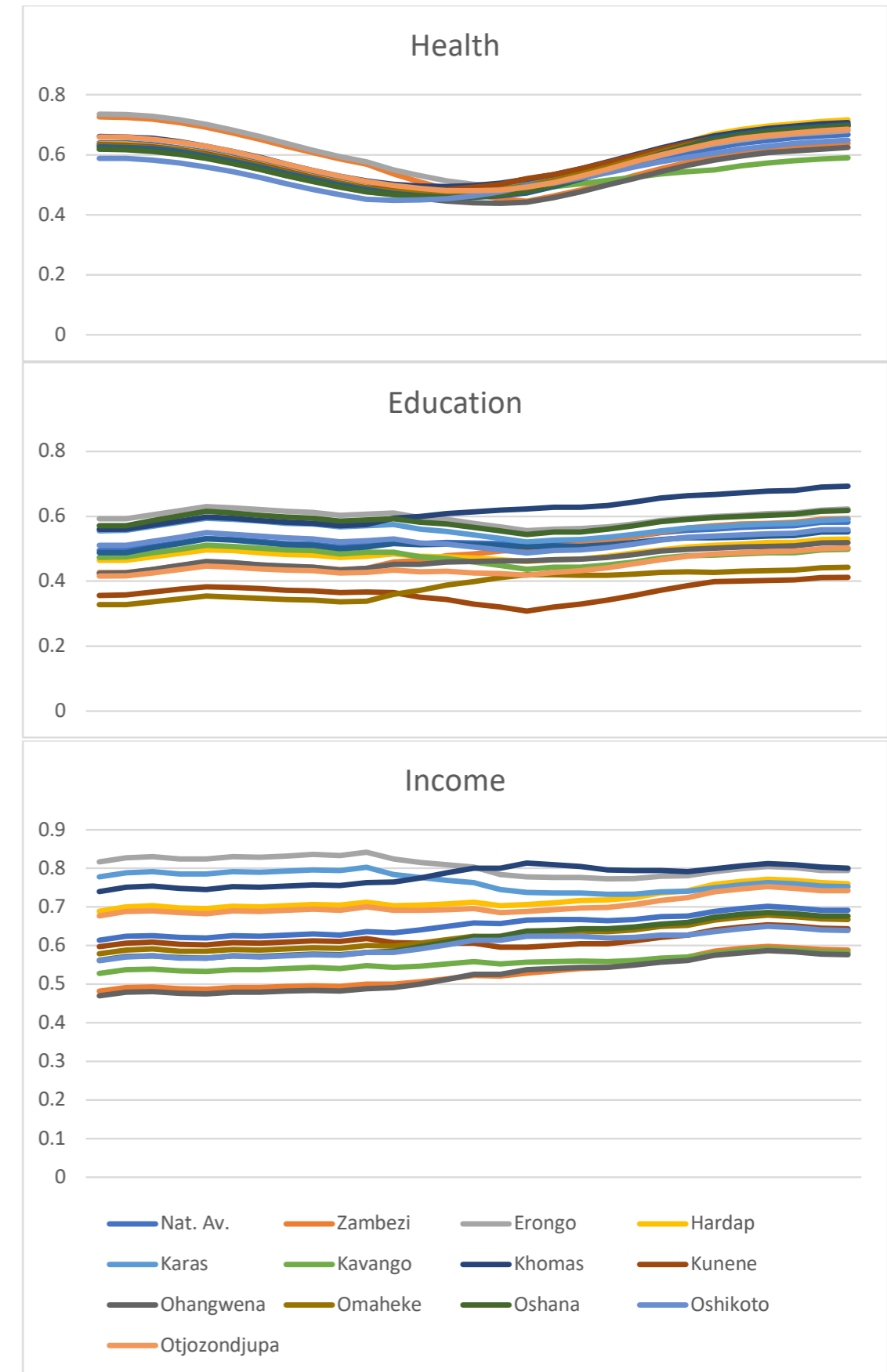


Figure 2.3 Human Development Index Components 1990 – 2018

Source: Global Data Lab (<https://globaldatalab.org/>)

2.4 Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index

Whereas the HDI captures the average level of human development grounded in the standard of living, education and health, it does not give a sense of the distribution of human development in a society. Because of this limitation, the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IAHDI) adjusts the HDI for inequalities in the

three basic dimensions of human development. As can be seen, Namibia's national-level HDI stands at 0.645 in 2018, but it drops to 0.42 when adjusted for inequality (Figure 2.4). That is a 34.8 percent loss in the basic dimensions of human development reflected in the HDI.

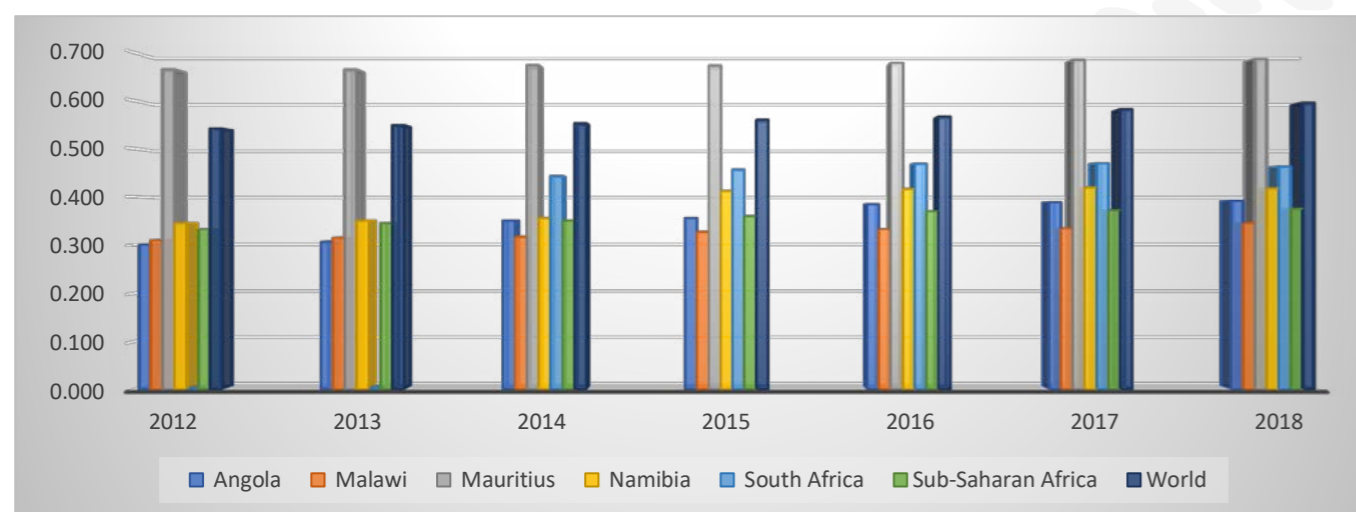


Figure 2.4 Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index

Source: UNDP 2019 Human Development Report (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/138806>)

Although the IAHDI is significantly lower than the traditional HDI, it shows a gradual improvement over the years. This is an indication of slow improvement in the equal distribution of development. Across all countries with data, Namibia is ranked 13th in the world in terms of greatest loss to the HDI due to inequality – and the Medium Human Development country experiencing the largest loss. Inequality in Namibia continues to be high, with insignificant reductions over the years (see next chapter).

Income in Namibia sees the biggest loss due to inequality in its distribution, with the income sub-index in the HDI dropping 53.6 percent (Figure 2.5). Inequality tends to be significantly negatively associated with per capita income levels: not only are the poorest countries the most unequal, but it is also believed that no country has successfully developed beyond middle-income status while retaining a very high level of inequality in income or consumption. In this situation, high inequality is considered a feature of underdevelopment.⁹

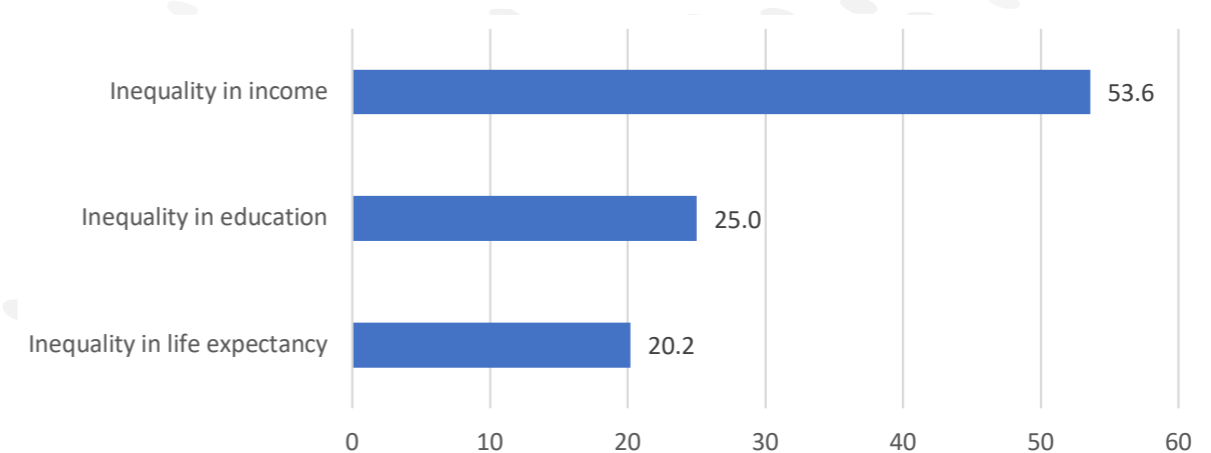


Figure 2.5 Losses to dimension of human development due to inequality in Namibia

Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/IHDI>

Education follows next, but is significantly further behind, with a loss of 25 percent. GRN promotes the concept of “Education for All” in order to ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes. Education attainment for Namibia has increased over the years. However, regional and gender disparities still exist. For example, enrolment is significantly higher among females than males, with 5 percent of females and 8 percent of males having no formal education. One indicator shows the urban/rural divide. Specifically, women and men in urban areas (96 percent and 95 percent, respectively) are more likely to be literate than those in rural areas (90 percent and 85 percent, respectively).¹⁰

Third, the loss in life expectancy due to inequality is 22.1 percent. Life expectancy at birth in Namibia in 2016 was 65.1 years, well above the sub-Saharan African life expectancy of 58.9 years. There has been a notable increase in life expectancy for both females and males in Namibia since the 2011 Census. Namibia has improved its health system since independence,

ensuring that health facilities are within reach of its people. Several health facilities have been constructed and some health centres have been upgraded to provide more advanced health services. The system of waiving treatment fees in government health facilities has been introduced and is being implemented. This is to ensure that every citizen has access to health services. However, gross inequalities in social and physical living conditions result in widely varying health indicators for different segments of the population. Inadequate access to safe water and poor sanitation are also public health concerns. Since they create conditions conducive for the spread of diseases, they are directly linked to increased health risks.

2.5 Gender Inequality Index

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects the costs to human development as a result of inequalities between women and men. A higher value reflects the loss to human development due to inequalities between males and females, and conversely, a lower value signals greater equality between them.

⁹ Martin Ravallion (2008). Global Poverty and Inequality: A Review of the Evidence. Volume 4623 of Policy Research Working Papers. World Bank Publications.

¹⁰ Republic of Namibia (2014). Namibia Demographic and Health Survey 2013

Table 2.2 Gender Inequality Index

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018
Botswana	0.58	0.53	0.52	0.50	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.46
Mauritius	0.48	0.45	0.37	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37
Namibia	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.51	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.46
South Africa	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.62	0.60	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57
Medium Human Development	0.67	..	0.60	0.56	0.52	0.51	0.51	0.50
World	0.55	0.52	0.49	0.47	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44

Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data#>

In Table 2.2, the World GII value stands at 0.44 – lower than the GII within sub-Saharan Africa, which was 0.57 in 2018. This indicates a comparatively worse situation for women and girls relative to men and boys in the sub-Saharan region. The average index score for the Medium Human Development countries for the period between 1995 and 2018 was 0.55. However, countries of interest as shown in the table recorded a slightly better score

than both the Medium Human Development and sub-Saharan Africa. Mauritius holds the lowest measured gender inequality with a GII score of 0.37, which indicates relatively equal opportunities for males and females. South Africa follows behind with 0.42 while Botswana and Namibia fare worse, with GII scores of 0.46.

Box 2 Measuring gender inequality

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is an inequality index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development – reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rates of female and male populations aged 15 years and older.

The GII is built to better reveal differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men. It measures the human development costs of gender inequality. Thus, the higher the GII value, the greater the disparities between females and males, and the greater the loss to human development.

Source: UNDP Human Development Report Office, hdr.undp.org

Within Namibia, IlKaras Region experiences the least loss to human development due to gender inequality, as shown in Figure 2.6. Conversely, Zambezi and Otjozondjupa exhibit the greatest

inequality between males and females. The key differences lie in access to income opportunities between the sexes. Chapter 5 explores these inequalities in greater depth.

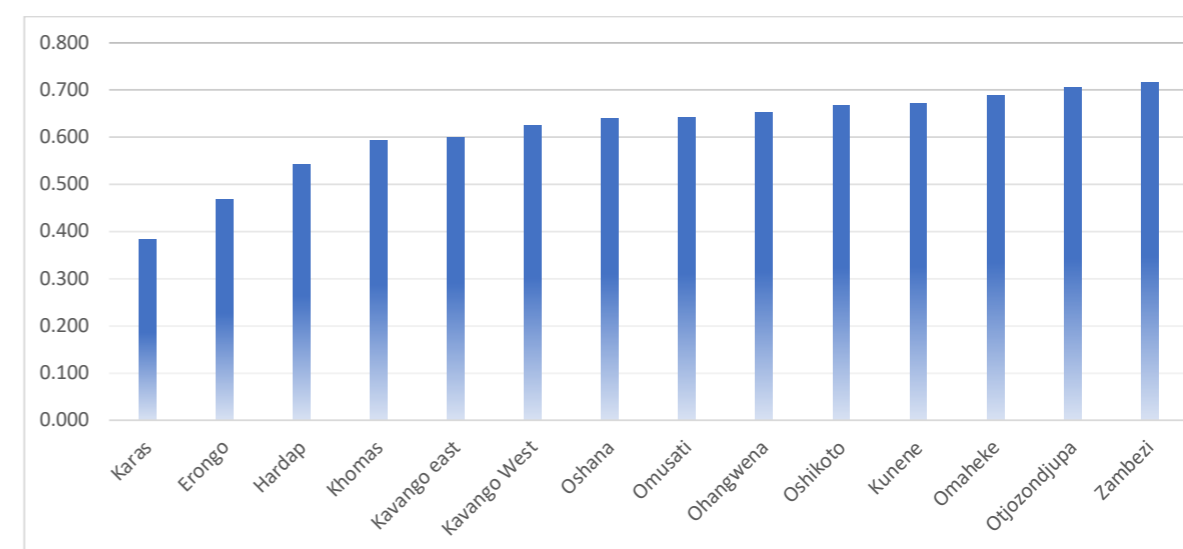


Figure 2.6 Losses to human development due to gender inequality across Namibia's regions

Source: University of Namibia (UNAM) computation¹¹

2.6 Multidimensional poverty patterns

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) shows the ways in which poverty matters

beyond just a lack of income or purchasing power in a society. Indeed, the interaction of

¹¹ The GII covers four indicators: (1) Maternal Mortality Rate; (2) Seats in Parliament held by women (the national level data is replicated for all the regions); (3) Adolescent fertility ratio (this is based on the 2013 DHS and is specific to each region); (4) Labour Force Participation Rate (this is specific to each region). Sourced from the 2016 Namibia Labour Force Survey, Table 3.4, p. 35).h Survey 2013

multiple forms of deprivation serves to hold many in a society in multidimensional poverty. In sub-Saharan Africa, over 560 million live in multidimensional poverty.

At the national level, 40.6 percent of Namibians live in multidimensional poverty, amounting to over 940 000 Namibians in 2013. Nearly 1 in 5 (19.3 percent) of Namibians are vulnerable to multidimensional poverty, experiencing deprivations in a fifth to a third of dimensions covered by the MPI. About 12.9 percent living in severe multidimensional poverty experience deprivation in over 50 percent of dimensions.

Research for this NNHDR computed the multidimensional poverty deprivation scores by sex in Namibia. In 2013/14, 55 percent of male were poor across the range of dimensions covered by the MPI. Similarly, the average multidimensionally poor male was deprived in 60 percent of the weighted indicators. Further, 58 percent of females were faced with multidimensional poverty.

The contribution of each indicator to multidimensional poverty provides insights into the nature of drivers of multidimensional poverty. The higher the MPI value, the larger the proportion of the population living in multidimensional poverty. Figure 2.7 shows that in Namibia, the main drivers of deprivation are nutrition and land/house ownership, while the contributions from child mortality and the source of drinking water are low.

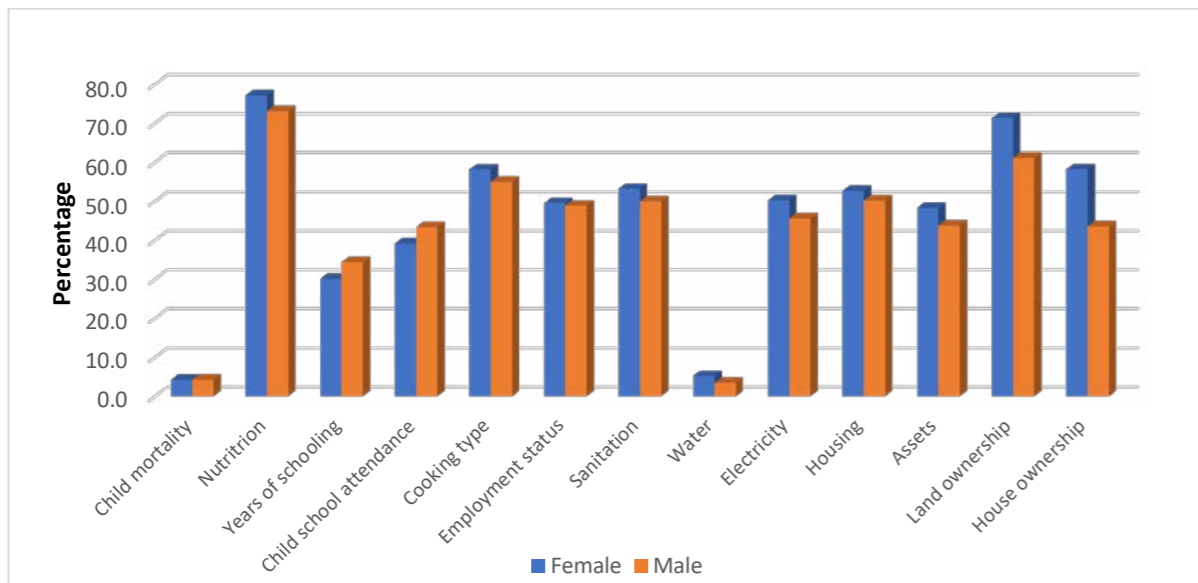


Figure 2.7 Multiple dimensions of poverty in Namibia, by gender

Source: UNAM computation using 2013 Namibia Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS)

Females are less deprived than males in terms of education, but more deprived in terms of house and land ownership. Figure 2.8 shows shares of the population per gender in terms of deprivation. Overall, women in Namibia are more deprived in terms of living standard, while men are more deprived in terms of education.

This is also evidenced in the current enrolment and the graduation figures, where more females graduate than males. The higher living standard enjoyed by males than females is attributed to the fact that males earn more than females, and also that more males than females own houses and land.

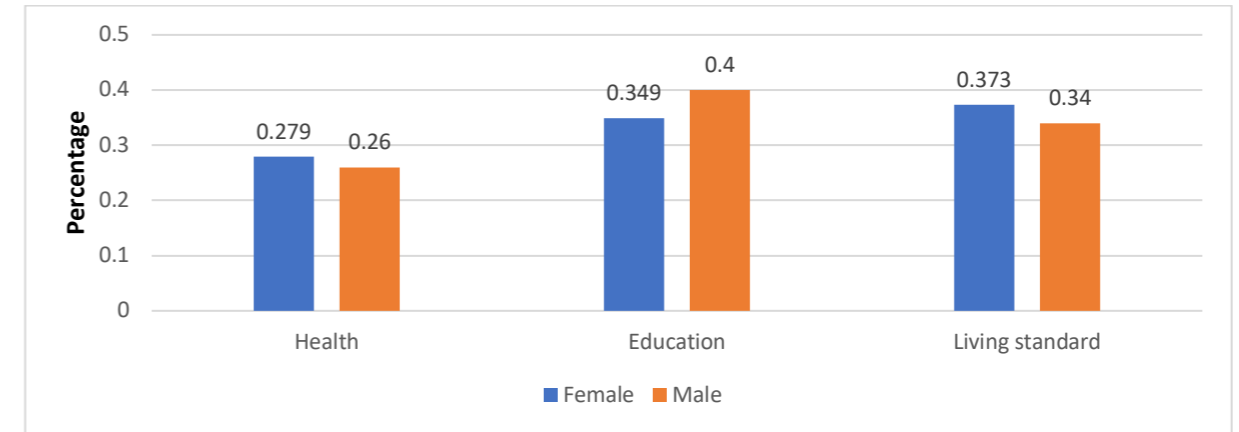


Figure 2.8 Share of female and male deprivation in health, education and living standard

Source: UNAM computation using 2013/14 NDHS

Males in many of Namibia's most rural regions (Zambezi, Ohangwena, Oshana and Oshana) are more deprived in terms of living standard. Figure 2.9 below shows that males

in Hardap, IlKaras, Kunene and Otjozondjupa regions experience deprivation particularly in education, while those in Oshana Region are highly deprived in terms of health.

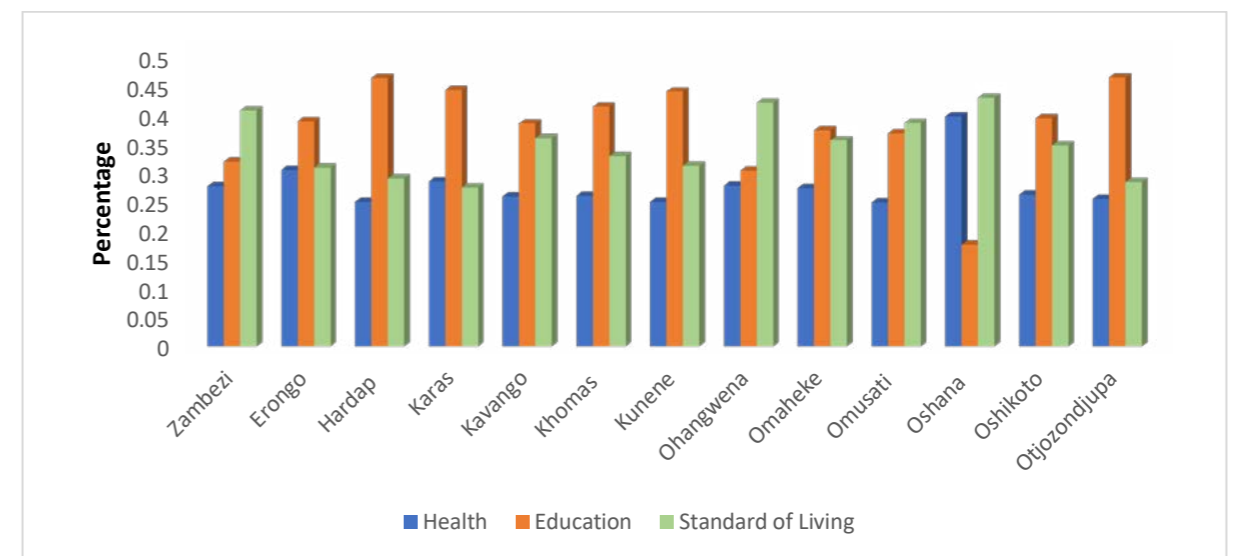


Figure 2.9 Regional multiple deprivation, males

Source: UNAM computation using 2013/14 NDHS

The pattern is roughly similar for females, as shown in Figure 2.10 below. Although all regions seem to be relatively deprived in health, females in Oshana and Zambezi regions are the most deprived in health. The most rural

areas are the most deprived in the category of living standards. On the other hand, while females in most predominantly urban regions recorded better living standards than those in predominantly rural regions.

Chapter 3 Income Inequality and Disparities

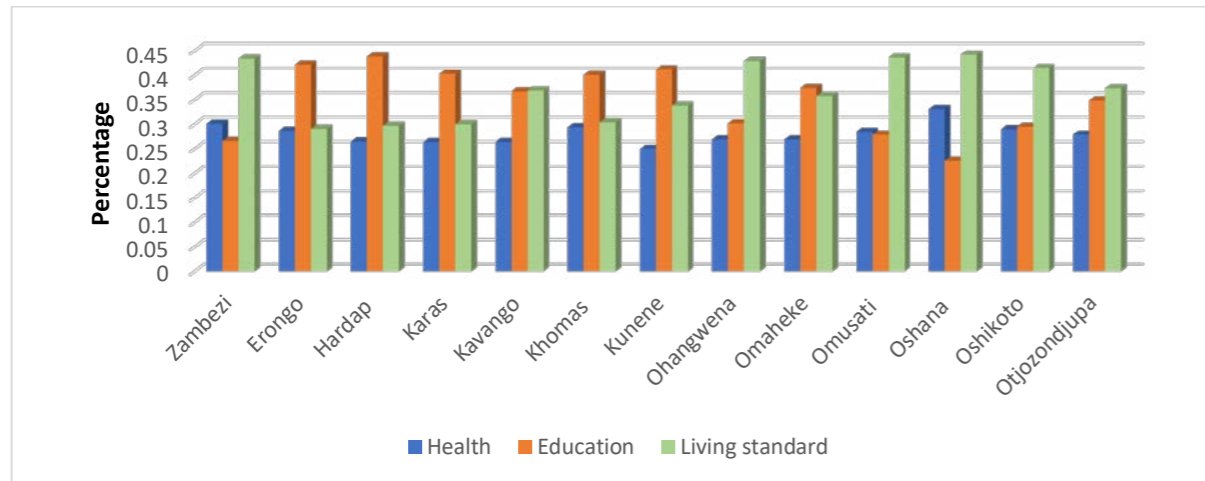


Figure 2.10 Regional multiple deprivation, females

Source: UNAM computation using 2013/14 NDHS

Reduction of income inequality has been at the centre of national development agendas in Namibia. Income inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, declined from 0.701 in 1993/94 to 0.560 in 2015/16, but it remains one of the highest in the world (World Bank, 2018). When data is disaggregated by sex, similar trends are observed in the male- and female-headed

households. In male-headed households, the Gini coefficient decreased from 0.671 in 1993/94 to 0.589 in 2015/16; while for female-headed households, the Gini coefficient declined slightly from 0.547 to 0.544. Male-headed households saw a larger relative decline in the Gini coefficient, but they remained more unequal than female-headed households.

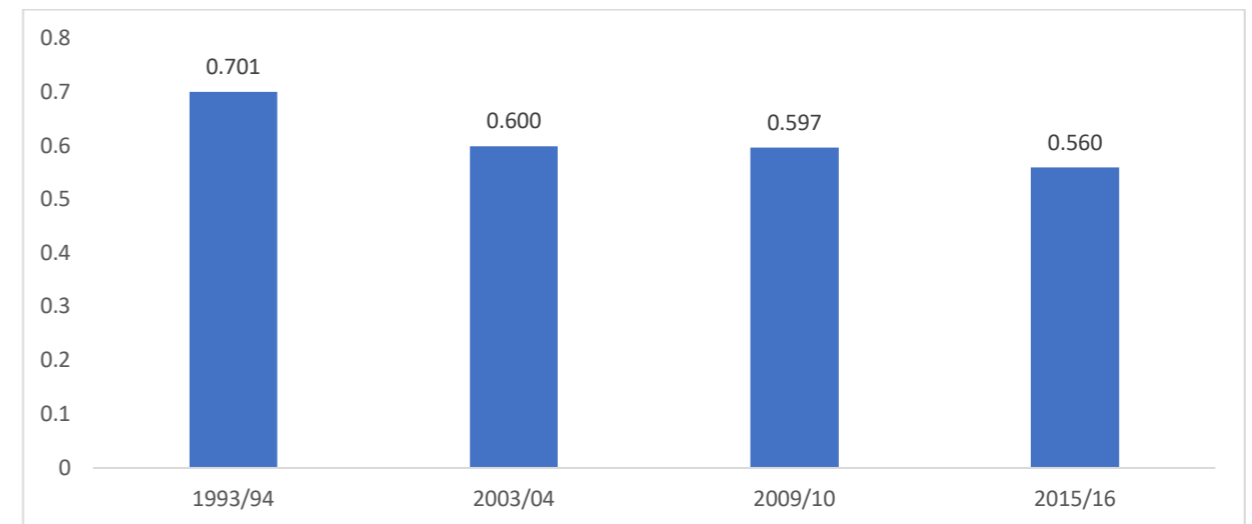


Figure 3.1 Income inequality trends, 1993/94 – 2015/16

Source: 2015/16 NHIES

Regional Gini coefficient inequalities are also observed in the country. The lowest was recorded in Omusati Region (0.45), and highest in Omaheke Region (0.66). The disparities in regional Gini coefficient are largely attributable to the unequal distribution of income within the population segments. A low Gini coefficient in Omusati Region is driven by the fact that subsistence farming is the major activity for most of the population. This income opportunity is accessible to most in the region, causing inequalities to remain minimal. About 38.5 percent of the population indicated that subsistence farming was their main source of income, thus resulting in a lower Gini coefficient. In Omaheke Region, the Gini coefficient is high in spite of the high proportion of communal farmers who reside in the region: they do so

alongside many commercial farmers, and in addition, many marginalised San communities are found in the region. More than 20 percent of the households of speakers of Khoekhoegowab languages¹² indicate that they rely on drought or in-kind receipts for their livelihoods. This is why Omaheke Region has the highest Gini coefficient of all regions. Farmers who own the land for crop and livestock farming earn significantly more than the marginalised communities who might not have attended school, and whose employment opportunities may be limited to being labourers on the farms.

This chapter will close with an analysis of what must be achieved to reach the NDP5 Gini coefficient target of 0.50. The analysis starts with a review of a range of available

¹² The languages spoken by the San people lie on the Khoekhoegowab language continuum.

measures of inequality relevant to income and wealth. Understanding the distribution of income, sectoral GDP growth rates, and the relationship between income inequality and

human development provides the foundation for motivating a renewed policy agenda.

3.1 Beyond Gini - income inequality levels and trends

In Namibia, there is an unequal distribution of income within the population despite the country's classification as an Upper-Middle Income economy. Nationally, only 12 580, or 0.5 percent of Namibia's population, earns more than N\$ 1.5 million annually. As many of the top earner will in fact earn far more than NS 1.5 million annually, and many of the bottom earners will earn less than N\$50 000 annually, the income of the bottom earners is

substantially under one-thirtieth of that of top income earners. This constitutes 781 102 people, representing 34.3 percent of the population (Figure 3.2) (following the 2015/16 NHIES population projection). As a result, Namibia has one of the highest levels of inequality in the world. The figure below shows that most of Namibia's total income is in the hands of a few, painting a worrisome picture of skewed income distribution.

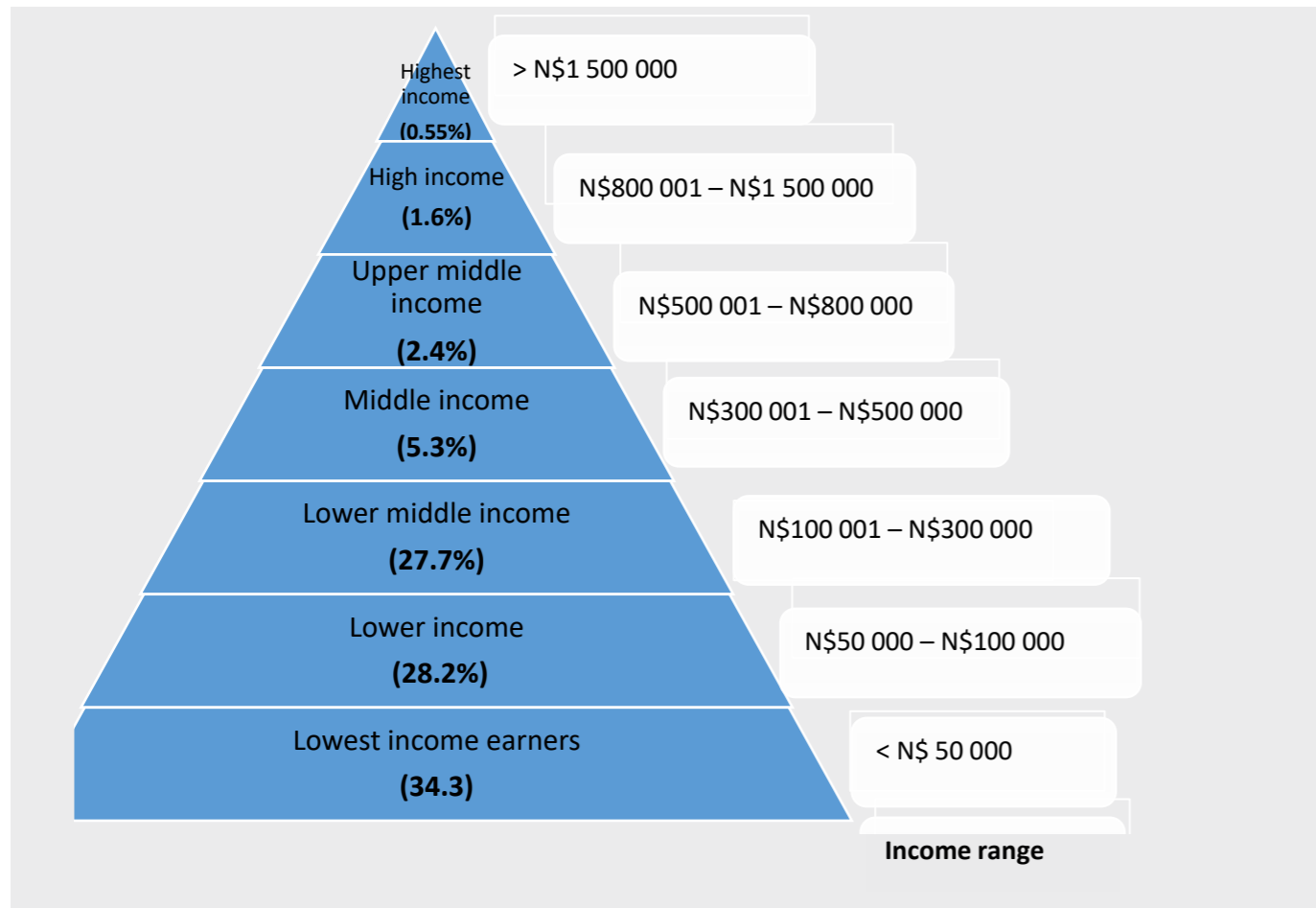


Figure 3.2 Namibia income pyramid
Source: Author's calculation based on 2015/16 NHIES

A more detailed look at the income distribution reveals that there is a decline in the lowest income earners category (Figure 3.3). The lowest income earners (those earning below N\$50 000 per year) have seen their share of the population drop from 78 percent in 2003,

to 34.3 percent in 2015. This means that many people who were formerly in the lowest-earning category have shifted to other, higher income categories. It is worth highlighting that more than half of the Namibian population still falls in the lowest and lower-income earners

categories, earning less than N\$100 000 per annum. Over the years, there has been an improvement in the middle-income earners' population, which improved from 1 percent in 2003/04 to 5.3 percent in 2015/16.

however, the share of income held by the richest only improved slightly, by 1 percentage point, between 2009/10 and 2015/16. There has been a massive decline in the lowest-earning segment of the population, while the middle category's share of income has steadily increased. This means that policy must address the need to strengthen and consolidate their emergence as the engine of income growth in Namibia.

The analysis shows that some broad redistribution of income is taking place in Namibia in the middle and lower categories;

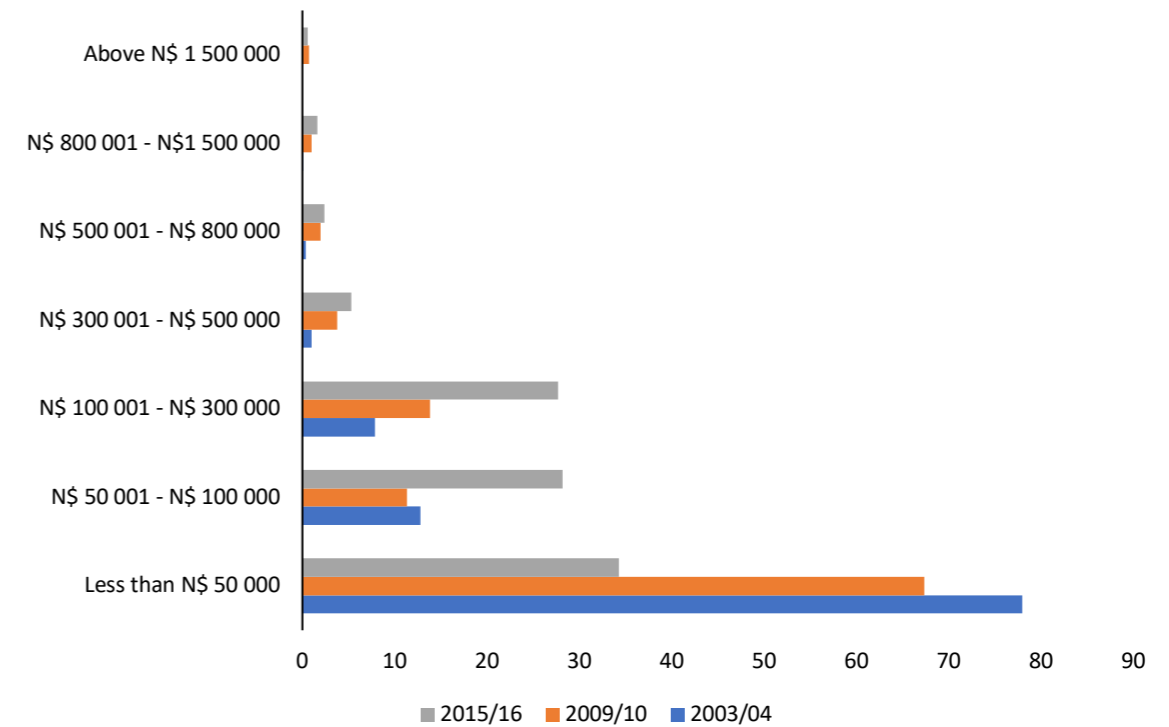


Figure 3.3 Distribution of income during 2003-2016
Source: Author's calculation based on 2015/16; 2009/10; 2003/04 NHIES, Namibia Statistics Agency

The limitation of looking at shares by population alone is necessarily treating the distribution of income as a zero-sum game. While it provides insight into the trends of how income is shared, it says little else about other key factors. These

other key factors include the pivotal relationship between income growth and inequality, to which we now turn.

3.2 Inequality and economic growth (global)

Globally, each percentile of the income distribution saw an increase in income between 1980 and 2016 (Figure 3.4). People in poor emerging market economies saw their incomes rise by 100 to 125 percent over those 36 years, with modest income growth in the middle (including the poor and middle class in the US and Western Europe), and then skyrocketing growth for the global 1 percent, and especially the global 0.001 percent and global 0.0001

percent. In 2020, the World Economic Forum reported that the world's 2 153 billionaires have more wealth than 4.6 billion people who make up 60 percent of the planet's population.¹³

¹³ M. R. Islam and M. Safiur Rahman (2020). Sustainable Water Purification. John Wiley & Sons.

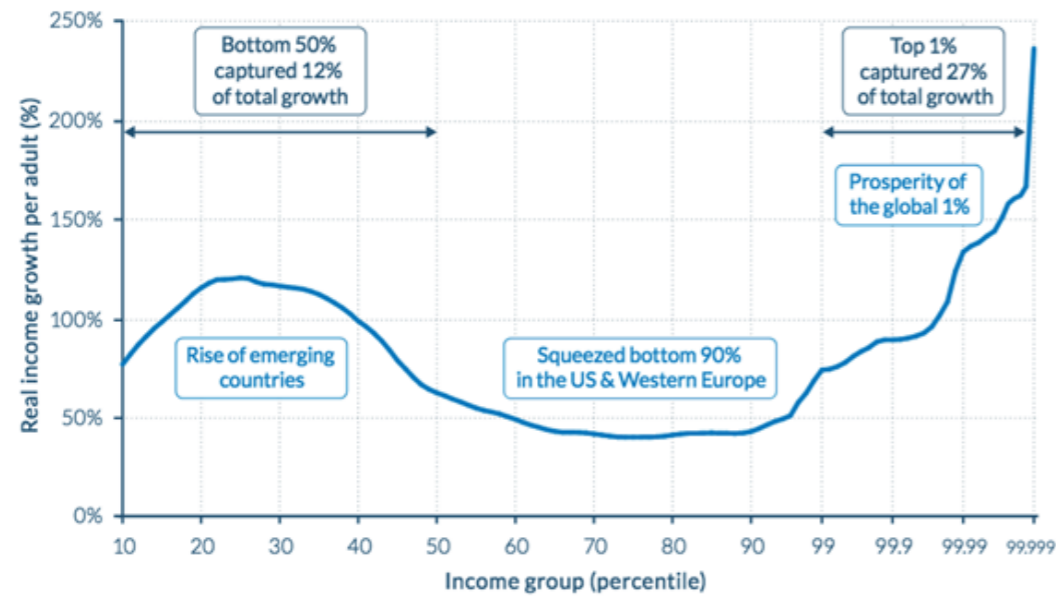


Figure 3.4 Total income growth by percentile across all world regions, 1980–2016

Source: WID World 2017¹⁴

While the growth trend for all incomes is positive, the relationship between inequality and growth is more complex. Cross-country econometric studies on the relationship between inequality and growth are mixed, and largely inconclusive.¹⁵ It is clear, however, that inequality increases poverty for any level of growth, all else being equal. Globally, between 1981 and 2005, while the impact of economic growth was to lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, increases in inequality meant that nearly 600 million people who otherwise would have escaped poverty were denied that chance.¹⁶

The evidence suggests that growth can to varying degrees be pro-poor, and therefore

inequality reducing. The effects of growth would seem to depend crucially on the strategy adopted. There are examples of countries at all levels of development that have enacted growth policies favouring disadvantaged groups. One study examined the experiences of 14 countries in which growth increased and inequality and poverty fell over the 1990s. In several cases, the poorest segment in the countries saw growth rates above the national average.¹⁷ This phenomenon is attributed in large part to investment in rural infrastructure and markets, public expenditures and safety nets, and credit provision, in a context of economic, political and environmental stability.

3.3 Income growth and inequality in Namibia

Just as with patterns at the global level, all income shares in Namibia have experienced positive economic growth in the latest year with comparable data. The bottom 40 percent are growing at an annualised per capita rate of 5.7 percent (Table 3.1). The top 10 percent

are growing at a rate of 4.9 percent. While the detailed data are not readily available, that the top 60 percent are growing the fastest at 6.7 percent underscores the emergence of the middle class in Namibia.

Table 3.1 Growth in consumption per capita

	2015
Annualised growth in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, bottom 40 percent (percent)	5.7
Annualised growth in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, top 10 percent (percent)	4.9
Annualised growth in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, top 60 percent (percent)	6.7
Annualised growth in per capita real survey mean consumption or income, total population (percent)	6.6

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators

The Namibian economy has been experiencing a decline in per capita income growth since 2014. Similar trends were also observed along with the rest of the world (Figures 3.5 and 3.6). The

country experienced a sharper decline in key growth-driving sectors, including construction, wholesale and retail trade, manufacturing and utility sectors, among others.

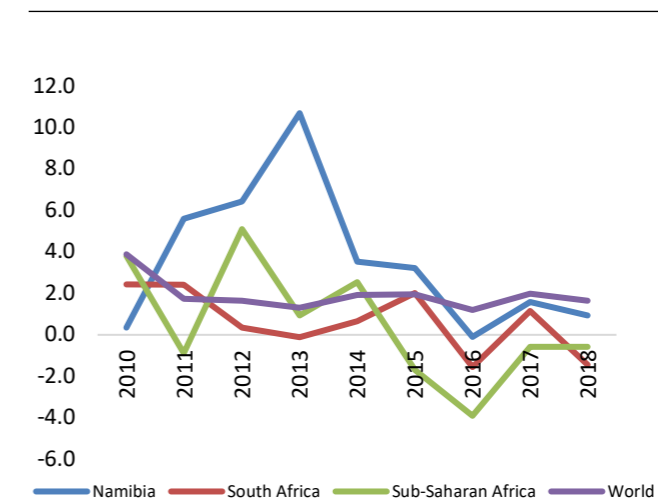


Figure 3.5 Adjusted net national income per capita (% annual growth)

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/>

¹⁴ On the horizontal axis, the world population is divided into a hundred groups of equal population size and sorted in ascending order from left to right, according to each group's income level. The top 1 percent is divided into 10 groups, the richest of these groups is also divided into 10 groups, and the very top group is again divided into 10 groups of equal population size. The vertical axis shows the total income growth of an average individual in each group between 1980 and 2016. For percentile group 99–99.1 (the poorest 10 percent among the world's richest 1 percent), growth was 74 percent between 1980 and 2016. The Top 1 percent captured 27 percent of total growth over this period. Income estimates account for differences in the cost of living between countries. Values are net of inflation.

¹⁵ Stewart and Samman, forthcoming

¹⁶ Hillebrand 2009, p. 7

¹⁷ Grant 2005

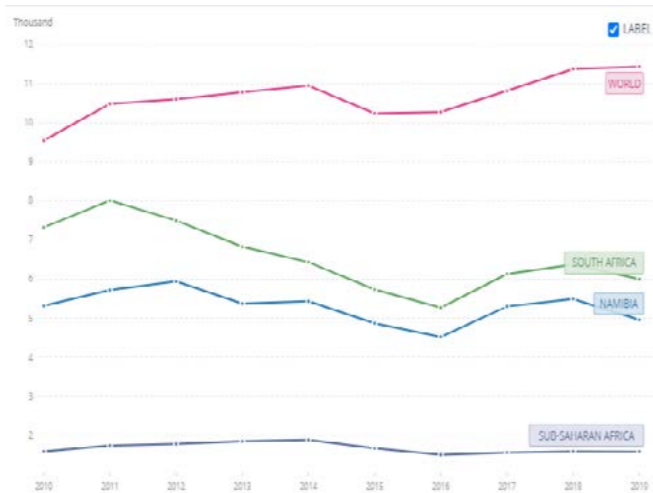


Figure 3.6 GDP per capita (current US\$)

Source: World Bank World Development Indicators, <https://data.worldbank.org/>

3.4 Structure of the economy and the consequences for inequality

The Namibian economy has proven to be very stable, with high growth over the years since independence. Between 1990 and 2018, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached an average of around 4 percent growth annually (Table 3.2). Despite the positive growth, the country could not meet the targeted 6 percent annual growth set in NDP4. Indeed, the relationship between income inequality and structure of the economy is another vital dimension to examine.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors remain the highest employment sectors in Namibia, accounting for 23.0 percent of the employed persons in the country. This is an increase of about 3.0 percent when compared to the 20.1 percent recorded in the 2016 Namibia Labour Force Survey (NLFS).

The share of GDP contributed by the agriculture and forestry sector has seen an overall decline, starting around 7 percent in 1990 and averaging around 4 percent in 2018. Despite this decline, the agriculture sector remains important to the lives of the Namibian population, despite the climate change risk. Primary industries grew by 1.2 percent between 2014 and 2018, on average. The agriculture sector is one of the priority sectors in Namibia, with the potential to expand the economy and address food poverty, income inequality and employment creation. The agriculture sector is the biggest employer in the country, employing around 21.6 percent of

the population (Namibia Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2018).

Average monthly wages for employees in the agriculture industry are the third lowest in the country, only being higher than the monthly wages in private households, and the accommodation and food services activities industries. Since a larger proportion of the employed are in the agriculture sector, given that wages are low, income inequality is bound to remain high, and stagnant.

Mining and quarrying have been the largest contributors to growth over the years, contributing more than 10 percent during the pre- and post-independence periods. The growth in the mining sector is due to high commodities prices and increased volumes of production from new mines across the country. About 1.7 percent of the population is employed in the mining sector, on average earning around N\$18 000 per month. In relation to other industries, employees in the mining sector are on average the second highest paid, following the financial and insurance activities industry. Although income in the mining sector is relatively high, it will not meaningfully impact inequality, because it only affects 1.7 percent of the population.

Secondary industries have been the second-most important contributor to GDP. On

average, they grew by 2.4 percent between 2010 and 2018. The manufacturing sector's share of GDP over the last 30 years has been averaging around 10 percent. The slow growth in the mid-2000s reflects a decline in the primary industries, which provide inputs for the secondary industries. Steady growth in the sectors negatively affects the performance of the secondary industries, making it difficult to

create the much-needed jobs and reduction in income inequality. The lack of diversification and complex manufactured products resulted in slow income growth and subsequent employment creation in these industries, and they thus contributed less to income distribution in the country.

Table 3.2 Sectoral GDP growth rates and shares, 1990–2018

Industry	1990–1999		2000–2009		2010–2018	
	% share	% growth	% share	% growth	% share	% growth
Agriculture and forestry	7.0	2.5	6.4	1.8	4.1	1.6
Fishing and fish processing	4.6	17.4	4.0	2.5	2.7	0.2
Mining and quarrying	10.8	2.9	11.7	5.1	9.8	7.2
Primary industries	22.7	3.9	22.3	2.3	16.6	4.3
Manufacturing	11.8	3.4	11.9	5.3	10.6	1.6
Electricity and water	3.6	1.9	2.5	0.3	1.9	4.7
Construction	2.4	5.2	2.9	10.7	4.4	6.2
Secondary industries	17.7	2.8	17.2	4.9	16.9	2.4
Wholesale and retail trade	8.4	5.2	10.3	6.2	12.3	4.6
Hotels and restaurants	1.3	4.9	1.6	6.3	1.9	4.6
Transport and communication	2.6	5.4	3.8	11.3	5.3	4.0
Financial intermediation	2.8	7.3	4.5	9.7	6.4	7.2
Real estate and business services	8.1	3.1	8.2	5.6	8.3	2.9
Community, social	3.8	2.2	3.1	2.3	2.1	0.2
Public administration, defence	27.3	3.1	10.6	4.9	11.0	4.0
Education			7.8	2.7	7.9	4.7
Health			3.8	-1.2	3.5	6.7
Private household	1.1	2.0	1.0	3.6	1.0	1.9
Tertiary industries	53.6	3.7	54.3	5.2	59.7	4.3
GDP at market prices		3.6		4.4		3.8

Source: NSA, National Account Time Series, 2018

On average, tertiary industries slowed down to 4.3 percent between the periods 2010 and 2018, from 5.2 percent between 2000 and 2009. With minimal growth recorded in the industries, making a dent on inequality may not be fully achieved as sub-sectors of the tertiary industries are mainly public sectors that contribute minimally to employment creation and actual production of goods. The growth performance of the industries is vital in terms of creating employment opportunities and bringing about human development.

Moreover, job opportunities are critical for moving out of poverty, but GDP growth in Namibia has not generated the much-needed jobs. Steady growth has not put Namibians to work, a key factor behind the slow reduction in inequality and unemployment levels. Despite positive economic growth recorded between 1994 and 2018, this growth has not created enough employment, as unemployment growth only rose from 1.3 percent in 1994 to 20.4 percent in 2016 (Figure 3.6).

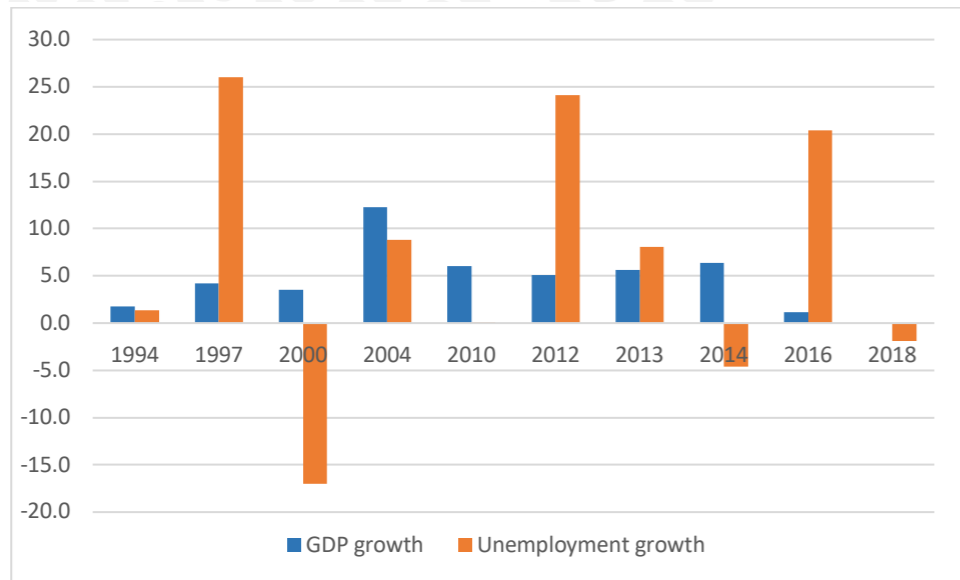


Figure 3.7 Jobless growth

Source: World Bank, <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators#>; 2012–2018 NLFS, National Accounts Time Series 1980–2018

Although the country observed jobless growth on the one hand, per capita income on the other hand grew, driven by the highest income earners population segment (0.55 percent of the population). Thus, Namibia’s classification as an Upper-Middle Income country does not fully represent the population of the country, as the majority of Namibians are no better off.

According to the broad definition of economic activities, 59.5 percent are in the working population, of which 73 percent are in the labour force (Figure 3.7). Of the economically active population, 65.5 percent are in employment. Although more than two-thirds of the labour force is in employment, only 65.2 percent of

these individuals are in paid employment – this represents only 18.6 percent of the Namibian population. Nonetheless, 75.5 percent of paid workers receive a monthly wage income of less than N\$1 353. This means that only 14 percent of the Namibian population earn a monthly wage income in excess of N\$1 353.¹⁸ Of the population segments that earn above the minimum wage, private enterprises contribute 51 percent, while government accounts for 25 percent, parastatals for 9 percent, and the private informal sector for 11 percent. The above discussion confirms that the majority of the Namibian population are income earners, thus resulting in an unequal distribution of income.

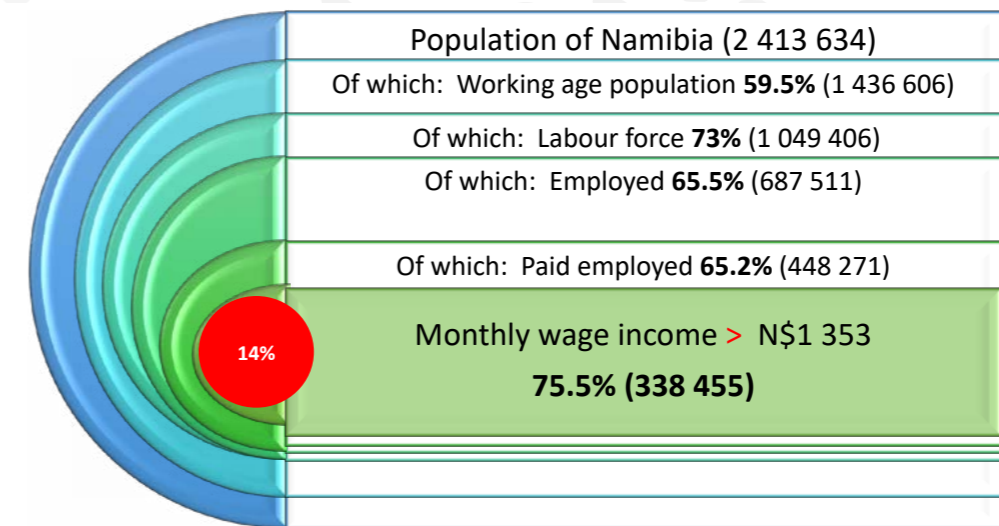


Figure 3.8 Labour structure

Source: Author’s calculation based on the 2018 NLFS

GRN has adopted fiscal policies which include tax reforms as a tool to redistribute income and reduce inequality. The tax policy is crucial for raising revenues to finance public expenditure on transfers, health and education that tend to favour low-income households, as well as on growth-enabling infrastructure that can also increase social equity. In particular,

to encourage contractual savings, current contributions by individual taxpayers in respect of pensions and annuities that are tax deductible amount to N\$40 000 per annum. To redistribute income and in an effort to reduce inequality, the government adopted a policy to exempt anyone earning below N\$50 000.00.

¹⁸ Minimum wage of private households as per Labour commissioner and domestic workers union agreement, 2017

Box 3 Otjivero-Omitara case study

GRN has realised the importance of reducing high levels of poverty and income inequality with universal income subsidies. A pilot Basic Income Grant (BIG) project was conducted in the Otjivero-Omitara region from 2007 to 2009, with very positive results. The household poverty rate dropped significantly, with food poverty declining from 76 percent to 37 percent within one year. Moreover, the crime rate was dramatically reduced, with the overall crime rate falling by 42%, while stock theft fell by 43% and other theft by nearly 20%. Moreover, school attendance levels were almost doubled, growing by 90 percent. A nationwide roll-out of the BIG formed part of the National 2016–2025 Plan, although it has yet to be implemented.

3.5 Regional income inequality and human development trends

Looking at Figure 3.8, there is a (weak) relationship between High Human Development regions and high inequalities, which can be partially explained by the presence of both affluent suburbs and squatter settlements in regions such as Khomas and Erongo, for example. However, there are exceptions, such as Omaheke, Kunene and Kavango East, where high levels of inequalities exist with low levels of human development. The high level of inequality in Omaheke is partially explained by the existence of both commercial farmers and communal farmers. The communal farmers have lower average incomes than the commercial farmers, and amongst communal farmers, the San communities generally have lower incomes than the rest.

Most Namibian regions can be classified as Medium Human Development regions, while Khomas and Erongo can be classified as High Human Development regions. Hence,

on aggregate, Namibia is a Medium Human Development country based on its Human Development Index of 0.645, while it is classified as an Upper-Middle Income Country based on the annual per capita income being above US\$5 000. However, it is one of the most unequal societies in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 0.56.

Some of the policy options could include targeting the lower income groups in Erongo and Khomas in terms of education and health services to break generational poverty and enhance opportunities for future high-income earners. For the rest of the regions there is a need to identify high earning economic activities away from traditional economic activities of communal farming and low skills jobs. Hardap, IlKaras and Oshana, as they are between the High Human Development regions and the rest, may require a mixture of these policy options.

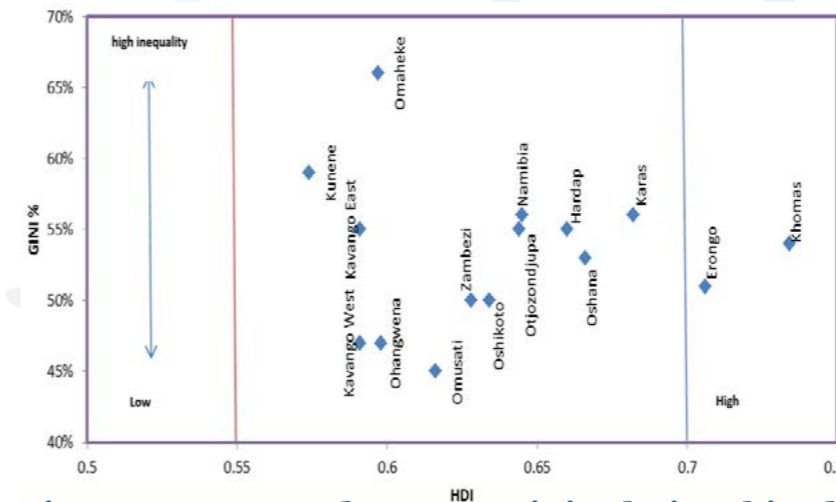


Figure 3.9 HDI and Income Gini relationships by region
Source: HDI by UNAM's own calculation; GINI calculated from NHIES 2015/16

Article 1

Upper Middle - Income Status Hides Huge Income Inequalities



Herbert Jauch
Labour researcher and activist

Namibia's status as an upper-middle income country hides the huge levels of income inequality that still characterise the country. Although the Gini coefficient has declined from 0.701 in 1993/94 to 0.560 in 2015/16, Namibia is still one of the most unequal countries in the world. At the top end, 12 580 people, or 0.55% of Namibia's population, earn more than N\$ 1.5 million annually, while earnings at the bottom end are N\$ 20 000 per year or even less.

A look at the Namibian labour market reveals the distribution of employment and income. Despite pursuing a host of investor-friendly economic reform policies after independence, Namibia hardly achieved meaningful structural economic changes. This is exemplified by a very small manufacturing base and the resultant high levels of unemployment, which stood at between 28.5% and 51.4% (using the broad definition) during the past 20 years. The figures contained in successive Labour Force Surveys further indicate that women and young people are the ones most severely affected. Unemployment amongst young people in the 20–24 years age category stood at a staggering 57% in 2018. As Namibia has neither support programmes for the unemployed nor an unemployment insurance scheme, their survival depends on support from family and friends.

The latest Labour Force Survey of 2018 shows that the main sectors in terms of employment are agriculture, fishing and forestry (accounting for 23% of employment),

followed by accommodation and food services (11.4%), wholesale and retail trade (11.1%) and private households (9.9%). More than half of all employed persons are employees (55.4%) while 13.9% are own account workers and 13% are subsistence farmers.

Almost a third of all employed persons are vulnerable and are faced by precarious working conditions. These include the subsistence farmers, own account workers and contributing family workers. However, vulnerability even reaches a significant part of those classified as employees. Only 39.3% receive paid annual leave while even fewer (36.9%) receive paid sick leave, although these are compulsory in terms of the Namibian Labour Act.

Formal employment is defined by some form of social protection (pension scheme, medical aid or social security), but in the Namibian case, 57.7% of all employed people are not covered by social protection and are thus in "informal employment". The highest levels of informality are found in private households (91%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (87.6%), accommodation and food services (68.6%) and construction (65.3%).

The high levels of precariousness are combined with low monthly incomes. Agriculture, forestry and fishing, accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail trade, private households, and construction combined account for 62% of employed people. Employees in these sectors earn far below the national average of N\$7 935 per month, for example N\$3 393 in agriculture, forestry and fishing; N\$2 819 in accommodation and food services; and only N\$1 387 in private households. In agriculture, only around 14 percent of all employees earn more than the minimum wage of N\$1 353 per month.

Another important aspect to consider is that the average monthly wages are lowest for young employees who have average monthly incomes of only N\$1 113 when they are between 15 and 19 years of age, while those between 20 and 24 years of age earn an average of N\$2 507 per month.

These figures indicate that while a tiny elite enjoys high incomes, the vast majority consisting of the unemployed, informally employed and

even large sections of those at the lower end of formal employment struggle to meet their basic needs. Interventions are thus needed at both ends, such as taxes on capital gains as well as inheritance and wealth taxes for high income earners. The poor, unemployed and low income

earners urgently need meaningful minimum wages, an unemployment insurance scheme, and most importantly, a universal basic income grant (BIG). Such redistributive measures are feasible, but require the political will to act.

Chapter 4

Inequalities and Disparities in Access to Land

Land is regarded as an asset that can be used by the poor to gain access to other assets. Globally, the issue of asset redistribution is one of the measures known to reduce inequality, because inequality is found to be higher among the landless labourers and small-scale farmers.¹⁹ As a result, land redistribution and access to land are on the international agenda as measures to address inequality. Land ownership is defined as the measure that determines who can use land, for how long, and under what conditions.

It has been found, however, that many of the landowners are part of the elite and bureaucratic system, and that most of best land is now in the hands of the most powerful people in societies across the globe. This has brought about high demand for land among the poor, and created conflicts between the poor and landowners.²⁰ It is further found that land rights when implemented properly give people, especially the poor, an increased sense of security, and that they have the potential to improve people's status.²¹ Land reform could therefore be used as a measure to address and reduce inequality between the rich and the poor, and between genders.²²

Namibia covers 824 292 square kilometres, more than twice the size of Germany. However, the country had an estimated population of only 2.4 million inhabitants in 2018. The population increased from 1.4 million in 1991, to 1.8 million in 2001, 2.1 million in 2011 and 2.3 million in 2016.

4.1 Land legislation

Access to land is the most basic social and economic resource right. The Ministry of Land Reform (MLR) was established to ensure the fair and equitable allocation of land among Namibians. The government, through the MLR, introduced several interventions, including the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act, No. 6 of 1995, the Communal Land Reform Act, No. 5 of 2002, and the National Resettlement Policy, as well as a programme of land acquisition subject to the principle of willing seller, willing buyer. It also established the Agricultural Bank, with the mandate of advancing money to persons or financial intermediaries for the promotion of agriculture and related activities. One of the programmes the Bank introduced is the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS), which is enabling emerging farmers from previously disadvantaged communities to acquire farms in commercial areas.

4.2 General land classification in Namibia

There are three general land tenure classifications in Namibia, namely communal, freehold, and state land. However, Namibia has had two main land tenure systems: freehold in declared urban areas and the commercial farms, and the customary tenure on communal land (homelands/tribal land), all of which was rural at independence. Before independence in 1990, most freehold land was owned by whites, and the blacks lived on communal/tribal land. After independence, land reform of both commercial and communal land received attention.

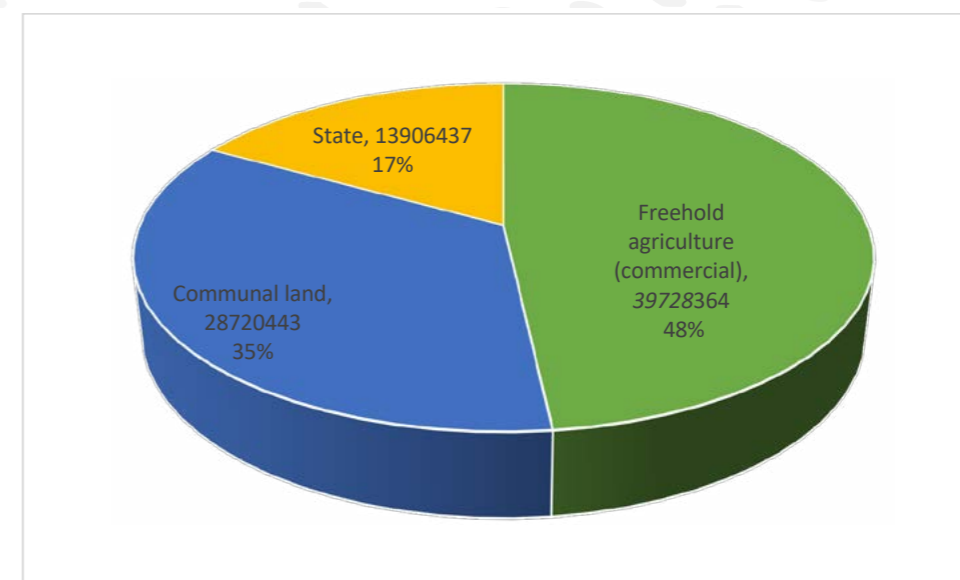


Figure 4.1 General land classification in Namibia (hectares)

Source: Namibia Land Statistics Booklet, 2018

Figure 4.1 shows that the largest portion of land is freehold agriculture (commercial) land, at 39 728 364 hectares (48 percent), followed by communal land at 28 720 443 hectares (35 percent). State land only constitutes 13 906 437 hectares (17 percent).

The Ministry of Land Reform's agricultural (commercial) land valuation roll of 2012–2017 has a record number of 12 382 farmland entities consisting of farms and portions of farms. The farmland totals 39 728 364 million hectares and is inclusive of agricultural government land such as farms for research and resettlement,

and servitudes. The 12 382 agricultural (commercial) farmland entities consist of 7 506 (61 percent) farms and 4 876 (39 percent) portions of farms.

Individuals own 52.2 percent of 12 382 farms and farm portions, followed by companies (close corporations and Pty.), at 31.5 percent, and GRN, at 13.8 percent. Farmers associations, foundations, estates and churches each own less than 2 percent of the land (see details in Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Agricultural (commercial) land by ownership

Ownership	No. of farms	% Farms	Hectares	% Hectares
Total	12 382	100.00	39 728 364	100.00
Individual	7 838	63.31	20 729 734	52.18
Companies (Pty. & cc)	2 859	23.09	12 518 657	31.51
Government	1 265	10.22	5 491 110	13.82
Estate	172	1.39	95 795	0.24
Trust	159	1.28	697 742	1.76
Church	61	0.49	136 088	0.34
Farmers associations	18	0.15	18 137	0.05
Foundation	9	0.07	41 102	0.10

Source: Namibia Land Statistics Booklet, 2018

¹⁹ Grobakken, 2005
²⁰ Ibid.
²¹ Ibid.; Mikk, 2008
²² Mikk, 2008

Most of the commercial farms and portions of farms are owned by Namibians (38 345 295 hectares; 96.5 percent). The second largest farmland ownership is by non-Namibians

(1 206 017 hectares; 3.0 percent). Joint ownership by Namibians and non-Namibians accounts for only 177 052 hectares (0.4 percent) of the commercial farms (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Farm ownership by nationality and extent (HA)

Nationality	Number of farms	Percent	Extent (ha)	Percent
Total	12 382	100.0	39 728 364	100.0
Namibians	12 098	97.7	38 345 295	96.5
Non-Namibians	250	2.0	1 206 017	3.0
Namibians & non-Namibians	34	0.3	177 052	0.4

Source: Namibia Land Statistics Booklet, 2018

4.3 Today's land ownership patterns

In the 2013/14 Demographic and Health Survey, men and women were asked to indicate whether they own land or housing alone or jointly, or both alone and jointly. Overall, 75.5 percent of women and 59.7 percent of men reported that they did not own land; similarly, 64.9 percent of women and 42.7 percent of men indicated that they do not own a house.²³ The report showed that there was a significant positive correlation between land ownership and the age of respondents. For both sexes, the proportion of those who did not own land or a house decreased by age. The analysis further indicated that urban dwellers were more likely not to own land or housing than those living in rural areas.

Today, the demand for land and housing in Namibia is increasing, mainly among the youth. Moreover, compared to other countries in the region, house prices are very high and unaffordable, especially for young adults. This trend has resulted in unrest and protests among the youth, who are demanding cheaper, affordable land and houses. Aspects of land inequality are of national interest, and the Head of State consequently called for a Second National Land Conference as a platform for engagement on the successes and challenges encountered during the implementation of the Land Reform Programme. The Conference also aimed to deliberate on ways and means

of tackling land distribution transformation and optimising benefits from the use of land to promote economic growth, create jobs and address the challenges of inequality.

According to the NSA,²⁴ white Namibians and foreigners own 27 million hectares of the total of 39 million hectares of freehold agricultural land (approximately 69 percent), while black Namibians own just 16 percent (the remainder was acquired through the Land Resettlement Programme). The verified information of owners of freehold agricultural (commercial) land shows that males own 77 percent, while females own 23 percent. Although a total 6.4 million hectares of land was acquired through the Agricultural Bank of Namibia from 1992 to 2018, 3.4 million hectares (54 percent) of commercial farmland were acquired through the AALS, and only 10 percent of females benefitted through the AALS, compared to 60 percent of the men.²⁵

4.4 Women and rights of access to land

When Namibia gained independence from South Africa, the 1991 Land Conference resolved that no Namibian person would have a claim to ancestral land. However, in order to assist indigenous groups and disadvantaged

Namibians, GRN commenced with the purchasing of land for resettlement.²⁶ According to the National Statistics Agency (NSA, 2018), a total of 442 lease agreements were issued to beneficiaries of the Land Resettlement Programme during the period 2002 to 2018. Of the issued leases, 236 (53 percent) were issued to male beneficiaries, while females were issued with 192 (43 percent). The remaining 14 leases (4 percent) were issued to other entities. Omaheke Region has the highest number of issued lease agreements, followed by Hardap Region.

Nevertheless, persistent societal discrimination that disadvantages women in the allocation of

land continues to exist, and hinders their access to land, either via inheritance or their not having access to credit to purchase land (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2011). In 2002 GRN passed the Communal Land Reform Act (No. 5 of 2002) that covered the composition of duties of the land rights boards, which deal with the control over and allocation of communal land. The Act provides that these 12-person boards must have at least four women representatives (Communal Land Reform Act, No. 5 of 2002, Section 4). Where traditional leaders allocate land, it is supposed to be approved by a land rights board.

Table 4.3 Proof of ownership of the land by females and males

Sex of Head	Title deeds	Letter from a chief	Verbal agreement	Other (Specify)	None	Total
Female	157 631	244 303	61 872	14 190	64 205	542 201
% of female	29.1	45.1	11.4	2.6	11.8	100
% of category	42.5	53.4	45.9	49.8	54.1	48.8
Male	213 507	213 436	72 986	14 286	54 420	568 635
% of male	37.6	37.5	12.8	2.5	9.6	100
% of category	57.5	46.6	54.1	50.2	45.9	51.2
Total	371 138	457 739	134 858	28 476	118 625	1 110 836
(%)	33.4	41.2	12.1	2.6	10.7	100

Source: Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2015/16

Table 4.3 shows the proof of ownership for the land for both females and males attested by title deeds, letters from chiefs, verbal agreements, and others. The females who have some proof of ownership (title deeds, a letter from the chief, etc.) account for 48.8 percent of the total, as opposed to 51.2 percent for their male counterparts. It is recommended that much effort should be directed at closing the gap in order to reach the target of 50/50.

²³ MOHSS, 2015

²⁴ NSA, 2018

²⁵ NSA, 2018

²⁶ United Nations Human Rights Council (2011) Report of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: Namibia. Available online via <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/>

Overall, only about 31 percent of women owned a house and just 21 percent owned land in 2013.²⁷ However, these figures varied widely depending on age, residence, region, educational level and household wealth. Women between the ages of 45 and 49 were most likely to own a house (70 percent) or land (51 percent). House ownership by women was slightly higher in urban areas (32 percent) than in rural areas (29 percent), while land ownership overall was higher in rural areas (24 percent) than in urban areas (19 percent). At the regional level, in Omusati, only 20 percent of women owned a house, and in Hardap, only 15 percent of women owned land. Interestingly, women with no education were more likely to own a house (42 percent) or land (29 percent), and women in the lowest wealth quintile were also most likely to own a house (39 percent) or land (34 percent).

Women's access to property and other non-land rights is governed by the marital contract. Most marriages in Namibia are in full community of property.²⁸ However, the Married Persons Equality Act (Act 1 of 1996) also provides for married women to have the right to make decisions regarding property within marriages, abolishing marital power and outlining the process to be followed in making decisions around major assets within marriages in a gender-equal way. Despite this legislative progress, discrimination against women in access to land and inheritance processes is common (Box 4), particularly in rural areas, where land continues to be allocated according to customary law.²⁹

Box 4 Widows' inheritance laws remain a women's rights challenge

There are no formal laws that exist to specially protect widows from harmful practices or property grabbing. In some communities in Namibia, widows are required to undergo "cleansing ceremonies" following the deaths of their spouses, and this can include forced periods of isolation, washing with particular herbs, and a sexual cleansing ritual. This puts widows at risk of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, and can limit their participation in inheritance decisions. The practice of widow inheritance was noted by the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Committee as a challenge.

Widows may be forced into marrying the brother or a male relative of their deceased husband to ensure that the husband's family continues to maintain and control the property. Where women refuse, they can risk losing their homes or their children.

Source: CEDAW, 2015

Land ownership in Namibia poses a major challenge to addressing the issue of inequalities. The majority of Namibians do not own land or a house; the majority of black people, women, and youths lack ownership and rights to this most important asset,

and this exacerbates inequalities of opportunities, income and dignity.

²⁷ Namibia Demographic and Health Survey 2013, Windhoek: Ministry of Health and Social Services and ICF International, 2014.

²⁸ The World Bank (2016) Women, Business and the Law 2016. Available via <http://wbl.worldbank.org/~media/WBG/WBL/Documents/Reports/2016/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2016.pdf>

²⁹ The University of Wyoming Human Rights Clinic (2015) Women's Property Rights in Namibia: An Investigative Report to Determine the Potential for Litigation. Windhoek, Government of Namibia.

Article 2

Gender - based Inequalities and Disparities

Rosa Namises

Directress: Women's Solidarity Namibia

Women remain at a disadvantage in income, health and protection. This is true despite the fact that women and girls in Namibia hold higher levels of human development in some spheres than men and boys do, placing Namibia among only 20 countries in the world where this holds true. They remain disadvantaged in income, health, and protection, despite their longer life expectancy at birth and higher educational attainment. It is true that there have been noticeable achievements in the field of gender, but multiple gender-based inequalities are still a reality in Namibia. Gender-based violence and violence against children, gender-based economic inequalities, inequalities in local representation, and unequal access of women to land rights are the lived realities for far too many women and girls.

Land is an asset that opens doors: it can be used to gain access to other assets. Globally, asset redistribution is known to reduce inequality. Landless labourers and small-scale farmers generally experience higher levels of inequality, as in the absence of land ownership, they cannot themselves determine who can use land, for how long and under what conditions. Land reform can address and reduce inequality between females and males, and between the rich and the poor.

In Namibia, most of the land is commercial land, used for freehold agriculture. Such land covers 39 728 364 hectares (48 percent of the total) followed by communal land (28 720 443 hectares; 35 percent). Overall, 75.5 percent of women and 59.7 percent of men do not own land. Similarly, 64.9 percent of women and 42.7 percent of men do not own a house. White people (Namibians and foreigners) own 27 million hectares, but black people own just 16 percent of the total 39 million hectares; males own 77 percent and females own 23 percent of freehold agricultural land.

Inequality in land ownership in Namibia is a major challenge that must be addressed. The majority of black people, women, and youths

do not have rights to this most important asset, and this as a result exacerbates inequalities of opportunities, income and dignity.

Since independence, Namibia has done a great deal to address the unequal position of women. Legislation and a policy framework for advancing equality and empowering women are in place. Nevertheless, many practices that constrain the advancement and empowerment of women still exist. The level of violence against women remains high and the involvement of the NGO's like Women's Solidarity Namibia is much needed and highly relevant.

In Namibia, access to communal land for subsistence farming is essential for people's livelihoods. Securing a piece of land is a fundamental requirement for rural women to secure their existence. Granting women equal access to land and control over resources is key in their economic empowerment. The economic situation of rural communities in most cases disproportionately affects women in Namibia. Now more than ever, the absence of economic independence for women raises the spectre of food insecurity. Likewise, food sovereignty and the building of community resilience is vital for eradicating poverty, malnourishment and malnutrition.

In Namibia, 44% of rural households are headed by females. Most female landowners are widows who inherited the land from their husbands, typically following a major confrontation and possible interventions by the law; others obtained land through divorce or inheritance from families. Since the promulgation of the Communal Land Reform Act in 2003, single women have been able to register their land without the consent of family members. Corruption in the land sector (and land administration in particular) hinders women's access to land ownership and affects their use of and control over the land. The requirements of the local banking sector that apply when a woman seeks a loan create a major exclusion for women which significantly impacts their

economic involvement. This prevents women from benefitting from economic opportunities, as they lack security of land tenure. It is still difficult for women to secure land in urban areas.

If we are to build on our achievements over the years, it is important that gender considerations

be included from the initial stages in the identification and design of programmes and projects by government ministries and civil society, and that the inclusion of such considerations become standard practice and the working culture.

Article 3

Disparities In Access To Land In Namibia



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The wave of demonstrations sweeping across countries is a clear sign that, for all our progress, something in our globalized society is not working.

(Achim Steiner, Administrator. United Nations Development Programme).

Namibia covers a land mass area of roughly 824 292 square kilometres (82.4 million hectares.)³⁰ About 10% of the land surface area is characterised by desert conditions, and is therefore uninhabitable, leaving only about 74.2 million hectares available for habitation. Namibia has a population of about 2.4 million and a population density of 2.9 persons per square kilometre, which implies a sparse distribution of the population. At face value, the 74.2 million hectares of habitable land, and a sparsely distributed population, presents an image of abundance of land for everyone. However, behind these numbers lies the skewed distribution and ownership of land that results in inequalities in access to land. Inequalities in access to land is one of the contributing factors to the status of Namibia being one of the top

two unequal countries in the world measured by the GINI coefficient – second only to South Africa. Inequalities in access to land in Namibia manifest in different ways, and result from a colonial history of land dispossession.

Namibia's land tenure system is comprised of freehold agriculture (commercial) land and communal land. Freehold agriculture (commercial) land covers 39 728 364 hectares (48%), while communal land covers 28 20,443 hectares (35%). The rest is state land (national parks) which cover 13 906 437 (17%). The disparities lie in the difference between freehold agriculture (commercial) and communal land: more than 50% of the population live and eke out a living on communal land, while freehold agriculture (commercial) land supports less than 10% of the population. Access to land in freehold agriculture (commercial) land is largely determined by access to monetary income, which remains inaccessible to the majority of the population, or by generational links with the settler population.

Within the freehold agriculture (commercial) land, 70% of the land remains in the hands of the previously advantaged population, while the previously disadvantaged population own only 16% of the land, reflecting a perpetuation of racial inequalities in access to land. Foreigners own 1 206 017 hectares of land. In the face of skewed distribution of land and foreign ownership of land are landless Namibians who continue to wander between corridors of commercial farms in search of grazing land. Furthermore, freehold agriculture (commercial) land ownership is gendered. Female ownership of freehold agricultural land stands at 23%, while male ownership of land stands at 77%, a situation that reflects gender inequalities. Inequalities in access to freehold agriculture (commercial) land are therefore intersectional – they cut across race, class, and gender. Over the years, communal land has continued to serve as a safety net especially for the rural poor. However, with the population increasing, appropriation of communal land for others uses, and especially fencing off of large tracts

of communal land by a select few has created a precarious state in access to land, a situation that affect the landless and those not engaged in non-farming activities for their livelihoods. While debates and initiatives regarding access to land have centred on rural and agricultural land, the question of access to land in urban areas has more recently taken centre stage. The future is urban, so the current narrative goes. Like other countries, Namibia is also undergoing a trend of an increasing urban population, and indeed, the urban population has passed the 50% mark. Inequalities in access to land in urban areas is one of the challenges which have a direct bearing on access to housing.

Since independence in 1990, Namibia has been implementing a land reform programme with the primary aim of addressing inequalities in access to land. However, despite the government's land reform efforts, inequalities

in access to land remain a key challenge for Namibia. Thirty-years into independence, there is a need to revisit the land acquisition and redistribution strategies, and to formulate effective strategies that are fit for need and purpose. Importantly, all players, including the current landholders, need to join the land reform engagement. Similarly, there is need to revisit the definition of the previously disadvantaged population to prevent elite capture of land reform programmes such as resettlement. Key segments of the population – the marginalised social groups – should receive priority in the resettlement programmes. The current status of continuing inequalities in access to land begs for more concerted efforts to bring about distributive justice. Addressing inequalities in access to land is key if Namibia is to make progress towards the attainment of the Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

³⁰ Land statistics in this piece are sourced from Namibia Statistics Agency, 'Namibia Land Statistics' (Windhoek, Namibia: Namibia Statistics Agency, 2018).

Chapter 5

Gender-based Inequalities and Disparities

Gender inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. Such perceptions often arise from differences in socially constructed gender roles. Gender inequality affects individuals throughout their life; economic costs are measured in terms of losses in human capital wealth, as opposed to annual losses in income or economic growth.

According to (WBG, 2018)³¹, globally, women account for only 38 percent of human capital wealth, versus 62 percent for men. In low- and lower-middle income countries, women account for a third or less of human capital wealth. On a per capita basis, gender inequality in earnings could lead to losses in wealth of US\$23 620 per person globally. These losses differ between regions and countries because levels of human capital wealth, and thereby losses in wealth due to gender inequality, tend to increase in absolute values with economic development.

For the 141 countries included in the analysis, the loss in human capital wealth due to gender inequality is estimated at US\$ 160.2 trillion, assuming that women would earn as much as men. This is about twice the value of GDP globally. Put differently, human capital wealth could increase by 21.7 percent globally, and total wealth by 14 percent with gender equality in earnings.

In 2018, Namibia was awarded the African Gender Award in recognition of the progress the country has made in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, and for promoting women’s representation in key decision-making positions. To date, women’s representation in the Namibia National Assembly stands at 46 percent. This is in line with the goal of reaching 50/50 representation.

Moreover, Namibia tops the SADC in women’s representation. So far only five countries have exceeded 30 percent women in local government, namely Namibia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Lesotho and South Africa. Other

countries have less than 20 percent women representation in local government.

Despite achievements in gender mainstreaming, inequalities still persist in multiple dimensions in Namibia, including gender-based violence and violence against children, gender-based economic inequalities, inequalities in local representation and unequal access of women to land rights.

Besides, the measures to capture the discrimination against women in social institutions across all stages, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), have not been adopted in Namibia. Thus, a deep dive into the underlying drivers of gender inequalities with a multidimensional and detailed landscape is yet to come.

5.1 Legal framework

The gender machinery put in place has generated the National Gender Policy (2010–2020), the National Gender Plan of Action (2010–2020), the Gender-responsive Budget Guidelines approved by the Cabinet in 2014, and the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (2006–2020) to enhance education from early childhood development to lifelong training. Moreover, the Child Care and Protection Act (No. 3 of 2015) entered into force in January 2019 with the gazetting of its Regulations. It provides a comprehensive approach to the prevention of and response to violence against children, including provisions on the trafficking of children and the minimum age of marriage.

Further, Gender-based Violence Protection Units have been established in all 14 regions in Namibia to handle and investigate cases relating to sexual offences and violence. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare and various stakeholders launched an annual awareness campaign against gender-based violence. GRN

has also launched a “Zero Tolerance Campaign against Gender-based Violence Including Human Trafficking”.

5.2 Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence refers to all forms of violence that are perpetrated against women, girls, men and boys because of the unequal power relations between them and the perpetrators. Causes of gender-based violence include customs, traditions and beliefs, illiteracy and limited education, unequal power relations, and the low status of women. The two most common forms of gender-based violence in Namibia are rape and domestic violence, both of which disproportionately affect Namibian women. However, domestic violence has a significant impact on Namibian children as well. Children in abusive homes are more likely to be abused themselves, and children exposed to abusive relationships may be more likely to become abusers themselves later in life.

Growing up in a household where violence is prevalent is likely to have a negative effect on children’s psychosocial development, and

on their own future relationships. It is clear, therefore, that GBV erodes the sense of social cohesion and stability needed for a society to function. In addition, when the violation of human rights is so ubiquitous, the extent to which a country can be called ‘democratic’ is called into question, where democracy is understood to stem from the protection of human rights for all citizens, regardless of gender or any other marker.³²

Figure 5.1 shows the analysis of GBV media coverage from April 2017 to April 2018 by the Namibia Media Monitoring Agency (NaMedia). The figure reflects that “abuse and domestic violence account for 26 percent of the time [and space] throughout print and broadcast media in Namibia”. Furthermore, it showed that GBV received more media coverage than other crimes. The analysis concludes that during the period under review, the results indicate that coverage of GBV cases in Namibia has increased, with Namibian newspapers devoting 29 percent of their news coverage to GBV news. The results are complicated, however, by the fact that two newspapers – The Namibian and the Namibian Sun – recorded ‘passion killings’, and ‘domestic violence’ as separate categories.



Figure 5.1 Coverage of gender-based violence: April 2017 – April 2018

Source: NaMedia

According to the Demographic and Health Survey, 2013, 7 percent of women have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime, and urban women are more likely to have

experienced sexual violence than rural women.³³ Increasing education is linked to decreasing experiences of sexual violence.³⁴ Current and former spouses are the most common

³¹ Wodon, Quentin T. and de la Brière, Bénédicte (2018).

³² https://ippr.org.na/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/GBV_WEB.pdf

³³ Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/fr298/fr298.pdf>.

³⁴ Ibid.

perpetrators of sexual violence, followed by strangers.³⁵

A number of rape cases have been prosecuted, resulting in sentences of five to 45 years imprisonment for convicted rapists, while other cases were pending before the courts for further police investigation. However, a lack of police vehicles, expertise in dealing with violence against women and children, and facilities to accommodate vulnerable witnesses, as well as the withdrawal of complaints by victims, continued to hamper investigations and prosecutions.

Rape is prohibited in terms of the Combating of Rape Act (No. 8 of 2000) and is defined as an intentional sexual act under coercive circumstances. The Act also prohibits marital rape, with a minimum sentence of five years imprisonment in the event of conviction. Increased sentences are provided for where coercive circumstances exist, where the rape causes the complainant grievous bodily or mental harm, where the convicted person is infected with a serious sexually transmitted disease that is known to the perpetrator at the time of the rape, in the case of gang-rape,

in the case of rape with a weapon, and where the perpetrator has previously been convicted of another serious offence. Marriage does not constitute a defence to rape.³⁶

5.3 Gender-based wage inequalities

According to the Global Gender Gap report (2018), the newest entrant to the top 10 for gender parity is Namibia (10th, 78.9 percent). In sub-Saharan Africa, Rwanda takes the lead, despite moving down two ranks after reversal in progress on economic participation and opportunity (6th, 80.4 percent). South Africa (19th, 75.5 percent) registers some progress on the political empowerment sub-index, but also has experienced a slight decline in wage equality.

The NLFS (2018) indicated that women work in sectors where wages are on average lower than in jobs that are dominated by men. Efforts have to be made to close the gap between male and female labour force participation among the youth.

As things stand, women in Namibia of equal education and experience must work 25 days more per year in order to reach the same annual earnings as men doing comparable work. The gap has narrowed from a difference of 20.4 percent in 2012 to 6.4 percent in 2018 (Figure 5.2)

At a national level, the monthly income is N\$7 936, an increase of N\$1 178 since 2016 when the monthly income was reported at N\$6 759. This was a bit higher for males (N\$8 052) than females (N\$7 789). Across industries, the highest monthly income of N\$20 459 was recorded in the financial and insurance industry, while the lowest income of N\$1 387 was in private households. More women than men work in private households. Furthermore, the information on average monthly wages of employees by age groups for the 2018 NLFS reveals that monthly wage levels increased with the employee's age, peaking at the age group of 55–59 years, but thereafter declined for those people aged 60 and above who remained in employment.

There is little evidence that the gender pay gap is justified by differences in observable characteristics between men and women, such as higher education or skills. Rather, the evidence points to gender pay differences within sectors and industries. Furthermore, the gender pay gap is attributed to males working more hours per week than females, with females thus having lower returns because of hours worked. The gender pay gap could be reduced by encouraging more gender-aware career counselling, especially in male-dominated sectors, to enable increased women's labour force participation and reduce poverty in households headed by females. In addition, increasing the female participation rate in the labour market and providing females with greater incentives to reduce the time spent on household activities, will serve to close the wage gap.

5.4 Drivers of gender-based economic inequality

Several factors remain at play that must be addressed to reduce gender-based economic inequality:

- **The labour force participation rate of females is lower than that of males.** Roughly 69.1 percent of women are in the labour force, while 73.5 percent of men are represented. This represents an improvement in the labour force participation for women as it is an increase from 66.6 percent recorded in 2016. However, the trend continues as males still led in participation with 73.5 percent in 2018, which is a slight increase from the 72.5 observed in 2016.
- **When women join the labour force, they work fewer hours and are under-employed in full-time work.** While men work on average roughly 43 hours per week, women work on average just 39 hours. Moreover, 79 percent of male workers are full-time employees, as opposed to only 68 percent for women. Even if equal pay for equal work existed, the time preference allocated to men in the number of hours worked and the higher availability of advantage over women.
- **Female-headed households suffer from more poverty than male-headed households.** About 11.1 percent of female-headed households live below the national poverty line, while only 8.5 percent of male-headed households do so.

5.5 Women in vulnerable employment

Vulnerable employment is defined as the sum of the employment status groups of own-account workers and contributing family workers. They are less likely to have formal work arrangements and are therefore more likely to lack decent working conditions, adequate social security, and 'voice' through effective representation by trade unions and similar organisations. Vulnerable employment is often characterised by inadequate earnings, low productivity and difficult conditions of work that undermine workers' fundamental rights.

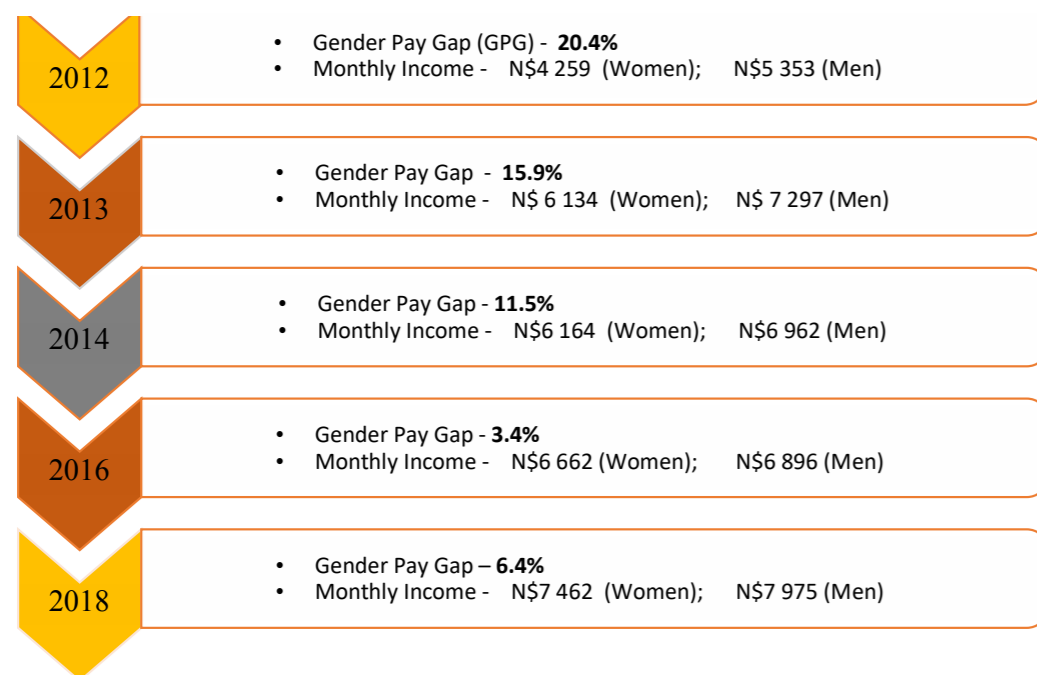


Figure 5.2 Namibia gender pay gap and monthly income 2012–2018

Source: NLFS 2012–2018

³⁵ Ibid.
³⁶ Ibid.

Table 5.1 reveals that the proportion of women in vulnerable employment who are subsistence/communal farmers, which stood at just over a half in 2014, had diminished to 41.8% by 2018. Similarly, unpaid family workers had accounted for 18.8% of women in vulnerable employment in 2014, but this had come down to 14.3% by

2018. Conversely, other own account workers had accounted for 30.5% in 2014, but this figure had risen to 43.9% by 2018. With men, too, other own account workers increased as a percentage of workers in vulnerable employment, rising from 34.5% to 44.4%.

Table 5.1 Workers in vulnerable employment (2014, 2016 and 2018)

	2014		2016		2018	
	Male % of vulnerable workers	Female % of vulnerable workers	Male % of vulnerable workers	Female % of vulnerable workers	Male % of vulnerable workers	Female % of vulnerable workers
Subsistence / communal farmer	42.5	50.7	35	36.17	39.8	41.8
Other own account workers	34.5	30.5	49.2	47.84	44.4	43.9
Unpaid family workers	23	18.8	15.9	15.99	15.8	14.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: NLFS 2014, 2016 & 2018

5.6 Women's political voice

Namibia currently ranks 12th globally and 4th on the African continent for the proportion of women in Parliament. Getting to this level of gender representation required a number of important changes in recent years, most notably the adoption of a 50/50 alternating party list by the majority party, SWAPO, which holds 80 percent of National Assembly's voting seats.³⁷

Since independence, the share of women elected in the National Assembly has on

average increased (Figure 5.3). Today, women make up 43 percent of the National Assembly and 39 percent of members across both houses of Parliament³⁸ - making the country one of the global leaders when it comes to gender representation at this level. Complementing the strong representation of women in the National Assembly, 32 percent of mayors, 48 percent of local authority councillors, and 59 percent of deputy ministers are women.³⁹

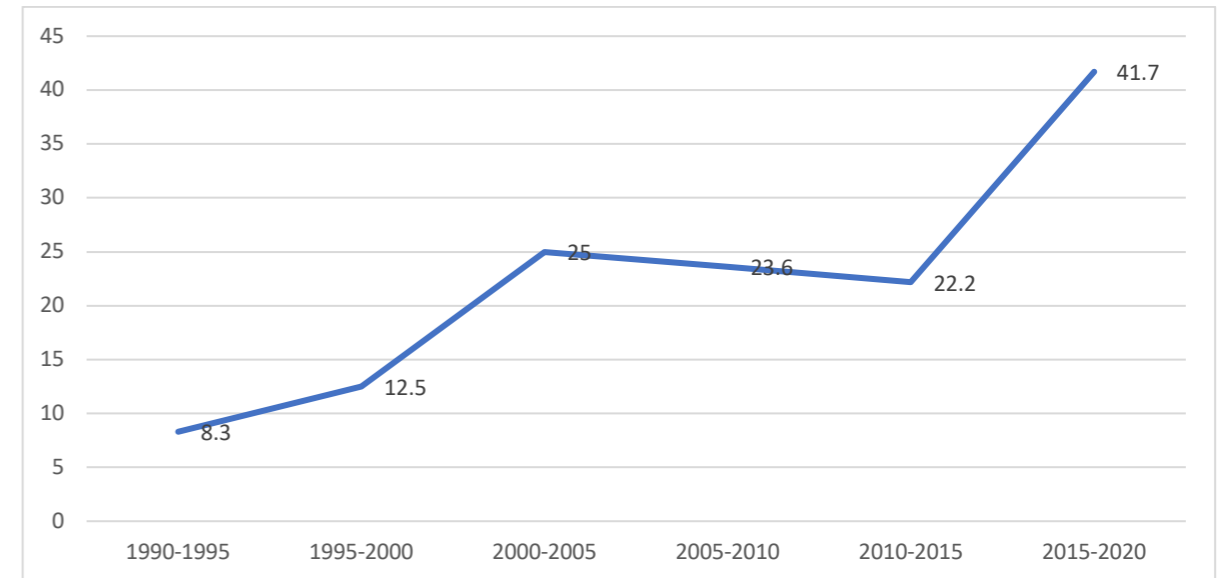


Figure 5.3 Percentage of women in the National Assembly since independence

Source: Based on Amanda Clayton, "Namibia at a Crossroads: 50/50 and the Way Forward", Institute for Public Policy Research Democracy Report, Special Briefing Report No. 7, September 2014

Nevertheless, much remains to be done to attain equal gender representation in other dimensions of political representation:

- the Cabinet – 17 percent women;
- at ministerial level – 20 percent women;
- in regional councils – 16 percent women; and
- among regional governors – 29 percent women.⁴⁰

Similarly, there are only 10 female Executive Directors of the 27 Executive Directors in government service. The imbalance continues at foreign missions, as there are far more male ambassadors than female ones, with 21 out of 31 being men.

As of 2017, there were no women amongst the five permanently appointed Supreme Court justices, and only four women amongst the 15 permanently appointed High Court judges (which is four women out of 20 superior court judges overall, or 20 percent). The level of women in the judiciary (looking at the superior courts combined) has not shifted significantly, with women comprising 18 percent of the judiciary in 2017, 15 percent in 2012 and 17 percent in 2010.

There are no quotas in place for women's representation in any branch or level of

government, though the National Gender Policy includes a strategy to encourage such quotas (The National Gender Policy 2010–2020). It includes strategies to encourage participation of rural women in decision-making roles at local, regional and national levels by addressing physical (i.e. geographical), cultural and educational barriers. In addition, it provides for gender-awareness and skills development for women to improve their ability to play an active role in making important decisions.⁴¹

Namibia's first female Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister were appointed in 2015. At that time, three of the President's five advisors were female.

The Constitution provides for the possibility of the State introducing legislation to address women's representation and equality (Article 95). Some political parties, including the ruling party, do have voluntary quotas. The National Gender Policy (2010–2020) provides for the establishment of a Parliamentary Gender Caucus to raise awareness amongst both male and female parliamentarians on the importance of women's representation in Parliament, as well as broader gender issues. Namibian popular opinion tends to favour the use of gender quotas (Figure 5.4).⁴²

³⁷ Gender Links, 2014

³⁸ National Assembly and National Council

³⁹ Legal Assistance Centre 2017; Nakale, 2018

⁴⁰ Legal Assistance Centre 2017

⁴¹ National Gender Policy

⁴² Ibid.

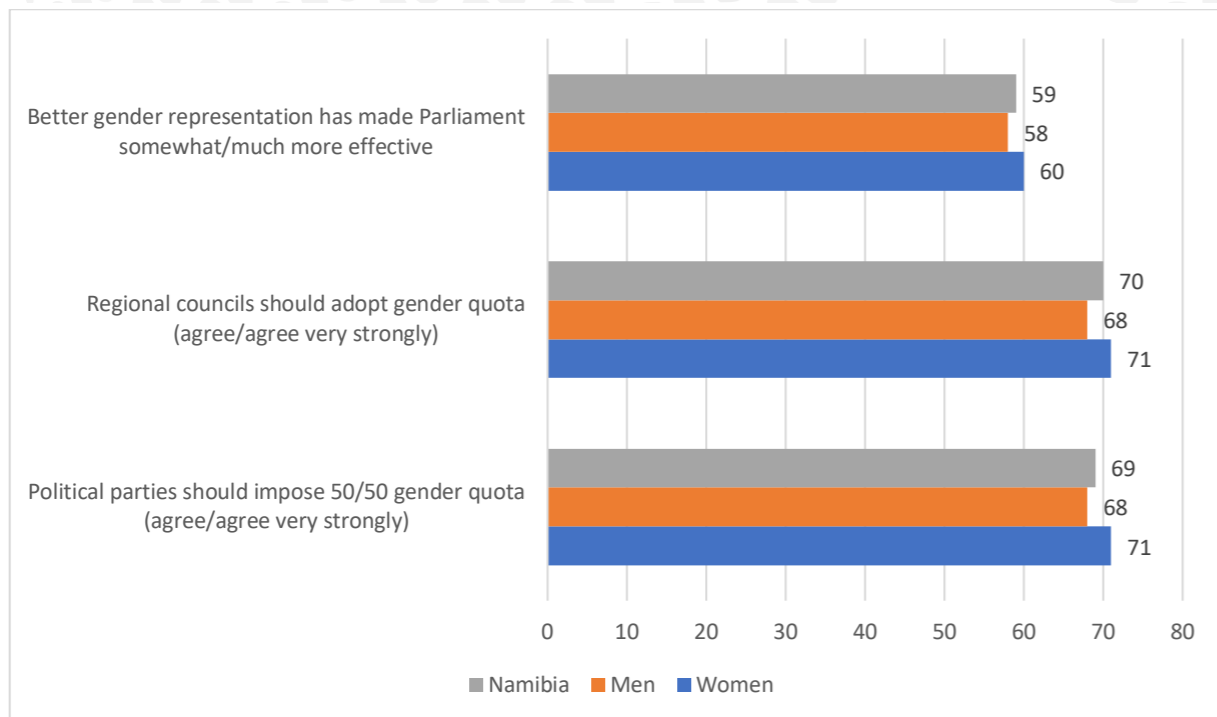


Figure 5.4 Support for gender quotas, 2017

Source: Afrobarometer 2018

5.7 Drivers of gender-based inequalities

A number of key drivers replicate the patterns of gender-based inequality explored in this chapter.

- Perceptions on the unequal status of women and girls:** Of women aged 15–49 in 2013, just over one in four (28 percent) agreed that a husband is justified in beating his wife for at least one specified reason. This is moving in the right direction, dropping from 35 percent in 2006–2007. But more awareness needs to be instilled to shift attitudes on violence against women – attitudes that hold women back, reproduce unequal human development, and inevitably hold back progress for all in Namibia. Respondents in rural areas tend to agree that a husband is justified in beating his wife, with 37 percent of women agreeing, while in urban areas, 21.5 percent of women agreed. Kavango is the site to prioritise for interventions to shift perceptions, as 56.7 percent of women agreed with at least one specific

reason that a husband is justified in beating his wife. This was the only region where more than half of women agreed.

- Unpaid care work:** Everywhere in the world, women and girls bear the burden of household care, raising children, and caring for the elderly. Moreover, this work in the household goes unremunerated. The unpaid care work done by women is estimated at \$10 trillion – 43 times the annual revenue of the richest company in the world, Apple.⁴³

Currently, Namibia lacks a time-use survey, so we cannot quantify the situation. Indeed, conducting a time-use survey should be a priority, whether as a stand-alone survey or an add-on to existing surveys in the country.
- Social and gender institutions:** While women and girls in Namibia enjoy relatively strong access to education and

health compared to men, discrimination in economic and social policy can be further removed to ensure that women reach leadership positions and contribute to accelerated human development progress in the country. Despite strong gender equality attitudes, 14 percent of Namibians say that they experienced discrimination based on their gender during the previous year, and a majority

believe that it is better for women to have as their main responsibility the care of the home and children.⁴⁴

Undertaking a study on the extent to which existing institutions could be improved to close gender gaps would be a positive step along this path (Box 5).

⁴³ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/even-it/5-shocking-facts-about-extreme-global-inequality-and-how-even-it-davos>

⁴⁴ Afrobarometer 2018

Box 5

A SIGI sub-national study

The OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is a cross-country measure of discrimination against women in social institutions (formal and informal laws, social norms, and practices) across 180 countries. Discriminatory social institutions intersect across all stages of girls' and women's lives, restricting their access to justice, rights and empowerment opportunities and undermining their agency and decision-making authority over their life choices.

As underlying drivers of gender inequalities, discriminatory social institutions perpetuate gender gaps in development areas, such as education, employment and health, and hinder progress towards rights-based social transformation that benefits both women and men.

The SIGI introduces 12 innovative indicators on social institutions, which are grouped into five categories: family code, physical integrity, son preference, civil liberties, and ownership rights. Each of the SIGI indicators is coded between 0, meaning no or very low inequality, and 1, indicating very high inequality.

The SIGI supports better evidence for researchers and policy makers alike. Its simple construction also makes it a tool for the general public interested in women's social and economic development.

- The score and country ranking provide a quick overview of gender discrimination in social institutions and allow for a comparison of countries.
- The SIGI sub-indices help to locate areas of particular concern; for example, a country might have particular problems with the level of violence directed towards women.
- The individual indicators of social institutions offer new empirical evidence on gender discrimination, and help to understand existing gender gaps in health, education and economic participation.
- The Gender, Institutions and Development Database country notes, which form the basis for each country's score and ranking, provide in-depth information on the situation of women and men with regards to social institutions.

Several countries in sub-Saharan Africa are instituting the SIGI survey at the sub-national level. To date, Burkina Faso and Uganda have completed these studies to better quantify country-specific discriminatory social institutions, provide evidence to strengthen national policymaking, and explore sub-national disparities.

Source: OECD SIGI, <https://www.genderindex.org/>

Chapter 6

Education Inequalities and Disparities

Developing human resources is a critical component of any country's growth and poverty eradication strategy. An educated citizenry is necessary for improving economic growth and development, alleviating poverty and enhancing quality of life. This is because skills are key drivers of well-being and prosperity, and the skills possessed by any country's population provide the fundamental determinants for productivity, well-being and prosperity.⁴⁵ Skills requirements determine how productive a country's economy is, and its potential growth.

Education plays an important role in reducing income inequality, as it determines occupational choices, access to jobs and the level of pay, and plays a pivotal role as a signal of ability and productivity in the job market. Investing in education has a positive effect on reversing rising inequalities, closing economic disparities among subgroups, and enhancing mobility for all. Hence, education is the greatest equaliser, and expanding the skills base of the labour force may lead to lower levels of inequality in the long run.⁴⁶

Since independence, the education sector has been allocated the biggest proportion of the national budget, leading to increased enrolment and improved literacy rates. Enrolments in both educational phases have shown an increase over the years. With the introduction of the new curriculum in 2015, enrolments in Grade 0 went from 32 753 in 2015 to 43 448 in 2018, whereas Grade 5 enrolments went from 64 632 in 2015 to 67 337 in 2018, although a decline was observed in 2016. The revised curriculum for the junior secondary education phase was introduced in 2017 and 2018 for Grade 8 and Grade 9, respectively. By 2018, 59 946 learners were enrolled in Grade 8. Further, the revised curriculum for senior secondary education was introduced in 2019 for Grade 10, and it is scheduled for introduction in 2020 and 2021 for Grades 11 and 12, respectively. Enrolments in Grade 10 went from 38 257 in 2015 to 45 369 in 2018, whereas in Grade 12, 20 198 and 23 653 learners were enrolled in 2015 and 2018, respectively.

⁴⁵ OECD, 2013

⁴⁶ Shimeles (2016)

Differences in early education and school quality are the major factors contributing to persistent inequality across generations. In Namibia, age at first enrolment in primary grades varies across the regions of the country, and this remains a challenge, with some regions having children registering for the first time at school above the ages of 8, while the education policy requires children who are seven years of age to be in Grade 1.

In 2016, 8.2 percent of Namibian children over the age of seven enrolled in school for the first time. Amongst the regions affected by late enrolment of children (i.e. over the age of seven) are Kunene, Omaheke and Kavango East, with 25 percent, 17 percent and 16 percent, respectively. The IlKaras and Oshana regions are doing better in terms of early enrolment in school for children, having recorded only 2 percent and 3.9 percent late enrolments, respectively.

Generally, employment rates increase with the level of educational attainment. Similar trends can be observed in Namibia as reported by the Equity Commission. Adults with at least a bachelor's level degree enjoy similar employment rates to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 82 percent, but adults with only lower secondary education had an employment rate of 49 percent, compared to an OECD average of 60 percent.

Although educational attainment for Namibia has increased, at 33.4 percent the country has one of the highest unemployment rates in the region, and this requires intervention. This is particularly pertinent in light of the high repetition and dropout rates. There is an established inverse relationship between the level of education and the chances of being unemployed: the higher the education level, the lower the chances of being unemployed (Figure 6.1).

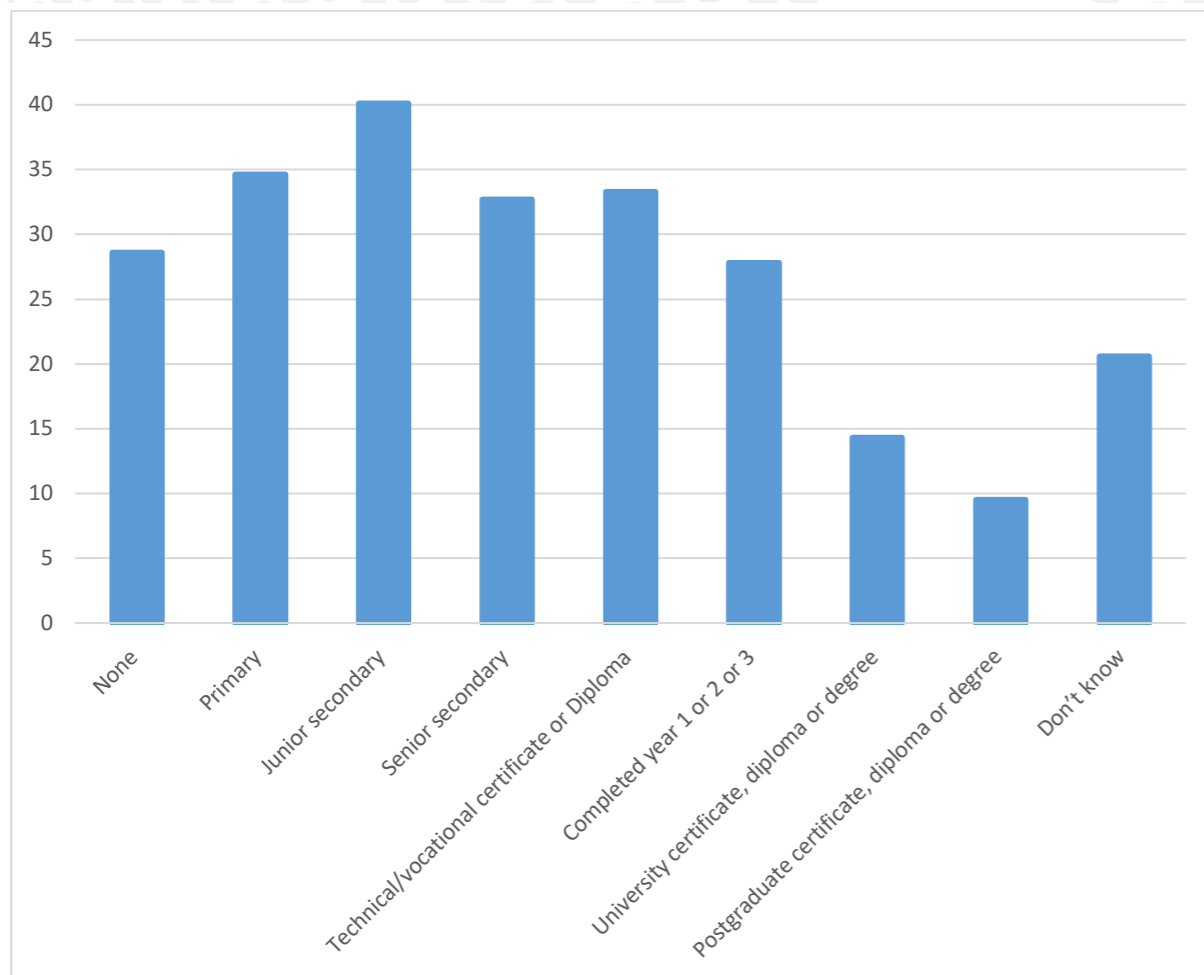


Figure 6.1 Unemployed by highest level of education (No. per 100)

Source: Namibia Labour Force Survey, 2018

It is evident that high drop-out rates are fuelling the high unemployment rates. As seen in Figure 6.2 those with Grades 8, 9 and 10 (junior

secondary education) have the highest drop-out rates (school leaving).

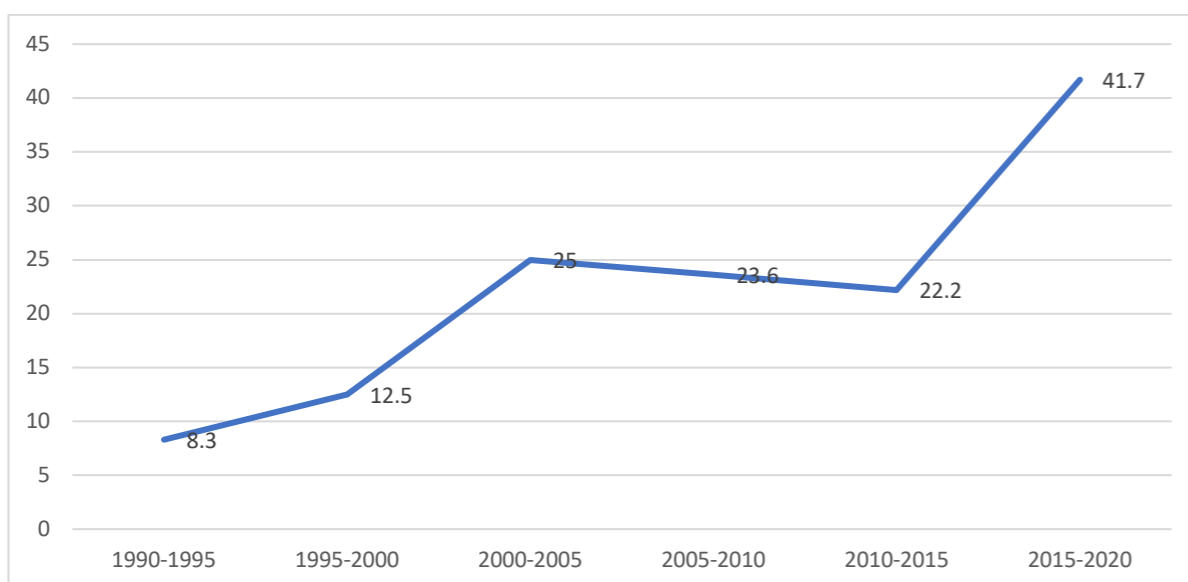


Figure 6.2 School leaving rates

Source: EMIS Reports (2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018)

For Namibia, statistics show that the gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education has increased overall among males and females over the years. However, the enrolment is significantly higher among females than males. The Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) system in Namibia is characterised by enhanced industry engagement and a revitalised apprenticeship system. Technical schools are also making a comeback, and there is noticeably increased access through an expansion of TVET provision.

Over the past three years, the system has experienced an increase in funding and employers' participation through the levysystem. The demand for TVET has also increased, and this is evidenced in the number of applications received over the past two years.⁴⁷ It is important to consider the trends in tertiary enrolment and TVET against the backdrop of the importance of early childhood development and the long-

term benefits in terms of reduced failure and dropout rates, reduced learner pregnancy, and higher employment opportunities.

The level of education in Namibia is high, with only 5 percent of women and 8 percent of men having no formal education. Women are more likely to reach higher levels of education than men. For example, 48 percent of women have some secondary education, compared to 44 percent of men. Women have a median of 9.1 years of schooling, while men have a median of 8.7 years of schooling.

In most regions in Namibia, women tend to complete more years of schooling than men. In Khomas Region, the median years of schooling for women is 11 years, whereas for males it is 9.8 years. In regions such as Otjozondjupa and Hardap, men and women have the same mean years of schooling, as shown in Figure 6.3.

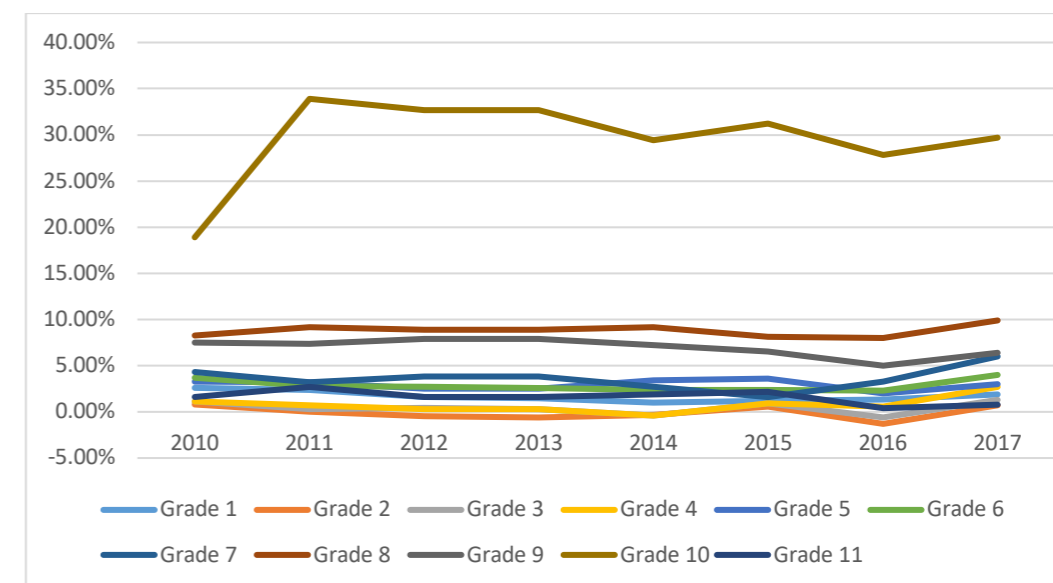


Figure 6.3 Median years of schooling completed, female and male, 2013

Source: DHS 2013

According to the Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) results of 2016, 7.7 percent of children in the rural areas of Namibia travel between six and 10 kilometres to the nearest primary school, as opposed to 2.3 percent in urban areas. These long distances to primary school, where the majority are still children, can lead to high dropout and failure rates in rural areas, thus widening the gap in educational attainment between urban and

rural areas. The proportion of women and men with no education is highest in Kunene Region, with 22 percent and 30 percent, respectively, and lowest in Oshana Region, with 1 percent and 2 percent, respectively.

The percentage of women and men with no education decreases with increasing wealth. About 10 percent of women and 15 percent of men in the lowest wealth quintile have no

⁴⁷ Lukonga et al., 2018

education, as compared to less than 1 percent each among households in the highest wealth quintile. The literacy rate in Namibia is generally high, with more than 9 in 10 persons being literate (93 percent of women and 91 percent of men). Literacy levels tend to decrease with age, especially among women. About 96 percent of women aged 15–24 are literate, as compared with 86 percent of women aged 45–49. Some variations in the level of literacy are defined by the following:

- **Urban/rural divide:** Women and men in urban areas (96 percent and 95 percent, respectively) are more likely to be literate than those in rural areas (90 percent and 85 percent, respectively).
- **Regional variations:** The literacy rate among women ranges from 77 percent in Kunene and Omaheke to 98 percent in Erongo and Oshana. Among men, the literacy rate is highest in Khomas (97 percent) and lowest in Kunene and Omaheke (both 71 percent).
- **Income differences:** Literacy increases with increasing wealth among both women and men. For example, 86 percent of women in the lowest wealth quintile are literate, compared to 99 percent of those in the highest wealth quintile. The corresponding percentages for men are 79 percent and 99 percent, respectively.

GRN promotes the concept of “Education for All” in order to ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes. TVET is important for promoting economic development as well as expanding employment rates. It is recognised to be a crucial vehicle for social equity, inclusion and sustainable development. In 2015, GRN accordingly established the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation to cater for the TVET sector, among other key functional areas. This ministry established the Namibia

Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) to ensure equitable access to higher education. NSFAF accords special consideration to orphans and vulnerable children, and more attention has also been given to learners with special learning needs.

GRN has been committed to investing in the education sector. Nambinga, Mabuku and Sikanda (2017) state that between 2000/01 and 2016/17, the combined actual annual budget allocation for the two ministries of education (the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture; and the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation) fluctuated within the range of N\$ 1.9 billion to N\$ 15.6 billion.⁴⁸

The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) is used to generate evidence-based information which can be used by decision-makers to plan improvements in the quality of education. SACMEQ provides valuable information that can be used to assess the condition of schooling for a country’s Grade 6 learners in terms of reading, mathematics and HIV/AIDS performance and knowledge, as well as the quality of input of their school principals and teachers.

According to the SACMEQ IV (2015) report for Namibia, education quality outcomes remain a problem, although investment in primary education is relatively high.⁴⁹ Therefore, getting value for money by the efficient use of resources continues to present a challenge. Namibia is ranked 7th in a SACMEQ IV country comparison, with a total score of 537.8 (learners) and 718.3 (teachers) with regards to reading performance scores. This indicates that Namibia moved up three places from the SACMEQ III (2011) results in learner performance, while teacher performance dropped by two places. The move can be a result of the many efforts the Ministry has made to ensure quality teaching and learning, while the drop can be attributed to a change in curriculum, and many other factors.

Table 6.1 Reading and mathematics test scores of learners and teachers (SACMEQ III and IV)

Region	SACMEQ III								SACMEQ IV							
	LEARNERS				TEACHERS				LEARNERS				TEACHERS			
	Reading		Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics	
	Mean	SE*	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Erongo	579.5	15.01	523.3	12.19	764.8	13.92	786.6	18.04	606.6	11.80	576.6	10.05	748.7	17.09	744.9	25.65
Hardap	509.4	18.27	483.1	13.24	773.6	23.6	818.8	30.61	571.3	16.38	550.8	18.89	738.1	23.24	831.1	35.17
IlKaras	548.0	15.76	510.3	14.94	774.5	25.37	799.8	26.37	585.2	9.49	546.9	9.21	753.4	19.45	831.2	30.59
Kavango	481.7	10.14	455.6	7.6	709.1	12.38	750.5	15.09	515.2	5.54	496.2	4.82	709.0	15.06	773.0	28.72
Khomas	574.9	12.54	522.7	11.55	751.3	14.82	760	21.42	584.7	14.35	554.1	12.77	758.4	13.90	783.3	15.80
Kunene	501.6	15.77	478.2	13.71	786.3	31.63	760.2	33.15	537.4	14.80	516.1	17.32	718.4	16.74	766.4	30.68
Ohangwena	463.5	5.22	447.8	4.86	744.2	15.57	785	14.07	493.2	4.50	494.8	3.31	715.7	8.30	754.3	15.74
Omaheke	494.5	8.98	468.3	6.19	779	20.13	818.7	27.84	558.1	11.60	527.9	9.42	743.6	21.44	750.0	25.38
Omusati	462.1	4.65	450.2	3.96	729.3	14.79	768.5	16.58	519.4	5.21	514.2	4.74	703.2	9.00	766.7	20.00
Oshikoto	471.1	10.48	457.2	9.27	744.3	11.58	771.7	18.48	504.2	7.43	504.7	6.78	692.7	11.40	769.0	17.54
Oshana	500.9	10.53	474.8	8.99	704.6	9.62	743.1	19.37	551.1	10.64	539.7	7.79	692.6	13.88	757.2	15.32
Otjozondjupa	526.5	9.91	488.6	8.14	731.1	19.78	797.6	23.06	567.7	12.07	533.6	11.44	713.5	15.65	835.5	24.87
Zambezi	488.5	15.94	457.9	10.4	738.7	12.87	737.6	16.39	542.0	10.40	522.9	7.38	715.9	9.29	756.6	30.23
Namibia	496.9	2.99	471	2.51	738.6	4.78	771.1	5.87	537.8	2.71	522.4	2.40	718.3	3.90	774.1	6.63

Source: SACMEQ report, 2015

* Standard error

Table 6.1 shows that learners in all regions on average surpassed the SACMEQ IV average of 500 in reading and mathematics, except Ohangwena Region – a substantial improvement over SACMEQ III results. This improvement in learners’ reading and mathematics can be attributed to the implementation of many education improvement strategies that the Ministry of Education has implemented over

the past five years, including continuous professional development; the compulsory mathematics education programme; improved textbook ratios in core subjects including English and mathematics; and standardised achievement tests and SACMEQ-recommended teaching and learning strategies.

48 V. Nambinga, M. Mabuku and M. Sikanda (2018).

49 SACMEQ Policy Research: Report No.4 (2015) Ministry of Education. <http://www.sacmeq.org/reports?project=All&report=112&author=All&=Apply>

In addition, investment in education, most specifically in primary education, has been a high priority for the government. Primary education is responsible for the largest share of total expenditure in the education sector, with

an average of 48 percent of the total budget between 2008/09 to 2016/17. Hence the quality of education is improving, although much still needs to be done.

Chapter 7 Health Inequalities and Disparities

Over the past decades, there has been considerable improvement in the public health care sector. At the time of independence, the Namibian health system was very fragmented. Most health facilities were concentrated in the urban areas and segregated along racial lines. Since then, a strong political commitment to upgrade the primary health care system has made health services more responsive to the needs of the population. As health is one of the government's priorities, Namibia is now among the top tier of African countries with respect to health expenditures.

Since 2015/16, the government has been dedicating an increasing share of general government expenditure to health. Government health spending through the Ministry of Health and Social Services and PSEMAS (the Public Service Employee Medical Aid Scheme) has increased steadily to 14.5 percent of total

spending in 2017/18. At that level of spending, the government was close to meeting the Abuja Declaration's target of 15 percent of general government spending on health. Due to the global economic slowdown, however, the government has performed budget consolidation, which affected the health sector. As a result, expenditure has declined to below 13 percent during the last two financial years (Figure 7.1).

With regards to international benchmarks, eSwatini is the only country in eastern and southern Africa that has met the Abuja target of 15 percent of general government expenditure for 2013–2015, with South Africa reaching close to 14 percent. The majority of countries, however, fall significantly behind (Moritz Piatti-Fünfkirchen, Magnus Lindelow & Katelyn Yoo, 2018).

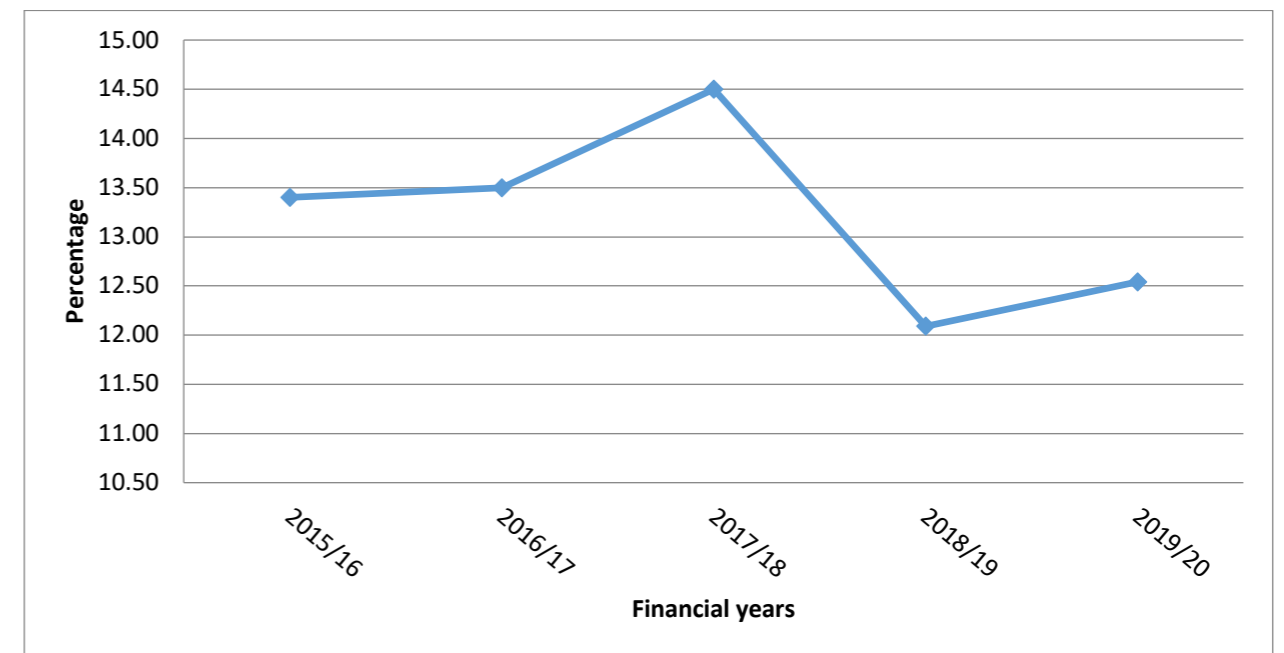


Figure 7.1 Namibia government health financing 2015 - 2020

Source: Ministry of Finance, Budget Review Books 2015/16 - 2019/20

Not only is government health spending high in relative terms, but out-of-pocket expenditures as a proportion of private health expenditures was 7.3 percent in 2016; this means Namibians are spending less out of their own pockets to

access health services. However, these figures camouflage the large inequalities in access to health care services between rural and urban dwellers, and between the rich and the poor.

Through health investment, Namibia has improved its health system since independence, ensuring that health facilities are within reach of its people. Several health facilities have been constructed and some health centres have been upgraded to provide more advanced health services. The system of waiving treatment fees for the vulnerable in government health facilities is being implemented. This is to ensure that every citizen has access to health services.

Increasing social spending, such as on health, may in turn translate into better health outcomes and a lower risk of death for individuals in the country. The United Nations estimates a global average life expectancy of 72.6 years for 2019 – with females living longer than males, as their life expectancy is 75.6 years, compared to 70.8 years for males.

The global average today is higher than the average was in any country back in 1950. The overall life expectancy at birth in Namibia in 2019 was 64.9 years, slightly below the SADC average life expectancy of 65.5 years. Namibia's life expectancy for both males and females declined from independence in 1990 to 2004, then entered a phase of growth after that. The current rates of life expectancy for Namibians have topped the 1990 levels of 65.7 for women and 59.0 for men: disaggregated by sex, life expectancy for females in 2019 was 67.7 years and for males, 61.8 years, placing Namibia in the 166th place worldwide. Mauritius and Seychelles have the highest overall life expectancy amongst SADC countries of 75.5 years and 73.7 years, respectively, while Lesotho has the lowest overall life expectancy of 55.7 years (Figure 7.2).

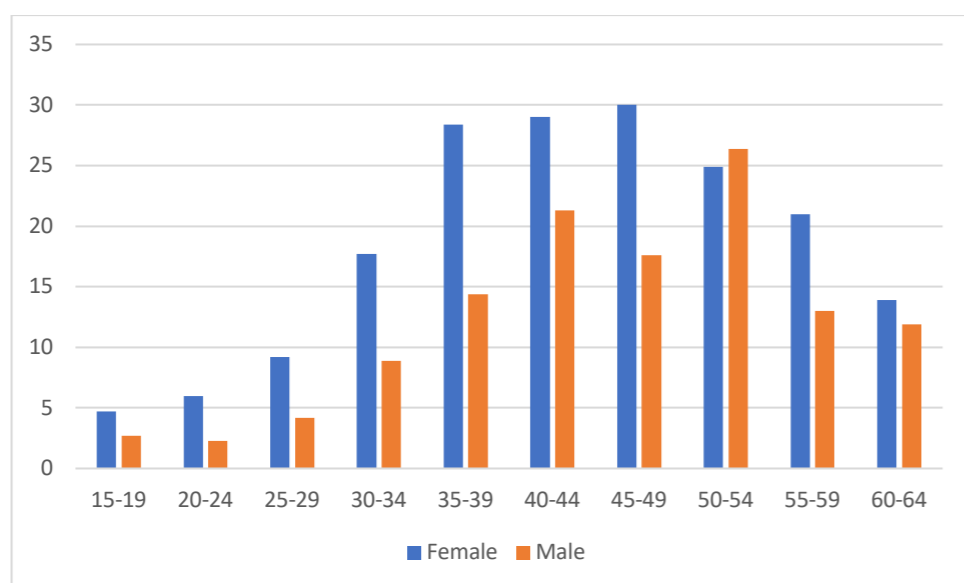


Figure 7.2 Life expectancy at birth for SADC countries 2019

Source: Worldometers 2019

Note: There were no data for the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Namibian population suffers from HIV and AIDS as the leading cause of deaths in the country, and thus it is still a factor deeply affecting overall life expectancy. Nonetheless, the rates of new HIV infections have decreased from more than 15 000 in 2002 to approximately 4 500 in 2018, and AIDS-related deaths had also halved by 2018 from nearly 10 000 deaths in 2002 (CDC, 2018). Even though there has been progress in the fight against HIV and AIDS,

however, it continues to put a tremendous strain on the health sector.

7.1 Maternal and child health disparities

Maternal mortality refers to deaths due to complications from pregnancy or childbirth. From 2000 to 2017, the global maternal mortality ratio declined by 43 percent – from 342 deaths to 195 deaths per 100 000 live births (UN Inter-Agency estimates, 2017). This translates to an average reduction in the annual

rate of 2.9 percent. While substantial, this is less than half the 6.4 percent annual rate reduction needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target of less than 70 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births by 2030 (UNICEF, 2019).

The trend of maternal deaths for Namibia over the period of ten years (2006–2015) indicates that there is much room for improvement, and that concerted efforts are required. The public health sector has made tremendous strides in ensuring that women have access to health services, with close to 95 percent of pregnant women receiving antenatal care (ANC) from medical professionals, and 82 percent being

attended by skilled health workers at the time of delivery. Despite impressive figures on women attending ANC and delivering with the help of medical professionals, maternal mortality rates remain high in the country, as shown in Table 7.1. Maternal mortality for Namibia has reduced from 371 deaths per 100 000 live births in 2006 to 265 deaths per 100 000 live births in 2015. In comparison to other SADC countries, Namibia is doing better than the DRC, Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar, eSwatini, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, but worse than Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia and the Seychelles.

Table 7.1 Maternal mortality rates in SADC by year, per 100 000 live births, 2006 - 2015

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Angola	668	640	450	450	450	546	526	350	351	477
Botswana	140	183	196	190	163	189	148	183	143	149
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	789	803	792	793	794	777	771	746	717	693
Lesotho	932	932	932	1 155	1 155	1 143	1 143	1 143	1 143	1024
Madagascar	495	482	468	453	436	420	402	384	369	353
Malawi	807	613	510	633	675	618	624	574	574	n.a.
Mauritius	17	36	37	65	33	34	62	66	52	47
Mozambique	741	500	550	646	490	408	563	480	506	n.a.
Namibia	371	344	180	321	200	315	299	130	273	265
Seychelles	n.a.	n.a.	65	n.a.	133	n.a.	n.a.	64	n.a.	188
South Africa	n.a.	n.a.	410	n.a.	300	154	152	140	140	138
Swaziland (eSwatini)	561	589	420	451	320	418	400	310	400	389
United Republic of Tanzania	454	454	454	454	454	454	432	432	432	432
Zambia	n.a.	591	470	n.a.	483	n.a.	n.a.	398	398	224
Zimbabwe	n.a.	n.a.	790	n.a.	960	483	525	470	614	651

Source: SADC Statistical Yearbook 2015

**n.a.= not available

With very high health facility-based deliveries (85 percent), it can be postulated that the majority of these maternal deaths take place in health facilities. Being a sparsely populated country, Namibia encounters the challenges of great distances to health facilities. This leads to differences in terms of how the population is catered for. According to NHIES 2015/16, 17.9 percent of households in Namibia have to travel a distance longer than 10 kilometres to the nearest health facility. Of those living in rural areas, 36.5 percent lived more than 10

kilometres from the nearest health facility. At a regional level, only 40.7 percent of people in Kavango West, 43.8 percent in Ohangwena, and 44.3 percent in Kunene lived within five kilometres of a health facility.

While neonatal mortality rates had been relatively steady for the three five-year periods before 2013 (2008–2012: 20 deaths per 1 000 live births; 2003–2007: 17 deaths; and 1988–2002: 25 deaths), data from the 2013 NDHS show that infant mortality had declined by

19 percent over the preceding 15 years, while under-5 mortality had declined by 18 percent over the same period. Despite the decline in the infant mortality rate, it was more than twice as high in the lowest wealth quintile (51 per 1 000 live births) than in the highest (22 per 1 000 live births). Some of the factors contributing to infant mortality are:

- **Malnutrition and poor health practices:** Malnutrition rates are high, with a quarter of all children under five years of age being stunted. A staggering 70 percent of the rural population practice open defecation. Frequent childhood infections, principally due to inappropriate infant feeding practices and compounded by low sanitation coverage and sub-optimal hygiene practices such as infrequent/absent hand washing with soap at critical moments (e.g. prior to feeding babies and food handling) are important underlying causes of malnutrition (UNICEF 2006). Only 13 percent of children of 6–23 months are fed in accordance with the three-core infant and young child feeding practices.

- **Distance to health facility:** There are still areas where a quarter of mothers give birth to babies at home without trained, skilled assistance at birth due to the absence of transportation to reach health facilities. Most women (72 percent) who delivered at home reported that they did so because a health facility was too far away, or they had no transportation to the facility. This explains why only 5 percent to 10 percent of newborns are checked on within the first two days of birth in certain areas.
- **Low vaccination:** Only 63 percent of children aged 12–23 months are fully vaccinated.

7.2 HIV prevalence

In 2017, the overall HIV prevalence among women aged 15–49 was 14.8 percent, compared to 8 percent among men of the same age (Figure 7.3). HIV prevalence rates were highest for women aged 45–49, at 30 percent, and 26.4 percent for men aged 50–54.

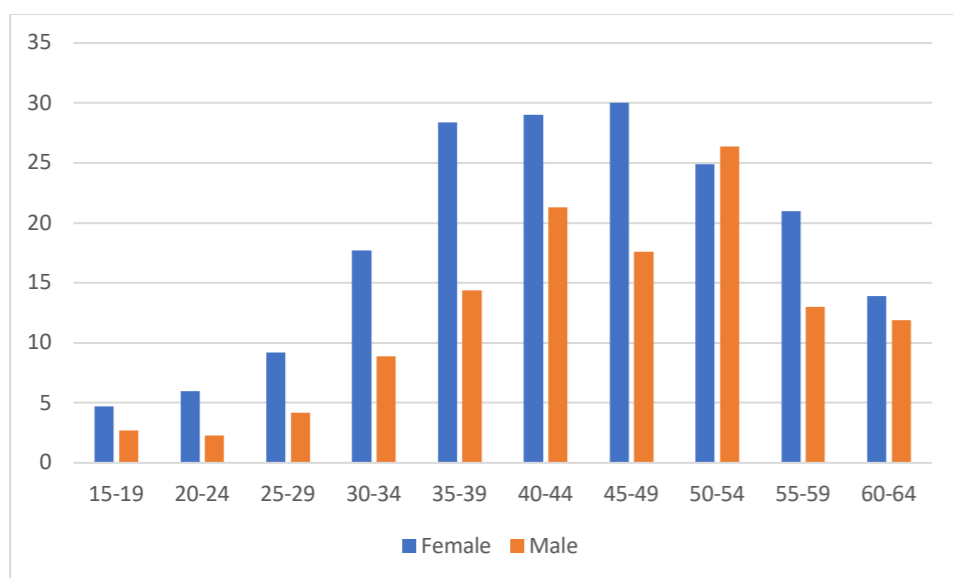


Figure 7.3 HIV prevalence by age group and sex, 2017

Source: NAMPHIA (Namibia Population-based HIV Impact Assessment) 2017

The 2013 Demographic Health Survey allows us to see the influence of inequalities in socioeconomic characteristics in HIV prevalence. Prevalence among women and men by socioeconomic characteristics was broken down into age groups of 15–49 and

50–64. As would be expected, prevalence rates varied based on factors such as employment, residence, region, education and household wealth. In the 15–49 age group, groups of women exhibiting high HIV prevalence rates included women who were employed (20.8

percent); rural women (19.3 percent); women with no education (26.6 percent) or only primary education (25.8 percent); and those in the lower and second wealth quintiles (23.80 percent and 24.4 percent, respectively). Regionally, in the female 15–49 age group, Zambezi had the highest HIV prevalence at 30.9 percent, followed by Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshana, while at 6.9 percent, Omaheke had the lowest prevalence.

The National Policy on HIV/AIDS, which sets out strategies to respond to HIV and AIDS, recognises in its preamble that the unequal position of girls and women in society makes women more likely to become infected with HIV and AIDS and to be more adversely affected than men.⁵⁰ It also explains that the low status of women contributes to the prevalence of HIV, as women have less freedom to decide when, with whom and how to have sex.

In Namibia, gross inequalities in social and physical living conditions result in widely varying health indicators for different segments of the population. For the majority of the population, enjoying good health is constrained by low income, a lack of education, and inadequate sanitation and water supply. Inadequate access

to safe water and poor sanitation are also public health concerns because they create conditions conducive to the spread of diseases. They are directly linked to increased health risks.⁵¹

7.3 Disability as a factor causing inequalities

People with disabilities are at greater risk for many forms of inequality, including health problems that should be prevented. People with disabilities of all forms (e.g. physical, visual, intellectual, etc.) are one of the most marginalised groups in any society. People with disabilities experience poorer levels of health than the general population.

Overall, in Namibia 4.7 percent of the population has some sort of disability. The proportion is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. It is also observed that the proportion of persons with a disability has remained fairly constant between 2001 and 2011.⁵² Persons with disabilities experience barriers to communication when they seek health services, which may result in poor service delivery. The classification of disabilities is outlined in Box 6.

⁵⁰ National Policy on HIV/AIDS, Windhoek: Republic of Namibia, Directorate of Special Programmes, 2007

⁵¹ World Health Organization [WHO] Regional Office for Africa, 2010–2018

⁵² NSA, 2016

Box 6

The need to update Namibia's classification of people with disabilities

According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the term 'people with disabilities' is applied to all persons with disabilities, including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. These can be attitudinal, physical, environmental and communication barriers. The 2011 Census still adopted the outdated definition of disability as the condition of loss of physical or mental function resulting in an inability to perform daily activities.

Using the medical approach, which is no longer in line with international human rights law, Namibia classified the following conditions as types of disabilities: blind; visually impaired; deaf; hearing difficulties; mute/dumb; impaired speech; impairment of hands; impairment of legs; impaired limbs; mentally disabled; albinism; and autism.

Source: United Nations, 2011. World Report on Disability

Article 4

Economic Inequalities and Disparities in Health



Nangula Uaandja
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Having read a piece written by the WHO on what we have learned from COVID-19, I tend to agree that indeed the “massive inequalities have meant that deaths and loss of livelihoods have been strongly driven by socioeconomic status, often compounded by gender and minority status”.⁵³ Although the WHO lesson gives the global perspective, the situation is very similar to Namibia, where the different socio-economic groups experience varied degrees of access to quality and affordable health care. These variations are largely manifestations of the systemic disparities among different social and economic groups, their geographic locations and their varied access to public and private health care systems.

Even though Namibia at 30 years after independence has constructed about 64 public clinics, six health centres and four district hospitals, women are still disproportionately affected by their socio-economic standing. Images of expecting mothers sleeping in

informal structures to be near a clinic or health care facilities are not uncommon, especially in some villages in the northern regions of Namibia. This portrays not only the mother's social and economic status, but also the disparities between private and public health care systems. Basically, those with financial resources are able to afford the private health care facilities and accord their new-borns with the best care. This gives their children the basic foundation for their futures.

While I believe that the roles played by public and private hospitals are complementary, I also believe that having access to a private health care facility in a rural area (beyond the capital) will remove the burden on public hospitals. Namibia's private health ecosystem is well organised, and the majority of those in employment (be it in the private or public domains) including their families have access to at least decent and affordable medical care. The majority even have medical aid schemes, including the government scheme, PSEMAS.

The major disparities affect those who are not employed, because their own and their family's health care is in the hands of public health system. While the public health system receives the second highest budget allotment (after education), there are challenges in the management of the system. These include unavailability of equipment, consumables and medicines, which are severely inadequate. Furthermore, the supply chain, central medical stores and facilities seem to be marred by various irregularities. The viewpoint is expressed that some of the entrusted service providers (those with tenders) do not deliver on time or up to the expected quality standards. My calculation is that the country has been experiencing major leadership, administrative and supply chain challenges that are unacceptably affecting the provision of decent medical health care to ordinary Namibians.

⁵³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/who-manifesto-for-a-healthy-recovery-from-covid-19>

As much of the Namibian population still live in rural areas, to reach decent care, be it public or private, they travel vast distances; therefore, decentralising the access with similar standards will change the dynamics. Distances affect family dynamics such that some even opt to leave their families and stay in and around hospitals to ensure that they can get routine health checks. Mothers and babies constitute the majority of those in this situation. The conditions in the waiting places are extremely poor, to the point of being unhygienic.

I see an opportunity for the public and private sectors to complement each other in the provision and delivery of a decent health service for the country. The problem is not about the availability of the funds. Rather, the challenges relate to the efficient and effective delivery of public health services. In many of the public management systems, there is no performance management system. Therefore, there seems to be a lack of innovation hampered by a lack of incentive to deliver better services. In our public sector, whatever you do, you are paid your salary – whether you deliver services efficiently and effectively or not, you still get your payment. As there are no punitive options for failure to deliver or incentives to deliver well beyond what is expected, our public health system is not improving, and is failing to serve the ordinary Namibian.

This is where I want to see the changes, to bring in more of the private sector ethos that delivers better. I want to see a change that if you do well, i.e. perform your public or private services, you are rewarded; and if you do badly, there is a penalty to pay. Public – private partnerships are needed so that there is a balance of affordability and accessibility to prevent the ordinary

Namibian from suffering. My sincerest wish is for public and private sector partners in Namibia to collaborate better. In this collaboration, the public sector would bring balanced, affordable services to all; while the private sector would bring in innovation and solutions to efficiently and effectively deliver health services for all Namibians, irrespective of their socio-economic status or their geographic setting.

I desire a change in the model of delivering public health care, where the government is playing more of an oversight role and the private sector is engaged to do more, and to do it better. The government will still be needed to invest in the public health care system; however, there will be a structure or an instrument in place for performance-based payment, to deliver improved and better health services. Private sector health providers could structure the delivery of services, but of a higher quality than is currently being given to the public.

I dream of a Namibia where ordinary citizens (mothers and their babies) somewhere deep in the villages are not waiting in uncomfortable conditions to receive decent public health care or services. The situation where citizens are forced to wait for hours and days for services, without access to clean, well-lit, comfortable waiting places, shall stop. I see a Namibia where this is improved through better public and private sector partnerships and collaborations. This would enable those of a relatively deprived socio-economic standing to still have access to health care, while those with the means could still utilise the private system. To date, there have been developments in the private sector; however, the public remains uncatered for, especially when it comes to public hospitals.

Article 5 Disabilities – Problems and Solutions



Pelgrina Shimanu Ndumba
UN Volunteer Project Officer

Persons with disabilities are considered as second-class citizens by society due to the assumptions made about them.

Gender inequality

Men with disabilities hold most leadership positions in running disability affairs and in general have a higher employment rate than women with disabilities. This results in men with disabilities being better able than women with disabilities to afford houses, which in turn means that women with disabilities at times choose not to withdraw from abusive relationships, as their abusive partners provide them with accommodation. Furthermore, men with disabilities are more likely to marry women (with or without disabilities) than women with disabilities, due to the assumption that women have to do all house chores, and that men are exempt from these chores. Women with disabilities are assumed to be incapable of doing anything productive.

Solutions

A mechanism to regulate the employment process of persons with disabilities should be put in place with proper procedures that will ensure that men and women with disabilities are equally employed and that a balance is created. All women with disabilities must be educated on their potential and capabilities. Most of these women have heard nothing good about themselves – all they hear are negative things said by other successful women. The mindsets of people without disabilities towards people with disabilities should be changed from negative to positive through more awareness campaigns.

Education inequality

In most cases, parents find out late that their young ones have disabilities. When a child has a disability at an early age, the parents only find out much later that their children with disabilities can also go to school. This realisation may only come when the children are already too old to attend early childhood development classes. Most teachers are not trained to teach learners with disabilities, and this causes learners with disabilities to fail or underperform, especially if they don't have access to special schools with all the necessary equipment.

Solutions

All parents should take their young ones for medical check-ups on a regular basis. In addition, health workers should be informed about all the opportunities available for persons with disabilities, for example special schools, so that they can advise parents of these children to take them to schools and not to keep them at home – which is what happened to me. Teachers should be trained on how to educate children with disabilities, and more teachers with disabilities must be employed to teach learners with disabilities. Furthermore special schools must prioritise getting specialised equipment and finding out how to use this equipment, as it sometimes occurs that the equipment is available, but nobody knows how to use it. Students with disabilities are mostly given their study materials late, for example a day before writing a test or exam. Students with

disabilities should make their own choices on which career to pursue. Too often, other people decide for students with disabilities what career they should follow.

Service inequality

No current screen readers can read our vernacular languages. Most vision-impaired persons cannot read and write English, and they don't know braille. In addition, not all persons with hearing impairments or service providers who render services to them can afford to pay for a sign language interpreter.

Solutions

We must develop screen readers that can read our vernacular languages. Screen readers should convert voice into text and vice versa so that sign language interpretation is not the only communication method for persons with hearing impairment. This would also have the effect of safeguarding their privacy. People with disabilities representing other people with disabilities should not only benefit themselves – they should be willing to work hard to benefit all people who have disabilities.

Ownership of land inequality

Land is very expensive and only a small percentage of people with disabilities can afford to buy land. In some cases, those with disabilities are given land by their relatives, but the land is taken away from them by force by those without disabilities.

Solutions

Persons with disabilities should be allowed to purchase land with their disability grant. In addition there should be a separate list for persons with disabilities when registering for land so that they can be the first in line for land grants. Persons with disabilities must be educated about the justice system so that they know what to do when their land is stolen from them. The justice system must be able to use any kind of evidence provided to investigate based on the disability of the victims. For example, a visually impaired person who claims to recognise the person that stole her land by the sound of their voice should be taken seriously.

Health inequality

Medical prescriptions are not in braille and don't have any indications for a visually impaired person to know that a certain medication must be taken a certain number of times a day. The result is that they sometimes take their medication too often, or not enough. In addition, hearing impaired people are not free to go for health check-ups with sign language interpreters when they have diseases like sexually transmitted infections.

Solutions

If medical prescriptions are not in braille there should be something on the medication showing how frequently the medication must be taken. Sign language interpreters should be recruited by health facilities. People with severe disabilities that have to see medical professionals almost every week should be helped with transport, which is usually very expensive. Otherwise, they spend most if not all of their disability grant on transport to and from the health care facilities. There should be free transport to health facilities for people in this situation, and health workers should have a list of such people so that they can follow up when they have appointments at the hospital, because care givers become tired at times and forget about the appointments.

Chapter 8 Towards a New Dignified Life for All

8.1 Conclusion and recommendations

This report has assessed the trends and status of inequality in its multiple forms and dimensions in Namibia. Its foremost contribution is to provide insight into the patterns of income inequality which have received significant attention in the policy landscape in the country since independence. In addition, it is also aimed at suggesting fundamental ways in which a multidimensional approach to addressing inequality in its various forms and dimensions, rooted in assessing progress in human development for all Namibians, can be adopted to accelerate the implementation of inclusive policy interventions for the well-being of all Namibians.

At the centre of Namibia's development plans are her people's well-being. Namibia continues to produce National Human Development Reports in order to generate national debate and dialogue around policies and actions needed to accelerate human development. The policy stance on inequalities goes beyond income inequalities: it explores the multi-dimensionality of inequality, which exists beyond income and wealth. The commitment of the nation to reducing inequalities is expressed in the medium- and long-term national development frameworks. The high government expenditure on social welfare further advances the agenda of achieving the national development goals.

At country level, Namibia's HDI stood at 0.645 in 2019, which puts Namibia in the Medium Human Development category. The same pattern holds true with the Gender Development Index, a measure of the quality of well-being for women in a country. The Gender Inequality Index shows the gaps between males and females in each dimension of human development. Namibia exhibits less inequality between the sexes than the average for sub-Saharan African countries and Medium HDI countries. The Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IAHDI) shows the costs to each dimension of human development due to inequality. On this measure, Namibia performed worse relative to the sub-

Saharan Africa regional average, but significantly better than the Medium HDI average. Therefore, the following are recommended:

There is a need to push the agenda of reducing inequality in all its forms and dimensions: When adjusted for inequality, the Human Development Index for Namibia declined from 0.645 to 0.42 in 2019. This indicates that inequality in Namibia is high and affects the human development of the country negatively. This will therefore require accelerated efforts aimed at addressing inequality in all its forms and dimensions by pursuing the following policy objectives:

- **structural economic transformation and an efficient and effective financing mechanism;**
- **integrated gender-responsive policies and programmes, as well as an effective and efficient social protection system for all; and**
- **investment in better research, measurement, and data collection and analysis, as well as deepened understanding of inequality in Namibia.**

8.1.1 Structural economic transformation and an efficient and effective financing mechanism

Income inequality in Namibia is worsening, as most of the population depend on paid wages (as opposed to generating own earnings), which has a significant negative effect on human development. There is a need to deepen structural economic transformation and adopt an effective and efficient financing mechanism aimed at addressing inequality in a comprehensive way.

- **Deepen structural economic transformation for inclusive growth and sustainable human development:**

The structure of the economy exacerbates income inequality, as well as other forms of inequality. For instance, the mining sector, which employs only small numbers of people in the economy for the mere fact that it is capital-intensive, pays higher wages to fewer individuals. Conversely, the agriculture sector employs the largest share of the workforce due to its labour-intensive nature but pays lower wages. There is therefore a need to structurally transform the economy through economic diversification into a knowledge-based economy to produce complex and sophisticated goods and services, and to accelerate sustainable economic growth, poverty alleviation and job creation in the fight against inequality and exclusion.

- **Improve the financing mechanism and make public expenditure efficient and effective in allocating the wealth in the society:** Firstly, improve the income tax system by increasing taxation on the wealthy. The global experience has shown it to be an effective way of reducing extreme poverty. Secondly, expand and make efficient and effective public budgeting on social spending programmes to create employment. As a recent Namibia Statistics Agency and World Bank report demonstrates, Namibia's generous social spending programmes substantially reduced poverty and inequality.⁵⁴ It is necessary to expand public budgeting on activities such as training the unskilled, that create employment and offer the potential for continuous productivity increases. Lastly, introduce the Basic Income Grant with balanced redistribution to build resilience for vulnerable groups.
- **Accelerate the process of establishing a Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF):** With a SWF focusing on developing domestic infrastructure and assisting to fund socioeconomic projects, infrastructural inequalities between regions and areas will be narrowed, the national economic growth will be greatly boosted, and income inequalities and other forms of inequality will be reduced.

- **Expand investment in vulnerable areas and sectors:** Practices in many other developing countries have shown that to invest in rural infrastructure will greatly benefit the poor. They are likely to enjoy improved household welfare and improvement of existing services, among others. Thus, special attention should be paid to the less developed regions with higher inequality levels, such as Kavango, Kunene and Ohangwena. Attracting investment to the agriculture sector is another necessary step to address income and other forms of inequality. The measures may include mechanising agriculture in communal areas and for emerging commercial farmers; redesigning the resettlement programme for productive activities; attracting private investors in communal areas by offering them reasonable periods of leasehold rights to enable them to recoup their investments; and enhancing local and regional value chains to secure markets for farmers.

8.1.2 Integrated gender-responsive policies and programmes, as well as an effective and efficient social protection system for all

The inequalities that characterise education, health, and land and housing demand integrated gender-responsive policies and programmes, as well as an effective and efficient social protection system for all.

- **Improve the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies in all spheres of human development:** The primary objective will be to reduce the gender gaps in employment rates and payment by policy guidance and special training support to women, to fund childcare by a wealth tax to support the entry of women into higher paying sectors, and to enhance GBV protection services and interventions (for example focusing on early unions/marriages, teenage pregnancies, and violence).

- **Deepen land reform and adopt living condition improvement strategies:** It is recommended that land reform be undertaken based on a comprehensive policy support, in a fair and transparent manner, thus effectively addressing land inequality in the long-term. Land distribution/ownership should be prioritised in the national development plans and sectoral strategies. At the same time, improving the living conditions in the informal settlements and rural areas would be helpful to mitigate the current housing poverty and inequality in the short-term.
- **Strengthen the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the sector policy on inclusive education:** This is aimed at helping to reduce the disparities between those at the top and the bottom of the income pyramid. Furthermore, strategies to encourage boys to stay in school are required, to reduce gender disparities existing in education. Moreover, it is important to increase and ably manage investment in human capabilities to address all forms and dimensions of inequality in Namibia.
- **Expand health care facilities and strengthen the resilience of the health care system:** Expanding health care facilities, especially in rural areas, and enhancing access to sanitation in informal settlements, will effectively remove the stumbling blocks on access to health and hygiene services and facilities. Besides, the health care system might be under severe pressure at this critical time, with an epidemic and pandemic outbreak, such as HIV/AIDs. There is an urgent need to strengthen the health system through provision of adequate human resources, infrastructure, and research and development in order to strengthen resilience of the health care system and confront future public health threats.
- **Strengthen impact on nutrition:** The government should incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators into the design of sectoral strategies and development policies. This is important to ensure synergies with economic, social and environmental objectives. Simultaneous

interventions to expand markets and market access for vulnerable groups should be undertaken, particularly for marketing nutritious foods or products vulnerable groups have a comparative advantage in producing.

8.1.3 Investment in better research, measurement and data collection and analysis, and in deepening understanding of inequality in Namibia

From a technical viewpoint, investment in better research, measurement and data collection and analysis, and in deepening understanding of inequality in Namibia are all critical for informed policy decision-making in addressing key challenges of inequality in the country. An agenda for strengthening research and measurement can significantly advance the range of policy measures to redress historical and contemporary forms of deprivation and inequality.

- **Beyond GINI:** Income inequality measures such as the Palma Index and comparisons with the distribution of wealth and income should be used more broadly to understand the distribution of income in the country. As this report shows, they can highlight areas of concern for which the Gini coefficient alone may not produce sufficient evidence to allow for the forms and dimensions of inequality in a nation to be addressed. It follows that there is a need for a multidimensional approach that is informed by more effective research, measurement and data.
- **Time use survey:** Given the lack of data on how females and males spend their days in Namibia, allocated resources for either a stand-alone time use survey or a questionnaire module adopted into existing surveys can provide new insights into the nature of the unpaid domestic work and the care economy that disproportionately disadvantages women and girls.

⁵⁴ Namibia Statistics Agency and World Bank. 2017. Does Fiscal Policy Benefit the Poor and Reduce Inequality in Namibia? Washington, DC.

- **Social Institutions and Gender Index:** Using new measures such as the OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) can provide insights into the underlying drivers of gender inequality with the aim of providing the data necessary for transformative policy change.
- **Advancing research and deepening understanding of inequality and human development:** The ways in which multiple forms of inequality, from disparities in income to unequal access to education and health, each influence human development progress requires better understanding. There may be both “good” and “bad” forms of inequality – the goal should be to support the former and to eliminate the latter, which rests on better understanding how these multiple inequalities interact.

8.2 A dignified future for all

At the heart of successfully addressing inequality in all its forms and dimensions must be a reinvigorated social contract between the government and its citizens. Growth alone remains ineffective to reduce ever-increasing inequalities. The human development fallout that is the product of stunted opportunities and skewed structural dynamics continues to limit human capabilities.

While disparities in terms of income, gender and land persist, Namibia’s social policies and spending priorities have led to significant progress in education and health. Women’s and girls’ empowerment have also been strengthened – with Namibia serving as a leading example to other countries in expanding women’s political representation and access to education and health services. Namibia’s poverty reduction efforts have led to good progress in education and health, which are key to strengthening human development.

Our understanding of the nature of inequality and its consequences for Namibia’s human development is only as strong as the evidence and data that are available. An agenda for strengthening research and measurement can significantly advance the range of policy measures available to redress historical and contemporary forms of deprivation and

inequality. Fundamentally, it is critical for Namibia’s policy landscape to be informed by robust data measurement, collection and analysis tools. These will be able to inform key policy options that will go beyond income and averages to consider other forms of inequality. Such efforts will help to paint a more robust picture of the state of inequality in the country today and in the future and to take a long-term view on the historical issues pertaining to inequalities, and of appropriate remedial actions that can be taken.

Namibia’s policies have demonstrated their capacity to reduce extreme poverty in the country. The political will to dedicate policies, spending and new programmes to rapidly address the root causes of inequality, is present. The evidence identified in this report and its policy recommendations provide a roadmap for accelerating the implementation of strategic interventions aimed at addressing inequalities that have made too many Namibians vulnerable to economic shocks, climate change and other vulnerabilities.

We have it in our power to win an equal and dignified future for all Namibians.

Technical Note: Computation of Composite Indices

Human Development Index (HDI)

The 2016 Labour Force Survey and 2015/16 NHIES datasets at individual level were used to construct the HDI.⁵⁵ The Human Development Index measures the average achievements in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life; access to knowledge; and a decent standard of living. A long and healthy life is measured by life expectancy at birth. Knowledge level is measured by mean years of education among the adult population, which is the average number of years of education received in a life-time by people aged 25 years and older; and access to learning and knowledge by expected years of schooling for children of school-entry age, which is the total number of years of schooling a child of school-entry age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates stay the same throughout the child’s life. The standard of living is measured by Gross National Income (GNI). The HDI is the range of geometric mean of the three-dimensional indices, expressed as:

$$HDI = (I_{health} * I_{education} * I_{income})^{1/3}$$

The dimension of each index is calculated as:

$$Dimension\ Index = \frac{actual\ value - minimum\ value}{maximum\ value - minimum\ value}$$

The value of the HDI can vary between 0 and 1, with the HDI score close to 0 indicating that the basic dimensions of human development are not fully attained while an HDI close to 1 indicates a higher level of attainment of human development.

Gender Inequality Index (GII)

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development – reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females, and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by the labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older (UNDP 2018). It measures the human development costs of gender inequality. The index ranges between 0, indicating that women and men fare equally; and 1, indicating that women fare poorly in all measured dimensions. The component indicators highlight areas in need of critical policy intervention, and it stimulates proactive thinking and public policy to overcome systematic disadvantages of women. The GII is expressed as a linear combination of each gender group. The aggregation formula for women and girls is given by:

$$G_F = \sqrt[3]{\left(\frac{10}{MMR} * \frac{1}{ABR}\right)^{1/2} (PR_F * SE_F)^{1/2} LFDR_F} \sqrt[3]{\left(\frac{10}{MMR} * \frac{1}{ABR}\right)^{1/2} (PR_F * SE_F)^{1/2} LFPDR_F}$$

⁵⁵ Namibia Labour Force Survey (2018)

and the aggregated formula for men and boys is given by:

$$G_M = \sqrt[3]{1 * (PR_M * SE_M)^{1/2} * LFPR_m}$$

The gender index is formed by the harmonic mean of female and male indices:

$$HARM(G_F G_M) = \left[\frac{(G_F)^{-1} + (G_M)^{-1}}{2} \right]^{-1}$$

In the above, MMR denotes maternal mortality ratio, ABR represent adolescent birth rate, PR denotes parliamentary representation, SE denotes attainment at secondary education, LFPR represents labour force participation rate, and subscripts F and M denote female and male respectively. Subsequently, the GII is expressed as:

$$GII = 1 - \frac{HARM(G_F G_M)}{G_{F,M}}$$

It ranges from 0 (no gender inequality across dimensions) to 1 (total gender inequality across dimensions).

Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) identifies multiple deprivations at the individual level in education, health and standard of living. The education and health dimensions are each based on two indicators: years of schooling and school attendance, and nutrition and child mortality. Standard of living is based on six indicators: cooking fuel, sanitation, water, electricity, floor, and assets. All dimensions are allocated weights. The education dimension constitutes the highest weight of 0.66666 units, whereas health and living standard dimensions carry a weight of 0.333333. The dimension weights are distributed uniformly across various indicators.

Data used to construct the MPI was sourced from the 2013 Demographic and Health Survey data set at a household level. The indicators are weighted to create a deprivation score, and the deprivation scores are computed for each household in the survey. A deprivation score of 33.3 percent (one-third of the weighted indicators) is used to distinguish between the poor and non-poor. If the household deprivation score is 33.3 percent or greater, the household (and everyone in it) is classified as multidimensionally poor. Households with a deprivation score greater than or equal to 20 percent but less than 33.3 percent live close to multidimensional poverty. Finally, households with a deprivation score greater than or equal to 50 percent live in severe multidimensional poverty.

Figure TN.1 below shows three MPI dimensions (health, education and living standard) with a composite of 10 indicators (nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, water, electricity, floor, and assets), which capture two key aspects of poverty, namely the proportion/incidence of the population segment subjected to multiple deprivation, and the intensity of the resulting deprivation (Alkire and Santos, 2010; Alkire and Foster, 2011).

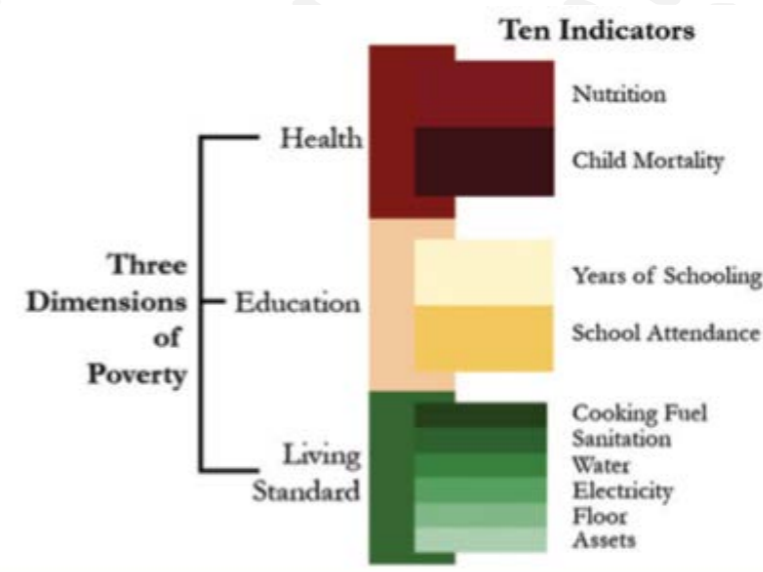


Figure TN.1

HIV prevalence by age group and sex, 2017

In addition to the above indicators, three key indicators that are inherent in Namibia's socioeconomic challenges were added. The living standard dimension has been extended from 6 to 9 indicators. The new indicators are employment status, land ownership and housing ownership.

The method accounts for the number of deprivations each individual simultaneously experiences across multiple dimensions of poverty. As presented in Table TN.1, it is designed to allow a flexible structure, which can be adapted to other specifications (Alkire and Santos, 2010); the dimensions, indicators, cut-offs, weights and unit of analysis can be determined by the user. Moreover, it offers a standard framework that allows modification to better address country-specific realities and requirements (Frame, De Lannoy and Leibbrandt, 2016). Individuals are identified as multidimensionally poor if their deprivation score exceeds a cross-dimensional poverty cut-off. The proportion of poor individuals (censored headcount ratio or incidence of poverty) and their average deprivation score (i.e. the intensity of poverty or percentage of simultaneous deprivations they experience) become part of the final poverty measure (Alkire et al., 2016; Alkire and Foster, 2011).

Table TN.1 Namibia MPI Domains and Indicators

Dimension	Indicator	Weight
Education	Years of schooling	1/6
	Child school attendance	1/6
Health	Child mortality	1/6
	Nutrition	1/6
Living standard	Employment status	0.03
	Sanitation	1/18
	Cooking type	0.03
	Drinking Water	1/18
	Housing type	0.02
	House ownership	0.02
	Land ownership	0.02
	Electricity	1/18
	Assets	1/18

Multidimensional inequality

To measure multidimensional inequality, a comprehensive technique that captures the incidence, intensity and multidimensional inequality and disparity is employed. Therefore, in order to capture inequality and disparities across the poor, the Alkire et al. (2014) methodological approach toward multidimensional inequality is implemented.

$$I^q = \frac{\tilde{\beta}}{q} \sum_{i=1}^q [c_i(k) - A]^2$$

where $c_i(k)$ represent the poor individuals' deprivation score, A denotes average intensity and $\tilde{\beta}$ the constant parameter. Seth and Alfred (2014) sets $\tilde{\beta} = 1/9$ because the deprivation scores range between $1/3$ and 1 .

According to Alkire et. al (2014), the national multidimensional inequality ranges between 0.006–0.3. The lower bound possible value that takes is zero, with this value indicating that the mean deprivation scores are uniformly distributed across the members. The upper bound value takes one fourth of the range of deprivation score vector. The upper bound value will be realised when half of the population

Alkire et. al (2014) uses an additively decomposable inequality measure that allows decomposition into within-group and between-group categories. To examine inequality at national or regional level, the multidimensional inequality indicator (Iq) employs the vector of deprivation scores of the poor people $c_i(k)$, and is expressed as:

have the lowest deprivation scores and the other half has the highest deprivation scores. It is important to note that low multidimensional inequality among the poor subgroup does not mean the general deprivation in well-being has uniformly improved. Therefore, it needs to be complemented by the dimensional share of the MPI.

Statistical Tables

Table ST.1 Human Development Index and its components (2018)

Region	Human Development Index	Health Index	Income Index	Education Index
Total	0.645	0.667	0.691	0.582
Erongo	0.695	0.680	0.794	0.622
Hardap	0.661	0.716	0.761	0.530
Karas	0.678	0.702	0.753	0.590
Kavango	0.555	0.590	0.582	0.498
Khomas	0.732	0.707	0.801	0.693
Kunene	0.570	0.699	0.643	0.412
Ohangwena	0.572	0.624	0.577	0.519
Omaheke	0.591	0.696	0.668	0.443
Omusati	0.614	0.699	0.600	0.552
Oshana	0.662	0.696	0.676	0.618
Oshikoto	0.614	0.648	0.639	0.559
Otjozondjupa	0.635	0.648	0.742	0.503
Zambezi	0.606	0.637	0.588	0.593

Source: Global Data Lab (https://globaldatalab.org/shdi/shdi/NAM/?levels=1%2B4&interpolation=0&extrapolation=0&nearest_real=0)

Table ST.2 Selected HDI, life expectancy, expected years of schooling, GNI per capita (2018)

Country / Region / Category	Human Development Index	Life expectancy at birth	Expected years of schooling	Gross National Income per capita (\$)
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.541	61.2	10.0	3 443
Medium Human Development	0.634	69.3	11.7	6 240
Namibia	0.645	63.4	12.6	9 683
South Africa	0.705	63.9	13.7	11 756
World	0.731	72.6	12.7	15 745

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2019, p.302 ff. (<http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>)

Table ST.3 Human Development Index, national level, select countries (values)

Country / Region / Category	1990	2000	2010	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.398	0.421	0.498	0.514	0.526	0.531	0.534	0.537
Medium Human Development	0.462	0.523	0.596	0.613	0.627	0.634	0.641	0.645
Namibia	0.579	0.558	0.594	0.617	0.636	0.642	0.645	0.647
South Africa	0.618	0.63	0.649	0.664	0.685	0.692	0.696	0.699
World	0.598	0.642	0.698	0.709	0.718	0.722	0.726	0.728

Source: UNDP Human Development Indices and Indicators, 2018 Statistical Update
http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2018_human_development_statistical_update.pdf

Table ST.4 Gender Inequality Index and its components

Region Urban/ Rural	Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100 000 live births)*	Adolescent fertility ratio (births per 1 000 women aged 15–19)	Seats in parliament held by: (% of total)*		Population with at least secondary education (% ages 25 and older)		Labour force participation rate (%)		Gender Inequality Index
			Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
IlKaras	385	17.6	47	53	57.4	58.7	69.8	81.1	0.385
Erongo	385	15.2	47	53	62.3	60	77.7	86.1	0.469
Hardap	385	19.3	47	53	54.8	52.9	67.2	80.6	0.542
Kavango East	385	34.4	47	53	70.6	71.8	63.1	60.1	0.599
Kavango West	385	34.4	47	53	68	70.6	60.2	57.9	0.625
Khomas	385	12.3	47	53	63.1	65.4	75.7	82.5	0.594
Kunene	385	38.9	47	53	40.1	43.7	64.4	72.1	0.672
Ohangwena	385	22.7	47	53	75.2	76.2	55.7	54.3	0.652
Omaheke	385	36.3	47	53	54.2	46.8	71.4	83.2	0.689
Omusati	385	11.1	47	53	74	76.8	56.3	58.5	0.641
Oshana	385	9.00	47	53	68.6	71.8	72.8	73.4	0.639
Oshikoto	385	13.2	47	53	74	69.7	60.5	64.7	0.667
Otjozondjupa	385	23.6	47	53	57.9	58.9	67.5	76	0.705
Zambezi	385	28.1	47	53	73.3	75.3	63.1	68.1	0.717
Urban	385	16.7	47	53	39.7	39.2	74.2	80.2	0.375
Rural	385	20.3	47	53	13.1	15.0	58.5	63.9	0.492

Source: DHS 2013

*The national average from DHS 2013 is applied to all regions.

Table ST.5 Multidimensional Poverty Index – deprivation scores by sex

	Female	Male
Child mortality	4.226	4.26
Nutrition	77.191	73.163
Years of schooling	30.094	34.38
Child school attendance	39.188	43.344
Cooking type	58.198	55.05
Employment status	49.581	48.882
Sanitation	53.231	50.053
Water	5.229	3.514
Electricity	50.304	45.687
Housing	52.639	50.266
Assets	48.282	43.77
Land ownership	71.403	61.12
House ownership	58.231	43.557

Source: Authors' estimation

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