Regional Poverty Profile

Based on
VILLAGE-LEVEL PARTICIPATORY POVERTY ASSESSMENTS
in
Kavango Region, Namibia
November 2005 – February 2006

FINAL REPORT
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## Kavango at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Kavango</th>
<th>Namibia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population (1)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>202,691</td>
<td>1,830,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>106,176</td>
<td>942,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>96,515</td>
<td>887,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. Size as a percentage of National Pop.</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Growth Rate</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Ratio: Males per 100 Females</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area in sq. km</td>
<td>48,463</td>
<td>824,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. Density (persons / km²)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of region as a percentage of country’s size</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5 Years</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 14 Years</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 59 Years</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 Years &amp; Above</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main language spoken at home</td>
<td>Kavango languages 91%</td>
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<td>Climate &amp; Rainfall (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td>Semi-arid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual mean temperature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean max in summer</td>
<td>31-36°C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean minimum in winter</td>
<td>5-10°C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily mean in June/July</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov./ Dec.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean annual rainfall</td>
<td>475-828mm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rainfall in Nov-April</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Growing Period (6)</td>
<td>61-90 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average yields (7)</td>
<td>302 kg/ha</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Household and Housing Characteristics</td>
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### Participatory Poverty Assessment for Kavango Region

#### Total No. of Private Households

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<th>Kavango Region</th>
<th>Total No. of Private Households</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>30,467</td>
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#### Average Household size

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<th>Average Household size</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.5 persons</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5.1 persons</td>
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#### Household Headship (1)

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<th>Female</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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#### Literacy and Education (1)

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>20%</td>
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#### Labour Force & Economic Conditions (1)

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<th>Female</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
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<td>69%</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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#### Fertility & Mortality (1)

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<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
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<th>Female</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57/1000</td>
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<td>75/1000</td>
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<td>78/1000</td>
<td>76/1000</td>
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<td>100/1000</td>
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<td>113/1000</td>
<td>111/1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>71/1000</td>
<td>69/1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<th>HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (8)</th>
<th>Rundu</th>
<th>Andara</th>
<th>Nyangana</th>
<th>19.7%</th>
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<tr>
<th>Proportion of HIV Positive Persons receiving ARVs</th>
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<th>Persons with disability</th>
<th>6%</th>
<th>5%</th>
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<th>Orphanhood (1)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Both Parents</th>
<th>2%</th>
<th>1%</th>
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<tr>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>4%</th>
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<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>9%</th>
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<tr>
<th>Households with at least one orphan</th>
<th>31%</th>
<th>27%</th>
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<th>One Parent</th>
<th>26%</th>
<th>23.9%</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Both Parents</th>
<th>5%</th>
<th>3.3%</th>
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<th>Poverty Indicators</th>
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| HPI (2000) (3) | 30.3% | 24.7% |
|               | 0.554 | 0.648 |

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<th>Consumption/Income Poverty (4)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Extremely poor</th>
<th>19.6% of h/h</th>
<th>8.7% of h/h</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>51% of h/h</th>
<th>29.1% of h/h</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ave. annual income per capita</th>
<th>N$1,763</th>
<th>N$3,608</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livelihoods and Outcomes (2002/03)(5)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average area planted/household</th>
<th>Male headed 1.59 ha</th>
<th>Female headed 1.50 ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average yield/ hectare</th>
<th>Male: 790 kg/ha</th>
<th>Female: 439 kg/ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average yield/capita</th>
<th>109 kg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock carrying capacity (12)</th>
<th>60 kg/ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average number of cattle / planting household</th>
<th>Male: 9.4</th>
<th>Female: 19.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of planting households owning a pair of oxen</th>
<th>46%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| Percentage of planting households owning a plough | 52% |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to services (9)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area per health facility</td>
<td>804 km²</td>
<td>6,447 km²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with access to health service within 10 km (2000) (13)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population/state registered nurse</td>
<td>3,794</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population/state doctor</td>
<td>14,360</td>
<td>6,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population per health facility</td>
<td>3,724</td>
<td>6,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total recurrent health expenditure per person</td>
<td>N$99</td>
<td>N$292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population/state social worker</td>
<td>50,273</td>
<td>34,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural extension officer/ households (7)</td>
<td>1,869</td>
<td>746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of households walking &gt; 1 km to safe water source</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of households living within 500 meters to a safe water source</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of households without a toilet</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

(1) Population and Housing Census 2001
(3) Namibia Human Development Report 2000/2001
(4) Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) 1993/1994
(7) Baseline Survey of the Impact of Agricultural Extension Services in Oshikoto Region, Directorate of Extension and Engineering Services, Tsumeb, October 2003
(11) ‘Core Poverty Monitoring Indicators: Education’ 2005
CHAPTER 1: Background to Kavango Region

1.1 Introduction to Kavango Region

In terms of the Human Poverty Index, Kavango Region ranks as the 4th poorest region in Namibia. With an HPI of 30.3 it lies below the national average of 24.7, but is better off than the poorest region, Caprivi, which has an HPI of 36. The best off region, Erongo, has an HPI of 17.1. Considering that the HPI for Kavango stood at 34 in 1997, the latest HPI suggests that some progress has been made in reducing poverty between 1997 and 2000.

In the mid 1990s, 19.6 per cent of households in Kavango Region spent more than 80 per cent of their incomes on food. This was very close to the national average of 8.7 per cent, but significantly lower than the 25.1 per cent of households in Omaheke that spent more than 80 per cent on food. As far as access to health facilities was concerned, 38 per cent of the population had to walk more than 60 minutes one way to the next clinic or hospital. This compared to a national average of 45.0 per cent and 89 per cent in Omaheke. Kavango Region also had the 3rd lowest survival rate in Namibia after Oshikoto and Caprivi. Almost 39 percent of the population were expected to die before reaching the age of 40. This percentage was 53.7 per cent in Caprivi, but the national average was 33.5 per cent. While 12 per cent of children under the age of 5 years were underweight on average in Namibia, this figure was 17.8 percent in Kavango - slightly less than the highest percentage in Khomas Region where 18.5 per cent of children under the age of 5 were underweight (UNDP 2000: 155).

Kavango Region comprise of 9 constituencies. These are Kahenge, Kapako, Mashare, Mpungu, Mukwe, Ndyona, Rundu Rural East, Rundu Rural West and Rundu Urban. The current administrative centre of is Rundu.

With a population in excess of 202,000, the region is populated by more than 11 percent of the total population. Eighty-two percent of the population is rural, resulting in a population density of 4.2 people per km². In 2001 household income from farming was the most important source of income for 52 percent of the population, compared to 21 per cent of the population for whom wages and salaries were the most important income source.

1.1.1 Climate and rainfall

Average annual rainfall at Rundu is 563 mm, and this rain falls during summer as afternoon thunderstorms (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003). No rain of any significance falls from May to September, and the chance of rain increases progressively from

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UNDP stated in 2000: “The most effective way of reducing poverty, as measured by the HPI, would be to improve access to health services”

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1 All the information in Chapter 1 is based on the work J. Mendelsohn and S. el Obeid, except where indicated otherwise. At times entire sections were taken over verbatim without the necessary quotation marks. This should not be construed to suggest that it is the work of the author of this report.
October until January, the month with the highest total on average, and then decreases again until April. 80% of the rain falls between December and March.

Rainfall variability is high, and the range that can be expected 90% of the time is 321 – 828 mm (Dealie et al. 1993). The lowest annual rainfall on record is 274 (in 1972/73), and the highest 1120 mm (1977/78) (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003). This variability manifests as irregular falls and occasional long periods of hot and dry weather during the rainy season.

Mean annual evaporation across the Kavango Region is about 1900 mm (Mendelsohn et al. 2002), which is about four times higher than annual rainfall. Highest rates of evaporation, that equate to greatest dryness, occur in October when it is hot and dry, cloud cover is sparse and it is often more windy than at other times of the year (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003).

Kavango Region experiences hot summers and cool to warm winters (Kavango Regional Council 2001). The coldest months of May, June, July and August have average minimum temperatures between 5 and 10°C. Frost is exceptionally rare and always confined to the low-lying valleys. Average temperatures rise rapidly at the end of the cold season and into summer, so highest average maximum temperatures (between 32 and 35°C) are recorded in September and October (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003).

1.1.2 Geology and Soils

Surface soils across the Kavango Region, like in Caprivi, are completely dominated by sand. At deeper levels of more than one metre are layers of clays, conglomerates, sands, silts and calcretes that originate from wetter climates in the geological past (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003).

Small scale variations in soil type occur, with areas close to the Okavango River containing fine sediments (silt, clay and fine sands) deposited during floods, and other sporadically-distributed areas rich in calcium carbonate. Also, soils in the bottoms of Omiramba are more clayey and darker than the pale coloured sands higher up and that form the dunes (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003). The more clayey soils are slightly more fertile than sands, and they are mostly cultivated. However, all soils in Kavango generally have low fertility.

Bedrock is exposed in very few places in Kavango Region. Exposures occur in the Mukwe-Andara area. The only other place is a short distance upstream, at Kangongo, where the Kangongo Crusher quarries the rock and crushes it for construction purposes. Along the railway alignment, the depth of bedrock steadily increases towards the west.

1.1.3 Vegetation

Kalahari woodlands are widespread in Kavango Region, and, in places where there are dunes, woodlands alternate with thin strips of grassland representing the lowest levels of the interdune valleys (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003).

The Kalahari woodlands are variable from place to place in their species composition and community structure, some places being quite open, others densely wooded with tall trees and little understorey, others having mostly medium-sized trees and lots of undergrowth.
These variations are small-scale and not significant to the environmental assessment. The dominant trees that occur in this woodland (not in order of predominance) are kiaat (Pterocarpus angolensis), teak (Baikiaea plurijuga), syringa (Burkea africana), silver terminalia (Terminalia sericea), mangetti (Schinziopthton rautanenii), false mopane (Guibourtia colesperma), camelthorn (Acacia erioloba), marual (Sclerocarya birrea), and weeping wattle (Peltophorum africanum). In places there are small stands of makalani palms (Hyphaene petersoniana).

Riverine forest is now mostly destroyed along the entire Namibian section of the Okavango River. However, where human clearing is prevented such as at lodges and tourist establishments, natural forest is returning. This comprises trees such as knobthorn (Acacia nigrescens), camelthorn (Acacia erioloba), syacmore fig (Ficus sycomorus), sausage tree (Kigelia africana), appelblaar (Lonchocaprus capassa) and jackal berry (Diospyros mespiliformis).

Grass grows between trees and shrubs in the woodlands, and certain types of tall strong grasses (mainly Eragrostis pallens) are harvested for thatching. Omiramba support good grazing fodder for livestock, particularly the lawn grass Cynodon dactylon.

Swamps and floodplains alongside the Okavango River host reeds, sedges and grasses depending on their degree of saturation and how frequently they are inundated. Reeds growing in areas that are regularly (annually) flooded and on the margins of permanent water are an important resource used by local people.

The strip of land about 10 km wide and running parallel to the Okavango River is relatively densely populated by both people and their livestock, so there are very few wild large mammals within this area. Lodges with small patches of recovering forest along the river, such as Shamvura, have reported one or two sightings of elephant and hyena in the last year, showing that these animals are not altogether absent, although they may have wandered in from the Angolan side. However, large mammals and carnivores such as these are more or less entirely confined to conservation areas.

Other game animals such as kudu, gemsbok, blue wildebeest and steenbok occur in the Kalahari woodlands but are very thinly scattered. Small mammals, reptiles and amphibians found in these woodlands are typical of this kind of habitat and have wide areas of distribution, so carry no conservation status.

Birdlife along the railway rout through Kalahari woodland is also typical of this habitat. While diversity is relatively high because of the proximity of wetland habitats along the Okavango and Mpungu Omaramba there are no species of conservation concern that will be significantly affected by the railway development.

1.1.4 Hydrology

The main hydrological feature of Kavango Region is the Okavango River. The Cuito River, a tributary, joins the Kavango River from Angola at Dirico, so flow volumes are greater downstream of this point. Apart from this difference, hydrological features of the upstream section are similar, but not identical, to the aforementioned description.

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2 This section is based on Christelis and Struckmeier 2001, unless indicated otherwise.
One important difference is the timing of flooding and the contribution of each tributary (Mendelsohn & el Obeid 2003). The Okavango River at Rundu experiences its highest water from January to May, with the peak in April, in response to summer rain falling in the upstream catchment and making its way downstream. Water in the Cuito is delayed by a longer period and peaks in about May, with a smaller peak. The Okavango brings in much more water during floods and then its level drops for the months of June to November. The Cuito peak is relatively much less than the Okavango, but this river contributes more to the downstream flow during the months of June to November.

The Omarumba that enter the valley of the Okavango River hold water for short periods, up to about 4 months depending on the summer rains, and water might even flow for short distances in them, but otherwise they are not active rivers at all.

1.1.5 Demographic Characteristics

In 2001 Kavango had a total population of 202,694 representing 11.1 per cent of the total population. With a total area of 48,463 km$^2$ the population density was calculated to be 4.2 persons per km$^2$. This was exactly twice the national population density of 2.1 persons per km$^2$, but much lower than Ohangwena (21.3 persons per km$^2$) and Oshana (18.7 persons per km$^2$), the regions with the highest population densities in Namibia.

1.1.5.1 Population Growth, Fertility and Mortality

The population of Kavango grew by almost 60 percent since 1991, when 116,830 were counted. The percentage of the total population increased with almost 3 percent (11.1 per cent in 2001 compared to 8.2 per cent in 1991) suggesting that the enlargement of the region from 42,771 km$^2$ in 1991 to 48,463 km$^2$ in 2001 had a positive growth effect to the total number of people in the region. The annual population growth rate has been calculated at 3.7 per cent, which is 1.1 percent higher than the national average of 2.6.

In 1991 the life expectancy in Kavango was calculated at to be 57 years, or just below the Namibian average 61 years (NPCS, 1991). In line with the national average, life expectancies declined dramatically up to 2000, however, when the average person in Kavango was expected to live for 40.3 years, compared to the national average of 43 years. It was still slightly lower than most other regions in the country but considerably higher than the life expectancy of 32.6 years for Caprivi. UNDP commented that these ‘low survival rates constituted for the first time a critical poverty trap in at least four of the regions.... Kavango must be included in these four regions, as the region had the third highest non-survival rate after Caprivi and Oshikoto (UNDP 2000: 29).

Mortality rates for infants and children under 5 have decreased substantially since Independence. The average figure for Namibia as a whole decreased from 87 deaths per 1,000 births of both sexes in 1991 to 71 in 2001. However, this improvement was more pronounced in urban areas than in rural areas.

The Total Fertility Rate for Kavango Region indicates the number of children a woman can be expected to have if she survives through the reproductive period from about 15 to 49 years. At 5.5 children, this is higher than the national average of 4.1
and exactly the same as the average for rural areas. But the figure has declined from 7.1 in 1991, when the total fertility rate in Kavango was also higher than national average of 6.1 (NPC 2003: 63). The explanation offered by the Census was that after Independence Namibia experienced a small ‘baby boom’, but that the situation had stabilised ten years on and ‘reproductive behaviour has returned to normal’ (Ibid: 61).

The declining mortality rates among under-5s and infant on the one hand, and declining survival rates on the other, suggest that deaths among adults were increasing. For Kavango Region, the number of deaths increased by 104 per cent between 1999 and 2001. This was 25 per cent more than the average increase of 80 per cent for Namibia as whole and 73 per cent for rural areas. By comparison, Khomas, Erongo and Ohangwena regions registered increases of 129 per cent, 125 per cent and 122 per cent respectively. Caprivi, reputed to have the highest HIV prevalence in the country reported an increase in deaths of 108 per cent (NPC 2003: 69).

1.1.5.2 Population Distribution, Migration and Male-Female Ratios

Eighty-two per cent of the population in Kavango lived in rural areas in 2001. Fifty two per cent of the population in Kavango consisted of women which remained the same if compared to the 1991 figures.

Fourty-one per cent of the 30,467 households were headed by women. This was slightly less than national average of 44.7 per cent. In Omusati and Ohangwena regions, by comparison, 62 per cent and 59.7 per cent respectively were headed by females. While it is tempting to ascribe this situation to the possible differential impact of HIV/AIDS and/or out migration of men, the available data does not make it possible to put forward a convincing explanation for this.

Average household size increased from 6.2 in 1991 to 6.5 in 2001, and is significantly bigger than the national average household size of 5.1 and about the same as the average for rural households of 5.7. By contrast, the average household size in Ohangwena 6.3.

About 38 per cent of members of households consist of own children, i.e. sons and daughters. Grandchildren account for 15 per cent and relatives of heads of households or their spouses for 18 per cent. Table 1 below provides a comparison of household composition in Namibia and rural areas. This shows that households in Kavango Region include slightly less grandchildren than the average for rural areas, but almost 3 times as many as urban areas. This suggests that rural households in general provide significant support to families in urban areas by looking after grandchildren.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kavango</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
<th>Urban areas</th>
<th>Namibia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sons and/or daughters</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandchildren</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relatives</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NPC 2003: lix
The population in Kavango is relatively young. Forty-five per cent of the population was younger than 15 in 2001. The proportion of people under the age of 15 in Kavango was thus higher than the national average and the averages for Ohangwena and Omusati. Slightly less than 50 per cent of the population falls within the economically active category of 15-59, which is less than the national average.

Table 2: Age composition of population in percentages, Kavango and north-central regions 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Kavango</th>
<th>Ohangwena</th>
<th>Omusati</th>
<th>Oshana</th>
<th>Namibia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-14</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-59</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NPC 2003

Of the 214,268 people recorded in 2001 as having been born in Kavango, 5 per cent were no longer living in the region. This compares with 25 per cent of people born in Ohangwena but no longer living there and 13 per cent in Caprivi.

1.1.5.3 Language Groups

The distribution of people speaking different languages broadly follows the tribal areas of the region. Some 46% of the population in Kavango speak Rukwangali as their mother tongue, a language that is spoken by the Vakwangali and Mbunza tribes; 21% speak languages of Angolan origin (mainly Nyemba); 18% speak Rumanyo, a language spoken by the Vagciriku and Shambyu tribes; 8% speak the Thimbukushu language of the Mbukushu tribe, 5% speak other Namibian languages (mainly Oshiwambo) and 2% European languages.

1.1.6 Settlement Patterns and Land Use

1.1.6.1 Commercial Farms And Communal Areas

There are 45 commercial farms in the Kavango Region. These farms constitute approximately 5.86% or 2,841km² of the total regional area (48 463 km²). Communal areas in the Kavango Region are covering about 74.53% or 36 122km² while the three game parks cover approximately 19.6% or 9,500km².

1.1.6.2 Urban Settlements

Rundu is the regional centre of the Kavango Region. It is a autonomous local authority responsible for its own finances and service provision. The highest settlement density can be found along the Okavango River and the main tarred road linking Grootfontein and Rundu.

With a population in excess of 202,000, the region is populated by more than 11 percent of the total population. Eighty-two percent of the population is rural, resulting in a population density of 4.2 people per km². In 2001 household income from farming was the most important source of income for 52 percent of the population,
compared to 21 per cent of the population for whom wages and salaries were the most important income source.

1.1.6.3 Urbanisation
The urban population in the Kavango Region in 1991 comprised 17% of the total population of the region. This increased to 28% of the regional population by 2001. (CBS. 2003, 9) The urban population for Rundu in the Kavango Region increased by 6.34% per year for the period 1991 to 2001, compared to the national population growth of 3.1% per annum.

1.1.6.4 Rural Settlements
The settlement patterns in the Kavango Region vary from very basic settlements that are not permanently occupied, to small and large villages, to formal towns. Photographs of typical settlements are shown below.

Photo 1-1: Small Rural Settlement
Source: Directorate of Survey and Mapping (DSM) of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation and Lux-Development (Société Luxembourgeoise pour la Coopération Internationale).

Small rural settlements are relatively isolated from modern infrastructure. They are characterized by one or more clusters of houses in close proximity to each other and a reliable and consistent water source, which is often not equipped with any pumping infrastructure. Many of these settlements concentrate along the Okavango River or an existing road network. Outer stick fences offer the homesteads some protection against wild animals and crop production is attempted within these fences. Building materials are predominantly wood and thatch.
Photo 1-2: Informal Rural Centre

Source: Directorate of Survey and Mapping (DSM) of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation and Lux-Development (Société Luxembourgeoise pour la Coopération Internationale).

An informal rural centre is characterized by a few core buildings, e.g. a clinic and/or a school, and a permanent water point, such as a spring, hand-dug well or borehole equipped with some kind of pumping technology. Clusters of houses and homesteads with livestock enclosures surround the core buildings. Larger areas of crop production are often in the vicinity. The clinics and schools are government constructed brick buildings, while most of the homesteads are made from traditional building materials (wood and thatch). The centre is connected to the larger regional centres by gravel road, facilitating easy transport of people, livestock and materials. In some cases the clinic and school are electrified with a stand-alone diesel generator or PV system.

Photo 1-3: Formal Rural Centre

Source: Directorate of Survey and Mapping (DSM) of the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation and Lux-Development (Société Luxembourgeoise pour la Coopération Internationale).

A formal rural centre has a formal public service infrastructure, e.g. school(s), clinic, police station and agricultural development centres or extension offices and is structured around some formal town planning. Most houses are built with modern building materials. A main gravel road suitable for heavy transport connects the centre to the national road network. Most formal rural centres are grid electrified.
1.1.7 Livelihoods

Eighty-two per cent of the population in Kavango Region was classified as rural in 2001. For the majority of the population in Kavango therefore livelihoods are based primarily on agricultural production which constituted the main source of income for 52 per cent of households. But agricultural output no longer suffices to sustain households, and incomes from agriculture are combined with other sources of income to make ends meet. The second most important source of income consisted of wages and salaries. Twenty-one per cent of households indicated that this was their main source of income. Business and non-farming activities formed the main source of income for 14 per cent of households, followed by pensions (5 per cent) and cash remittances (4 per cent) (NPC 2004a).

1.1.7.1 Livestock

Livestock plays an important role in Kavango Region. It is an important source of draught power for cultivation, yields meat from time to time and can be milked. Meat and milk can be consumed by households or sold to obtain cash. The main cattle breeds are Sanga/Nguni and their crosses with Brahman, Bonsmara, Afrikander and Simmentaler. In the freehold sector beef ranching forms the backbone of commercial farming.

Large numbers of cattle are found north of the VCF. Table 3 below provides a summary of cattle numbers for 6 agricultural seasons since the mid-1990s. As can be seen from the table, livestock numbers changed from season to season.

**Table 3: Cattle numbers, Kavango 1996/97-2002/03**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td>59,293</td>
<td>35,562</td>
<td>94,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/98</td>
<td>55,570</td>
<td>28,621</td>
<td>84,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>52,695</td>
<td>32,784</td>
<td>85,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/01</td>
<td>76,184</td>
<td>41,089</td>
<td>117,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/02</td>
<td>61,055</td>
<td>37,890</td>
<td>98,945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/03</td>
<td>84,147</td>
<td>63,190</td>
<td>147,337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: NPC 2004 Annual Agricultural Surveys 1996-2003*

The perceived large number of livestock in Kavango has produced a constant lament that rates of off-take are too low, undoubtedly fuelled by legitimate environmental concerns. The MAWF has ascribed this state of affairs to high marketing costs, particularly with regard to long periods of quarantining and transport costs (DEES 2003: 7). Programmes are implemented to induce farmers to market more cattle.

Cattle and goats dominate livestock farming in Kavango. Although cattle numbers in the region were estimated at 137,000 in 2000, owned by 59% of the households in the region. Goat numbers were estimated at about 64,000 in 1998/9, owned by 51% of households in the region. Larger and Wealthier household own more livestock than homes with smaller incomes and fewer household members. Other livestock owned include 3,000 pigs, 1,700 donkeys, 1,200 sheep and some 500 horses in 2001. The numbers of livestock especially cattle, goats and sheep have recently decreased to 120,168 for cattle, to 50,893 for goats and to 410 for sheep. (DVS Livestock Census 2003)
The change in livestock numbers has been attributed partly to livestock theft that characterized the recent security unrest in the region and the fact that when Angolans moved into Kavango during this time most of them moved with their livestock. Now that the situation has normalized people have returned back to their homes in Angola and have moved back with their livestock.

Cattle farming is the most important enterprise in the region because the household herd is regarded as the bank for the household, as well as an income generator bringing in money from sales. Most cattle sales are to MeatCo but as of late sales to MeatCo have been decreasing because farmers are not happy with the prices offered to them and because of the costs and inconvenience of the prolonged quarantining required for export of meat south of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (MAWRD 2003: 15).

1.1.7.2 Cropping
Subsistence crop production is the major activity of most rural people in the region. Major cereals grown in the region are mahangu (pearl millet), maize and sorghum. A high proportion of cultivated land is used for pearl millet. Pearl millet is dominant in Kavango region because of the crop’s known characteristics of growing on poor sandy soils and low rainfall. Sorghum is not grown on a large area but on small portions of land sometimes mixed on the same plot with mahangu. Maize is also grown in small quantities and is consumed as green maize. Maize on larger portions of land is grown by the irrigation schemes found in the region. Most farmers also grow other crops e.g. beans, cowpeas, bambara nuts, groundnuts, melons and mutete. In most cases these crops are planted amongst the mahangu. There are some small gardens along the Kavango River owned by either individuals or groups (usually women) where tomatoes, carrots and cabbages are grown for sale at the open markets or along the main roads.

As Table 5 indicates, the average areas planted by households were relatively small. Households generally planted between 1.5 and 1.6ha. On the assumption that the average consumption of cereals per person in Namibia is estimated at 125 kg, an average rural household of 6.5 people in Kavango would need at least 812 kg of grains per year to subsist. At an anticipated average yield of 615 kg/ha for the 2005/06 season, this would require a minimum field of 1.3 ha (NEWFIU 2005: 10). At the level of averages, therefore, the majority of households in Kavango should be able, in theory, to feed themselves from their land.

Table 4: Area planted Kavango (in ha), 1996/97-2002/03

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kavango</th>
<th>Area (ha)</th>
<th>Total (ha)</th>
<th>Average Area (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/1997</td>
<td>7,208</td>
<td>21,891</td>
<td>29,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/1998</td>
<td>2,882</td>
<td>8,440</td>
<td>11,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>3,436</td>
<td>9,568</td>
<td>13,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>7,868</td>
<td>12,078</td>
<td>19,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>4,608</td>
<td>7,435</td>
<td>12,043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>6,516</td>
<td>10,741</td>
<td>17,257</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.1.7.3 Socio-economic differentiation

Asset ownership in communal agriculture is highly uneven. Acknowledging this state of affairs, the Agricultural Census (NPC 2004b: 36) has identified three main categories of farmers:

- Category 1: holdings with less than 1 hectare of land planted
- Category 2: holdings planting between 1 and 4 hectares
- Category 3: holdings planting more than 4 hectares.

Table 5 summarises the areas planted by female headed households and male headed households.

Table 5: Cultivation in Kavango by socio-economic group and area
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Average Area planted (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>3,706</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>4,687</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>1,879</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>10,271</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/98</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>4,709</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>8,384</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>4,516</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>3,568</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>8,605</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/01</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>4,007</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>6,269</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>11,253</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/02</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>4,939</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>3,864</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>9,383</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/03</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>4,019</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>6,510</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>11,076</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Households in the poorer categories tended to be smaller than those in Category 3. Access to labour and livestock are key variables in determining production levels. Wealthier households had more workers and much more livestock than households in Categories 2 and 3. Workers in Category 3 also cultivate almost twice as much land as workers in Category 2. This explains to a large extent why wealthier households were able to cultivate larger areas than poor households (see Table 4). Cereal production per holding in Category 3 was up to 3 times more than in category 3.

### Table 6: Per capita production, yields and number of livestock per household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Person per Household</th>
<th>Workers per Person</th>
<th>Area per Worker</th>
<th>Cereal Production per Person</th>
<th>Cereal Production per Work</th>
<th>Yield per Holding</th>
<th>Cattle per Holding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1997/98</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>1,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group 111</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.79</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>1,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Groups</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 1.1.8 Employment Rates and Poverty

Rates of employment and unemployment have a direct bearing on levels of well being and poverty. Access to cash in an increasingly commercialising world is important, amongst other things to pay for education and enable households to buy food when their own harvests were insufficient.

The labour force participation rate is an indicator of the percentage of people older than 15 years which is economically active, i.e. is either employed or unemployed. According to the Namibia Labour Force Survey 2004 (NLFS 2004) 43,2 per cent of
the population in Kavango was economically active in 2004\(^3\). A lower percentage of women (40\%) than men (48\%) was economically active. This represents a big decrease in economically active people since 2000, when the total stood at 50 per cent for the region. Table 9 below provides an overview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males</strong></td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females</strong></td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural areas</strong></td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Namibia</strong></td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NLFS 2004: Table 4.3

Labour force participation in Kavango decreased both absolutely and relatively. In 1997 the region was below that of the country, but had a higher rate of participation than rural areas in general. By 2000 Kavango had gained some participation but remained below the national average. In 2000, this figure dropped back to 43.2 percent where it has the 5\(^{th}\) lowest participation rate in Namibia.

Kavango has the 5\(^{th}\) highest dependency rate in Namibia. The dependency rate refers to the ratio of the total population to the employed population in a given area. According to the 2001 Census, each employed person in Kavango supports 4.5 other people, the same as the national average. In the 4 north-central regions every employed person supports more people than the average for rural areas. Dependency ratios in the southern communal areas are all below the average for rural areas (NPC 2003: 41).

Rates of employment and unemployment provide a good indicator for well being. However, poverty is not defined purely in terms of material criteria. Other criteria have been developed that help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of poverty. The two most accepted indicators at present are the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Human Poverty Index (HPI). Both indicators try to steer away from a definition which reduces poverty to incomes, by attempting to capture the fact that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, only one component of which is material.

The HDI has three components:

- longevity as measured in life expectancy;
- knowledge, using adult literacy rates and combined primary and secondary school enrolment rates as proxies; and
- access to resources, measured by per capita income. Ideally, access to land, credit, capital and other resources should be taken into account, but a lack of comprehensive and reliable data makes this impossible in Namibia.

The HPI is intended to complement the HDI. Its focus is different, in that it seeks to measure deprivation of certain elements of human life that are considered

\(^3\) This is very close to the findings of the 2001 Census, which calculated a labour force participation rate of 50 per cent for Kavango (NPC 2004a: 30).
prerequisites for human development. Where the HDI measures progress in
development, the HPI is an indicator of the additional development required to
eradicate deprivation. The assumption in constructing a HPI is that, ideally, poverty
would have been eradicated where every new born child was assured of an
adequate diet during its first five years, every youngster was trained to read and write
and every citizen had access to safe drinking water and to health care as well as a
high probability of surviving the age of 40 years.

The HPI also has three main components of deprivation:

- longevity, which relates to the probability of a population not surviving up to
  40 years of age;
- knowledge, measuring the lack of access to knowledge by means of the
  written word, measured as adult illiteracy, or the proportion of the population
  above 15 years of age which is not able to read or write in any language; and
- standard of living, representing an arithmetic average of three sub-
  components:
  - the percentage of the population without access to safe water;
  - the percentage without access to health services; and
  - the percentage of malnourished children.

Income does not enter into the calculation. However, the proportion of people who
spend more than 80 per cent of their incomes on food, i.e. those commonly classified
as extremely poor, are also included in the HPI.

As far as the HDI is concerned, a score of 1 indicates the highest degree of human
development. In 2000 the HDI for Namibia was 0.648, that for Kavango 0.554, down
from 0.584 in 1999 and 0.569 in 1998. Kavango ranks 3rd lowest when compared to
HDIs of all other regions.

The HPI reflects the number of people who are deprived of those elements discussed
above. In 2000 the HPI for Namibia was 24.7 per cent, and that of Kavango 30.3 percent. Kavango ranks 12th in the country in terms of the HPI.

The 2003/1004 Household Income and Expenditure Survey provides data on annual
incomes and expenditures, and uses these data to measure the incidence of poverty.
The earlier NHIES of 1991 proposed two different definitions of poverty in the country.
It classified as "poor" those households that spent more than 60 per cent of their
income on food. Households whose expenditure on food exceeded 80 per cent of
their income, were classified as "extremely poor".

1.1.9 Access to Services

Poverty is not only a manifestation of low incomes. Access to such services as
health, safe water, education, markets and agricultural extension services is shaping
poverty in fundamental ways.

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4 All information on health services is based on the Essential indicator report 2001-2002
unless stated otherwise. 4 Information extracted from the Rural Electrification Master Plan, 2005
As far as **health services** are concerned, Kavango Region is served by a total of four hospitals, situated at Rundu, Nyangana, Andara and Nkurenkuru. There are a further 8 health centers 42 clinics. The area per health facility – 804 km^2^ compares to an average of 3,651 km^2^ for Namibia as a whole. In 2001, the region

There are a total of 330 **schools** in the Kavango Region. Table 3 shows the number of schools, number of learners and teachers.

**Table 8: Schools in the Kavango Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>Secondary School</th>
<th>Combined School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>64 688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All town and major concentrations in the region are supplied by water through state water schemes. For the localities along the Kavango River, piped river water is pumped directly from the river. The water supply on commercial farmland is the responsibility of individual farm owners.

In the case of rural water supply, it is the responsibility of the Directorate Rural Water Supply to look after the water needs of small communities, schools, clinics and livestock. Many boreholes have been drilled and equipped by government administrations, private organizations and contractors. A total of 19 NamWater schemes and about 315 rural boreholes exist throughout the region.

There are 3 NamPost post offices in the Kavango Region, situated at:
- Divundu, Nkurenkuru and Rundu

The telecommunication infrastructure consists of an exchange at Rundu. A line connects this exchange to minor exchanges at the following places:
- Nkurenkuru and Rupara to the west; and
- Mashare and Nyangana to the east.

The nearest railway link to the region is Grootfontein, which is connected to Rundu by tarred road. A tarred road eastwards (Trans-Caprivi Highway) along the Okavango River connects the Region with the Caprivi. To the west of Rundu, a gravel trunk road runs along the Kavango River to Nkurenkuru. Gravel district roads and other minor gravel roads serve the rest of the region. Two of the major road projects include a recent contractual agreement which had been signed to tar the road to Nkurenkuru as well as a new planned road link between Nkurenkuru and Tsumeb.
1.2 TOWARDS POVERTY REDUCTION IN NAMIBIA

1.2.1 Objectives of the Kavango Regional PPA

The overall aim of the Kavango Participatory Poverty Assessment was to engage with those who live in poverty and to provide them with an opportunity to describe their experiences and present their own views on how their lives could be improved. Specifically the objectives of the PPA are to:

- deepen the understanding of poverty by including the perspectives of people who are poor;
- assess coping strategies of people who are poor and their affect on the sustainability of their livelihoods;
- assess communities’ access to services and livelihood resources;
- assess dimensions of poverty trends from community perspectives within the context of HIV/AIDS, gender and the environment;
- explore the differences and competing priorities of people who are poor;
- facilitate the engagement of communities in policy formulation and programme identification in support of people who are poor; and
- empower local communities and decentralised structures to analyse the causes of poverty, and present ideas and develop strategies with a view to finding solutions.

The aim is to use the PPA results to develop regional poverty profiles that depict the extent, nature and characteristics of poverty in each region and identify priority areas for action. These will in turn guide regional development plans and the allocation of resources for poverty reduction programmes.

1.2.2 Sampling Design

The Kavango Region is divided into nine Constituencies namely Kahenge, Kapako, Mashare, Mpungu, Mukwe, Ndiyona, Rundu Rural West, Rundu Rural East and Rundu Urban. There are considerable differences between these constituencies and the sample that had to be designed attempted to capture as much of these variations as possible. Eleven statistical indicators were used to capture the variation between the 9 constituencies. These indicators included, amongst others, measures such as the unemployment rate, percentage of households with at least one orphan, percentage of households without safe access to water, life expectancy at birth, percentage of households with farming as the main source of income, and adult illiteracy rate. Since only six villages could be included in the sample, a purposeful decision was made to include the four “poorest” constituencies, the “richest” constituency and an urban site in the sample. Based on the eleven indicators, the nine constituencies were ranked in terms of the general levels of well-being in each constituency. This resulted in the Mukwe Constituency being ranked as the poorest, Ndiyona as the second poorest, Mashare as the third poorest, Kahenge as the fourth poorest Rundu Rural East as the “best off” in the rural areas and Rundu as the urban Constituency.
Table 9: Statistical differences between the Constituencies in the Kavango Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
<th>% of hh’s: at least one orphan</th>
<th>% of hh’s: without access to safe water</th>
<th>% of hh’s: without access to sanitation</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth</th>
<th>% of hh’s: farming as main source of income</th>
<th>6-15 girls not attending school</th>
<th>Adult illiteracy rate</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kahenge</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapako</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashare</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpungu</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukwe</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndyona</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rundu Rural (W)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rundu Rural (E)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rundu Urban</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One village then had to be selected from each of these constituencies. In selecting the villages the researchers sought pockets of poverty as well as variations in terms of environmental conditions, access to services, remoteness and good representation. Based on these requirements, the following villages were selected in the sample:

Table 10: Villages Selected in the Kavango PPA Sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituency</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mukwe</td>
<td>Korokosha</td>
<td>Remote with services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndiyona</td>
<td>Causa</td>
<td>Remote and no services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashare</td>
<td>Tam Tam</td>
<td>Remote with services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahenge</td>
<td>Murere, Toyota, Zoma, Nyime, Hema, Simba, Nkambe</td>
<td>Accessible with no services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpungu</td>
<td>Katomena Mavenge</td>
<td>Accessible with nearby services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rundu Urban</td>
<td>Kehemo</td>
<td>Urban Area and richest constituency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAP 5: DISTANCE TO EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE KAVANGO REGION
MAP 6: DISTANCE TO HEALTH FACILITIES IN THE KAVANGO REGION

Legend

- Health Facilities
  - Clinic
  - Hospital
  - Health Centre

- Distance to Health Facility
  - 10000
  - 20000

- Towns and Villages
  - Towns
  - Villages
  - PPA Sites

- Roads
  - Trunk Roads
  - District Roads
  - Main Roads

Constituencies
- KAHENGE
- KAPAIO
- MSHARE
- MPUNGU
- MUKWE
- NDYONA
- RUNDU RURAL
- RUNDU URBAN

Scale: 1:1,900,000
1.2.3 Research Methodology

The unit of study for the PPA research was a village. Following the selection of the Villages where the PPA study were to be conducted, the Kavango Regional Council was tasked with making the initial contact with the villages and to inform the leadership and villagers about the study.

This was done via discussions and a letter from the Regional Council to the Regional Councillors and traditional leaders introducing the PPA. The traditional leaders were sensitised regarding the objectives of the assessment and their co-operation was solicited to mobilise village leaders and communities. Upon arrival of the teams at the selected villages, the assistance of village leaders and traditional leaders were sought to further mobilise the communities, arrange logistics and find a suitable campsite for the team. A single research team was deployed in the region and fieldwork took six weeks to complete.

The research teams camped at each village for five to six days and assisted with the transport of community members from outside localities every day. The morning sessions commenced at various times depending on the schedule of the communities. People commenced their daily chores very early in the morning and were allowed to complete these before they were fetched. There was a mid-afternoon break for lunch, which was provided by the research team and prepared by two cooks appointed from within the community. The second session was usually completed during the late afternoon to allow enough time to take villagers back to their homes.

In order to be able to reflect the opinions of the various sub and well-being groups in the community, group discussions and the application of some tools were usually arranged into subgroups to reflect the differences of opinion according to age, gender and well-being variables. Participatory research tools were used and the general principle of “handing the stick to the community” to lead the research process was followed. A facilitator from the research team provided guidance and visual representations were extensively used to ensure that most members of the community could understand and participate in the process. To illustrate the issues and points under discussion, local materials were used to construct the visual presentations, mostly on the ground, but also on flip charts and boards.

1.2.4 Documentation

The nature of participatory methodology is such that accurate documentation of all the discussions during the application of each tool or discussion are kept and that these notes be transferred into an intelligible exercise report while it is still fresh in the memory of all team members. To ensure that this is done thoroughly, one or two team members were tasked to take notes during the application of each tool. At the end of the day, the team members together, prepared “key notes” by means of card sorting for each tool applied during the day. The notes of the note taker were used as the basis while team members reconstructed the discussions in their memories to ensure that no crucial information was omitted from the notes.

1.2.5 Research Tools Used

The research teams employed a number of participatory research tools and methods to solicit information from the study sites. The following tools were specifically used:
1.2.5.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
Focus group discussions were especially used to solicit the views of the community and subgroups on the local definition of vulnerability, insecurity, social cohesion, crime, violence and conflict. The technique comprises a semi structured discussion on the various topics of importance where the facilitator introduce the discussion and then through probing guide the discussion to cover all the required topics.

1.2.5.2 Village Resource Maps
This tool was normally the first tool used when commencing the research. Under the guidance of the facilitator, each community developed a village resource map. A village resource map is a simple tool used to analyse the space in which communities live and carry out their livelihoods. It is used to identify environmental, economic and social resources in the village. Following the completion of the visual map, team members interviewed the various elements of the map in order to come to an understanding of the environment (social, economic and environmental) within which the community makes a living.

1.2.5.3 Transect Walk/Drive
While the village resource map was compiled, another facilitator together with a small representative group of community members did a transect walk (and sometimes drive) through the village. A transect is a sort of diagram of a line cut through or walked through a village. A transect walk is used to gather information, by direct observation and interviews with key informants and passers-by about the environmental, economic and social resources in a community. It is a tool that directly builds upon the Village Resource Map to help researchers learn in more detail about the resources in a community, as well as about settlement patterns, basic services and land use.

1.2.5.4 Problem Tree
In order to examine and analyse underlying or root causes of poverty and vulnerability and to show the links between different causes and effects of poverty, a problem tree format was used to solicit the causes and effects of poverty from the communities and to determine the linkages.

1.2.5.5 Well-being Ranking
Within each village there are people who are more vulnerable to shocks than others. Because it is important to understand the views of the various well-being groups and to assist with focussing on the poor, a well-being ranking exercise using card sorting was done. The goals of this exercise are to assess the relative extent and nature of wealth and poverty in the village. Through a participatory process, villagers identified criteria of well being to assess the degree of vulnerability to poverty and to get an estimate of the number of households in the most disadvantaged categories. These included households with disability, chronically sick person(s), as well as those without a wage earner or without land. Each household in the village was recorded on a card and the cards then sorted according to locally constructed categories of well or ill being.

1.2.5.6 Seasonal Calendar
A seasonal calendar was developed in each village. A seasonal calendar is a tool for exploring changes in livelihood systems over the period of one calendar year. It is useful in counteracting time biases and it helps to find out what happens in different seasons. Usually the purpose is to investigate how incomes vary across the year, and how much labour is required for agricultural activities in various seasons.
1.2.5.7 Time-trend Analysis
Trend lines or diagrams are tools that help us to learn about community perceptions of change in the local environmental, economic, social or institutional patterns. It is a tool for looking at what is getting better and what is getting worse. A trend line is a simple graph depicting change over time and were used in this context in each village to assess whether levels of poverty are getting better or worse, to deepen understanding of what factors have affected well being and poverty over time, and to identify different experiences and views by age and gender.

1.2.5.8 Gender Analysis Matrices
A matrix format was used to analyse who owns, has access to and control over resources with regard to the different activities undertaken by women and men in the community. As with all the other tools, maximum use was made of local materials to draw the matrix on the ground and to identify and record the different topics under investigation.

1.2.5.9 Livelihood Analysis
Although there are a number of tools that can be used to analyse livelihoods, this study used a matrix to determine the ownership and use patterns of various assets amongst the various well-being groups in the community. This tool provides a good understanding of the assets available to the various groups to make a living and the extent to which these assets are used as opposed to owned by the various groups. In addition, it illustrated the various benefits derived from these assets for each of the respective well being groups.

1.2.5.10 Family Dynamics
Family Dynamics was used as a tool to solicit information about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the community, the perceptions about the disease and the impacts of the disease on people’s lives. It employs the use of pictures to represent a typical family. This then used to explore the roles and responsibilities of each member, the dreams of the family and how they see their immediate future. HIV/AIDS is then introduced into the equation and people are then encouraged to discuss the effect it is likely to have on the family and its well being.

1.2.5.11 Venn Diagram
To determine what services are delivered to the community and to solicit information about how services are delivered and how important these services are to the community, Venn Diagrams were used. The Venn Diagram is a tool which illustrated the importance of local groups and institutions. It is useful for clarifying decision-making roles and identifying potential conflicts between different socio-economic groups. It is also helpful for identifying linkages between local institutions and those at the intermediate- and macro-levels.

1.2.5.12 Service Score Card
Direct Matrix Ranking was used to assess the priority various groups in the community attach to different types of public services provided in their village or region. Various dimensions of a service were listed on the Y-axis and then scored in terms of how well the service provider performs. All responses were probed to get to the core reasons why a service or an element of a service received a particular score.

1.2.5.13 Pair-wise ranking
The method of Pair-wise Ranking is closely linked to the problem tree where a card sorting method is first used to sift the most important problems or poverty causes
identified in the problem tree to a manageable number. Using a matrix format, these problems are then ranked against each other. The reasons for each ranking are probed into and discussed. Once completed the matrix provides a very good prioritisation of the issue under investigation.

1.2.5.14 Community Action Planning

Following on the problem tree and the pair-wise ranking exercises, a community planning exercise was done with each of the communities. This exercise consisted of the identification of practical and effective ways in which the community and external role players could address the various problems or root causes of poverty. Key questions included the identification of causes that are beyond the control of communities and those which communities themselves can address. Communities were also asked to identify some of the actions households and/or the community at large are taking in order to address (prevent/mitigate the impact of) these causes, and what people did in the past to address these causes. Finally, participants were asked to state who should do what to take more effective action or to solicit assistance from external role players.

1.2.6 Compilation and Synthesis of Data and Information

Synthesis of data took place at different levels through a complex series of steps. Following the completion of fieldwork, the research team leaders compiled a site report for each of the six villages visited. Site reports were already compiled to reflect the format of the RPP which is based on the format of the RPP for the Caprivi and Omaheke Regions.

1.3 COMMUNITY PROFILES

1.3.1 The community of Korokosha

1.3.1.1 Location

Korokosha is located in Mukwe, the poorest of the Kavango Constituencies, approximately 70 km west of Divundu and south of the Trans Caprivi Highway. The settlement is reached by following a sandy track southwards for approximately 12 km from the main road.

1.3.1.2 Population

The total number of households in Korokosha village is 44. Although the community were of the opinion that the village has approximately 600 residents, an average household size of 6.3 for Mukwe constituency in 2001 were used to estimate the population in the village at approximately 300 people. The village comprise of mostly Rugciriku speaking people. Other languages spoken at Korokosha include Mbukushi.

1.3.1.3 Physical Infrastructure

The village is spread over an area of approximately 45 km² and is roughly shaped in the form of a square. Based on the findings of

The 2001 Census found that only 34 percent of households in Mukwe constituency had access to safe water. This was the lowest percentage of all constituencies in Kavango. 86 percent of households were within 1 km of a water point. 56 percent of households used water from sources such as the river, streams or dams.
the Village Resource Map (VRM), participants were well informed of and indicated the village boundaries with neighbouring villages and farms.

Korokosha has a borehole with a Lister engine and three water tanks that provide the villagers and livestock with water. The borehole was established in 1976 soon after the establishment of the school. A Water Point Committee (WPC) is in place and households (not homesteads) pay N$10 per month while people who own a business or receive old age pension pay N$20/month. The water is regarded as of good quality. Sewerage disposal is only available at the school and consists out of ventilated dry pit latrines.

1.3.1.4 Natural Resources

Although the main livelihood activities of Korokosha involve crop production and livestock rearing, people depend heavily on the availability and harvesting of natural resources. Wild fruits are collected throughout the year, depending on the availability and peoples supply of staple foods. Thatch grass is found all over and one participant stated “Korokosha is surrounded by it”. Thatch grass is cut by a number of residents and mostly bought by “Danie”, a well-known person buying grass from local villages in the Kavango Region. The villagers also use thatch grass as a building material for roofs of traditional houses. It was mentioned that men and women of Korokosha may cut as much grass as they wish. However, outside residents must first ask the permission of the headman as he is in control of the land.

![Photo 4: Thatch grass ready to be sold to “Danie”](image)

Soils are generally good and “it is not necessary to apply fertilizer”. Although sandy soil is present, the majority of crop fields are located within pockets of loam soil. Crop fields are used mostly to plant Mahangu, Sorghum, Maize, pumpkins and groundnuts. It was also confirmed that, “everyone who has a house has a field”. The availability of good grazing pastures depends mainly on the rainfall of the previous year. “With good rain the grazing will grow nicely.” Grazing of livestock is done mostly inside the boundaries of the village. If there is a problem with water, they will go to other villages in search of water for the cattle. Apart from the water pump, people and livestock also make use of natural pans in the rainy season.

Some resources are in abundance and do not seem to be declining, as people do not over utilise them, these include: Thatch grass, Maguni, Matu, Mpundu, Mangeti and Maka trees. Thatch grass is considered as the main natural resource. “If you don’t have grass – you don’t have maize meal.” In contrast, the following resources seem to be in shortage: Ntimba, Makwevo and Acacia worms from the Acacia trees. According to the community, these shortages are caused by the occurrence of simba (veldt fires) that causes them to decrease in numbers. In addition to this low rainfall causes some resources to decline as well.
1.3.1.5 Services
The first school at Korokosha was established early in 1976 and consisted out of one classroom. After independence, more structures were added to bring the total to nine classrooms. The Sebastian Karupu Combined School hosts Grades 1-7 and has a total of 288 children with 6 teachers. The school has a government feeding programme which provides the children with maize meal every afternoon after school.

Korokosha also has a crush pen which was build by the veterinary services. However, the crush pen only consists out of the “manga” which is the first part that traps the cattle so that they can be inoculated. Villagers stated that they are still waiting for the veterinary services to provide material to complete the rest of the kraal. “The vet's must come and bring us material. The other villages received more poles to build the whole crush pen.”

There are 4 cuca shops in Korokosha that mostly sell sugar, salt, coffee, tobacco, some maize and mahangu, “Kashipembe” and “Tombo” (traditional beer). Most of these supplies are obtained from Rundu and Divundu and participants complained that the cuca shops are very expensive. Lastly, Korokosha has 4 churches located inside the village borders. These include: Apostle of God Church, Full Gospel Church, Roman Catholic Church and a Baptist Church.

1.3.1.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy
The livelihood characteristics of Korokosha residents are strongly linked to their dependency on natural resources. Although, the main livelihood activities of Korokosha involve crop production and livestock rearing, piecework on agricultural level, also form part of the daily livelihoods of some community members. It is normally the poorer proportion in the community who depend on doing piecework for those better off groups. In return, payment is provided either through cash but mostly in kind.

Wild fruits are collected throughout the year, while the cutting and selling of thatch grass plays an important part in the lives of Korokosha residents.

1.3.2 The community of Causa

1.3.2.1 Location
Causa is located in the Ndiyona constituency approximately 160 kilometres from Rundu. The Village is accessible by travelling eastwards from Rundu on the Trans Caprivi Highway for approximately 100 kilometres. Close to Ndiyona, a small off-road track to the south leads to Causa which is located approximately 55 kilometres south of the Trans Caprivi Highway.

The vegetation is typical of Woodland Savannah with large trees and dense undergrowth. The village is isolated and not easily accessible. The road is merely a
track and not maintained at all. Sandy soils make travelling to and from Causa very difficult.

Causa has a picturesque atmosphere with lush vegetation and lots of big trees. The village is relatively small and spread over an area of approximately 20 km². The majority of infrastructure as well as homesteads and cattle kraals are located in the centre of the village with crop fields and grazing areas on the periphery.

1.3.2.2 Population
Participants consider Causa to be established in 1997 with the installation of the borehole. However, during the early eighties there was at least one homestead residing in the area. With the installation of the pump in 1997, there were 3 homesteads at Causa. Since establishment, the village has grown and although it remains a small village there are now 12 homesteads in Causa. The total population is estimated to be around 80 to 100 people.

The Headman for Causa is resident at the nearby village of Shamashwa. The TA has representation at Causa through one local Traditional Councillor and although the Headman does not visit Causa very often, the local TA Councillor meets with the headman when required.

The village comprise of Rugciriku and Nyemba speaking people.

1.3.2.3 Physical Infrastructure
Causa has very little formal infrastructure. This could be attributed to the relatively small population and the isolation of the village.

The manga was constructed with Government assistance in 1998. Although the manga is used to vaccinate livestock, it requires some maintenance to be done. Unfortunately, participants indicated that the Veterinary Services do not visit the community often and that their last visit was in 2003. Although cattle have been vaccinated for free, the Veterinary Services do not vaccinate goats and residents have to pay in order to have their goats vaccinated.

In terms of water, the village has a borehole equipped with a hand pump which had been installed in 1997. The quality of the water is good and although the hand pump has broken twice since 1997, the borehole has never gone dry and always produces water when it is functional. The infrastructure also includes a small trough for cattle approximately 50 metres from the borehole.

Causa has a Water Point Committee in operation. Members of the community pay N$10 per month per household or, alternatively, N$20 per month should the household own cattle. Payment can be made either in cash or in kind and is normally done on the first day of the month. The majority of people pay in kind by giving 5 large cups of Mahangu.

Although the community has a WPC, they claim that the infrastructure was never formally handed over to the community and remains “in the hands of the Government”.

The 2001 Census found that only 45 percent of households in Ndiyona constituency had access to safe water. 80 percent of households were within 1 km of a water point.
1.3.2.4 Natural Resources

The community of Causa depends heavily on natural resources found in the area. This dependency could be attributed to the fact that the village is isolated from bigger settlements and difficult to reach. Although a borehole and hand pump was established in 1997, the village has a large natural pan, which had been used for domestic purposes prior to the installation of the borehole. Since the establishment of the borehole, water from the pan is only used for washing while some prefer their cattle to drink water from the pan.

It was also mentioned that, due to the isolation and lack of markets, thatch grass and reeds are not often sold. There is only one person who buys thatch grass from the community. As a result, thatch grass and reeds is mostly used for domestic purposes. According to participants, all people in Causa have equal access to resources.

1.3.2.5 Services

Causa has three churches. The Roman Catholic Church was established in 1998. It has no building and sermons are held under a big Usivi tree. The Baptist Church was established in 1999. Community members themselves built a traditional structure to host activities of the church. The Church has a local Pastor who has left Causa for the moment. Lastly, the Full Gospel Church was established in 2004 and services are carried out weekly by local members of the congregation. A cemetery was established in 2003. It was reported that before 2003, people were taken to the Hospital in Nyangana and buried there. However, nowadays, people are brought back here for burial. Upon investigation, it was found that the cemetery has only 3 graves. No commercial development has taken place at Causa. The nearest shops are at Ndiyona approximately 55 kilometres to the north along the Trans Caprivi Highway. Although traditional alcohol is being brewed, it is sold mostly from the residence where it has been brewed. This is also part of the socialising of the community as drums are normally played at these events.

Causa has neither school nor medical facility. Although the Councillor approved a school for the community, nothing has happened in this regard. Community members cleared a portion of land to accommodate the school and went as far as to erect one classroom. Unfortunately, the school inspector did not come back to look at the classroom. In the mean time, the class room has collapsed due to the rain and lack of use and maintenance done to the structure.

For medical services, community members walk ±55 kilometres to Nyangana to call the ambulance. Young people would normally be tasked to walk the distance through the night to prevent suffering from heat exhaustion. Although the mobile clinic visits the community, the service is not very reliable and may take months before returning. The mobile clinic does not cater for serious diseases and do not stock a wide variety of drugs.
One pension payout point exists approximately 8km at Vergenoeg for old people to collect their monthly pensions.

The closest Agricultural Development Centre (ADC) was at Nyangana, approximately 55 kilometres far. Although AET visited the community last year, community members were concerned with the frequency of visits.

1.3.2.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy
Primarily, livelihoods aim to produce crops and rear livestock as a means to sustain the residents of Causa. However, only two households at Causa seemed to have managed relative successes. As a result of the different levels of poverty, these few relative successes dictate to extend the livelihood activities of the majority of other households in the community.

Although it can be said that a joint dream of the community is to have a good number of livestock and a big field to cultivate crops successfully, very few people ever achieve this goal. Almost as an alternative short-term goal, people conduct piecework for those who have had success. Payment for piecework can either be in cash or in kind (by means of mahangu or maize meal) depending on the agreement reached between the parties.

Almost as a secondary goal, people tend to their own fields with manual implements and often only at the end of the planting season. Resulting in lower yields, which will only sustain them for a few months in a year. Another important aspect of the livelihoods of people is the fact that employed relatives living elsewhere have their livestock cared for by rural people. Although this is also true in Causa, many people claim that these relatives can at any time collect the animals which adds to the vulnerability of households.

1.3.3 The community of Tam-Tam

1.3.3.1 Location
Tam-Tam is located in the Mashare constituency approximately 125 kilometres South, South-East of Rundu. The Village is accessible along the gravel road leading and ending at Ncaute. From Ncaute a small off-road track takes you further to the Village of Tam-Tam.

The area is characterised by vegetated Kalahari dunes and a big muramba. As a result, the village is spread along, and partly inside, the muramba while some features and uses are located on top of the northern dune. The vegetation is typical woodland savannah with large trees and dense undergrowth. The village is spread over an area of approximately 30 km² and is roughly shaped in the form of a square. Based on the findings of the Village Resource Map (VRM), participants were well informed of and indicated neighbouring villages viz: Kondja Village in the north-west, Small Karakuvisa Village in the south and farms of Mr Kapoffi, the Roman Catholic Church and Mr Kangowa to the west and east. The village further comprise of a “grid” like road pattern with the main tracks leading to and from the centre.

The majority of the community facilities and infrastructure are located in the centre of the village. Homesteads are scattered throughout the area while the crop fields mostly occur in the muramba. Grazing areas are located on the outskirts of the village boundaries. The majority of homesteads have cattle kraals, which are located in close proximity to the homestead.
1.3.3.2 Population
Tam-Tam was “established” in 1972 by the current Esimbi. At the time, his homestead was the only one. This might be a contradicting point. Although the Esimbi claims to have established the village, the san people were here before him. This issue is probably confirmed by the local name given to the village. Another interesting point confirming the above is the fact that there are two cemeteries for San people while all other residents claim to “be buried at the place where their ancestors come from”. There are also no cemeteries other than those for San people. The village comprise of mostly Rukwangali speaking people. Other languages spoken at Tam-Tam include Shambyu, Nyemba and lastly, in the minority, are the San who speaks “Runduni”.

Since establishment, the village has grown and got bigger as time went on. Even today the village is ever increasing. Currently there are 17 households and it is estimated that Tam-Tam has approximately 200 residents.

According to participants people continue to move to the village in search of good agricultural land. According to one participant, newcomers go through a process of consulting firstly the local Esimbi who will again consult the elders and other community members. Should the applicant be successful, the Esimbi will investigate and demarcate a portion of land suitable for the new person. Secondly, the applicant will then consult the Headman and from there go to the Hompa who will finally approve the application for land. According to the participants, N$50 is paid for 40ha of land. This payment is made as a once-off payment.

1.3.3.3 Physical Infrastructure
Tam-Tam has seen a fair amount of infrastructural development compared to other sites visited by the PPA team. In terms of water, the village has a borehole with an open water tank, which had been provided with a diesel engine in 1987. The infrastructure also includes a trough for cattle approximately 70 metres from the community tap. Although the quality of water is good, the infrastructure is not conducive for human consumption. The open corrugated dam sometimes collects insects and dead birds. This cause diarrhoea and stomach cramps. In order to prevent diseases people have to boil water before it can be consumed without any problems.

The community has a Water Point Committee in operation. Members of the community pay N$25 per month if they have cattle while those without cattle pays N$15 per month. Payment can be either in cash or in kind. It was mentioned that, in kind payment is normally done by means of mahangu. Until last year, 1 big cup of mahangu was worth N$50.
mahangu was valued at N$1. Although the community has a WPC, they claim that the infrastructure was never formally handed over to the community. They also claimed never to have received any form of training.

The United Methodist Church constructed a clinic at Tam-Tam during 1992. The intention was to hand over the structure to the Government to be used as a health clinic. Unfortunately, this formal handover never took place and until 1998 nothing happened. As a result, a committee was established to work with the health authorities in Rundu to formally open the clinic. The committee had to count the number of residents at Tam-Tam and surrounding areas. It was estimated that approximately 800 people were resident during 1998. Although the former Councillor and Governor knew about the problem, nothing had been done until now. The community feel that, in the mean time, the number of people has increased dramatically and they wish to see something happening in this respect. The irony is that Tam-Tam was selected based on the criteria of having an operational clinic. “At present the clinic is used to host visitors coming into the community”

Another formal infrastructure is the manga, which had been constructed by the Government in 1999. Vaccinations by veterinary services are conducted at the manga on an annual basis during March of every year.

1.3.3.4 Natural resources
Large trees and dense undergrowth dominate the vegetation in Tam-Tam. Villagers therefore collect wild fruits as part of their livelihood systems. However, due to veldt fires and changing rain patterns, some wild fruits are decreasing. According to participants, veldt fires are on the increase due to arson. It is believed that hunting is made easier when the grass is burned down. Fires are apparently caused by people from other villages and normally come from the east.

Although a bit far, forest areas have good soil for grazing while thatch grass is found all over. It was unfortunately mentioned that thatch grass is not sold, as there are no markets available locally. Thatch grass is only used for domestic thatching of houses.
1.3.3.5 Services

Tam-Tam Junior Primary school was established in late 70’s. The structure evolved through the years and while starting off as a traditional structure it was upgraded in 1997 to a half corrugated iron structure. The school has two classrooms and offer grades 1-4. There are only two full time male teachers (one of which is also the principle). Unfortunately, the principle has become ill and as a result, the remaining teacher organised an assistant in the absence of the principle. Although this is not a formal appointment from the Ministry, the full time teacher intends to pay the assistant from his own resources. Teaching is conducted with one grade inside the classroom while the other remains outside. When the particular period has passed, the outside group will go inside and receive their lecture. Another issue of importance is that the school-feeding programme at Tam-Tam has stopped in 2005 for no apparent reason. This caused many children to go hungry while at school. According to the school board, the abolishment of the school-feeding programme caused the number of learners to decrease by half. This is especially true for smaller children who cannot attend school for the full day without eating anything.

Tam-Tam has no traditional healer and as a result people in need of immediate medical treatment has no other alternative than to travel to the nearest clinic at Gcatchinga which is approximately 35km away. Travelling is difficult as the road is bad and it is inconvenient to walk or using a canoe or sleigh. In the event where a vehicle is available, transport cost can vary between N\$25 to N\$50.

The mobile clinic visits Tam-Tam only every third to fourth month. In 2005 they visited in October and again in February 2006. During this time a number of babies were born, but only received immunization injections on the last visit in February. In addition to this, the personnel of the mobile clinic will sometimes refuse to treat people: “There was an old San lady who was sick, the villagers asked the staff to treat her but they refused and the lady died two days later”. It was also mentioned that the poor medical facilities affects the san community the most as they have no money to pay for transportation or medical treatment.

Apart from the National radio services, there are no other means of communication at Tam-Tam. People rely on writing letters to family or relatives or to the NBC for announcement.

Tam-Tam has one Roman Catholic Church, which had been established in 1995. A local resident female doubles as the priest. Regular weekly services are held by either the local female resident or by visiting priests from the Roman Catholic Church Group.

No commercial development has taken place at Tam-Tam. Although traditional alcohol is being brewed, it is sold from the residence where it has been brewed. No specific shebeens or cuca shops exist in Tam-Tam. There are also no markets available. In the event where manghetti nuts are being sold, it is first kept at home from where people can go and buy.
1.3.3.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy

Primarily, livelihoods aim to produce crops and rear livestock as a means to sustain the residents of Tam-Tam. However, only a fortunate few manage to do either of these with relative successes. The community has different levels of poverty and in the race to achieve the desired level of subsistence agriculture, a number of difficulties and hardships have to be dealt with along the way.

Although it can be said that a joint dream of the community is to have a good number of livestock and a big field to cultivate crops successfully, very few people ever achieve this goal. Almost as an alternative short-term goal, people conduct piecework in order to make ends meet. Payment for piecework can either be in cash or in kind (by means of mahangu or maize meal) depending on the agreement reached between the parties. Piecework is difficult to find and one has to seek for it. However, on rare occasions people could “announce” that they have work to be done. Piecework is not normally given to strangers and although it can include a number of things it is mostly concerned with seasonal agricultural labour. A pre-requisite for piecework is the tools needed to conduct the specific work. These tools are normally axes and hoes but could also be ploughs and oxen.

Another important aspect of the livelihoods of people is the fact that employed relatives living elsewhere have their livestock cared for by rural people. Although this is also true in Tam-Tam, many people claim that these relatives normally collect the animals during the ploughing and planting season. This limits the benefits, which could be derived from the “caring” responsibility and it was said that it contributes to the vulnerability of households.

Although piecework is always a very favourable short-term solution to make ends meet, it was established that approximately 80-90% of people were utilising their fields at the time of the PPA.

According to the 2001 Census, only 54 percent of households in Kahenge constituency had access to safe water. Thirty-five percent of households used water from sources such as the river, streams or dams. Thirty-four percent of people had to walk more than 1 km to the next water point.
1.3.4 The community of Murere

1.3.4.1 Location
Murere is located in the Kahenge Constituency some 70km South of Nkurenkuru and ±190km West of Rundu. The community is found roughly in the centre of a cluster of villages all using the same water point with a distance of ±15km from the furthest village. The area comprise of Murere, Toyota, Zoma, Nyime, Hema, Simba and Nkambe. Turning south from the main gravel road linking Rundu and Nkurenkuru, the typographical characteristics of the area is distinctive east west sand dunes in parallel of each other. Villages are mainly found on top of these large flat dunes, while crop fields are located on the edges of the dunes and below in the depressions where the most fertile soil can be found.

1.3.4.2 Population
According to the participants, most of the people living in and around Murere were Rukwangali speaking, but some also spoke Nyemba. All seven villages had a total of 106 households of which 91 were male-headed households and 15 were female-headed households. A total number of 34 people received old age pension. There were also a total number of 51 orphans within all seven villages. (An orphan was characterised as being less than 18 years of age and has lost one or two parents).

1.3.4.3 Physical infrastructure
Murere and the six surrounding villages where established during the mid 90’s. Being fairly new and given its remoteness, it has seen very little physical development. As a result of the dunes and availability of fertile soil, the village has a linear shape. The distance between the eastern and western boundaries are roughly 21km with homesteads scattered over a very big area.

Murere has a water point with a holding tank, which is in a very good condition. However, the open zinc-dam was dirty and apparently difficult to clean. There is a crush pen, but according to the villagers, it is located far from any homesteads and therefore vandalised.

1.3.4.4 Natural Resources
The area is characterised by fertile soils and this is also the main reason why people relocate to this site. The agricultural activities are considered the single most important livelihood activity. This is also evident if considered how far people have to walk in order to collect water from the formal water point. In contrast to other sites visited, the centre of the village is not at the water point but approximately 13 kilometres away from it. When asked why people settle so far away from the water, participants stated that people would rather settle where fertile soil can be found in order to increase the quantity of produced crops. This also explains why the homesteads are dispersed over such a large area. In addition to the fertile soil the area has a lot of big trees and vegetation. As a result, wild fruits are collected and consumed as an important food source.

1.3.4.5 Services
A Primary School teaches Grades 1-4. The two classrooms are built with traditional materials and are not really conducive for teaching. The community were not very happy with the teachers as they were not yet back after the holidays. Although the Authorities brought materials, the teachers were not there to accept the books. The school is located very close to the water point and therefore very far from the majority
of homesteads. Children therefore walk long distances to school and back and in some cases, discourage school attendance.

A clinic, which consists of only a traditional thatch grass roof structure and one voluntary nurse, provide villagers with some medical relief. Lastly, Murere has a total of four churches all spread out over a large area to accommodate villagers.

1.3.4.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy

Villagers of Murere rely on agricultural activities as their main livelihood while poorer people rely mostly on providing labour and skills in exchange for food or money. Piecework is an activity, which is done throughout the year. Collecting wild fruits and berries also forms part of many people’s livelihood activities. It was reported that disabled, sick and older people mostly relied on family support and begging in order to make ends meet.

Due to the isolation of the site, markets are not available and as a result the local economy is based purely on bartering. In rare events, cash received through pensions is used to pay for services or labour.

1.3.5 The community of Katomena Mavenge

1.3.5.1 Location

The village of Katomena Mavenge is located in the Mpungu Constituency approximately 20 kilometres North-West of Nkurenkuru and approximately 170 kilometres west of Rundu. The Village is easily accessible along the gravel road leading north west from Nkurenkuru towards Katwitwi. The village is very small and located along the Kavango River. The area along the river as well as the gravel road from Nkurenkuru is well inhabited with a number of other villages scattered throughout the area.

Katomena Mavenge is spread over an area of approximately 15 km² and is roughly shaped in the form of a rectangle. Katomena Mavenge should not be regarded as a village as such but rather as an area. It should also not be regarded as an area which exist in isolation of other villages. The name of the Village, Katomena Mavenge, actually refers to two areas, which forms part of a continuous linear belt of occupied land locked in between the gravel road to Katwitwi and the Kavango River. The village is bordered by Nkinka to the West, Simanya to the East and Mbumbu further to the South. The biggest of these villages are Simanya with its centre approximately 5 kilometres southwards along the gravel road to Mbambi and Katwitwi.

1.3.5.2 Population

It is believed that the village of Katomena Mavenge exist since the early 1900’s. Participants knew of two households who had been here since the earliest days. The village increased drastically since then and it was recorded that the area accommodates 26 homesteads at present with each having 3 households on average. The village expand to the west of the old road and north towards the river. It was mentioned that the Unita Rebels caused the community to refrain from establishing close to the river. In some cases homesteads located close to the river were forced to move away due to attacks from the rebels who crossed the river.

It is believed that the village has a lot of youth and also more women than men. According to participants it is common for men to go out in search of work while the women remain in order to care for the children and daily household chores. Languages spoken at Katomena Mavenge include: Nyemba, Chokwe and San with Rukwangali spoken by most people.
1.3.5.3 Physical Infrastructure

Probably the most prominent physical feature in the community is the old road leading to Mbambi which had been in existence since before World War II. This old road also forms the boundary between Katomena and Mavenge.

Katomena Mavenge has very little formal development. The village itself has no water point or any other formal infrastructure. For water, villagers use the river and with the exception of education, no other services are provided inside the village boundaries.

A new powerline has recently been constructed and cuts through the village. This powerline will provide grid electrification to Katwitwi but no linkage exist to benefit the community of Katomena Mavenge.

Homesteads are found mostly to the West of the old road while most crop fields occur closer to the riverside but also scattered throughout the area. Grazing areas are located towards the south of the village.

1.3.5.4 Natural Resources

The river system serves as an important part of the livelihoods of people. Although some resources are available throughout the year, a number of them are only accessible on a seasonal basis. Fishing is done by a number of people while the gathering of wild fruits and other natural resources also forms part of the normal livelihoods of residents.

It was mentioned that although all have equal access to resources, it is sometimes difficult to do so due to the high cost of permits needed for harvesting specific resources. This include, amongst others, N$50 per fishing net per annum and permits for cutting of timber trees.

1.3.5.5 Services

As mentioned previously, Katomena Mavenge is very small and also surrounded by other villages in the area. Formal infrastructural development has not taken place inside Katomena Mavenge but rather inside the surrounding villages. It so happened that Katomena Mavenge has neither a formal water point, manga, church nor a clinic. Commercial development is also limited to a small number of cuca shops, which sell basic necessities. In terms of water, residents have no formal water point and resort to collecting water from the river. The nearby village of Simanya has a formal water point but residents of Katomena Mavenge prefer to collect water from the river as the distance to the water point is too far to travel by foot.

The same applies for the use of a manga. The nearby villages of Simanya and Kinka have crush pens where cattle can be vaccinated. For this reason, residents also make use of these facilities even though these are located outside the formal boundaries of Katomena Mavenge.

The village has no public telephones and participants indicated that they have to write letters or alternatively “go in person”. Although the PPA team experienced cell phone network coverage, participants indicated that none of the community members have access to cellular telephones.

The village has a Primary School hosting grades 1-7. The Kinka Primary School is located inside the village boundaries and has an enrolment of 167 learners with 3 male teachers. The structure is relatively new and formally constructed with permanent building material.
Although not considered as communal property, Katomena Mavenge has a *local distiller* used for the production of traditional liquor: Kas hipembe. The process involves the gathering of Manghetti nuts and then after having left it in the sun for some time, the nuts and evolving juices are closed in the container. The heating of the container cause the contents to boil and while the steam escapes through the extraction channel it condensates through the cooled section as submerged in the water. The result is a very strong alcoholic drink which is sold to customers.

![Photo 11: The distillers being used to make Kashipembe](image)

1.3.5.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy

The main livelihoods of people at Katomena Mavenge revolve around subsistence agriculture. Because all cannot achieve successful farming, many people regard doing piecework as part of their livelihood systems. Only 6 members of the community are formally employed. Two of these are teachers at the local primary school while 4 are employed as literacy teachers for older people in the community. Relying on the mentioned natural resources plays an important part of the livelihoods of people.

Interestingly, participants mentioned the occurrence of “body selling” to form part of the livelihood system. Although this was said, it can be assumed that while some practice commercial sex as a livelihood system, others engage in commercial sex as a coping strategy during times of scarcity.

1.3.6 The community of Kehemo

1.3.6.1 Location

Kehemo informal settlement is located in the Regional Capital of Rundu and is spread over two constituencies namely Rundu Rural East and Rundu Urban. Based on the selection criteria, only Kehemo Urban was to be evaluated and the PPA team therefore focused on that portion of Kehemo. Kehemo Urban is situated on the most eastern boundary of Rundu and north of the main tarmac road leading to Divundu. The target area is spread over an area of approximately 3 kilometres and is roughly shaped in the form of a rectangle.

1.3.6.2 Population

Kehemo was established in 1971 when two different households were relocated to the area. From there, the name Kehemo or “do as you please” originated. Since then, Kehemo has grown into a large informal settlement of Rundu. According to participants the settlement continues to grow and it can be expected that the densities continue to increase due to in-migration into Kehemo. It was not possible for the participants to indicate the number of households or people. As a result of war,
landmines and HIV/AIDS, participants felt that there are more females living in Kehemo than males. This was supported by the 2001 National Housing and Population Census data. As can be expected of a large informal settlement of the Kavango capital, a wide variety of nationals and language groups from all over the country reside in Kehemo.

1.3.6.3 Physical Infrastructure

Kehemo falls under the jurisdiction of the Rundu Town Council and all infrastructure is considered the responsibility of the local authority. With regard to service provision, the Town Council has installed a number of services. These were identified as follows:

Piped water reticulation system with individual water meters installed at random. Households are connected to the electrification grid through pre-paid meters installed in the respective dwellings of residents as applied for.

Sewer reticulation is based on individual septic tanks and dry pit latrines. In addition to these there are:

- 11 public telephones,
- 3 informal dumping sites,
- 2 markets, one formal and one informal

As far as roads and storm water is concerned, no specific stormwater reticulation has been provided for and roads are not gravelled as a rule. As a result, stormwater normally gathers in road reserves which makes mobility slow and inconvenient.

1.3.6.4 Natural Resources

Collecting natural resources like firewood, wild fruits and fishing are all regarded as important means to make a living.

1.3.6.5 Services

Kehemo is served with basic services. The township has a number of shebeens, a community hall, churches, a cemetery, two markets and some dumpsites for refuse removal.

1.3.6.6 Livelihood and characteristics of the economy

In contrast with the rural settlements, livelihoods of people living in Kehemo aims to either earn a living through employment or through conducting small-scale business activities. Although not as extensive as in the rural areas, people rely on agricultural piecework provided outside of the proclaimed Rundu area.

Unlike in most rural sites, body selling is regarded as a livelihood activity among mostly women, and in some cases also men. Begging also forms part of everyday life in Kehemo and it was reported that more and more people are begging in order to make a living. Lastly, it was determined that some families depend on Government grants for old age pension, disability and orphans. In order to have access to these
grants, households deliberately take in orphans and disabled people only to have access to those funds received.

**Figure 1: Village resource map of Kehemo Urban**
CHAPTER 2: POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND WELL-BEING

Poverty, vulnerability and well-being are perceived and understood in different ways by different communities based on locality specific contexts and reference points or benchmarks. To gain an understanding of and insight into how different communities view, perceive and define poverty and its associated social implications, focused group discussions were held with community members. Following these discussions, participants were asked to categorise households within their societies into distinct groups of well-being and poverty based on criteria and characteristics outlined by them. The factors and driving forces that dragged people into poverty, kept them impoverished or moved them out of poverty were also dissected and discussed in detail by community members. Moreover, the strategies and coping mechanisms employed by all well-being categories in dealing with the causes and effects of poverty were elaborated during discussions.

2.1 POVERTY AND WELL-BEING

Understanding how people perceived well-being provided a good indication of how people perceived poverty as the opposite of well-being. Two proxies provided an indication of the communities’ definition of well being namely those characteristics of people they regarded as better off and the things which were required to help people move out of poverty.

2.1.1 Perceptions and dimensions of poverty

From the synthesis of the research information there seemed to be a difference in perception between those communities that were mostly making a living from subsistence agriculture and those communities that were not entirely dependent on agricultural activities for their livelihoods. In Kavango 2 broad categories of communities were found: rural communities whose livelihoods all depended on subsistence farming and an urban community, which depended mainly on cash income for survival. In addition to these two broad categories, rural communities were further classified into communities who are accessible or relatively accessible and those who were remote and hard to reach. Although perceptions were not mutually exclusive there was a clear difference. The different perceptions are highlighted below.

2.1.1.1 Perception of poverty in remote rural communities

According to the participants in remote villages well-being, or a good quality of life existed when a person has cattle or more specifically oxen and ploughs to produce food with for his household members. Equally important, well-being is a situation where there are markets available or located close by where produce and natural resources can be sold for financial gain eg. “nangondwe” (thatch grass). Lastly, it was reported that a state of well-being is attained when one’s children are educated and employed to support the other members of the household.

It is also worth reporting that not everyone agreed on the basic principles of well-being. It was apparent that the respective well-being groups perceived well-being...
differently. This perception is linked to the current level of well-being attained by a particular person. To illustrate this, the following explanation is provided: The lowest well-being group perceived a person who owns two oxen, a plough and a large crop field as someone in a state of well-being. However, other people who owned two oxen, a plough and large crop fields did not regard themselves to be in a state of well-being. To the contrary, they had other expectations of well-being and indicated that those who were able to pay others for labour were experiencing a good quality of life.

In contrast to the above, people in remote rural communities perceived poverty and for that matter, a poor person, as someone who does not have assets such as chicken, livestock, donkeys or mahangu. In addition, a poor person had either a small crop field or no crop field at all, did not own implements like a plough, hand-hoe, axe or a sleigh. Indirectly, this translates into not having food, which causes one to be poor.

Poverty makes it difficult to feed the babies in the house. And, as a result, women today will only “give her husband 2 babies because there will be no food to feed them”. The irony is that, traditionally, and especially in the remote rural areas, children are regarded as an asset and less children therefore also cause people to be poorer than they used to be.

It was also reported by a female participant that, a poor person is also someone who does not own cattle and have no one to plough for her. This can be a result of old age or can be brought about by the loss of a husband or whoever cultivated the field for that particular household. Not owning ploughs and oxen to plough with also cause people to become and remain poor. The absence of these assets force one to use hand held implements such as hoes. By cultivating with hoes, it is not possible to have a big field, thus only generating low yields, which will result in eventual food insecurity.

Participants not only perceived poverty as not owning certain assets, but also by not having access to certain resources and services. “Walking long distances to obtain water is also regarded as poverty.” After probing, participants reported that when a person lived far from a water point and there was no water left in the house, then someone would be sent to collect water. It was reported that it could take from 08:00 in the morning to 17:00 to fetch water with cattle. Participants stated that everyone, including the children had to sit in the shade and wait for the water to arrive before conducting normal household chores.

Poverty was also regarded as the difficulty for old people to collect their pension monies. Some villagers were too old to walk and needs to be pulled on a sleigh, which is very uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous. To prove the point, villagers explained that an old lady was recently pulled on a sleigh when the sleigh overturned on top of her and injured her badly.

Lastly, a poor person is characterised by not having, or, loosing the support he or she used to enjoy. This can be the result of the loss of either the parents, the breadwinner or any other person within the community who provided support.

A striking feature of the perceptions and definitions of poverty in a context of remote rural communities with subsistence agricultural character is the strong emphasis on being able to secure or produce food. The remoteness of these communities forces them to barter with services, skills or labour in order to secure food. The remoteness,
absence of markets and lack of commercial development almost nullifies the principles of a cash economy.

2.1.1.2 Perception of poverty in accessible rural communities

Communities located closer to gravel roads are not as isolated as those living in remote areas of the Kavango Region. It was apparent that these communities were in closer contact with larger service centres and the subsequent cash economy. Although these communities also depended on subsistence agriculture, the perception of well-being varied slightly and included the component of employment as a pre-requisite for well-being. By including the component of employment, less emphasis was put on the struggle to produce food. Instead, the frequency of meals per day was also used to illustrate the state of well-being.

Participants therefore perceive well-being as a situation where money is readily available through employment. They added: “This will enable a person to successfully address problems at the end of the month - problems will only be temporary in nature”.

Another participant perceived a well-off person as someone who owns cattle, is employed and has food to eat. It was reported that having a job meant that you were well-off, as employed people can buy on credit in the cuca shops. It was further added that receiving drought relieve is not considered as a state of well-being, but being able to eat at least three times a day without drought relieve is considered well-being. Participants stated that although there are only a small number of households who experience this situation, they do not depend on other people for food or money, as they have their own productive assets to sustain their livelihoods.

According to an old man, well-being is a situation where not only money but also livestock and clothing are available. He added, “…even 10 will be fine”. As with the remote villages, the benchmark for well-being was not the same for all villagers. In this regard another man said:

“Although our needs can never end, if I had a 100 cattle, poverty cannot fool with me”.

Lastly some felt that if you have a farm with cattle and a tractor and manage to eat 3 times per day, then you are in a state of well-being.

Community members in the relatively accessible villages' perception of poverty is linked to their understanding of well-being. Generally, villagers indicated that a poor person is perceived to be someone “without parents, with no food to eat, no clothes to wear and not making a good living”. The latter specifically refers to the fact that a poor person who does not have a job could be forced to steal. It was also mentioned that “not having fields or oxen or ploughs to cultivate your own food” means to be poor. Such a person would have to “rely on others for support”. As support and assistance from others are not guaranteed “a poor person will continuously be in search of food”. A number of examples were given to illustrate the possible support as required by poor people. These include:

Assistance with cultivation of crop fields. It was mentioned that many people do not have assets such as oxen and ploughs to cultivate their own fields with.
Participants even indicated that support should come from the Government. They also added “Since the new president came into power, we did not receive anything”; and Assistance in terms of payment of school fees. In this regard a lady mentioned that she has to sell her cattle in order to keep the children at school. Should those learners then finish school, employment is not guaranteed and the loss of productive assets were in vain – “nothing is given back”.

Further more, poverty can be seen when a person or a group of people cannot find employment, does not own cattle and being without a family. In terms of the latter, the following was added: “If all my children passed away, then there is no one to help build shelters. Children and family members help to cultivate fields and collect food, so the absence of family members can make you poor”.

According to some participants, the availability of productive assets is a very important indicator of poverty. This is especially true in Tam-Tam as the soil is not as good as it is in other localities. The use of manual implements will therefore not yield good results, and consequently people do not often cultivate without oxen and ploughs. It was said that the crops cultivated with manual implements would only grow knee height and then die. It was reported that using a plough will actually help with fertilisation of the soil. Old vegetation will be put back deep under the soil where it will decompose and fertilise the soil. In contrast, manual equipment like hoes will not fertilise the soil because the hoe only “scratch the surface”.

Finally, in addition to indicators such as employment, support from others and productive resources, it was said that a whole village could be poor if they do not have proper infrastructure or service delivery. One man reported that:

“Going into a village and there is no water, that is also poverty”.

2.1.1.3 Perception of poverty in the urban context

Community members of Kehemo indicated that a poor person is someone “not having a house, no food to eat and not having employment.” In addition to this another felt that a poor person is having old and battered clothing “poverty sits in the clothing”. Although it was felt that employment played an important role in the well-being of a person it was also mentioned that even if you are employed, you could have nothing and be poor. “It depends on the kind of employment. If you work and get only N$150 you cannot satisfy all your basic needs”. With reference to the latter, it was mentioned that although some are employed, they spend all their money on payment of debt leaving them with nothing.

The above statements illustrate the dynamic perception people have of poverty. It is evident that the perception changes as the level of well-being change. In some rural communities, employment was seen as the ultimate means of escaping poverty, whereas in the urban settlement, the benchmark was raised to a specific level of income.

Although Kehemo is an urban site, people still felt that “having cattle and a crop field” is an important assets for well-being and that the use of manual implements contribute to poverty. Another opinion was that although crop production and cattle rearing is considered important aspects of well-being, it still requires an income to be able to pay for the labour concerned with crop production and cattle rearing; “in the end, all revolve around having an income to pay for labour”.

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This specific perception was not felt as strongly in the rural communities where bartering is more acceptable. From the discussions in the urban settlement, it was evident that the cultivation with hand held implements seemed almost out of the question. Even if oxen and ploughs are available, urban dwellers still needed money to pay for labour in order to cultivate the field.

2.1.2 Perceptions and levels of vulnerability

In his Assessment of OVC Interventions with a Food Component in Namibia, Verduijn (2004: 21-22) defined vulnerability simply as ‘the extent to which people are affected by adverse events and processes’. He stressed that vulnerability should not be understood in terms of events, but rather as the consequences of such events. ‘People living in drought-prone areas are vulnerable not to drought as such, but to hunger induced by drought’. Following research done at the University of Western Cape, he identified three overlapping types of vulnerability:

**Economic vulnerability** related to stresses on livelihoods systems induced by factors such as asset poverty, debt, insecure entitlements to social services, wage/remittance dependency, job insecurity, monetary poverty and lack of access to credit.

**Health vulnerability**, which referred to ill-health and disease. Poor diet, malnourishment, stunting and wasting, chronic ill-health, psychological stress and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS increased peoples’ vulnerability.

**Social vulnerability** related to stress on social networks, and included such issues as high dependency ratios, stressed care chains, exploitative gender dynamics, patterns of alcoholism, prostitution, violence and crime.

Verduijn also drew a distinction between structural vulnerability (long-term) and transitory or current vulnerability (short-term).

The concept of vulnerability thus refers to those things, occurrences and events, which may cause people and households to fall into poverty. It helps to explain perceptions of poverty and well being and further clarify poor people’s perceptions of poverty. Vulnerability to poverty was investigated through the use of focus group discussions where villagers first had to define the word in the vernacular and then proceeded to explain all the dimensions and elements thereof. Again, perceptions varied based on the site-specific circumstances of the community.

2.1.2.1 Perceptions of vulnerability in remote rural communities

Most households in remote rural areas experienced in one way or another, all levels of vulnerability. Many households did not have draft oxen or ploughs to cultivate with. It was also mentioned that should you rely on livestock for ploughing and these livestock become **sick or die**, that person will fall into poverty as he relied on these resources for crop production.

Such households resorted to cultivate their field with hoes. However, the use of hoes limited the acreage that could be cultivated. As a result, those people will have no option than to rely on doing piecework for in kind payment.

"Those not having and always relying on others for support or for piecework, they can easily fall into poverty"

In addition to the latter, one participant went even further and said: “not getting support will cause you to fall into poverty”. On the contrary, people who were trying to
sell something like ‘Oshikundu’ (traditional beer) to earn an income would mostly find a way to buy what they needed to survive, while those who are lazy would not try to sell anything and would become vulnerable. A villager used an example of how “young men could do blacksmithing and make axes, bows and arrows or hoes and sell it to other people for money.

Poor infrastructure can also cause people to be vulnerable. In this instance, reference was made towards the manual water pump. “Our infrastructure cannot hold water, if the pump breaks today, we have a big problem. Where will we get water from?”.

Disabilities also cause people to be vulnerable as they cannot work in their fields in order to produce their own food. HIV/AIDS or other illnesses result in the loss of breadwinners and as a result a lot of orphans are left behind. In many cases these orphans are given to other family or relatives who might already struggle to make ends meet.

In almost all sites visited, reference was made to the old age pensions which are far too little to support an old person. Although this has since been increased from N$300 to N$370 per month it was reported that: “Old age pensions are too low to live on. This cause old people to become vulnerable to poverty”.

Wild animals such as elephants, hippos and antelope cause people to be vulnerable to poverty as they can destroy a whole crop field in one night. The concern raised by the participants was that no compensation is paid towards those who lost their crops. It is also very difficult if not impossible to prevent large animals from feeding in the crop fields. The loss of already limited supply of crops further contributes to food insecurity and vulnerability.

Lastly, it was reported that during the Angolan war, many people fled from Angola and came to live here while patrolling soldiers also spent a lot of time in the northern areas of the Kavango Region. These war soldiers and refugees impregnated a lot of women and left all the parenting responsibilities for their mothers when the war was over. Although it is not possible to register these children for orphan support, they do not have fathers to care for them. This made a lot of people vulnerable to food insecurity. During the same time, UNITA rebels would cross the border and steal cattle, food and implements while the villagers are left with very little to sustain themselves. This cause people to become vulnerable to food security.

2.1.2.2 Perceptions of vulnerability in accessible rural communities

Vulnerability in locations which are relatively accessible are closely linked to those who are inaccessible. Factors contributing to vulnerability include the following:

People who have to rely on others for support are more vulnerable than those operating independently. For example, someone who cares for and uses cattle of relatives is vulnerable because the relative can take back his cattle at any time. “Where am I then?”. Unwanted pregnancies and the death of parents lead to an increased number of orphans. These orphans and small children are vulnerable. In many cases they become the responsibilities of the old people who cannot care for them in the same way as their parents did.

Although these orphans are vulnerable, their presence in a new household might also cause increased vulnerability for others who had previously not been so vulnerable.
Alcohol abuse can also cause people to become vulnerable. In this regard it was said that young people are sometimes irresponsible. They would use money intended for school fees to buy alcohol and later become criminals because they have no education. Participants also said that those with food would continue to barter mahangu for alcohol. This sometimes causes the household to have no food available for consumption and thus become vulnerable to food insecurity. Interestingly, both men and women confirmed that they sometimes “steal” mahangu at home and smuggle the mahangu out in exchange of alcohol. Women sometimes pretend to collect water while the container is filled with mahangu. While on the other hand, men smuggle mahangu out inside their pants.

A female participant felt that the high levels of unemployment cause people to be vulnerable. It was also reported that although employment is scarce, absenteeism causes people to lose their jobs and become vulnerable to fall into poverty.

Laziness can cause a household to become vulnerable. To illustrate this, an example was again used in terms of alcohol abuse: “While others work, I am straight to the bar”. In addition to this, “Although one is complaining about poverty, that person do not try to improve his or situation by doing things like clearing fields for cultivating or buying livestock”. It was also added that when a female is lazy the husband can force the lady to work but when the husband is lazy the wife cannot force a man to work.

People misusing their assets are considered to be at risk to fall into poverty. In this specific instance an example was given of someone selling his or her assets like cattle or chicken in order to buy alcohol. The loss of these assets are impacting negatively on the well-being of the family as these assets are relied upon. It was also strongly emphasized that there will be no means of replacing those assets.

Although linkages might already have been made above, the loss of a breadwinner will add to the vulnerability of a household. An old lady used herself as an example as she has lost her husband in 1985. Since then, it was very tough for her to make a good living. She had to do everything alone and was forced to sell a lot of animals in order to sustain herself and pay for her kids at school. Lastly, jealousy is also considered as an important indicator for vulnerability and poverty. An example was given that when a project is proposed and some people are jealous, that project can be sabotaged in order for it not to go ahead.

2.1.2.3 Perceptions of vulnerability in the urban context

According to the urban community, vulnerability was easily understood and although similarities exist, it was as if the practical implication thereof were felt stronger amongst urban residents oppose to those living in the rural communities. The contributing factors to vulnerability in Kehemo include the following:

The loss of the breadwinner will cause a household to become vulnerable to fall into poverty, as the support provided by the breadwinner will be lost. “If the person was responsible for paying school fees then the children will become vulnerable”. Also, women with babies who loose their husbands due to divorce, death or fathers not accepting their parental responsibility experience difficulty in caring for the small child. In many cases, as experienced in the rural areas, these small children are sent back to the grandparents to care for the young ones.

People misusing their assets are considered to be at risk to fall into poverty. “Overspending can cause a rich person to become poor”. In the rural communities, misusing of assets meant mostly the sale or bartering of ones assets. In the urban community the added component of debt and credit also comes into the equation.
This tendency also support the fact that the more rural and remote localities do not operate within a cash or monetary based economy.

**Alcohol and drug abuse** can cause a person to loose his/her job making them vulnerable to poverty. **Illnesses and disease** will cause a man or woman to become vulnerable as they will spend money on medical bills without being able to work, if they do not heal then they will end up being poor and only relying on others for support. Again payment of medical expenses illustrates the importance for the demand towards money. Sudden **disability** will cause a person who depends on working in his/her crop fields to become vulnerable to poverty. Other contributing factors also include laziness and caring for orphans. Although rural communities maintained a relatively crime free life, the urban community indicated that being a victim to **theft** also contributes to being vulnerable. And, that this is very often the case. Lastly, **nepotism** is also a contributing factor for poverty and vulnerability if temporary employment opportunities and community projects are only given to specific members instead of benefiting the whole community. Members of the community also felt strongly that **corrupt** officials cause people to be vulnerable: “Why are other people from other regions employed to do cleaning work? We can also clean the schools and hospitals, it is corruption!”

### 2.1.2.4 Most Vulnerable Groups

Villagers stated that both **young children** and **old people** are not able to provide for themselves. They have to rely on others for food production and, as a result, are therefore considered as more vulnerable than those who are able to care for themselves. According to one participant, modern day life allows for young people to make their own decisions and choose “to go with life”. This cause them to drop out of school and come back home “as two”. Ironically, making life difficult for themselves. The participant also indicated that young people could get this “**new disease**” called AIDS. As a result of the aforementioned, “the two now becomes the responsibility of elders at home to take care of”.

**HIV/AIDS infected and affected** members of the community cause their respective households to become vulnerable. In many cases, the breadwinner would no longer be able to provide for the household. Family members would then be forced to work and support the household but also make more time available to care for the infected and ill members of the household. The **interdependency between the well off and the poorer** segments of the community also results in the vulnerability of both groups. While the poor rely on the rich for piecework, the rich rely on the labour provided by the poor. However, due to the smaller proportion of people availing piecework it must be deducted that the poorer groups are more dependant on the rich, thus making them more vulnerable than the other better off well-being groups. In Tam-Tam, the local teacher was considered a rich person and he was the only household in that category. The teacher also provided piecework for a lot of community members. It was specifically mentioned that, should that one person offering piecework, pass away, the only local opportunity is lost and the community feels very vulnerable as a result. This situation was present in all of the rural communities visited by the PPA team. As a person becomes wealthier and more successful, he will automatically need more labour and the interdependency becomes bigger. Should he then suddenly pass away, the community will have no one to provide food in return of labour.

**Disabled** people are also vulnerable to poverty. If a person is unable to work, does not have the necessary national documents and fails to register for a disability grant, that person will be vulnerable while depending on the support of family members. **Low rainfall** and **changing weather patterns** cause low harvests and little food for
the community. This means that the community at large are at risk of falling further into poverty. In addition, veldt fires also cause a decrease in wild foods and fruits. This, together with the changing rain patterns result in increased food insecurity, which cause communities to be at risk.

An old lady who said that she has many orphans to take care of gave a testimony of how difficult her life is. The added pressure of school, fees, clothes and transport costs to and from Rundu adds to the vulnerability of the household. In the process, assets are sold to make ends meet and the difficulty in obtaining national documents to register these orphans for grants cause the household to suffer.

No definite indication was given to indicate vulnerability between men and women. However, after much deliberation it was concluded that men and women are both vulnerable to fall into poverty when either of the two partners pass away or separate. Initially, participants felt that females can easily find a new partner, while men are struggling to do so. In contrast, and irrespective to the latter, women felt that they are more vulnerable as they are responsible to care for children and orphans. In conclusion, men and women depend equally on each other to sustain household needs. Whilst men are responsible for providing – either locally or from elsewhere, women are responsible for caring of small children at home.

2.1.3 Perceptions on Social Exclusion

In most cases, the rural communities of Kavango seemed to live peacefully with one another. Participants stated that social exclusion among community members did not exists in Murere. Also in Causa, no specific cases were reported of social exclusion on a community level. The community has a certain dependency on the richest person at Causa who provides piecework to a large proportion of the community irrespective of tribe, ethnic group, language or well-being group. This was also the case in Tam-Tam where villagers seemed to be living peacefully and in harmony with each other. It was specifically indicated that no cases of crime, violence, domestic violence or substance abuse occur in Tam-Tam. It was categorically stated that all members of the community whether San, Rukwangali or Shambyu speaking, are being heard irrespective of tribe, well being group or ethnic group.

Noteworthy exceptions were encountered at Katomena Mavenge as well as in the urban site of Kehemo. At Katomena Mavenge, participants were of the opinion that San people are not being heard. People indicated that Apart from the San who belong to others, poor, rich, men and women are all considered equal. According to the participants, this situation of the San who belong to others, has become part of the their tradition. They do not attend meetings and do not want to accept that they are free to attend and contribute.

Although all (with the exception of the San) are considered as equal, some individuals were reported to have more influence than others. This influence is not based on a level of well-being or tribe but only on personality of the specific person. “If you want, you may talk but sometimes people do not have the self esteem to talk freely”.

Participants strongly felt that social exclusion exists in many different ways in Kehemo urban. One example was given where piecework was only given to people who spoke the same language as the employer. One lady mentioned that she asked to do domestic work from a lady and was turned away only to find that two other women where employed as domestic workers two days later. It was believed that she...
did not speak the same language and was denied the work. Another form of social exclusion that exists is that of community members towards an albino person purely due to their difference in skin colour. Participants also indicated that not only Kehemo is socially excluded, but also the whole of Kavango region, as employment throughout the region would be given to people from other regions. If was further stated that temporary employment would also be given to people who already had employment instead to those who are not employed.

Although no inter-communal discrimination or exclusion was recorded, almost all communities expressed their concern about being voiceless when it came to issues of governance. Participants at Causa were of the opinion that because they live far out in the bush, they are not being heard and consider themselves to be voiceless. In this regard, they added: “You people are just the same as the other people, writing what we are saying but you will never return to us, but we will sit here and do your work like all the others”. “The Councillor said that he will give feedback to us, but we never heard from him. We do not have a voice. Causa has no voice!”

Another issue mentioned by the participants was that feedback is not provided. I.e. the issue of national documents and the difficulty experienced to obtain these documents was explained to most of the Councillors. In Tam-Tam, participants indicated that neither feedback nor assistance was given to Tam-Tam. “Tam-Tam was jumped and no documents were given here – not even to San people”. Another example given was that the Councillor came to open the PPA proceedings. At his arrival they heard that he is currently busy in the area giving blankets to the communities. However, “he left again with the blankets”.

It was further mentioned that the government socially excluded the whole community as it was advertised over the radio that birth certificates could be collected at the Councillor’s office. When the people arrived at the offices they were told to go to another place, when they got there they were told that it was only the San people who could apply for their birth certificates. People were refused assistance and were sent back without anything. Villagers strongly felt that they were socially excluded for not being able to obtain their birth certificates and exploited by spending many hours in queues while wasting money on travelling costs. Lastly, people also felt that issues given through to the respective VDC’s, do not yield any feedback nor results. At Katomena Mavenge, the community also indicate that they have reported their problems to the leaders “but we only get promises and we feel as if we are not being heard”. With reference to the above, the Deputy Headmen reported that assistance were requested from Agriculture to establish a garden next to the river. Unfortunately, no feedback is given and he is always referred to the Councillor and told “you just have to wait”.

2.2 CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF POVERTY

Extensive public discussion and application of a number of participatory tools enabled the PPA team to come to a thorough understanding of the causes and effects of poverty in the surveyed communities. To add, clarify and summarise the causes and effects of poverty in each site, communities prepared “Problem Trees”. This is a visual method which uses the image of a tree to identify the root causes of poverty (the roots of the tree) and the effects or ramifications of poverty (the branches of the tree). Poverty represented the trunk of the tree. Freedom was given to identify as many causes and effects as the community members could think of and these were then reclassified during synthesis into three broad categories, namely economic and infrastructural causes and effects, environmental causes and effects and social causes and effects of poverty.
It has to be noted that what is called causes and effects are actually interdependent relationships where one cause can have several effects while some of the effects can be the cause of the original cause. Causes and effects of poverty are therefore multiple and interdependent relationships are indeed complex. There were also differences between the various types of sites included in the sample as categorised in the preceding sections. These are identified and elaborated on in the paragraphs below.

### 2.2.1 Economic effects of Poverty

Economic causes and effects of poverty refer to those causes and effects that emanated from shortcomings in the provision of physical services as well as the difficulties experienced in the productive activities of the communities.

#### 2.2.1.1 Accessibility and Isolation

Poor infrastructure and in particular poor feeder roads made it difficult for many households in the selected sites to access public services. Of the five rural sites visited, only one (Katomena Mavengi) could be reached with a normal sedan vehicle. Of the remaining four, at least two (Causa and Murere) could only be reached with a 4x4 vehicle while the other two sites could possibly be reached with a normal pick-up depending on the season.

The nature of settlement patterns in villages in the communal area of Kavango pose serious challenges for the provision of services, as households were not concentrated in one locality. Invariably, therefore, they had to cover some distances to reach clinics, schools and water points. Most households did not own any form of transport and often did not have the cash to pay for transport. This meant that many people spent a lot of time walking to schools, clinics, water points. In the event of illness at Causa, youth are required to walk 55 kilometres through the night to the nearest hospital in Nyangana to call the ambulance. It was also the case in many rural localities that the conditions of the roads were not suitable for old people to be travelling with sleighs. This resulted in old people having to walk long distances in order to collect pensions and obtain medical assistance.

With the growing commercialisation of the rural economy, access to markets and services became more important. However, the poor road network increased the transport costs of marketing occasional surplus crops to a level where they outweighed the potential benefits. The absence of markets therefore prevented people to participate in the local economy of the region. For example, a lot of thatch grass is found in the area surrounding Causa but the absence of a market to sell these natural resources cause people to remain poor.

#### 2.2.1.2 Lack of income

The PPA Team established that access to cash incomes is becoming an increasingly important part of livelihoods. Money was perceived to be at the centre of development. A lack of money prevents households to pay for services or buy assets. It was stated above that in those cases poor households either cultivated with hoes or they relied on neighbours to borrow ploughs and oxen. In the former scenario, household were not able to cultivate enough land to provide food for a whole year. In the latter case, households had to wait until the owners had finished ploughing, which typically was towards the end of the rainy season. Late cultivation invariably led to
participatory poverty assessment for Kavango region

Poor harvests. A final option of households with no assets and no income was not to work their fields at all but rather assist others in their fields.

A lack of income also impacted negatively on education. Many young people were prevented from obtaining secondary and tertiary education due to a lack of money. While education was free of charge, parents still had to pay for transport, contributions to School Development Funds and school uniforms. There was an acute perception that without proper education, chances of finding employment were reduced. This represented a vicious circle: no cash – insufficient education – unemployment – no cash – no farm implements – no cash.

The major reason for the general lack of cash incomes was unemployment. The NLFS 2004 showed that 44.4 per cent of the labour force in Kavango was unemployed. In all sites visited by the PPA Team unemployment was regarded as one of the main causes of poverty. At Murere, participants stated that the main cause of poverty was unemployment, this leads to the fact that poor people who are unemployed and uneducated does not have access to other sources of income or means to obtain more productive assets to move out of the poverty cycle.

Changes in the labour market also contributed towards unemployment. There was a general perception that it was more difficult now to obtain employment than it was before Independence. In the past people with no education found employment. Today people were asked about language proficiency, age, ID, school grade and literacy. If the answer to all or any of these was negative, there was no employment. In Kehemo, participants stated that unemployment is the main cause for not obtaining an income which is further complicated by overpopulation as competition for employment is very high in Rundu. Corruption, nepotism and discrimination were also mentioned as major role players preventing poor and different cultural groups from obtaining employment.

2.2.1.3 Lack of productive assets
Probably the most important cause for not being able to produce sufficient crops is the absence of productive assets such as ploughs and oxen, which directly influence the availability of food. A lack of these resources causes people to only cultivate small fields which do not yield enough food to last for a year. In some instances households lost their implements after the husband passed away and in-laws claimed his property. Apart from livestock losses to drought and disease, stock was also lost due to UNITA attacks and theft. This often resulted in households loosing the only two draft oxen they owned. More generally, the shortage of implements was ascribed to a lack of money. Many households did not have the necessary cash to buy agricultural tools, or hire labour for cultivation.

2.2.1.4 Vulnerability of Livelihood systems
Because livelihoods in Kavango are largely dependent on agricultural production, rainfall is of central importance. It was mentioned above that annual rainfall in the region showed considerable variations between seasons and within seasons. This makes crop farming very risky. Not surprisingly, therefore, droughts were identified as a major cause of poverty in the region.

2.2.1.5 Limited Opportunities for Income Generation
Opportunities to generate cash incomes are severely restricted in the rural areas of Kavango due to the fact that the majority of households are cash strapped. It could be argued that during normal rainy seasons, agricultural production yields at least some food for these households.
A lack of funds and expert advice exacerbated this problem. Laziness and dependence also played a role in not having projects, as well as self-enrichment and selfishness. In some localities however, initiatives were made from community members to establish i.e. gardening projects. Unfortunately the decentralisation structures and local leaders were not yet effective in securing funds for such projects.

2.2.1.6 Government Neglect
In almost all of the sites visited, communities felt they are being neglected by the Government of the day. At Korokosha participants reported that they felt excluded from all the other villages due to discrimination. It was mentioned that the Councillor seldom visit Korokosha and that no projects ever occurred in the village. The absence of the Councillor was considered as a cause of poverty as no developmental opportunities exist. At Causa, participants felt that no medical treatment causes people to lose their breadwinners, which lead to low productivity and ultimately, food insecurity. Together with this, the absence of the Drought Relief Programme further contributes to the food insecurity of the community. Apart from medical services, people also felt that support services such as Agricultural Extension Services, Veterinary services, poor water provision infrastructure and low levels of Aids awareness all contributes to poverty.

2.2.2 Social Ramifications of Poverty
Poverty culminates in a number of social ramifications, which in turn can also reinforce the poverty from which it results. The social ramifications of poverty that were identified are substance abuse, sexual practices and HIV/AIDS, poor community health, poor education and laziness.

2.2.2.1 Alcoholism and Substance Abuse
Alcohol abuse was identified as a cause of poverty. Participants identified several reasons for alcohol abuse. These included that some people sought peace and happiness in alcohol or simply wanted to cope with stress. Poverty and not having food to eat were factors that could give rise to stress. In other cases peer pressure induced people to start drinking.

Substance abuse has led to instances where people sold some of their assets and food reserves to obtain the cash required for buying alcohol. Some participants ascribed the lack of livestock to alcohol abuse. They said that many people sold their assets in order to obtain cash for alcohol consumption.

“Alcohol will affect the poor people the most as they might obtain alcohol the easiest and more cheaper than all the other things. Poor people will drink alcohol if they do not have anything to eat. A poor person will abuse alcohol to help him forget about his problems.”
2.2.2.2 Sexual Practices and HIV/AIDS

Sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS contributed towards poverty. In many instances, the brunt of the problem is borne by rural households, which invariably look after orphans. With regard to the former, teenage pregnancies were mentioned as a problem. Teenage mothers frequently left their children in the care of their parents in order to complete their education. This placed additional pressure on many households, which did not have enough resources to care for these infants. Moreover, they may not receive any support from the fathers of their babies, who often are never seen again. Although this may be true for many regions, it was felt that the presence of Namibian soldiers as well as UNITA rebels during the early 2000’s caused many unwanted pregnancies.

2.2.2.3 Poor Community Health

Poor health gave rise to poverty. HIV/AIDS increasingly contributed towards ill health, but hunger was also a factor. Poor health was related to not having easy access to medical services. As mentioned previously, distances to health facilities sometimes prevented early treatment of diseases. This was compounded by the perception that medical centres and mobile clinics have limited quantities and types of drugs available for treatment. People in poor health did not have the physical strength to cultivate their fields.

Disability, also understood as a form of poor health, could also lead to poverty. In many cases, disabled people were not able to work in their fields. Physically disabled people were also regarded as poor especially in cases where these people could not succeed to register for disability grants.

2.2.2.4 Poor Education

There was a strong perception among participants that employment opportunities were directly linked to a good education. As a result, poor education kept people in poverty. A number of factors contributing towards many people not obtaining a good education were identified. In this regard, not all sites visited had schools. Causa had no school while Tam-Tam and Murere had junior primary schools, each with only two class rooms which had been constructed with traditional materials and were reportedly in a dilapidated state. In some cases ablutions were rudimentary, while in most, no ablation facilities were available. None of the rural schools had electricity. In most instances poor housing for teachers served as a strong disincentive to teach in rural areas. Most schools found it difficult to attract teachers, particularly schools in remote villages.
Many young learners also had to walk long distances to school, which interfered with their education. A general complaint was that Secondary Schools offering Grades 8-12 were far away from villages. This gave rise to a perception that government did not provide enough schools. Many households lacked the financial means to send their children to secondary schools. The cost item that proved insurmountable for many was transport to and from secondary schools. In addition, those who made it to Senior Secondary Schools but failed Grade 10 could not repeat it as a result of government policy. Although Namcol was an alternative, many households could not afford to pay fees for Namcol. These were regarded as being too high. In addition, a repeat year at Namcol cost double the initial fee. Many people thus ended their education with grades that were too low to compete for employment in the labour market.

2.2.2.5 Natural Laziness
A common explanation for poverty in the rural areas was that it was self-inflicted by poor people being lazy. It was specifically reported that by being lazy and not properly weeding a crop field would directly impact negatively on the quantity of food to be harvested. It was also mentioned that lazy people would rather sit at home or partake in drinking oppose to work in the fields. It can be assumed that every society has a fair share lazy people. However, it is possible that descriptions of the poor as being lazy were a metaphor used to describe a situation where the lack of implements and assets led to such poor returns of working in their own fields that it was more beneficial for the poor to help others who had the necessary implements to cultivate or not cultivate at all.

2.2.3 Environmental Ramifications of Poverty
By definition, livelihoods that are dependent on agriculture also depend on environmental conditions that are favourable to these activities. The environmental
causes and effects of poverty that came from the PPA are droughts, pests, animal disease, wild animals, and veldt fires.

2.2.3.1 Drought
Droughts are a regular feature of Kavango region. They result in poor harvests and stock losses.

2.2.3.2 Wild animals and pests
The occurrence of seasonal pests and wild animals is also considered as a contributing factor to poverty. Birds, locusts and worms cause considerable damage to crops on a regular basis. There were no pest control programmes in place to protect peoples’ crops. Traditional ways to chase birds away by making a noise with buckets or plastic bags only had limited effect. It was also reported that the most effective way to minimise losses would be to be present in the crop field. In addition to birds and pests, the Kavango region has lots of wild animals. Elephant, hippos, kudu, warthogs and other mammals are responsible for the destruction of large proportions of the harvest. In more specific terms, it was mentioned that the elephants came to Causa during the previous crop season. Although villagers managed to call upon assistance from Nature Conservation, endeavours to save the crops were in vain. The game guards spent the harvesting season but “they only managed to chase the elephants from one field to the other”;

2.2.3.3 Veldt fires
The occurrence of veldt fires impacts negatively on the well being of the community. Residents felt that too little support is given by the Department of Forestry to better prepare for veldt fires from destroying grazing areas and thatch grass. In addition to the latter, annual veldt fires also decrease the availability of fruit bearing trees and scrubs. Thus directly causing food insecurity for the group of poor people depending on these natural resources.
Participant: Mr. Thomas Munango

19 January 2006

I am 63 years of age and was born in Siudiva Village. I have been living in Murere Village for the past 7 years and moved here due to the war with the UNITA rebels.

I am a subsistence farmer, and my only income now is my old age pension which I started receiving from last year October. Receiving old age pension places me in a better group, but it was not always like that. I was better off in 1985 when I was working at a fishing company in Walvis Bay. I earned enough money, which made life easy as I was also considered a rich farmer since I had many cattle. That all changed when my contract with the fishing company in Walvis Bay ended, and forced me to go back home.

That is when things went down hill for me, as there was no money and I had to sell some of my cattle in order to get food on the table, but I did not suffer much. One day when I went to my kraal, it was empty and all that were left was the footprints of my cattle. The UNITA bandits stole my cattle during the night, and this forced me to move to Murere Village which is deeper into the bush. Life had become hard for me since my cattle were stolen and I was left with nothing.

I would like to get back what I had lost seven years ago. Currently I only have 7 goats and 2 cattle. In the years to come, I am hoping to have a big kraal and extended fields, so that I can go back to the category of rich people. I am not used to being poor, and every time I want to do something, I struggle. I try to stay positive, and believe that I will be rich again.

The only income that I receive, is from my old age pension of N$300 per month, which has to cover the water of N$10/month, food of N$50/month and school of N$260 per year for my children. There are 15 members in my family which consists of 5 of my own children, 3 orphans/grand children, 1 stepson and 6 other family members. There is no HIV infected people in this family, although there are three orphans. The family sees me as the head of the family, and apart from myself, my brother also receives old age pension.

I fell with the rich people, but I lost everything because the UNITA rebels took everything from me. Now I am poor, but I will make it.
2.3 LEVELS OF WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

The information presented above emanated from general discussions of how communities viewed well-being and poverty, and what factors contributed gave rise to poverty. These general discussions did not provide any information on how communities were stratified in terms of well-being status. In order to arrive at an understanding of different well-being groups, participants were asked to rank the households in their villages according their perceived socio-economic status. The names of households were recorded on cards as a first part of the exercise and then placed inside the various well-being groups created by the participants. In Kavango, the sites visited were relatively small and the exercise was done for all communities visited. It should be mentioned that although a table with percentages of sub-groups was produced, the main aim of this exercise was to obtain a better understanding on the characteristics of sub-groups as perceived by participants.

2.3.1 Categories and Characteristics of Well-being

The number of well-being categories ranged between 3 to 5. These were grouped together in 3 main categories in the table below.

2.3.1.1 The very, very poor - “Vahepwe wo vahepwe” or “Tumbu-Tumbu”

In Katomena Mavenge, the 12 households in this category represent 36% of the households. The households do not own any cattle or ploughs. They do have labour for doing piecework. A number of people in this group are ill and are not always strong enough to work for others. They also rely on support from others. All of the San households in the community were put in this category as they do not own crop fields and do not produce their own food.

In Tam-Tam, the Very poor comprised of the only San household in the community. It was stated that the old lady does not own anything and simply rely on community support and wild fruits. In Korokosha it was reported that this group “do not even own a chicken”. Participants stated that people living in the worst group are frequently sick and struggle to cultivate their own crop fields. Diseases like TB, high blood pressure and HIV/AIDS prevent these people from doing piecework. Some people receive some support from family members in the form of food, clothes and medicine, but it is limited as these family members are also struggling. People who are able to do work depend on cutting and selling thatch grass for an income.

In the urban settlement of Kehemo, the very poor people live in a traditional house owning the clothes on their bodies and some patches of mahangu between the houses inside Kehemo. It is possible for these people to go to bed without having eaten anything.

2.3.1.2 The poor or “Vahepwe”

In Kehemo, poor people are considered to own a small traditional house with a radio and one or two pots. Poor people obtain water from their neighbours and make illegal connections for electricity. A few people will own some chickens and goats, which is kept in the rural communities. People will receive support and sell firewood for a small income.

In Korokosha, the poor mainly depend on selling thatch grass and doing piecework for the rich group. Poor people will only be able to cultivate a small field and will spend more time in the fields of those offering piecework. In order to cultivate their own fields, the poor people barter their labour in exchange for the use of someone
else’s ploughs and cattle. Apart from the latter, they receive some support from family members and other better off community members. Their most important assets are a hand hoe and axe which enables them to do piecework. In general, the poor group were regarded as those people who would only have access to cattle and oxen, but would not own them. Some poor people may own chicken and some implements. Poor people only eat when they can find food or at most once a day.

2.3.1.3 The better or “Hansa”
It was reported that better people were those people who were able to cultivate their own fields and produce enough yields to last them most of the year. Some people only received old age pension as a fixed income, while others would do piecework for food as a form of payment. Households in this category owned a small number of cattle and oxen, chicken, goats and donkeys. Some would own a plough with other implements for weeding and clearing. The better group would be able to plough their own crop fields to eat at least twice a day.

In the urban community of Kehemo, people who are considered to fall in the “better” group are those who receive support from neighbours as well as old age pension, disability grants and orphan grants. Houses are constructed out of traditional materials with a zinc or thatch roof. These houses will mainly contain a bed, table and some chairs. Some people will own a small crop field outside the urban area with two or three cattle. Only a fortunate few will have running water from a tap at their houses.

![Figure 3: The well-being ranking visual compiled by Tam-Tam Villagers](image)

2.3.1.4 The rich or “Ngawo”
According to the rural villagers, rich people are those people who owned their own business and motor vehicles. They are either formally employed or were retired and received either a formal pension or at least an old age pension as a source of income.
Rich people were also able to eat as much as they liked and when they liked. The “Rich” group also provided piecework to other people as they could afford to pay people to work in their crop fields. People in this group also owned many cattle, oxen, some donkeys, horses, goats, chicken and more than one plough. People who were rich would become richer, as other people would work in their crop fields and produce surplus mahangu by cultivating bigger fields. At Tam-Tam, there was only one household listed in this group. The head of the household is formally employed as a teacher at Tam-Tam Junior Primary School. He is also the only formally employed person in Tam-Tam. He owns two ploughs, his own cattle and a crop field.

Another important characteristic of these households are their support which is given to others. In Katomena Mavenge, the rich people also cared for a number of orphans.

2.3.2 Prevalence of Poverty (well-being ranking)

The ranking of households in the various settlements is depicted in the following table:

Table 11: Well-being ranking by PPA site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village name</th>
<th>Well-being category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very, very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korokosha</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causa</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murere</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tam-Tam</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katomene Mavenge</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kehemo¹</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table indicates that on average 47.6% per cent of households in the sites visited were described as poor or very poor by participants. This compares with 47 per cent of rural Namibia as reported by the NHIES 2004. However, these percentages should be taken for what they are: subjective assessments of poverty. Moreover, they are only pointers, as categories identified in different sites do not necessarily correspond.

2.3.3 Social Mobility

The previous section has shown that the majority of households were regarded as poor to very poor in the Kavango Region. Some participants stated that the very, very poor have always been very, very poor. In fact, everybody was perceived to have started there. But those who were wealthy could also become poor, and the not so wealthy could become wealthier.

These perceptions show that participants were well aware that poverty was a dynamic process. People could sink into poverty as much as they could rise out of it.
Attempts were made during the fieldwork to discern factors that influenced this process of social mobility.

At a very general level most participants felt that Independence brought about a general improvement in peoples’ livelihoods. Peace and the abolition of the notorious night curfew in Kavango meant that all households could work longer hours in their fields and thus produce more mahangu. Human security improved for all households, as the terror that accompanied the war stopped. In addition, access to clean water improved after Independence and more school were built.

These developments were generally highly appreciated. But did they enable all households to rise out of poverty, and if not, why not?

2.3.3.1 Moving down the Well-Being Ladder

Participants identified a number of factors that impoverished households. In a region where livelihoods centred on agricultural production, drought was identified as a major factor that thrust people down the socio-economic ladder. The most serious consequence of droughts is that it destroys assets of households. In some instances households were able to recover from such shocks.

Another common phenomena in the region is when someone is given a few cattle to take care of, such a person will experience a growth in well-being and go from the “Tumbu-Tumbu” group to the “Hansa” group as they now have access to the benefits as provided by the cattle. Advantageous of having access to cattle could include the availability of: milk, transportation, meat as well as using the oxen to plough with. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true and the same household is at risk of moving down the social ladder once the owner takes these cattle back. In such an event, that person will fall back into the “Tumbu-Tumbu” group.

With reference to villagers comments it seemed that there were many factors that could cause people or even whole communities to move down from a ‘rich’ or ‘better’ position to a ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’ position or vice versa. Some of these factors are mentioned below:

Loss of employment was considered a major roll player in terms of social mobility if alternative means are not acquired to cope with this loss of income. In this regard, two aspects can be singled out: unemployment and losing employment. In all sites participants made mention of increasing numbers of youth sitting at home and not finding employment. In doing so they put pressure on scarce resources at household level instead of making a contribution to its well-being. At best, this state of affairs prevented households from improving their well-being, at worst it put them on a gradual downward spiral of impoverishment.

At Causa participants reported that the loss of livestock also contributes to the downward mobility. It was specifically stated that old people are more at risk as they depend on their assets to maintain a certain level of well-being. Although this is also true for other age categories, old people felt that they do not have labour to offer to recover from such shocks.

Other contributing factors for downward social mobility, which had already been discussed above, includes: mismanagement of assets, alcohol abuse, theft, laziness, fire and the regulated labour market.

Poor health and HIV/AIDS infection in a household also propel households into poverty. The reason for this is that ill and infected people lose their ability to contribute labour towards the household. At the same time, expenses incurred by taking the sick to the hospital put added pressures on the resources of households.
The eventual loss of the breadwinner and productive members of the household leaves an increased number of orphans, which has to be cared for.

2.3.3.2 Moving up the Well-Being Ladder
In discussing social mobility with villagers it became apparent that upward social mobility is more difficult than it is to fall into poverty. However, testimonies were given by participants who had experienced upward social mobility. As mentioned above, employment was the most important and major factor supporting upwards social mobility. In Katomene Mavenge, 4 men and women were employed as literacy teachers. The resultant employment caused all 4 households to attain a better level of well-being after the employment had been secured.

People also indicated that the registration for old age pension would lead to upwards social mobility. It is therefore worth mentioning that the difficulties and hardships encountered with issuing and registration for old age pension hugely hampers the potential for upwards mobility especially in the remote rural areas of Kavango where old people struggle to register for old age pensions.

**Inheritance** practices and rights is another contributing factor for social mobility. Unfortunately, inheritance practices has an almost neutralising effect on the livelihoods of the community. Although some participants have experienced upwards social mobility as a result of inheritance, many widows claimed that inheritance practices has impoverished them as they often loose assets to the relatives of the late husband. In addition, they remain responsible for the upbringing and caring of their children which is in many cases simply not possible.
My name is Tcao Tame, I am an old San lady who had been living at tam-tam for the past 25 years.

According to the authorities, I am now 60 years old. But, according to those who know me, and the age of my own children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, I must be at least 80 years of age. I have an old South West Africa Identity Document (ID) indicating my date of birth at 12/07/1945. Unfortunately, my Namibian Birth Certificate states my date of birth in 1947. My husband and children (with the exception of one daughter) passed away and as a result, I care for 5 orphans (grandchildren). The 6 of us live and sleep in this small hut, which I had built myself. At night, I make a small fire inside the hut to keep us warm.

I have no income, do not get old age pension or any Government support for the 5 orphans I care for!” Consequently, we survive on wild fruits, which I collect from the bush. These wild fruits include a number of things but comprise mostly of Manghetti nuts. As I am getting older it is very difficult to gather enough food to feed the 5 children in my house. In recent times, I received some support from one of the better-off households in Tam-Tam.

Pre-independence-life was a little bit better. At the time, my husband and children were still alive. We had the ability to care for ourselves, but nowadays life is very difficult. Since they passed away, I became a very poor person. I was recently ranked as the poorest person in the community. Apart from my traditional hut, a small woven carry bag (for personal documents) and a few pieces of clothing, I own nothing!

Since 1995, the former Councillor tried to get me an ID. A few years back, I was informed (through the same Councillor) that my ID has burned out and that I must re-apply for a new document. Although such application was lodged in 2005 at the nearby village of Namagadi, no feedback was given and I am still waiting. I also tried to register for old age pension, but without a national ID, it is not possible. She added by saying: “If the highest ranking government official of the Constituency (the Councillor) cannot help me to register for pension, who can then?” Unbelievably, Tcao remains positive and said: I expect the future to become better. In 2010 I believe I will get the monthly old age pension while the Government will also support the 5 children. This will enable us to make a better living.

She concluded with a message to the Government: “As you can see, I am a very poor women and request the Government to provide me with food, clothes and blankets and also give support to the 5 orphans I cares for.”
2.4 COPING STRATEGIES

The concept of coping strategies is very loose and not well defined. As a consequence, it became difficult in the field to differentiate between coping on the one hand and disaster and risk management on the other. The latter was part and parcel of livelihoods in an arid environment, where risks of harvest failure were the rule, rather than the exception.

Bryceson (1999: 11) stated that it was important to distinguish rational risk management from default coping strategies. She argued that:

“Risk management” is perceived to be voluntary decision-making that avoids production failure by varying income sources and spreading them over time to reduce “co-variate risk” and to ensure “consumption smoothing”, i.e. the continuous realisation of the household’s basic purchased needs year-round. “Coping strategies”, on the other hand, are defined as an “involuntary response to disaster or unanticipated failure in major sources of survival”. Whereas “coping” is associated with “trying to preserve existing livelihoods in the face of disaster”, “adaptation” refers to the more rational response of “making permanent changes to the livelihood mix in the face of changing circumstances” (quoting Ellis 1997).

Risk management and coping strategies did represent ‘qualitatively different approaches to risk’. Coping strategies could evolve into risk management over time. As Bryceson (Ibid) argued, ‘they can form a sequential trial-and-error learning curve in which rural farmers are thrown into “coping” in the first year or two of a “disaster”, after which they “manage risk” and in so doing, they eventually adapt’.

Against this background and the fact that communities in most parts of Kavango region have very few opportunities available to them, it must be stated that many activities frequently seen as coping strategies are part and parcel of livelihood strategies in a risky environment. Making and harvesting natural resources for consumption, relying on support from others and doing continual piecework for others oppose to cultivating ones own field are all strategies pursued constantly by the poor. The combination of these strategies may change from time to time, with more emphasis placed on one rather than another. But they are all part of the overall livelihood systems of Kavango residents.

The living conditions of urban sites compared to those of rural villages differ tremendously. Urban sites, to a certain extent, lack the traditional values which are still present in the rural communities. The fact that one becomes only one individual out of 40 or 50 000 people, psychologically cause people to act differently than where you are amongst your family and relatives. Therefore, one of the biggest differences recorded during PPA fieldwork was the tendency of urban people to steal food and or belongings in order to sustain themselves. It was said that in times of absolute scarcity or food insecurity, urban residents cope by stealing mahangu from crop fields located outside Rundu. Although theft can also occur in rural areas, it was never indicated to be practiced as a coping strategy while residing in the rural communities. The reason for this being that the traditional authority of a rural village can still determine the punishment for theft and damage to crop fields. Fines are normally given or in worst cases, people are expelled from villages, while in urban areas law enforcement is much more difficult.

Another coping strategy identified by Kehemo residents was that some family members would take orphans and disabled people into their care and register

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5Co-variate risk refers to risks that affect many households, e.g. drought and floods
them for Government grants for their own financial benefit. It is regarded as a coping strategy to register an orphan for the financial support, but once registered, the guardian would have money available to continue with normal livelihood activities.

Although piecework is generally regarded as part of the livelihood system of Kavango residents, it could also be seen as a coping strategy for those who are forced to look for temporary employment during times of scarcity. This is the case for those who normally provide piecework to others but are not able to do so as a result of droughts, floods or some sort of shocks. It was also mentioned that should no piecework be available at the local village, some resort to seek for employment away from home. By doing piecework locally in someone’s field (i.e. land clearing) a person can earn N$10 by starting early in the morning and working up to 12:00. With the N$10 earned two large cups of maize meal can be bought. The effect of this coping strategy is that small children are forced to stay at home and wait for the person to return with the maize meal before they can have something to eat.

Another means of coping is to gather wild fruits for consumption. Although this is done as a part of the livelihoods, some extreme cases of vulnerability could force someone to rely on these resources to prevent starvation in extreme cases. However, as a coping strategy, women in Korokosha and Tam-Tam, were said to collect wild fruits i.e. Musivi, Namgondo, Maguni, Ngongo, Makwe wo. These wild foods can either be consumed or used for brewing traditional alcohol for consumption or mostly in exchange for other foodstuffs. The complex dynamic of livelihoods and coping strategies needs to be revisited with regard to the gathering of wild fruits. Participants in Murere stated that should a shock occur in Murere which forces people to turn to a livelihood activity which they would not rely on under normal conditions, then it can be regarded as a coping strategy. Participants stated that if the rich group should loose their crop fields and is forced to rely more on collecting wild fruits which they normally do not rely on, then the livelihood activity can be regarded as a coping strategy until the shock disappears and things return to normal.

People also rely on support and assistance from other community members in times of scarcity. However, it was mentioned that support to the poor in Katomena Mavenge does not happen often. “If we cannot look after our own families, how will we be able to support others.” Where support is offered, it will mostly be in the form of providing possibilities for piecework. If nothing is available people “borrow” or engage in making debt at local cuca shops to sustain themselves. In Tam-Tam, “Support is given to those you see are poorer than yourself”. This support can be given in terms of mahangu or through borrowing cattle for two days to plough one’s crop fields. This support given is not exclusively for family member but can be extended to other community members in need. Support is given to all different groups irrespective of status, language or ethnic background. “Support is shared so that I help you and you help him etc.

In Katomena Mavenge and Kehemo, some women cope by engaging in commercial sex in order to make a living and care for other household members. In this regard, it was mentioned that “the nothing to do girls go to the military camp for body selling”. Apart from the latter, it was also said that in some cases, women would pay men for sex by buying them alcohol. Participants agreed that commercial sex contributes to the spread of Aids, but added that some women have no choice than to take the money in exchange of sexual favours.

“Making debt is better than to steal”; “The nothing to do girls go to the military camp for body selling”
In the case of poor people, participants mentioned that **begging** would become the ultimate coping strategy to prevent starvation. Begging in the rural areas and especially in Murere is not considered as a livelihood activity as the poorest of the poor normally work before they can receive water. If a shock should affect the poor people and they are unable to rely on any other livelihood activity, then begging will become a coping strategy as they would be forced to beg people for food or money in order to survive.

### 2.5 POVERTY TRENDS

By discussing historical tendencies of several factors associated with poverty, it was possible to obtain an understanding of the factors that shaped poverty and lent it its dynamic nature. To do this, a PPA tool called Poverty Trend Matrix was employed. Participants discussed whether six predetermined issue got better or worse since 1985.

#### 2.5.1 Poverty

The general perception of poverty trends in the Kavango is that of an impoverished community today oppose to that of the mid 80’s. Both rural and urban communities were of the opinion that people and households are poorer today than what they were pre-independence. In 1985 people were employed as migrant labourers, policemen and soldiers in the military. The demand for labour was a lot higher than what it is today. Migrant labour was plentiful and no pre-requisites existed to qualify for work offered.

The economic climate has also changed dramatically since pre independence. Money had value and salaries were normally sufficient to cover at least the cost of living. This has drastically changed after independence. Migrant labour no longer exist and people started to loose their employment. It also became more difficult to secure employment as education, language proficiency, national id documents and prior experiences became pre-requisites for acceptance in the labour market. Apart from having less employed people, the cost of living went up and more money was needed to cover the basic living costs. A number of services, which had previously been provided free of charge became very expensive i.e. transportation, education, water supply and medical services. Unfortunately it is also felt that attaining an education today does not necessarily guarantee employment.

“If I had no money and I was sick, I would ask for a lift free of charge and people would help me”.

The changing rainfall patterns also impacted negatively on the ability of villagers to produce crops. According to a number of villagers, rainfall decreased during the post independence period. Production of food decreased and less people is able today to produce sufficient food to last for a year.

According to participants, independence also brought a misconception of “human rights”. To the extend that there is no need to act responsibly. This also lead to a situation where everyone could do as he please. People seem to confuse independence with a collapse of moral values. The youth lost their respect for older people and the police and Traditional Authority no longer maintains law and order. The lawlessness causes people to steal others’ assets without receiving punishment for such crimes.
The perception of people is also that the situation is not going to improve. A number of communities were sceptical about the future and did not foresee an improvement in the general well-being of future generations.

2.5.2 Vulnerability

Vulnerability forms an integral part of the larger concept of poverty. It is therefore no surprise that, as with poverty, the situation has deteriorated over the same period. In Korokosha, participants were of the opinion that people were less vulnerable in 1985. As mentioned above, employment was available through various systems, rainfall was better and harvests were good. People owned many livestock. Migrant labour was available and people could become soldiers or policemen who earned a salary. In 1990 people were scared of the war and moved around a lot. People could not settled down to produce food, which made them vulnerable. When the South African Military withdrew back to South Africa, some people went with them, while other people stayed behind. People who stayed behind lost their jobs as a soldier and could not join the Namibian Defence Force. People were more vulnerable as they could not find alternative employment.

Although the above reflected the perception of vulnerability for most of the sites visited, Murere villagers were of another opinion. People at Murere felt that the pre-independence era and presence of the South African Defence Force made people more vulnerable than after independence. The following statements reflected their view: In 1985 people were more vulnerable due to the war at the time. People were moving around and could not settle down to build their farms. People lost their livestock, implements and family members. Villagers could not trust each other, as they were afraid of being reported of helping the ‘enemy’. “If you were reported you could be killed”. As breadwinners were lost, households became vulnerable to fall into poverty. After independence vulnerability started to decrease as the war ended. When the country received independence, people received freedom of speech. Disputes between political parties started to become less and peace came to the country. People could start to settle down on land and farm to produce food. Vulnerability became less.

They were also of the opinion that people were vulnerable because of politics and the “war” at the time.

Irrespective of the two views highlighted above, all communities were in agreement that vulnerability today is high. In addition to the views above, people felt that the presence of new diseases and illnesses cause people to become more vulnerable. Diseases prevent people from working in their fields to produce food while some would die and leave orphans who have to be cared for. Veldt-fires also destroyed grazing areas and crop fields, which could cause people to fall into poverty. Veldt-fires were reportedly more now than they were in the past and is caused by jealousy over others assets. In all cases,
participants were sceptical about the future and thought vulnerability will become even higher.

2.5.3 Food Security
The findings related to food security were similar in all sites visited. Generally, people felt that food is becoming more expensive than what it used to cost. In addition people have less means today to produce and obtain food as they had in the past. The participants of Tam-Tam indicated that food security in 1985 was very high as people could sustain themselves even without employment. Households could produce enough yields to sustain them for a full year. All communities also felt that the changing rainfall patterns reduce the quantity and quality of the crops produced.

“Rainfall was abundant and people spend money on buying livestock instead of food.”

Thing started changing in 1990 when food security started to decrease. The government provided less food and the rain became less. As a result, lower yields were produced and wild fruits also decreased. Prices for food increased and with less employed people, less food could be bought. In 2006 the participants indicated that they would become less secure with the availability of food as the rain started to fall too late. Drought relief stopped in 2003 and people were worried that little food will be available. The participants foresee that food security will dramatically decrease in 2010.

2.5.4 Social Exclusion
Social exclusion proved a difficult concept to probe – especially amongst the rural communities of Kavango. Various references were made to explain the trends regarding social exclusion. On a rural community level, the observation was made that various language and ethnic groups lived peacefully with one another. It was also specified that people do not socially exclude one another and everyone is able to contribute where he/she pleases. In this regard, no specific changes occurred in terms of trends.

However, on a more political level, social exclusion were considered to be very high in the period before independence. This was mainly based on the old apartheid regime at that time. White children and black children were not given the same opportunities, while black people did not exclude each other that much. After independence, politics was the main reason for social exclusion, as people would fight among each other if they belonged to a different political party. Participants also felt generally that tribal differences will cause increased social exclusion. This believe is based on the perception that employment opportunities will become impossible for a person who do not belong to a certain tribe.

At Katomena Mavenge, it was however mentioned that the San community remain socially excluded. However, it was also mentioned that this is largely out of their own choice. Although it has been said that the San are sometimes “owned” by villagers, they do not want to partake in community meetings or decisions.

“The San were socially excluded by black and white people”.

Historically, social exclusion existed between white and black people. Today this has changed and remains more between different political and tribal parties.
2.5.5 Crime and Violence

At Tam-Tam, participants expressed their opinion only on their local context. In this regard it was said that crime and violence existed before independence. Different political parties interrogated people and beat them to get information out of them. According to the participants crime and violence was mainly caused by the war at that time. After independence, this disappeared and crime and violence decreased drastically. This trend seemed to be true for the relatively small remote rural localities in the Kavango. However, in more general terms and especially in the urban areas the trend could not have been further from the above scenario.

According to the residents of Kehemo, crime and violence was very low before independence. The law enforcement officers would always patrol the area and show their presence in areas where crime and violence erupted. “People respected the law at that time”. Participants stated that many of the residents living in Kehemo were employed as law enforcement officers and could therefore control problems within their areas. There was also a curfew for bars, as they would not sell alcohol after 22:00.

After independence crime and violence increased dramatically as people were free to drink alcohol. Money started to become important and necessary to make a living. If a person could not find employment, then he would start to steal from people. Law enforcement officers became lazy and also partook in the criminal activities. “Police officers started to drink alcohol while on duty”. It was generally felt that the selling of body parts also started after independence, as witchcraft became an open practice.

Participants placed six stones during 2006, as the community felt that crime and violence has increased even more since independence. This was supported by the fact that one participant’s house was broken into while he was attending the PPA meeting. According to participants, crime and violence has increased so much in Kehemo that it is occurring every day. Law enforcement never shows their presence in Kehemo and when they are called, then the police would only arrive the next day. The community felt that crime and violence would increase even more in the future as more people will be unemployed. It also seemed as if the community of Kehemo has lost all faith in the law enforcement officers who would not be able to control crime and violence.

“Even though we received our independence, other people lost their bread (jobs) and turned to crime and violence to survive”.

2.5.6 Alcohol abuse

All settlements visited in Kavango were of the opinion that the trend for alcohol and substance abuse seemed to have increased steadily from pre-independence. It was also perceived to keep on rising and little hope was given to proof that this trend will change within the foreseeable future. All villages ascribed this increase to the absence and inability of the police to prevent the abuse of alcohol and other substances. Although substance abuse was not present in all of the rural localities, it was apparently easily obtainable in the bigger urban areas.

Together with the lack in law enforcement, the collapse of the establishment’s moral system and the misconception of “freedom” brought by independence also contributed to the increase of alcohol abuse.

Villagers from Murere highlighted their perception as follows. In 1985 people were running around from the war, people had no time to sit and drink alcohol. The police
were also efficient in terms of enforcing law and order. The Traditional Authorities as well as the law banned people from drinking alcohol in public. Traditional beer was not abused as people respected the traditional authorities as well as the law. Children were not allowed to drink any alcohol.

Since independence alcohol abuse has increased as corporal punishment was taken away. Children started to drink alcohol freely. If they were to be punished, nothing could be done. Schools could no longer discipline students as it became illegal to hit or punish someone. Villagers stated that the Human Rights and Freedom of speech has been misunderstood by children and people in general. People thought they could do anything, as they were now “free” to do it. Alcohol was easily obtained in Angola and brought over to Namibia. When Angola was still at war people over there were desperate and would sell anything to younger people for money or clothes or food in exchange for dagga or alcohol.

Photo 12: The time trend visual as compiled by Causa residents
CHAPTER 3: LIVELIHOOD SYSTEMS

This Chapter presents an analysis of how households and communities live and survive. It considers the seasonal activities of men and women and assesses how different well-being categories use their assets to make a living. The information was collected after coming to an understanding of how the various villages worked and what resources they had at their disposal and used to make a living. Seasonal calendars were used to assist villagers to indicate their activities through the various seasons and to show what changes in livelihood systems took place through the course of a year.

A matrix was used to determine the assets different well-being groups used in their livelihoods and to determine what benefits they derived from these assets. The chapter closes with information on ownership, control and use of resources by gender and general considerations of the role of gender in livelihood systems and processes. The specific impact of HIV/AIDS on peoples livelihoods is also considered.

3.1 MAIN LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

Livelihoods in the communal areas of Kavango Region aim to produce crops, mostly mahangu and maize, and rear livestock as a means to sustain themselves. However, only a fortunate few manage to do either of these with relative successes. The communities have different levels of well-being and in the race to achieve the desired level of subsistence agriculture, a number of difficulties and hardships have to be dealt with along the way. The majority of households cultivated with ox-drawn ploughs or hoes. However, not all households had livestock and ploughs. These poor households either cultivated by hoe or borrowed implements from people in the village. Either way, their predicament invariably led to low yields. If they cultivated with hoes, labour constraints in these households limited the area they were able to plough. If they borrowed implements from members of the community, these generally only became available towards the end of the rainy season, after the owner had completed his/her cultivation.

Livestock and more specifically cattle formed an integral part of livelihoods. Cattle not only provided draught power for cultivation, but also products such as milk and meat that could either be consumed in the homestead or sold to obtain cash. Although it can be said that a joint dream of the community is to have a good number of livestock and a big field to cultivate crops successfully, very few people ever achieve this goal. Almost as an alternative short-term goal, people conduct piecework in order to make ends meet. Payment for piecework can either be in cash or in kind (by means of mahangu or maize meal) depending on the agreement reached between the parties.

Piecework is difficult to find and one has to seek for it. However, on rare occasions people could “announce” that they have work to be done. Piecework is not normally given to strangers and although it can include a number of things it is mostly concerned with seasonal agricultural labour. At the time of the PPA fieldwork it was ploughing while in winter months a need exist for weeding and harvesting. A prerequisite for piecework is the tools needed to conduct the specific work. These tools are normally axes and hoes but could also be ploughs and oxen. Although piecework is always a very favourable short-term coping strategy for the poorer segment of the communities, it was established that at least 80% of people were utilising their fields at the time of the PPA.

The inter-dependency between the “better off” and “poor” people of any community varies according to the specific situation. In the event where one or two households
produce crops with success, these households normally provides piecework for the whole community. The irony in this is that it creates a certain “poverty trap” as people then do not spend time in their own fields in order to increase the size of the field. On the contrary, the fields of the successful farmers gets bigger and bigger every year. It must be said that although the short-term deliverables is beneficial for the whole community, the long-term effects are devastating for the sustainability or upward social mobility of the poorer households.

Photo 13: Manghetti nuts

In addition to subsistence agriculture, the livelihoods of Kavango rural villagers is further characterised by the use of natural resources. The Kavango Region hosts a wide variety of natural resources, which are being harvested for domestic purposes and in some cases, sold to earn cash income. This dependency varies according to locality and of course the availability of markets.

Another important aspect of the livelihoods of people is the fact that employed relatives living elsewhere have their livestock cared for by rural people. Although this was true for many households in the Kavango Region, many people claim that these relatives normally collect the animals during the ploughing and planting season. This limits the benefits, which could be derived from the “caring” responsibility and it was said that it contributes to the vulnerability of households.

Forest areas host a number of wild fruits and foods, which are collected throughout the year, depending on the availability of staple foods. Wild foods gathered include Manghetti, Usivi and Maguni. These are used for consumption, brewing of traditional alcohol but not normally sold locally as it is readily available.

The eastern parts of Kavango also have a lot of thatch grass, which are sold as a livelihood activity. The grass is cut and then bundled before it is sold to local merchants who collects, or simply next to the main road. Although this is a seasonal activity, many of the villagers depend on it to make a living. Cutting thatch grass is considered as a livelihood for people who do not own large crop fields.

Photo 14: Thatch grass ready to be sold

Lastly, another very important natural resource must be the Okavango River and the subsequent resources present as a result of the river system. The water from the
river is used for drinking, washing, bathing, irrigation of small gardens and fishing. A number of other food sources are also collected form the river, these include: otters, lizards, tortoises and in some cases even serpents such as pythons which are used as a supplementary food source or “relish”.

In the urban area of Kehemo, livelihoods centred on cash incomes. Although formal employment provides some households with a regular income, the majority of people are forced to exploit informal income generating activities. Employment is normally in the form of part time jobs like domestic work, repairing or building traditional fences or baby-sitting while the small scale business activities include collecting and selling of firewood, wild fruits (spinach), reeds, fish, vet cookies, traditional (soft) drinks, traditional mats and repairing shoes. The majority of selling is done at either one of the two local markets.

Photo 15: Some wild vegetables sold in Kehemo

With regard to small scale selling of the abovementioned, participants emphasized that the cost for small scale selling of produce is regarded as very high. So much so, that it is almost not viable to conduct some of the activities on a small scale. Residents complained that the cost to produce and then sell the above is very high and that today (in contrast with the past) permits needs to be obtained for the harvesting of natural resources such as fish, reeds, wood or grass. Payment is required to the respective line ministry. In addition to this, payment is also required to the traditional authority of the area where the harvesting takes place. In most cases it is also required to obtain a transportation permit. Lastly, payment towards the local authority for the utilisation of the market infrastructure, is also required. It is evident that the production cost of attaining sellable produce is known to be very expensive.

Photo 16: Ladies in Kehemo selling maize meal

A more formal form of employment is achieved through the relatively large number of cuca-shops and shebeens operating in Kehemo. In total, 14 shebeens have been recorded while a number of businesses and cuca-shops operate in order to provide for the basic needs of residents. Although livelihoods of Kehemo do not focus on agricultural produce, a small number of people still cultivate crop field outside of the proclaimed area of Rundu. It was specifically mentioned that during these periods,
people will move to the crop fields where temporary structures will be built for people to stay at when the need exist for intensive agricultural based labour.

As with other urban settlements, the very poor people make a living by begging. These individuals would go from one neighbour to the other, asking for some mahangu or maize. A rather disturbing livelihood activity that was mentioned was one where foster grants and support intended for orphans were used by foster parents and other relatives for their own benefit, often leaving the orphan without any benefits.

During the fieldwork process of visiting the rural settlements, participants often denied the presence and practice of body selling in their communities. It was also said that this practice are normally found along the main road and in “town”. It was therefore not a surprise to be confronted with a detailed explanation on this practice during the “village resource mapping” on the first day of the Kehemo. Both males and females will partake in body selling when hunger and disparity forces them to do so. It was reported that:

“Nowadays you will find older women, who has money from her late husband, will have young men as boyfriends in order to satisfy tem sexually. The benefit derived by men is the access to the money of the older women”.

It was specifically stated that the above is a result of the difficult times villagers live in and that people will do all sorts of things to make ends meet.

### 3.2 SEASONAL FACTORS AFFECTING LIVELIHOODS

Livelihoods in Kavango are influenced by seasonal changes. This flows from the fact that livelihoods centre on agricultural production, which is dependent on rainfall. A seasonal calendar was developed by participants in all sites to provide an understanding of how livelihoods were influenced by seasons. The perception of people also varied slightly between the respective localities. And, the opinion of men and women also varied slightly. However, after consultation, consensus had been reached on the following issues:

#### 3.2.1 Rainfall

Rainfall starts towards the end of the year during October/November and then steadily increases throughout summer. Although men felt rainfall was highest in December, women indicated the rainfall to reach its peak in February. During March, rainfall decreases drastically and stops at the end of March towards the beginning of April.

Mendelsohn et al (2000: 9) estimated that on average over two-thirds of the years’ rain fell in these three months. In April the rains decreased and the rainy season normally ended in May.

Participants did not comment on intra-seasonal variations in rainfall, which are a prominent feature of rainfall patterns in Kavango. The total annual rainfall is as important as its timing during the crop cycle. Olszewski and Moorsom (1995: 44-45) have pointed out that rain-fed crops needed approximately 75 mm of rain over 5 consecutive days to bring soil moisture to a satisfactory level so that sowing could start. For optimal growth a delay in rainfall of at least 10mm should not exceed 10
days. This needs to be continued for 90 days if new varieties of seeds are used or 120 days using traditional seeds.

### 3.2.2 Agricultural labour

Agricultural labour varies seasonally according to the respective activities but continues throughout the year. It starts towards the end of winter in July with the clearing of the crop fields and by transporting the already harvested mahangu back home. Land clearing is done in order to prepare the field for the next season. Old grass, vegetation and mahangu stems from the previous year, is gathered and bundled together to form several heaps. The activity of land clearing will continue well into August and sometimes into September while the heaps of cleared vegetation are burnt after having dried out for some time.

In August while women is thrashing the mahangu in order to remove the mahangu grain, men will build structures to be used for the storage of the mahangu. Once the fields are cleared from all vegetation, ploughing and planting will start in November. This activity peaks in December when a lot of labour is required for ploughing, planting and weeding. With reference to the latter, it is important to understand that although all may be busy with a particular activity, the better-off well being groups are being attended to first – mostly through piecework offered, before those in the lower well-being groups can attend to their own fields. Resulting in late planting, often in small fields, for the poorer section of the community. January and February is also used for ploughing, planting and weeding. Planting is not normally done after 15 February.

In March, the crops have to be taken care of and weeding is considered an important activity to ensure good yields. In addition to weeding, the chasing of birds is also very important to secure good yields. Both male and females do weeding as well as chasing of birds. In April all partake in picking up mahangu, which had fallen down as a result of strong winds. In May and June, the main activity is concerned with harvesting the whole field while at the same time the storage is built at the crop field to store harvested crops.

Piecework can be done throughout this period and depends on the specific situation of the individual. Some work in their own fields and take on piecework over the weekends. Others would specifically conduct piecework in order to sustain themselves with food while working in their own fields. Friends cultivating two fields might also decide to work in this field for a number of days and then go together and work in the field of the other person. In such cases no payment is given but the situation might be beneficial should one loose his harvest as a result of bad weather, mice or birds destroying the crops. The latter agreement will then serve as a sort of an insurance policy should either one of the parties experience some sort of a shock in future.

### 3.2.3 Other labour

Other labour includes the herding of cattle. Cattle herding are only done from January onwards when the crops have already been planted. Herding is then important to ensure that cattle do not destroy young crops. After harvesting in July, cattle are left to stray and graze by themselves.

During these dry months stray cattle can get lost in search of water. The men are then occupied to look for stray animals, which might have ventured to neighbouring villages. In August, men are required to do maintenance work on the existing houses, fences and re-thatching the roofs.
In the early summer months of September to November, men are also responsible for making handles of various implements. This is done during these hot months so they can do the work in a relaxed environment under the shade of a big tree.

Men and women do the cutting of thatch grass in April. This activity is normally conducted in pairs to increase productivity. In May, some women will be weaving baskets for domestic use or for sale to interested parties.

For settlements located close to the river, fishing is done as part of people’s livelihoods. Although participants indicated fishing to be a major food source emphasise was put on the fact that they are subsistence farmers and not fishermen. Although men and women practice fishing, different techniques are used to do so. Women use traps while men use spears, lines with hooks and nets. Fishing can be done throughout the year, but it is best from August to March when the water level is not too high.

Early winter months are also used to move the house if it has become dilapidated after a few years of use. If the house is not moved to a new location, some time is spent on renovating it. This includes mostly re-thatching the roof and in some cases fixing cracks in the walls.

### 3.2.4 Food availability

It is important to consider that food availability varies for households according to the respective well being groups. Although an explanation is provided below to reflect an average household, there are extremes to this scenario. Some may have food available throughout the year while others may not be as fortunate as is depicted below. In order to indicate the food availability for an average household, the following is applicable.

During the months of May to August food availability is high. This period is directly after the harvesting season. As a result, the mahangu, which had been harvested, is still available. Although this might not be true for all households, the availability of food in the community means that piecework could be done in return of food supplies. Other food sources, which are also available during this time, are maize, watermelon, beans and pumpkins.

As from September onwards up to December some households still have food available. For most, food becomes scarce or depleted due to low yields as a result of manual labour and implements used to cultivate. Households who have little food available will start to make use of natural resources such as wild foods to sustain themselves.

In January and February, generally speaking, little food is available. However, for those who managed to plant early, crops will start ripen in March and April. This will allow some households to have so called “green crops”. These are not yet ready to be harvested but could be used directly from the fields to consume at home without harvesting the whole field.

### 3.2.5 Diseases

The main seasonal disease mentioned is malaria. Participant claimed to become sick with malaria starting in March. It is believed that the consumption of “green crops” cause people to suffer first from diarrhoea and then as a result of the latter, malaria.

During April and May the prevalence of Malaria increase as mosquitoes are now plentiful after the rainy season. Although some participants believe mosquitoes cause malaria, some also believe that “In winter you shiver and then people get Malaria”.

Regional Poverty Profile for Kavango Region
Although the prevalence of Malaria ends during the early months of summer, participants recorded to become sick throughout the year. In these cases, they have to travel to the hospital in order to confirm the illness from which they suffer.

3.2.6 Availability of water

For most settlements in Kavango, households rely on whatever water infrastructure they have. It was generally realised that inland settlements normally have a borehole with some sort of pump for extraction of water. Villages closer to the river do not normally have boreholes but are provided with water from the river into a series of tanks located close the main road.

As far as the seasonality of water goes, reference has to be made to other sources of water in the region. For villagers residing inland, water availability is directly related to the frequency and quantity of natural rainfall. Soon after the rainfall started, the natural pans begin to fill up with water. The timing and quantity of water that is gathered depend on the intensity of the rain, but normally in November people could start using water from natural sources. During February and March these sources are normally at its highest level. After the rainy season the pans starts loosing water until it dries up completely close to the beginning of the next rainy season.

For villagers next to the river, seasonal availability of water is not as big of a problem. However, it must be said that normal problems associated with the quality of the water remains present throughout the year. In discussions with communities, it was mentioned that water derived from the mechanical sources have never dried up. In events where the infrastructure experience technical problems, people rely on seasonal water sources.

3.2.7 Expenditure

The characteristic bartering system followed by the rural and remote rural communities of the Kavango region result in very few people actually buying necessities with money. Apart from the few people who get old age pensions and maybe the local teacher, hardly any one earns a formal salary. As a result, people barter their assets, produce and labour in return for whatever is needed.

The expenditure as depicted in the visual below, is mostly concerned with bartering and in specific terms deals with the payment of water, school fees and supporting the community members in time of need. The most prominent monetary expenditure is therefore towards the payment of school fees in January, June and September. No other expenditure takes as much money as school fees. In addition to the actual school fees, the expense of school clothes, books and transport to schools adds to the high levels of expenditure during these months.

For the urban areas, who participate in a cash economy, residents of Kehemo also expressed their concern in terms of payment for education. School fees, school uniforms, books and pens must all be paid for at once. For many poor people, this is not possible.

3.2.8 Income

As mentioned above, income is limited to a few people earning old age pensions or who might have formal employment. For the rest of the rural community, income is mostly derived through bartering labour for specific benefits. As the community depends on doing agricultural related piecework for the better off groups, the outcome of this exercise, for rural people, focused mainly on the availability of this piecework.
Income in Kehemo is mostly generated through small business activities, vending and hawking while employment ensures a monthly income to a fortunate few. Participants also regarded mahangu as a form of income for doing piecework such as clearing of fields, ploughing and harvesting. Both men and women can partake in doing piecework in order to secure an income.

People, who do not depend on piecework for a means of income, will collect and sell “muttete” (wild spinach), reeds, wild fruits and wood. The availability of these will depend on the season and rainfall.

Table 12: The image shows the seasonal calendar as conducted with the male group

3.3 LIVELIHOOD RESOURCE OWNERSHIP, ACCESS AND CONTROL

3.3.1 Gender, culture and asset ownership

This section deals with the extent of gender equality in the ownership, use and control of important resources and seeks to determine the perceptions and attitudes of villagers about gender equality, gender roles and gender relations in the village. In order to determine the differences in patterns of ownership over, control of and access to the use of the various resources used in the community for making a living, an Ownership, Access and Control Matrix was used as tool to assist the community in elaborating how these resources are allocated to women and men and the patterns related thereto. The exercise assumed a household where both a husband and wife is present because this enables one to distinguish the true nature of the gender dimension of ownership, access and control over resources.
Although slightly different, both men and women considered the same resources as important for their livelihoods. In general terms, it was evident that the “important” or productive resources (i.e. ploughs, cattle, oxen and goats) are mostly owned and controlled by men while women own and control mostly the assets of “less-importance” (i.e. chicken and baskets) and are made responsible for the reproductive activities such as caring for children and other household chores.

Generally, men own approximately 60% of assets oppose to 40% for women. In terms of access, men also have more access to resources than women have. It was determined that men could use 55% of assets while women could use 45% of assets. As far as control over assets is concerned, men control 57% of assets while women only control 43% of assets. Although these differences does not seem to be dominated by men it must be taken into consideration that men also own the assets of “more importance” which confirms the male dominance in general.

Having said the above, it is essential to mention that a small minority of women do also own “important” assets. It is therefore not culturally considered taboo, but very difficult for women to obtain these assets. Women felt that these imbalances should be addressed. According to one of the female participants in Tam-Tam:

“Assets should be ours.”

Table 13: Ownership, control and access matrix as prepared by Tam-Tam females

3.3.1.1 Fields for cultivation
In general, fields were indicated to be owned by men and women. However, men identified fields and women followed them to settle. Although fileds were said to be owned equally by men and women in Katomene Mavenge and Tam-Tam, other settlements visited showed that men mostly own crop fields. Although men in general were perceived to have more ownership than women, access and control of fields
were more equally distributed. To make general assumptions on who has more access and control was not possible. The issue was discussed in much detail and the outcome varied from one site to the other. Some women claimed that they decide on when to start with clearing and planting while in other sites, it was agreed that men were responsible for these decisions.

The ratings of ownership may be an indication that property rights in general were gradually changing towards a more egalitarian system. It was stated that women could also own fields in their own rights. The gradual transformation of gender based property rights appears to be confirmed by changes in inheritance practices. More and more women were said to keep their fields on the death of their husbands. It was also recorded that men and women could each have their own field and that they would sometimes compete on who’s crops performs better based on the input provided by each.

3.3.1.2 Agricultural Implements and Equipment

With the exception of female headed households, ploughs were mostly owned, controlled and used by men. However, in most cases, it was mentioned that some women also own ploughs. In cases where women did support this, it was said that they would seldom use them and rather instruct someone to plough their fields. Notwithstanding the above, the PPA team did witness two occasions where women were busy ploughing. It was generally accepted that where male relatives were not available for assistance with ploughing, women resorted to the act themselves.

Hoes were controlled, used and owned equally by men and women. This was also confirmed in terms of the activities associated with hoes. In all of the sites, participants indicated that weeding is done by both sexes and men and women would normally each have its own hoe to weed with.

Axes and yokes were mostly owned by men as the associated activities are sometimes considered to be too hard for females. In many cases women indicated that they could also use axes and yokes and that most of them do sometimes use them but to a lesser extend than men.

3.3.1.3 Agricultural Produce and Livestock

In all sites visited men as well as women owned cattle. With the exception of Causa, the majority ownership vested with men and it was stated that nothing prevents women from having or buying cattle or even oxen. It seemed however more difficult for women to buy cattle as they normally had less money than men had. The same applies for other livestock such as pigs and goats.

However, in terms of access and control of these animals, men had the majority access and control over livestock. This was even true in cases where women had ownership. It was said that although women own cattle, men normally made decisions with regard to the utilisation and application of cattle and other livestock. It was also men who normally watered livestock, observed animal health and went looking for them when they got lost. Men also trained oxen to plough and decide whether to borrow oxen for ploughing purposes.

The situation was however, more flexible than a simple matrix suggested. Participants drew attention to the fact that men consulted women before they sold or slaughtered cattle. In case of female ownership, women also consulted their husbands before making decisions whether to slaughter or sell her animals. Income generated through the sale of animals was also discussed and mutual agreements were normally reached in terms of how to spend the money.
3.3.1.4 Cash and Income

In terms of income, all participants felt that men earn more money than women do. This resulted from the fact that men could easily take on piecework elsewhere and spend time away from home as women are responsible for household chores and caring for children. It was also said that once the money is brought home, women are in control of the money and men felt that women also have more access thereto. However, it was also confirmed that in some cases men would refrain from declaring all income earned as they could spend some before bringing the money home and lose sole ownership and control thereof. For money that is declared and brought into the house, mutual agreements had to be reached before either party could spend income. In Murere it was reported that women would sometimes sell some of their own mahangu or maize. The money she earned would be kept for herself with which she could buy clothes, livestock, implements or if she so choose household necessities.

3.3.2 Roles and responsibilities of men and women

Information obtained at all sites in the communal areas suggests strongly that gender relations are undergoing a gradual process of transformation. The fact that participants made statements about increasing gender equality signalled a strong perception that the role of women has changed and continues to change. In Tam-Tam, a male participant confirmed that a lot of changes has taken place since independence. He added by saying women became equal to men and started to disagree with their husbands decisions. He concluded with a subjective and rather sexist remark which support the practical notion of increased gender equality:

“Despite these changes, the division of labour in Kavango remains gender based. It turned out that women are responsible for household chores such as cooking, collecting water, taking care of small children, doing washing and cleaning the house. As part of their agricultural responsibilities women will normally harvest, plant, weed, thrash and pound mahangu and fetch firewood. Although men heavily contested it, women were also said to be ploughing. The PPA team confirmed this as two recordings were made of women who were ploughing side by side.”

“This change is not a good thing as, traditionally, it was a disgrace if a man stood in front of a pot preparing food when visitors arrived at the house.”

Despite these changes, the division of labour in Kavango remains gender based. It turned out that women are responsible for household chores such as cooking, collecting water, taking care of small children, doing washing and cleaning the house. As part of their agricultural responsibilities women will normally harvest, plant, weed, thrash and pound mahangu and fetch firewood. Although men heavily contested it, women were also said to be ploughing. The PPA team confirmed this as two recordings were made of women who were ploughing side by side.
Men are responsible for ploughing, clearing of crop fields and sometimes assist with weeding. Other responsibilities carried by men include the cutting of poles and collecting of mud for the construction and maintenance work on houses, cattle kraals and the manga. They also look for stray animals and prepare handles for hand implements. Another very important duty of men is to tame oxen and teach them how to pull sleighs and plough the crop fields.

**Photo 18: A man with poles for maintenance work**

Young boys not attending school is primarily herding cattle, while girls will assist their mothers with pounding of the mahangu in order to prepare food and collect water. In Korokosha, men indicated that small boys have in the past been occupied with herding of cattle. At present though, priority is given to attain an education and therefore boys only herd cattle over the weekends and during school holidays.

After long deliberations at Causa, the men somehow agreed that women do work very hard, or, by implication, harder than men. One participant said that some women would work in the field in the hot sun with a baby tied to her back. And, when the husband and wife return from the field, the man will sit and wait for the food while the women will still collect water, firewood and vegetables along the way in order to cook at home.

Women in the urban settlement of Kehemo was visibly outspoken and expressed their dismay with the **imbalance** as far as the roles and responsibilities of men and women are concerned. The lady added:

The outspokenness of women in Kehemo also signifies the different attitude and awareness of the traditional gender in-equality which exist in the rural communities.

Despite the fact that women performed most of the work in the fields, men were widely regarded as the main breadwinners in households. The reason for this perception was that men were said to be more frequently in formal employment than women and thus had more opportunities to earn cash incomes. This explanation is perfectly plausible in view of the division of labour in rural Kavango, where women were responsible for most tasks in the fields and in their households. These obligations made it difficult for them to engage in full-time paid employment.

This brief description of livelihood activities corresponds broadly to what participants said. It suggests a simple division of labour where women were responsible for activities associated with domestic tasks and men for tasks unrelated to the day to day activities of sustaining family members. It must be emphasised, however, that this schematic description plasters over the constant flux of gender based tasks. Increasingly men and women consult before men take decisions. Increasingly, also,
women earn cash incomes in their own rights, which is likely to strengthen their positions within largely patriarchal household structures.

Change in gender relations is a dialectical process. On the one hand, the increasing need for women to be involved in the domestic economy by engaging in income generating activities gradually weakens the role of the male head of household as sole breadwinner. It is reasonable to assume that women would want to have a greater say in the households if they make financial contributions.

At the same time, the transformation of family structures in Kavango shape gender relations. In 1991, only 33% of households in Kavango was headed by females. In 2001, this has increased to 41% and there is nothing to suggest that this trend has in the mean time increased towards the 50% mark. It is therefore expected from women today, more so than ever, to make decisions and ensure an income for the survival of their households.

3.3.3 Inheritance systems

The discussion about traditional inheritance systems confirms some of the tendencies raised above. But a few conceptual issues must be spelled out first before taking up Kavango again.

Reference to ‘traditional inheritance systems’ is fraught with conceptual problems. What exactly are ‘traditional inheritance systems’ and at what point in history? Research conducted outside Kavango region suggests that customary inheritance systems are dynamic, constantly adapting to changes in production and political context. Based on fieldwork conducted in Ohangwena, Lebert (2005: 71-72) argued ‘that variability and malleability are the norm in customary practices of property rights and inheritance’ and cautions against ‘rigid and static views of tradition, gender and community’. She concluded that: The clearest trend (in practices and norms of inheritance) is that such rights to property vary widely from homestead to homestead, depending largely on the nature of the relationship between the husband and wife and/or between this couple and their extended (matrilineal) families (Ibid: 90).

The most pervasive change taking place was the transformation of large extended families into smaller nuclear units. Lebert (2005: 89) noted that the most prized assets in Ohangwena Region – land and fields, cattle, millet and children - ‘have increasingly been shifted way from a matrilineal system of inheritance to a system whereby one’s primary heirs are one’s (only) spouse and children’. The above also seemed to be true for the Kavango Region. Although different sites provided slight variations in modern day practices, all seemed to agree with the historical systems of inheritance.

By using examples of men and women passing away, it was mentioned that in the past, if a husband who owned some assets and livestock passed away, the relatives of the late husband will decide if the wife was good or bad. If she were a good wife, she would in all likelihood be re-married by the brother of the late husband. However, if the relatives felt she was not a good wife, then she would be taken back to where she came from. In both instances she would not be given any assets. The relatives of the late husband will sit together and decide what will happen with the assets. Should she be re-married, she will go with the re-distributed assets to the house of her new husband and continue life as before. However, should she be taken back home, she will only benefit through the assets which had been given to her children. In the event where the lady has passed away, the relatives and husband of the late wife will go to the parents of the wife and explain what had happened. As a suggestion to ask for forgiveness, the husband will give the parents of the late wife one cow.
This traditional system of inheritance is definitely changing. An old man in Causa gave a testimony of him losing his brother the previous year. As a result of the new system of inheritance he got nothing and the wife and children were given all of the assets. Even though these practices have not been tested in Tam-Tam recently, participants were well aware of the new rights allowed by inheritance practices. It was stated that women today are given the opportunity to stay at the present village of the late husband should they prefer to do so. In these cases, she would be able to continue using the family’s crop fields. Ladies are also aware that in contrast with historical inheritance practices, women have the opportunity to report cases of unfair inheritances to the tribal chief or “Hompa”. Legally, it is not allowed for the relatives to confiscate the assets of the women. Although women know about this, it has not been tested in Tam-Tam and, many women felt that reporting unfair division of assets to the Hompa will result in violent behaviour from the relatives of the late husband. One lady also said that reporting the case to the Hompa would cause her in-laws to accuse her of “bewitching” her husband in order to cease all of his assets.

Interestingly, it was mentioned at Tam-Tam that these inheritance systems for San people have not changed. An old San lady also indicated that she had lost all of her belongings with the death of her husband. In recent times, a San man working for another family at Tam-Tam, passed away. After his death the widow and children were taken back to where they came from. All assets owned (mostly domestic in nature) were taken and left at the village where the lady had come from.

Generally, participants felt that the old inheritance system caused women to fall into poverty. It was even suggested by men that although it is a new thing, it is good that women are also given something in order to sustain themselves. Irrespective of the latter some male participants disagreed from the previous statement and said “if she went poor, she must go back poor”. It was commonly agreed that the situation regarding inheritance issues normally cause hatred between the two families.

To summarise: access, ownership and control of assets within households must be assumed to show great variation within Kavango Region. What is shared across the board is that fundamental changes in gender relations are taking place, both in terms of the day to day running of households and inheritance systems. Looked at from the perspective of gender equality, this is a necessary and positive development. But it is important to recognise that transformation processes impact differentially on different classes. In driving gender equality, one has to be aware of some potential problems, particularly with regard to poverty. Only two aspects will be mentioned here.

The first aspect concerns the introduction of labour saving technology into communal farming. Although the issue was not probed specifically, it is reasonable to assume that the persistent labour shortages in poor households are shaped to some extent at least, by changes in family structures without a simultaneous change in agricultural technology. On the basis of the PPA fieldwork there can be no doubt that those households that are forced by circumstances to use hoes for cultivation, are unable to produce enough food for one year. Hoe cultivation requires much more labour than ploughs, for example, and many poor households neither have access to such labour nor to cash to acquire ploughs and oxen.

Another aspect of the social transformation taking place is worthy mentioning. This relates to the impact of increasing gender equality and the contraction of extended families on social safety networks. Lebert (2005: 89) drew attention to an important implication of changes in matrilineal inheritance systems. Based on her fieldwork in Ohangwena, she argued that as the rights of extended families became subsumed under those of nuclear families and the rights of widows and their dependants became more secure, ‘commitments to responsibilities traditionally assigned to these
same members have weakened’. Discussions about the role of extended families focused primarily on the geographical distance of extended families that made it difficult to help kin that were in dire straits. But it is conceivable that changes in inheritance systems decreased the incentives from helping, as an important element of reciprocity is gradually disappearing.

Changes in the inheritance system brought about changes for the youth as well. Nowadays, fields were inherited by mothers of the household after the deaths of their husbands. Due to a shortage of land for cultivation, young men could no longer expect to inherit a piece of land from their fathers. The present and likely impact of these changes on the social fabric could not be established. But Bryceson (1999: 33) mapped out a likely trajectory when she stated that ‘where land shortage prevents fathers from bequeathing land to their oldest son they feel they are loosing an important bond’. Together with sons increasingly earning incomes from other, non-agricultural sources, this was likely to lead to ‘the gradual erosion of rural patriarchs’ control’. It is conceivable that the loss of control of parents over their children is linked to these changes.

An interesting discussion was held with one participant in Kehemo. After having conducted a personal history with the lady it became apparent that after the death of her husband she became a victim of “inheritance fraud”. The personal story of Ms Anonymous is given below.

**HIV/AIDS POSITIVE AND VICTUM OF “INHERITANCE FRUAD”**

Anonymous moved to Kehemo 20 years ago when her brother took her there after her parents died in 1985. She currently makes a living from selling firewood and wild fruits that she collects in the veldt and her two orphans receive government grants of a total of N$200.00 per month. Anonymous has no other form of income and falls in the “poor” category.

She started selling firewood in 2003 after her husband passed away as a result of being HIV/AIDS positive. She stated that when her husband was still alive, they were living in a modern house in Safari as her husband was employed and was able to provide for the household. After her husband’s death, she and her two children had to move out as the house was in her late husband’s fathers name and her sister in law received the house from her father. A week after her husband’s burial, her sister in law took Anonymous to the Mbukushu Traditional Authority where they received a marriage certificate to provide prove of the marriage. This certificate would allow Anonymous to receive her husband’s life insurance payout from Metropolitan Life. After obtaining all the necessary documentation, Anonymous’ sister in law opened a bank account and told her that she opened it on her behalf. When Metropolitan Life paid out her husband’s life insurance, Anonymous found out that her sister in law changed the name of the beneficiary to her mother’s name. Metropolitan Life paid out an amount of N$15 000.00 into the bank account which was also in the name of her late husbands mother. Anonymous only received N$600.00 from her sister in law and told her that she must provide receipts as proof of buying food with the money received.

“All the benefits is given to her, all the benefits that I was suppose to get. It was taken from me and I don’t have anything. My sister in law faked the names and signature and took everything”.

Anonymous also stated that she is HIV/AIDS positive and that she needed that money not only to support her own children, but also to help her buy the medication needed for her illness. Currently, she copes by selling firewood for an income and she also receives some food from the Catholic AIDS Action. “I cope o.k, but the only thing is that I don’t have enough food, sometimes the food that the Catholic AIDS Action gives becomes finished. We need to eat and there’s no money to buy food, so that makes me a bit weak and I can’t go to sell firewood.”

Anonymous first found out that she was HIV positive after her husband passed way. She became very ill and knew that her husband died as a result of HIV/AIDS. She was tested with the same results. Anonymous stated that she receives a lot of moral support from her family members, but the support that she relies on the most is the contribution of food from the Catholic AIDS Action.

“The support from the CAA helps me the most as the food keeps us alive”. 
3.3.4 Socio-economic differences in access to resources, livelihoods and coping strategies

Participants were asked about the main assets that formed part of their livelihoods. A simple matrix was constructed, where the important assets were listed and their benefits described. In each case, 50 stones were used and allocated according to the importance of the respective resources. The exercise was done for various well-being categories in order to better understand the ‘ingredients’ of livelihoods but also the perception of different well-being groups. The asset and benefit matrices developed for the “Rich” and “Poor” well-being groups in Murere are reproduced below.

Table 14: The visual shows the resources, scores and benefits derived for the rich

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<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crop Fields</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chicken, goats, cattle, food, money, blankets, clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxen</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Money, food, transport, clothes, blankets, labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plough</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cattle, food, soap, seeds, seeds, chicken, clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Domestic use, food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Fat, labour, money, clothes, cattle, milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axe</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Construction, land clearing, shelter, medicine, sleigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Food, payment of fines, money, treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Payment of fines, food, money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Payment of fines, labour, clothes, food, transportation, charity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: The visual shows the resources, scores and benefits derived for the poor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crop Fields</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>School fees, clothes, bread or food, seeds, washing powder, soap, pay bills, bartering for labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Hoe</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Plough, labour, weeding, crops, traditional beer, food, income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milling tools</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Meal, traditional beer, Income, bartering for mahangu, food, thrashing tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Income, food, clothes, livestock, traditional beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Wild fruits, building material, materials for implements, transportation materials, grazing, traditional medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mud</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Building materials, food, floor for thrashing, traditional medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above visuals it is evident that the Rich group have quantifiably more resources than the poor. The poor group has less resources and lack productive assets to assist them in cultivating their crop fields. It is interesting that the rich value their oxen as the most important resource without which they would have difficulty to cultivate their fields. The poor who do not own oxen value their crops fields as the
most important even though they do not have the means to effectively and efficiently cultivate their fields.

The above situation regarding the ownership of resources cause a certain dependency within the community. This “viscous circle” or “poverty trap” cause the poor to spend less time on improving their own situation and force them to focus on the short term goals of obtaining food to eat. On the contrary, the rich use labour provided by the poor to further improve their situation by, for example, increasing the size of their fields and thus ensuring a bigger yield for subsequent years.

The key distinction between the benefits derived by the various groups, appears to lie in the fact that the rich manage to produce more than what they would need for a whole year. Once benefits generated, supersedes the annual needs, it is possible to cross the barrier of availing piecework in return of (surplus) foods. This will enable more assets (bigger fields) which will produce more crops and expectedly more labour could be bartered with.

Another important aspect is the availability of money. Surplus produce could also be sold for money with which more assets or alternatively increased benefits can be obtained.

By analysing the two matrices above, the general deduction could also be made that the “rich” group do not depend so much on one specific asset. The ranking show that all assets are important and that the benefits generated come from a number of assets. In contrast, the “poor” depend heavily on their crop fields. Surprisingly perhaps, the low score given to labour indicate a possible misunderstanding of the concept as labour is used to conduct piecework for other better-off groups.

3.3.4.1 Coping strategies of various social groups

When participants were asked how they would cope during shocks or loss of most important assets, it became apparent that the “rich” groups are more resilient to recover from such shocks. In the case of Tam-Tam and Katomene Mavenge, it was said that should the rich for example loose their employment, they would spend their effort on farming activities. And since they have a lot of productive assets they would be able to cope by using those assets. During periods of drought they would still be able to cope by selling their assets.

For the poorer groups it would be a lot more difficult to cope during these periods of shocks. In order to cope, the lower well-being groups will look for piecework in order to sustain themselves. However, hardship or shocks will mostly result in downward social mobility especially for the lower well-being groups. Although the better groups would be able to replace some of the assets and benefits lost, the lower well being groups will not be able to replace these losses.

According to participants in Causa, the loss of important assets will impact heavily on the well being of the entire community. For example, should the “rich” loose their most important asset (oxen) the whole community will be forced to cultivate by hand. This will result in low yields for everyone and consequently a situation of food insecurity. One participant indicated that:

“if the rich people fall down we will all fall down”.

In order for the above community to cope with the above situation residents will have to seek for piecework elsewhere. Off course, not everyone will be able to find such piecework and “all of us will be beyond poverty and caught deep inside the whole of
A “rich” old man at Causa said “Everyone, including myself, will be forced to go out and seek for piecework. Your stomach will tell you to work for others.”

In a situation where the “poor” loose their important assets (crop fields) they would immediately have to start clearing a new field. Although it will be bad for the general community, participants felt that this will only affect them in the short term and not in the long run as for the rich people loosing their oxen. They indicated that they would again make a field as big as the one they had and that they will use old seeds to start planting immediately.

Another coping strategy will be to “try” and engage in business activities in order to make ends meet. In this regard, they indicated that they would simply have to cut grass or firewood and although there are no markets, they will look for potential clients in order to make some business by selling these resources. It was concluded that in order to cope, people would need to find employment. However, this is not possible without a national identity document or birth certificate.

3.4 FOOD SECURITY

It is important to be more specific at the outset about what food security or insecurity means and what the PPA has been able to do. In his assessment of OVC interventions in Namibia Verduijn (2004) defined food insecurity as follows:

Food insecurity exists when people are undernourished as a result of the physical unavailability of food, their lack of social or economic access to adequate food, and/or inadequate food utilization. Food insecure people are those individuals whose food intake falls below their minimum calorie (energy) requirements, as well as those who exhibit physical symptoms caused by energy and nutrient deficiencies resulting from an inadequate or unbalanced diet or from the body's inability to use food effectively because of infection or disease.

He further distinguished between transitory and chronic food insecurity. The former was said to be seasonal and occurred during periods before harvests. It included shortfalls resulting from natural disasters or other shocks. Chronic food security was associated with long term conditions such as a lack of productive assets, reduced consumption patterns, low dietary diversity and no seed stocks.

The PPA was not able to establish whether and if so, in how many, households the food intake regularly or temporarily fell below the minimum calorie requirements. The information obtained during field work instead highlights periods in which households had to survive on food that they did not produce. Without wanting to pre-empt the discussion below, it can be stated here that the information to be presented below suggests that households that are not food secure are suffering from chronic food insecurity, due to a lack of productive assets.

3.4.1 Sources of staple foods of various social groups

The main source of staple in the Kavango Region is mahangu. Villagers reported that all the social groups mainly relied on the production of Mahangu as their main source of staple food.

According to the villagers, rich people were dependent on agricultural activities as a source for their main staple food. However, the rich group who owned their own business or whom were either formally employed or were retired and received pension were able to buy other types of food like meat and poultry. Rich people were reportedly able to employ other people to produce surplus mahangu by cultivating bigger crop fields.
The main source of staple food for the **better** groups was reported to consist of agricultural produce like mahangu, maize and sorghum. Villagers stated that the better group would also rely on collecting some wild fruits when it was needed. The better groups were able to cultivate relatively big fields that would provide them with just enough mahangu to last through out the year.

The **poor** groups mainly relied on some crops produced in their own fields as well as bartering labour for food as payment. The poor groups rely on doing piecework for the rich group to obtain an income to buy food with. The poor group reportedly depend on collecting wild fruits and berries as part of their food sources. In times of hardship and poor yields, the poor group would receive some support from family members and friends in the better group.

The **very poor** groups mainly consisted out of sick, disabled, orphans or old people. Villagers stated that the very poor group mainly relied on family support as a means of obtaining staple foods. Those who were able to perform work would rely on piecework in order to obtain food. The very poor group also relies heavily on the availability of wild fruits and berries as part of their daily diet. Should some of the very poor people receive no support from family or friends, then they would resort to begging as a means of obtaining food from other villagers.

### 3.4.2 Factors contributing to household food insecurity

A distinction between urban and rural communities is necessary to qualify the various factors contributing to household food insecurity. Amongst rural villagers, the main threat to widespread food insecurity was natural shocks for instance drought, pests and wild animals such as elephants, hippos, kudus and warthogs.

These factors could cause food insecurity to many households in the community as the eventual produce derived from the crop field is not enough to sustain the dependants of that filed. In addition to shocks, illness and disease also cause households to be food insecure. Illness and disease reportedly “robs” people of their ability to cultivate effectively. Even though they were still able to do so with the assistance from other household members, areas cultivated were smaller and often did not produce enough food to last for a whole year. The same was also true for the aged who simply did not have the physical ability to cultivate large fields.

Villagers reported that laziness in a household could also cause food insecurity as family members would refrain from working in their fields or start ploughing late in the rainy season when it is already too late to plant seeds. This usually resulted in small fields and poor yields.

A lack of productive resources also contributed to food insecurity and has once again to do with the capacity of certain households to fully utilise their fields in the absence of the necessary tools such as ploughs and oxen.

For urban dwellers in the Kavango region, food insecurity is also related to the inability of producing enough food. Many people in Kehemo were also dependant on agricultural activities outside town to produce food. However, people living in Kehemo urban stated that the biggest factor contributing to household food insecurity is the fact that living expenses has increased so much since independence that it has become difficult to buy food from shops which will last the household a month. Another important factor was the increasing number of orphans living in a household; which made it difficult for households to produce or even buy enough food for the whole household. Unemployment also plays a big role on food insecurity in Kehemo
and affects the poor people most. The urban economy is largely based on a cash economy and unemployed people who do not have cash available, struggle to obtain food.

### 3.4.3 Vulnerability to food insecurity by social groups

Food insecurity affects the majority of people in the Kavango Region at one time or another. Although some are better equipped to produce and acquire food, very few people are not vulnerable to food insecurity.

Participants stated that all the social groups identified would become vulnerable to food insecurity should a shock occur. It was mentioned that the rich group would be able to deal with such a shock more efficiently than the poor and very poor groups.

However, interestingly, it was also reported that the very poor group would be least affected by periods of overall food insecurity. The reason being that the very poor group would not loose as many assets or recourses as the rich and better groups. Villagers stated that the very poor people were already used to living in difficult conditions and would be more ‘streetwise’ on how to find alternative sources of food and they would be able survive with less.

### 3.4.4 Coping with food insecurity

In order to cope during periods of food insecurity, people in the Kavango Region mostly rely on wild fruits and manghetti from the bush. It should also be mentioned that food insecurity were peaking over December to February when one would least want to be food insecure.

For people living close to the river, various sources of food is collected as mentioned above. In urban areas and even at Katomene Mavenge, it was said that “body selling” is practised as a coping strategy for some. On enquiry, it was confirmed that the income generated through this practice is used for securing food. One lady even said that money generated is given to parents who are told “do not ask where the money is from, just buy food”.

CHAPTER 4: HIV/AIDS

The importance of HIV/AIDS as an issue impacting negatively on peoples’ livelihoods was recognised in all sites. Most recent data from sentinel surveys conducted in 2004 suggests that the prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst pregnant women ranged between 21 per cent at Rundu Hospital, 18% at Andara and 15 per cent in Nyangana.

In general, people were not too eager to discuss issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS and its impact on their lives. In four of the six sites visited, people were of the opinion that no-one in the community was infected with the virus. In Katomena Mavenge and Kehemo participants were more at ease to discuss issues. It is therefore also not surprisingly that these two sites also admitted to prostitution being practised within the communities. Although the participants of the other sites admitted to adultery, prostitution was always heavily contested.

Although rural communities denied having infected people in their communities, participants revealed conscious awareness of the disease and its strong impacts on the livelihoods of households. Although it can safely be said that everyone knew of the disease, communal residents did not want to accept the possibility of having infected members in their communities.

There appears no easy explanation for this. Most likely, this form of denial is a way of coping with the fear of the disease and its implications. In addition to this, discussing HIV/AIDS issues might invariably impact on sexual behaviour by encouraging or discouraging sexual relationships.

A PPA tool called Family Dynamics was used to encourage discussions about HIV/AIDS and perceptions in the community in a hypothetical, abstract way. The tool allowed participants to create hypothetical families that were broadly representative of typical families in their communities. On the basis of these hypothetical families, their livelihoods and the roles of family members as well as their dreams about the future were discussed. Once that was done, HIV/AIDS was introduced into the equation by designating one family member as being infected with the virus. The groups then discussed the likely impact of the infection on the livelihood of the family and the roles of family members as well as the effect it will have on the dreams of the household.

4.1 FAMILY COMPOSITION, LIVELIHOOD AND VISION

The hypothetical families constructed by participants of Kavango were fairly homogenous. They consisted of a husband and wife, their off-spring and a few members of the extended family of either the husband or wife. Typically the male heads of households take decisions and are in charge of households. Their main responsibilities are to look after livestock, do their part on crop production and construct or maintain household structures and fences. Women are responsible for household chores and cultivation. Both men and women are assisted in some of these tasks by the youth. The most important duties of young children included the collection of water and firewood.

All households had dreams of being well-off. Some through successful farming activities while others dreamt of achieving a good education with tertiary qualifications and well paid employment through which they would then support those at the village.
4.2 IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS

Once the general discussions were completed, the cards symbolising members of the hypothetical households were turned around. One card had a red dot on the back, signalling that the particular member had contracted HIV/AIDS. This was used as the starting point for discussions about the impact his or her disease was likely to have on the households’ livelihoods and visions of the future.

Table 16: The hypothetical family of Kehemo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Responsibilities and dreams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>The husband makes handles for axes and hoes and sells them at the market. He normally just sits mat home and smokes a lot. He also search firewood for his wife. He aims to use his pension to buy goats and progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>She is responsible for household chores and care for her husband. In 15 years she will be registered as a pensioner and will be able to contribute financially on household level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Daughter (Nadia)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Working as a kinder garden teacher. She acts as the head of the house. She buys food and supports the family. She also care for the old ones if sick and she is currently pregnant. She wants her unborn child and infant to have good education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Son of Nadia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Small boy is cared for by grandma if Nadia is at school. He drinks Oshikundu and milk from the shops.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Names in bold red represents the Aids infected members of the household.

4.2.1 Spread of Infections

Poverty was said to drive some young girls into prostitution. In some cases as a temporary coping strategy, alternatively as a livelihood activity. In Katomena Mavenge, the nearby Military Base is considered as a potential source of income for young girls. By receiving money, a number of necessities are bought in Nkurenkuru. Once the money has been spent, the ladies will go back for some more income.

The main factor contributing to the spread of the disease was therefore believed to be the engagement of commercial sex. In this regard, employment and the lack thereof played an important role. The reasons given to support the above was that people with no employment would migrate to urban areas where employment could be obtained. These in migrating people would often sleep at, and with, ladies in order to be accommodated for the night. Instead of having to pay for accommodation, payment is made for sex and accommodation would then be for free. Secondly, people who are

As far as could be determined, a lady can earn N$200 to N$250 for selling herself without a condom. Sex with a condom does not yield much and in many cases they would only get some alcohol in return. “You will not get paid for insisting on a condom because everything is left in the condom”.

“By earning the N$200, they would consider themselves to be rich and buy some maize, soap or “tune herself” by dressing nicely. If the 200 is finished she will go back and get another 200”
employed elsewhere also engage in commercial sex, or having sex with multiple partners. In both instances, the contraction of the disease is believed to be inevitable.

In terms of adultery, participants noted that it could easily happen. Even married couples could both be unfaithful to their partners. And even if you agree with your partner not to commit adultery “you will never know”. A specific case of adultery at Causa was reported in 2005 to the Hompa. The lady who was married, but temporarily separated from her husband, together with the unmarried man with whom she had an affair was each fined 5 cattle. Another person said that even if you suspect something, it is very difficult to report the matter because it is not possible to provide evidence. The person said: “it is very difficult to control your kids or your wife. You can control cattle but not people”.

Older people attributed the spread of HIV/AIDS to loose sexual practices and alcohol abuse. More specifically, many parents stated that the introduction of human rights after Independence instilled an attitude amongst the youth that they could do what they liked. They used the freedoms that were introduced after Independence against their parents, who were no longer able to control them. It was said that young girls traditionally spend time at home with her mother but in recent times the ladies wear provocative clothing and hung out in bars in search for companions.

Sexual behaviour, and as a result infection, is influenced by the absence of people knowing their HIV status. Participants indicated that they would want to know their status, but that it is very difficult for them to determine this as it can only be done at the big hospitals. The impression was created that due to the lack of knowledge on their status, people have already accepted that they will probably become ill at some or other time. However, they also indicated that if they knew what their status is, they would better take care of themselves and have protected sex.

In contrast to the above, and rather disturbingly, it was also noted that should a person know he or she is HIV positive they would increase the frequency of having sex in order to “spread” the disease so they do not die alone. In this regard, men also believe that by having sex, an ill person will become better as the disease is now shared between two people.

4.2.2 Impact on households and individuals

The “discovery” of AIDS under key household members shattered the ambitions and dreams of the respected hypothetical households. Initial dreams of the imaginary households could no longer be reached and intentions of tertiary educations had to make way for domestic chores and attending to the infected people at home. Young people had to contribute from an early age and school attendance was not always possible due to the added financial constraints and domestic responsibilities. Prior to the discovery of the illness, people worked together in the fields. Now, this is no longer possible, as more support has to be given to those infected household members.

It was stated that the few assets owned by these households would have to be sold in order to sustain the basic needs of the families and pay for medicines. The loss of assets and especially productive resources further crippled the households to sufficiently produce food and satisfy the basic demands, revealing a situation of downward social mobility as a result of AIDS.
According to participants, the prevalence of AIDS in the community will contribute to poverty. The community will become smaller and the remaining members of the community will struggle to find food as they will not have the energy to do productive labour. It is therefore believed that increased infection rates will amplify criminal activities as people would prefer stealing oppose to doing piecework.

“People will not be able to work in the field. We will become the same as the San people - with no fields”

Furthermore, it was stated that in caring for the sick and subsequent selling of assets, little or no money would be available to pay for school fees. Thus, leading to a proportionally bigger community without education. The perception of educated people being infected at a higher rate than non-qualified will therefore also imply the downfall of community well-being. Increased numbers of orphans will turn into “street kids” who will have to fend for themselves by engaging in criminal activities.

This perception also strongly supports the perception that educated and employed people such as nurses, teachers and police officers are those likely to be infected by the disease. The reason given is that employed people travel more often and have the money to engage in commercial sex.

4.3 HIV/AIDS AWARENESS, SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR, AND CONDOM USE

In comparison with rural areas visited by the PPA team, the communities of Kehemo and Katomena Mavenge had a much better understanding of the disease. According to participants of Kehemo, they learned about the disease by listening to the radio, watching television, receiving information at the hospital and clinics and lastly “we also physically see the people living with AIDS”. According to the participants the symptoms observed include continuous diarrhoea; syphilis; weight loss; continuous coughing; demanding a lot of food; and aggressive behaviour – “if you look at him, they will say: Why are you looking at me?” It is also believed that changes occur with ones hair as it becomes like that of a baby.

The youth of Katomena Mavenge were also well informed about the disease. They knew that the disease is contracted through having unprotected sex, by using the same blade (at a traditional header) or needles already used by an infected person, and through contact with an open wound. The youth were also convinced that the disease is spread intentionally through blood transfusions at the hospital, or at the clinic - “because some nurses are not nice”. Lastly, a perception exists that the disease could also be spread through the clipper of a Hair Salon.

Participants indicated that the Red Cross and Lironga Eparo respectively visited Katomena Mavenge to create awareness through discussion and videos. As a result of the awareness, Kehemo and Katomena Mavenge residents had a good understanding of preventative measures and how to reduce the risk of infection.

The picture on awareness in remote rural communities however was a lot different than depicted above. A need was expressed to learn more about the disease and that follow up visits were required from stakeholders to explain and clarify issues.

An observation during the Family Dynamics discussion at Katomena Mavenge, was the large number of babies present. A female participant with 2 babies of her own responded and said they are the result of unwanted pregnancies. She also said that
in some cases the men refuse to use condoms and that even though she gets the contraceptive injection from the hospital, it does not seem to be very effective.

After having discussed the issue, it became apparent that levels of awareness did not necessarily impact on the use of condoms. Generally, people in Kavango do not use condoms. Although condoms are not available in the rural remote areas, they were available in Rundu and also for residents of Katomena Mavenge. For residents of Katomena Mavenge, it was said that condoms are for sale at the school in Simanya, the company Cool Ryder, cuca shops and at the hospital in Nkurenkuru. Members of the discussions also indicated that the Nkurenkuru hospital provides female condoms and learners were told at school how to use these female condoms. However, irrespective of the awareness and knowledge, it was admitted that the youth do not normally use condoms as this prevents them from producing babies. It was also mentioned by some of the ladies that men do not normally agree to use condoms. On the other hand, women also do not always insist on using a condom as she might think he appears to be healthy.

“If a boy is fat, he cannot be infected.”

With regard to condom use, the isolation of Causa and its residents cause people to have very little information on the use of condoms. A number of participants indicated that they have never seen a condom. Although some said the mobile clinic distributes condoms, they have never received any training on the use of condoms. They also said that they heard of female condoms but have never seen these before. Participants in all remote rural areas admitted that they do not normally use condoms for the following reasons:

- The use of condoms during intercourse wane virility. Both men and women admitted that they would prefer not to use a condom for this reason;
- Another reason is that the use of condoms will prevent them from producing babies;
- It was also said that although adultery is happening, it is not acceptable for a man to use a condom while having sex with his own wife. And even if you use a condom with your wife it would not be possible to produce babies;
- People also believe that the disease is inside the condom. People claim to have seen the disease when condoms are filled with hot water;
- The last problem with condoms is that they expire and then become unsafe anyway as they sometimes break inside of the women.

According to the discussions, some residents of Kehemo use condoms while others prefer not to. It was indicated that old people are not likely to use condoms as they are normally married and requesting the use of a condom would signify mistrust between husband and wife.

4.4 PREVALENCE OF HIV/AIDS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS PLWA

It was estimated by participants that Kehemo has approximately 150 PLWA. However it was also said spontaneously that there are probably 400 orphans as a result of the disease.

It was confirmed by participants during the Family Dynamics exercise that the community of Kehemo does not reveal a negative attitude towards people living with
Aids (PLWA). The participant stated that it could be his best friend or relative “so we just go on as normal”. However, one lady specifically said that although some claim to be going on as normal, it is often the case that when they are together, that person will pretend as if she cares but as soon as they separate the friend will start to gossip by “oh, you know this one, she is infected with the virus man.” As a result of the above people are not very open about their HIV/Aids status and will only in some cases report or share this information with the relatives or maybe a close friend. In cases where close friends or relatives are told, they seek advice from them. It was however also said that the prevalence of Aids would most likely cause hatred between community members due to gossiping of likely infected people.

With reference to support to PLWA, participants indicated that support would be required from various sources. These sources could include immediate family members, relatives, the community, NGO’s, government and the church. Firstly, household members will spend a lot of their time in order to care for the infected relatives. In cases where the remaining household members are too old or young to care for the sick, other relatives from other households would have to summons someone to provide the necessary support. This support could either be in the form of providing food and clothing or through comforting and encouraging those infected by the disease. Secondly, food, clothing and tablets was felt to be provided from the government, community and the church in order to prolong their lives.
Participant:  Wants to stay anonymous

PERSONAL HISTORY OF HIV/AIDS INFECTED PERSON

I am 22 years of age and was born in Masalte. I came to Kehemo Urban with my parents in 1995 when my father found employment as a packer at a supermarket. Our household comprise of 15 members: my father, brothers and sisters with their children. We all live together in Kehemo in four traditional huts and depend on my father’s income. Initially, the family depended on three salaries, as two other members of the household were also employed. My one brother and sister who were employed passed away and the old man alone cannot afford to take care of all the members in the household.

Everyone now depends on my father’s salary, since he is the head of the family and the only one receiving an income. The income of my father covers the food of N$300/month, school fees of N$680/term, water of N$200/month and electricity of N$100/month. Having all these expenses does not leave money for anything else.

I am HIV/AIDS positive, and I am a single parent with four children. The Catholic Aids Action provides counselling to HIV/AIDS infected people and the Hospital provides tablets to help them. But although I receive the support, I’m still afraid of death and that my time is near. Besides the stress of passing away, I’m doing fine. At one time I was very sick, but I’m stable now and concentrate on my health.

Nobody knows of my illness except my younger sister and one of my friends, so the people still treat me as a normal person. My thoughts on using condoms changed after my husband infected me with HIV/AIDS. When I was younger I did not have the courage to use condoms, and because I was married, I trusted my partner. My husband passed away in 2004 due to HIV/AIDS, after that I abstained from sex. No condom, no sex.

With the help of the Catholic Aids Action and Hospital, I receive some medicine free of charge, which usually makes me dizzy, but only if I didn’t eat enough food before taking the medicine. Apparently the medicine boosts your immune system and leaves you feeling healthy and stronger. Except for my younger sister and one friend I have not yet told my parents or any one else of my illness, so I only receive the support and necessary help from the Catholic Aids Action and Hospital.

My dream is to be a successful businesswoman one day. I want the government to support me by employing me and provide food and money so that I can help support my family.

My message to others: “AIDS IS REAL, TAKE CARE AND ALWAYS USE A CONDOM.”
CHAPTER 5: SERVICE DELIVERY, GOVERNANCE AND DECENTRALISATION

Structures and processes within the livelihoods framework are the institutions, organizations, policies and legislation that shape livelihoods. They operate at all levels, from the household to the international level, and in all spheres, from the most private to the public.

Structures in the framework are the private and public organizations that set and implement policy and legislation and deliver services.

Processes refer to the way in which the above-mentioned institutions operate and interact. It includes their policies and legislation. In addition processes refer to cultural practices common in the area under study, power relations and ‘rules of the game’. The latter deals with informal practices in which people and organisations interact with each other.

Venn Diagrams were used to identify and determine the importance of all institutions that either render services or whose services were needed by poor communities, as well as assessing the quality of services delivered from the perspective of poor recipients of such services.

Photo 19: Example of Venn-Diagram for Korokosha

The example of the Venn Diagram above was developed in Korokosha. It provides an example of the institutions that were identified as important and discussed in terms of them being inside or outside of the community, the linkages between the institutions and the “level of support” provided by these institutions. As can be expected, participants mentioned several institutions that did not currently deliver any service to communities, but were regarded as important.
5.1 INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

5.1.1 Traditional Authorities

With the exception of Causa, all 4 rural sites, regarded the Traditional Authority as a very important institution. In Causa, the Traditional Authority was not resident in the community and the Headmen only had a Traditional Councillor who resided within Causa. It was recorded that the Headman does not often visit the community and as a result participants regarded him to be of medium importance. Participants at Causa also felt that the support provided to the community is not very high and his “medium sized” card was therefore placed not in the centre of the visual but rather to the edge.

In all other sites, people seemingly though highly of the Traditional Authority and indicated a high level of support. This could possibly be a result of them being present during these discussions or, possibly in fear that people would report to the headmen those individuals who were not satisfied with his services. It was difficult to gauge the feeling of people in this regard and in one site people did confirm that the headmen has accepted bribes in order to influence judgement of the Traditional Authority.

In all communities, Traditional Leaders were said to be responsible for solving disputes between villagers, allocation of land for newcomers, making the final decision on behalf of the community and all other matters relating to visitors coming into the communities.

Based on the actual visuals strong linkages also existed between the Headmen, the Village Development Committee and the Regional Councillor who mostly had meetings to discuss pressing matters.

Although the Traditional Authority was placed in the centre of Venn-diagram visuals, it was felt that information and decisions were not always disseminated to community members.

5.1.2 Rundu Town Council

For residents of Kehemo, the Town Council was placed on a big card as their service is regarded as very important to the community. However, the card was placed outside the community circle as the participants felt that the Town Council does not achieve their goals. The community felt that the roads were in a bad condition and that there should be public water taps, toilets and dustbins placed in communities who do not have access to these municipal services. Refuse collection does not occur and as a result rubbish are being disposed of inside the settlement.

5.1.3 Village Development Committees (VDC’s)

The VDC’s were considered to be very important and all were placed on big cards supporting the perception of importance. In three of the 5 rural villages, participants were positive about the level of support provided by the VDC’s. One village, Causa, did not have a VDC and never heard of it. As a result, villagers claimed that developmental issues were not given any attention. In Katomene Mavenge, participants and especially the youth were very much outspoken about the support provided by the VDC. The youth were of the opinion that they do not have any influence or impact on developmental issues. The headmen of Katomene Mavenge, who resides in the nearby village of Simanya responded and said that meetings are held in Simanya and that people are lazy and prefer not to attend meetings. In return, one member commented with the following:

“The proposals given to the VDC go nowhere! We are not lazy, we are just tired”.
The process of decentralisation has not yet been tested in the rural areas and it remains to be seen whether these decentralisation structures will be able to effectively address developmental issues on “grass-roots level.”

5.1.4 Education and training facilities

Participants placed high value on education, and the Venn Diagrams reflected this with schools and school boards being placed in the centre of most localities. As mentioned above, education was regarded as the key to employment and a better life. Not all communities had schools and two of the existing schools were constructed with traditional materials, they were too small, ill equipped and in some cases under staffed. In addition, children had to walk long distances (in Murere, as far as 13 kilometres) in order to get to school. As a result, small children would often not attend school and it was generally accepted that small kids couldn’t enrol as the distance is simply too far from them.

In most localities, people were not satisfied with the teaching staff or at least had complaints about staff attendance, alcohol abuse, or being on sick leave for extended periods. Expectedly, the impact of the situation must be detrimental to the quality of education for children within the rural areas. It is also ironic that rural households and especially the remote rural localities, had to overcome extreme hardships to be able to pay school fees for a service, which is rendered below average.

With the exception of Murere, the school boards were praised for the work and input to ensure children attend school and burning issues are reported to the circuit inspector. In Katomena Mavenge, it was also said that the school board members would leave their fields in order to check on teachers and children who do not attend school.

It must be stated that in two localities at least, participants and school board members felt that teaching staff were undermining the school board members. For example, in Tam-Tam, the school principle were said to be on sick leave and “The principle has a programme for seeing his doctor in Windhoek”. Participants indicated that he always shows papers to the school board members, but as they cannot read, it is not sure whether these papers are legitimate, or not.

5.1.5 Health services

In general, villagers were not happy with the services provided by the mobile clinic. The service was described as irregular and complaints were raised about staff attitude. The service provided also did not cater for serious illnesses and drugs were limited to Panados, Betadine, Cloroquine and contraceptives. In remote rural localities a strong concern was raised about the inability of rural people to pay for medical services. Participants indicated that it is sometimes not possible to pay the required N$2.00 as money is not available in the rural areas. Suggestions were made to devise a credit scheme for people who do not have money available for payment.

Hospitals were also criticised for not allowing people to heal whilst admitted. Reports were given where seriously ill people were taken to hospital only to be given tablets without admitting the patients. In one case a man reported that even though hospital
staff did not want to admit his mother, she passed away the same day. Distances to hospitals were normally very far and in most cases inconvenient to travel.

A number of traditional healers operate in the Kavango Region. Although many villagers claim they deliver a better service than western medicines, the general perception was that they are very expensive in comparison and that some traditional healers “only claim to know how”. Cards for the traditional healers were mostly of medium size and placed inside the Venn-diagram and towards the edge thereof.

5.1.6 Technical services

Agricultural Extension Services (AE) were regarded as a very important service. Ironically, in all sites visited the “level of support” were perceived as very bad. In all cases the card for AE were placed outside of the community and some people claim never to have seen a person from Agricultural Extension Services. This perception of people were linked to the newly adopted approach by the Directorate not to travel around in the regions. 12 Agricultural Development Centres exist in Kavango and all have permanent staff. Irrespective of the new approach followed, it is worthwhile to indicate that a big need exist to be visited by Agricultural Extension Technicians’.

Veterinary Services (VET’s) were regarded as an important service by all rural communities and placed on big cards to support this perception. With the exception of Korokosha, all communities rated the level of support as average and card were placed inside the Venn-diagram but to the outer edge of the community. Visits are conducted on an annual basis and vaccinations of cattle are done locally at the respective mangas. Concerns raised by villagers were the frequency of visits and also the timing of visits and subsequent vaccinations. Villagers reported that vaccinations which are done too late in the year cause animals to die as they are too weak to handle the drugs. Other issues raised included the construction of crush pens which were apparently done for some communities but not for all.

Mixed feelings were raised by villagers to indicate the importance and level of support provided by Rural Water Supply (RWS). Although cards for RWS were all big, the level of support varied between communities. It was reported that breakages were not attended to immediately and after reporting the faults, it took staff very long to fix the problem. Probably the biggest concern was the standard and quality of infrastructure. At Tam-Tam, the water reservoir was an open tank which was not conducive for human consumption. In other localities plastic water tanks were available but the stands for these tanks were said to be sinking into the soil. In other communities, for example Causa, the community used only a hand pump and water could not be stored for extended periods. At Katomena Mavenge, no infrastructure was available and people used water from the Kavango River. In addition to the infrastructure, none of the communities were formally handed over the infrastructure and in some cases villagers were either reluctant or unable to pay for water.

Nature Conservation, Ministry of Environment and Tourism was indicated as a very important institution for residents of Causa. The community was very appreciative of the efforts made to guard the crop fields against destruction from elephants. It was also said that staff from MET also involved the community in the process. However, the means used to scare off elephants were not very effective and it was reported that the elephants were only chased from one crop field to the other.

Only 3 rural communities and the urban site of Kehemo regarded Namibian Police as an important institution. None of the rural communities had a local police station or policemen. It was generally accepted that the traditional authority dealt with issues of crime and violence whilst in extreme cases the police were called to visit a site for a specific case or serious offences. It was also said that the police never made
voluntary visits and that small children had never seen a police officer. In most cases the cards of the police were placed outside of the Venn-diagram.

5.1.7 Pensions

Given the important role of pensions as the only regular income for many households, the distributing agency for pensions, United Africa, featured very prominently in the urban area of Kehemo. It was rated as a very important institution and the level of support were highly commended. Apart from paying out pensions, it also supports burial proceeding, purchasing of coffins and transportation of corpses. The same could however not be said for the rural communities. In the remote rural communities, old people had extreme difficulties in obtaining pensions. They had to travel long distances in order to collect pensions and in some cases the delivery was not made on time. In such cases the old people had to travel back to the village only to return the following week.

5.1.8 Communication

The Namibia Broadcasting Corporation was a very important source of information in all communities. In Katomena Mavenge, participants specifically stated that the service informs people of meetings, news, deaths and messages to and from friends and relatives. It was also mentioned that the NBC creates awareness on the AIDS pandemic as well as other educational programmes on how to behave within the household.

Although it was not mentioned as part of the Venn-diagramm exercise, most villages expressed a need for telecommunication services. None of the rural communities visited had telecommunication infrastructure. The only site which had mobile coverage was Katomena Mavenge. Participants however mentioned that the service is only available on some days and dependant on the transmission from Nkurekuru approximately 20 kilometres away and none of the local villagers had access to cellular telephones.

5.1.9 Religious, social and political institutions

Churches played a very important role in the lives of all communities. They were placed on big cards and were mostly placed inside the Venn-diagram to represent a high level of support. The number of churches within small localities was quite high. In Causa for example, three churches were recorded. These churches provided a valuable support the church committees were said to be very active in providing moral and in some cases monetary support.

In Kehemo and Katomena Mavenge a number of institutions were organised around HIV/AIDS support. These included Catholic AIDS Action (CAA), Red Cross, Bridges of Hope and Lironga Eparu. Catholic AIDS Action is considered to be very important to the community as this institution provides support to the HIV/AIDS infected people in the form of clothes and food. The CAA also provides support to people who are only ill and too poor to buy food. This organisation also trains people to work and care for HIV/AIDS victims who are unable to walk. They are trained to bathe, feed and treat people who are HIV positive. The card was placed in the centre of the community.

The Red Cross provides support to all sick and extremely poor people as well as to orphans. This institution is also regarded as providing a very important service to the community and was placed inside the community circle. As far as could be determined, no linkages existed in terms of the latter two institutions.

The Constituency Councillors played an important role in all communities visited. In all localities, the Councillor was put on big cards to illustrate the importance. The
placement of these cards was unfortunately not always as one would have expected. The main concern raised was the frequency of visits, which seemed to have decreased since the election campaigns were held. The other problem mentioned most frequently were the lack of feedback provided regarding problems channelled through to the Councillor. This problem could however be linked to the issue mentioned earlier about headmen not feeding information through to villagers in general.

5.2 GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

To establish the role of women in the institutional landscape of villages a gender and leadership matrix was developed by participants in all sites. The gender and leadership matrix of Tam-Tam is illustrated below as an example.

![Gender and Leadership Matrix](image)

Table 17: The visual shows the memberships of the various committees in Tam-Tam

Participation of women in public life and specifically village institutions has increased in recent years. Women participated more or less to the same extent as men in village institutions. Representation on executive committees was about 50:50, as many participants would have said. In some villages women played more prominent roles than men.

5.3 ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF SERVICES

Access to and quality of services was discussed at all sites. A lot of information pertaining to service delivery and access to services was obtained during general discussions. However a specific tool, a service scorecard was used to enable participants to identify criteria in terms of which they wanted to evaluate specific services. The following section will therefore combine information from the service scorecard and information gleaned during other exercises.

5.3.1 Regional and local authorities and committees

The services of Constituency Councillors were rated in four of the six sites. As mentioned previously, the criteria used to rate the Councillors were determined by participants themselves and then discussed in order to propose interventions for
improved service delivery. The first criterion for evaluation used by villagers was in terms of the promises, which are being made by Constituency Councillors. Various testimonies were given about promises, which were made but never kept. These included amongst others, piecework, which had been promised to communities, promises to collect registration lists for orphan support and distribution of blankets which had never been collected and also promises to assist old San people to register for pension which had also not been done. The second criterion for evaluation was on feedback given back to the community. Some villagers claimed to never receive any feedback concerning issues raised with the Councillor. It was also stated that even if feedback was provided, it never reached the community. In more specific terms, the Village of Korokosha proposed two income-generating projects in writing to the Councillor in March of 2004. The projects were formulated based on a community initiative, formulated by the VDC and signed by the headmen. At the time of the PPA visit in November, 2005 no feedback or response had been provided.

The third criterion was based on the frequency of visits made by the Councillors. Community members reported that the Councillors only visited their sites once or maybe twice after being elected. They stated that during campaigns frequent visits were made and that they would still want to see these frequent visits. As an intervention, almost all communities requested scheduled meetings with the Councillor once per month. The fourth criterion was the dissemination of information. Community members mentioned that information was only provided to certain members of the community. It was strongly felt that information should be provided to all the community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stick to promises</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Only empty promises</td>
<td>Want piecework as was promised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback given</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>No feedback ever given</td>
<td>When problems are forwarded to the Councillor, then community wants feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent visits</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>Only visited Kehemo once, one week after his election</td>
<td>Community wants to see Councillor once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of information</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Only some people were informed</td>
<td>Must inform all the people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18: Service Score Card compiled by the participants

Villagers used three criterions to score the services of the Town Council. The first being rendering of services. Community members stated that they were paying for the removal of solid waste, but there are three dump sites inside of Kehemo, as this service does not exist. It was scored a ½/5. Community members stated that the Town Council should clean up the town.

“There is no service from the Councillor. We give our problems, but he sleeps on the papers.”
The second criterion was the affordability of services. Community members stated that they paid too much for connection fees of electricity and water while there are many faulty meters. A score of 1/5 was given, as they stated that it was too expensive to pay for something that was mostly out of order.

The final criterion was the response time. Community members stated that when they reported a problem, it would take a long time before anything was done about it. A score of 2/5 was given as participants stated that they expect a response the next day after payment was done.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rendering of services</td>
<td>½/5</td>
<td>No cleaning solid waste but paying for it</td>
<td>Clean up the solid waste in town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Connection fees and faulty meters are expensive</td>
<td>Too expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response time</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Problems are attended to very late</td>
<td>Should at least attend to problem within one day after having reported it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3½/15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: Service Score Card as compiled for the Town Council

In all sites in the communal areas the services of headman were generally regarded as good. However, community members at Korokosha felt that the Headmen discriminate against poorer people. In the event where disputes exist between poor and rich people, the rich person would pay the Headmen in order not to fine him for the wrongdoing. A recent example was given where a rich person stole a goat from a poor person. According to one participant, the Headman failed to call people together as he already accepted some payment from the rich person.

Participants stated that it is only the rich who are benefiting from the headmen.

5.3.2 Health Services

In addressing health services the service score card was completed for hospitals, mobile clinic and traditional healers. The specific service ranked by the community depended on the local circumstances and experiences of that community. The comments made for hospitals did not refer to any specific institution but to hospitals in the Kavango region in general. The same applies for traditional healers.

The first criterion for the hospital was the admission period of patients in hospitals. Various testimonies were given of people who were released while still being ill. In Causa a man indicated that his brother was given tablets and released. The brother passed away the next day. Community members scored 1/5. It was also stated that the patients should be allowed to stay in the hospital until they have recovered fully.

“There is discrimination here. The Headmen bypass the local Councillors and Advisors in order to accept a bribe of N$50 and then eat alone’ – ‘it is only the rich who are benefiting from the headmen’
The second criterion used was the affordability of treatment. Community members stated that the cost for medicine, treatment and admission fees - especially over weekends, were too expensive and should be reduced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission period</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Patients are released too soon.</td>
<td>Allow person to recover fully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability of treatment</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Must at least admit a person without paying</td>
<td>Reduce the price of medicine from N$30 to N$15. If doctor asks you to come back then must not pay again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation for relatives</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>At least be allowed to stay for 3 days</td>
<td>Allow accommodation until patient has recovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: Service Score Card for the Hospital services

The third criterion used to evaluate the hospital services was the accommodation for relatives. People felt that relatives travelling from far should at least be allowed to stay for 3 days, as they take care of their relatives in hospital.

In general, people were not happy with the quality of the service provided by the Mobile Clinic. For the purpose of the discussion, villagers provided three criterion on which to rate the specific service. Firstly, it was indicated that the frequency of the visits are not suitable for a healthy community. At Causa, they only visited twice during 2005. This is apparently due to the poor roads and difficulty the ambulance experience to travel to and from Causa. Participants indicated that if the roads were upgraded they would probably be visited more frequently.

The other two problems are the variety and quantity of drugs available and that no transport is provided to seriously ill people. An illustration was given about a young boy who had been beaten with sticks and thrown into a hole. Although he was badly injured and needed stitches to his head, the ambulance refused to provide transport to the hospital.

“When we need an ambulance we must pay N$100,00 to the driver. He says that he knows where he must take the money. They never give us a receipt for that money. We are poor, why must we pay for this service?”
Participatory Poverty Assessment for Kavango Region

### Table 21: Service Score Card for Mobile Clinic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of visit</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>They only visit twice per year – during May and October ’05. Apparently they have difficulty in driving here “They said we should clear the road. So we did but still they don’t come”</td>
<td>RCC should gravel the road and the clinic should be here every month. In addition, people want Red Cross Volunteers to supply medicine locally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply and variety of medicine is inadequate</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>They only stock Panado, Bethadine, Cloroquine and contraceptives. The number of tablets is also not adequate - only 5 tablets for 6 months!</td>
<td>Staff should provide enough tablets to last for 6 months. At least 25 tablets plus Puma for muscle pains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporting of the sick</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Don’t give transport to sick</td>
<td>Want them to provide transport to seriously ill to hospital. “They are already here, why do they charge N$200 for transport of sick people?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4/15 **27%**

In addition to the above there existed a general dissatisfaction with the staff of the mobile clinic. It was mentioned at Tam-Tam that the staff of the mobile clinic do not respect patients and is rude to people.

Lastly, it is believed the traditional healers are not as effective as in the old days. Some claimed that many traditional healers only “pretend to know” and become traditional healers to escape poverty. Apart from the latter, they also claimed that the traditional healers are very expensive if compared to western medicine and medical facilities. In this regard, participants indicated that the payments made, i.e cattle and other livestock are consumed quickly before patients claim back the payment, which had been made. In many cases, clothes of patients are left at the traditional healer to be destroyed or burned in order to kill the disease. However, participants claimed that the clothes are given to the relatives of the traditional healer.

### Table 22: Service Score Card for Traditional Healers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>“Although some cure, some just lie to you. Especially these days they are not so good. They only want to escape from poverty and then become traditional healers. – They pretend to know”.</td>
<td>Only pay if you are cured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Apart from being very expensive, patients are told to leave their clothes and blankets behind. They say they will burn the clothes or throw it into the river. But they don’t, they just give it to their relatives.</td>
<td>Charge according to illness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4/10 **40%**

Regional Poverty Profile for Kavango Region
5.3.3 Education and Training

Murere was the only site that preferred to evaluate the services rendered by the school and the teaching staff during the Service Score Card Exercise. The first criterion was the attendances of teachers. Villagers reported that teachers usually missed a whole week when collecting their salaries in Rundu. It was also reported that teachers would sometimes stay away for a whole week in a month without providing any valid reasons. Villagers stated that they would like to report the matter to the school inspector. This concern was supported by the fact that teachers only came back from the Christmas holiday on 18 January 2006. Schoolbooks were apparently delivered to the school but teachers were not there to sign for these books. After having waited for the whole day, materials were then left at the headman’s house and were not yet collected at the time of the PPA team’s departure on 20 January 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School attendance of teachers</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>Only came here on 18 January 06. Teachers normally miss 1 week in a month for salary collection</td>
<td>Report matter to inspectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications of staff</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Well qualified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of infrastructure</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>The infrastructure was said to be leaking. Books and material left in the classroom get wet when raining</td>
<td>Proper / new renovated structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5/15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23: Service Score Card for Education

The second criterion was based on the qualifications of the teachers. Villagers scored 5/5 as they felt that the teachers were qualified to teach properly and had no problems regarding this.

The third criterion was the quality of the school structure. Villagers reported that the classrooms were build out of traditional thatch grass and wooden poles. This posed problems, as there were large gaps between poles which cause books and paper to become wet during the rainy season.

Photo 20: One of the classrooms of Murere
season. Villagers stated that they would like a proper school building for their children’s education. The participants also stated that they are forced to send their children to a school close to the river as their school is not functioning that well.

It should be added that only Murere chose to evaluate the service of the school. And, although difficulties and problems were encountered at other schools as was reported previously in this document, most of the villages preferred to rate other institutions and services as a priority above that of education.

5.3.4 Technical services

Participants were generally not too pleased with the overall service rendered by Rural Water Supply. Participants felt that the response time of the staff is very slow and community members wait for long periods after having reported the matter to the Regional Offices in Rundu. It was also felt that Rural Water Supply does not conduct routine inspections to water installations. This cause unnecessary breakages, which could have been prevented if faults are attended to in advance. With respect to the latter, scheduled monthly visits are suggested by the community to ensure a more reliable source of water.

It was also reported that the staff does not want to take advice on how to address the problem. Participants felt that the RWS staff are skilled but lack the motivation to fix problems and take pride in their work. Lastly, the participants felt that the existing infrastructure is not suitable for human consumption. The use for open tanks, or in some cases no tanks, add to their vulnerability and causes them to become ill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response Time</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>RWS staff take too long to attend to repair works</td>
<td>Repairs must be done the first day after matter was reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of visits</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>RWS do not visit unless called upon</td>
<td>Community wants 1 scheduled visit per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to take advice</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Staffs do not take advice on how to fix the pump. *</td>
<td>Staff must consider the opinion of comm. members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled staff</td>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>Although skilled, staff not willing to work properly</td>
<td>Staff should be motivated to do work and be proud of what they do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of infrastructure</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Open tank cause them to consume polluted water</td>
<td>Want to see a closed tank on a stand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24: Service Score Card for Rural Water Supply

* Note: A recent report of faulty pipes in Tam-Tam resulted in only one pipe being fixed. When community members requested the RWS staff to take out all other pipes, the staff refused to do so. As a result the problem remained and RWS had to come back again to fix all the other pipes of the borehole.

In general, the quality of water throughout the region was good and the supply of underground water was also sufficient. Problems experienced pertained to the infrastructure extracting water. In all sites visited, none of the infrastructure was formally handed over to communities. In some villages, walking distances to
boreholes were very far – 13 to 15 kilometres in Murere while Katomena Mavenge relied on water from the river as the nearest borehole was at Simanya some 6 kilometres away.

The payment for water is determined by the Water Point Committee. Tariffs for payment also varied from one site to the other. In Murere, everyone above the age of 18 must pay N$5.00 per month regardless of them using water from pans during the rainy season. In Korokosha, households (not homesteads) pay N$10/month for water while pensioners and people doing business pay N$20/month irrespective whether cattle are owned. In Causa it was determined that payment for water could also be made in kind by giving 5 large cups of mahangu. The WPC will then sell the Mahangu and so generate the necessary funds to be deposited into their bank account.

In Murere, the very poor and San people who cannot pay for water in cash may do labour for water as payment.

Some communities knew about the existence of Agricultural Extension Services, but most villagers have never benefited directly from these services. Most participants had difficulties remembering when last they saw an agricultural extension technician in their villages. Four of the sites elected to evaluate the services. The overall rating of was poor. Community members indicated that the Agricultural Extension Services never visits the community of Katomena Mavenge. As a result, the frequency of visits and support through provision of seeds all scored zero out of five. Participants indicated that in spite of the latter, they do benefit from listening to the occasional radio programmes hosted by Agricultural Extension. In addressing the current situation, the community would want to get 3 dedicated visits annually. These visits should be planned for September, November and December. Through these visits, proper training could be given before the planting season begins. The visits for November and December are aimed to provide seeds and then to monitor the progress of planted crops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>Agriculture Extension never came here</td>
<td>Residents want 3 visits per year: In September to demonstrate; In November to bring the seeds; in December to monitor progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating farmers</td>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Only on radio – never come here</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide support (seeds)</td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>Don’t get seeds– use old seeds – some buy</td>
<td>Same as above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25: Service Score Card for Agriculture Extension
Communities’ perception with regard to the service provided by AE is poor. Although the provision of seeds and ploughing services has been outsourced, villagers remain under the impression that AE is responsible for the provision of seeds. Dissemination of this information needs to be channelled through to villagers before the perception of this service will improve.

Most sites did not mention veterinary services specifically in the service scorecard exercise. However, in Katomena Mavenge it was reported that although vaccinations are done, this is normally too late in the year and as a result, cattle may become sick and even die. As with AE, participants wanted some follow up visits in order to report such cases to the VET's.

After having evaluated the above services, residents of Tam-Tam concluded with: “If we can achieve the above, maybe we will also have a taste of the bread of Independence”.

5.3.5 Telecommunication
Apart from the urban site, none of the others had public telecommunication infrastructure. Most participants thought access to a public telephone is crucial for medical services as well as to stay in contact with relatives.

5.4 GOVERNANCE, DECENTRALISATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

5.4.1 Understanding governance and corruption
Residents of the Kavango Region were very much forthright when tissues of Governance were discussed. Generally people were not happy with the current state of governance. Some of the issues, comments and criticisms of villagers had already been highlighted in this report but to do justice to the intended aim of the PPA process, it is important to comprehend the perception of people fully.

Participants in Kavango provided a good understanding of the various concepts of governance and what constituted good and /or bad leadership. By using a combined summary of all sites visited, the following is understood about good governance:
According to the participants, **Good Governance** is:

a) “A government who is at peace with it’s people and who understands their problems”;
b) “A government who goes to its people – not stay in the office and phone to ask how are things there?”;
c) “Good leaders must be available when called upon”;
d) “A government who do not discriminate against certain tribes”;
e) “A government who tries to address the problems of the people”;
f) “A good government respects its people!”;
g) “When assistance is given to everyone, equally”;
h) “A good government will cater for rich as well as for poor people”;
i) “When rich and poor could have access to loans”;
j) “Good governance will take responsibility for its people”;
k) “Good governance will deliver and not make empty promises”;
l) “A fair and honest government”
m) “A good government provides good education”
n) A government who empowers its people”, and
o) A Government who meets with its people and provides feedback on issues.

Without stating the obvious, people perceive Bad Governance as quite the opposite of the above. However, a few interesting pointers are worth mentioning:

**Bad Governance**, is a Government who:

a) “Do not respond to the cries of the people;
b) “Make empty promises”;
c) “If leaders do not consult people and make decisions on their behalf”;
d) “A government that lets its people fall into poverty is bad governance”;
e) “A bad government makes the economy of a country collapse”;
f) “If no feedback is given to it’s people”;
g) “If leaders come to community to boast about their diplomas and money while they cannot be told anything”;
h) “If leaders come to the community already angry and scaring-off people”;
i) “If leaders don’t respect people and do not consider what they say”;
j) “Supplying drought relief only to certain people or not supplying it at all”;

Partakers in the process at Tam-Tam felt that their direct link to Government is through their Councillor. It was generally felt that Governance might be better in town than on village level. They felt that the Government should identify some priority areas as the previous Government did. In more specific terms they referred to the
difficulties experienced with obtaining national documents such as id’s and birth certificates, payment for water and purchase of diesel, which now became the responsibility of the community.

People all agreed that the state of Governance impact directly on the level of development and level of poverty in the country. In this regard, they said, money, which had been intended for development, are misused and only enjoyed by a few. They were also of the opinion that if these cases of corruption continuous, the country will become very poor and eventually people will immigrate to foreign countries. According to the same residents, good governance, on the contrary, will lead to unity and will create job opportunities. If money was intended for Tam-Tam, the benefit will be enjoyed by the residents of Tam-Tam and not by anyone else. In terms of decision-making on a community level, the community members indicated that important decisions are taken by the community themselves in the presence of the Esimbi and the VDC members. Every person in the community has the right to participate in these meetings and discussions. They also indicated that the land belongs to the community of Tam-Tam. Therefore, any planning decisions must include the views of the people of Tam-Tam and they wish to play a role in this planning process.

Community members from Murere stated that they were satisfied with Governance at National level. However, participants added that although ruling of the country does not pose any problems, the problems occur along the Regional Government. Participants stated that corruption and nepotism causes major problems for people who are being excluded from opportunities and assistance. One participant stated: “People who are always denied jobs, will later turn to crime and violence to fend for themselves”. This statement was drawn out a discussion of how only certain tribes in the Kavango region would be employed by the government, while other tribes would be denied of any employment opportunities.

Causa community members were very much outspoken on the topic of Governance. They indicated several times that the level of Governance is not acceptable and it leads to impoverishment of the people. “Since independence, we were supposed to benefit, but only some benefit from Agribank”. It was specifically mentioned that all people want the same assistance as was given to the San people. They added by saying: “We don’t know why support dedicated to the poor, does not reach the poor and why officials do not deliver”. According to the participants these are examples of the Bad Governance in Namibia. Another example given in this regard was the issuing of birth certificates and national Id’s. “The home Affairs staff chased people out of the building because of the clothes they wore.” An old man said that this illustrates failure of the program and that the Ministry of Home Affairs did not achieve the objectives as determined beforehand. People from Causa were scared to go back to that locality in order to collect their pension money. “The same can happen with pension, we are scared to go there now”.

In Tam-Tam the Government is “far away”. Referring to the Venn-diagram, participants said: “If you saw where we put our Councillor, what will you call that”. They went so far to say: “The previous Government was better for us. We have not benefited anything in Tam-Tam since independence”.

According to villagers of Causa, the state of Governance causes impoverishment of people.
According to participants of Katomena Mavenge, the state of Governance is not what it should be. With regard to the latter the following was noted:

- “The Government is not doing anything for us. We request but nothing is forthcoming”; 
- “Since independence, nothing is done for us, we asked for a tar road but nothing is done. The existing gravel road is not even maintained properly”;
- “We also requested a borehole, but nothing has happened. We have a school but there is no clean water for the kids”;
- “We also requested telephone booths, but telecom say they cant put up telephones if there is no electricity”;
- “Nowadays, if we request things from the Government, they turn their backs on us”; 
- “The hippos destroy our crops, we are promised compensation but no one has received a cent for compensation”;
- “The process for ID documents is very long and expensive. Even if you go to Rundu, they say it is not there and then you have wasted a lot of money”;
- People also feel that they waste their money and assets to educate their children as there is no employment for them even if they finish school.

On a local level, the Headman said that the community has the power and that he only serves as the co-ordinator. He also gave an example of a person from another region who wanted to establish a project next to the river. Because this person did not follow the correct procedures, the community stopped him. According to the participants, corruption and nepotism is a big problem in the community. A number of examples were given to illustrate this principle of nepotism. Firstly, “We wanted a teacher for science, but instead we got one for Agriculture because he is the relative of the inspector”. And secondly, “The principle also told the School Board that they do not have to approve the principle and that he already followed all the correct procedures to appoint the new Principle. But, the inspector wanted to bring his relative as the Principle and not the local person who qualified for the position. Now we don’t have a Principle”.

Also at Kehemo, participants felt that corruption and nepotism occurs on a large scale. When asked to give an example, participants responded by saying that nepotism occurred on the first day the PPA team arrived in Kehemo. The Vice Chairperson of the VDC pre-elected one family member to help with the preparation of the community lunch. Volunteers were supposed to be elected from the community and by the community.

When asked how corruption and nepotism affects the community, the response was: “Those people who are at the PPA meeting are those who are suffering the most. The rich will not come here, but if opportunities should come to Kehemo, then it will be the rich who will benefit from it, as nepotism and corruption prevent the poor from receiving any benefits”. 

On a positive note it must be emphasized that all communities visited, with the exception of Korokosha indicated that constituency Councillors had visited them at
one time or the other. During these visits, meetings were held with the communities and important matters were discussed, reported on and sometimes formally submitted through the respective VDC’s. Unfortunately, in most cases this is where it remains. Participants claimed not to be given feedback on these matters. The fact that no feedback is given was most definitely indicated as one of the major problems recorded in all communities.

5.4.2 Decentralisation

All constituencies in Kavango have Councillors, with constituency offices. The constituency office at Divundu is currently under construction and the Chief Clerk operates from Mukwe. All offices had Chief Clerks, with a Chief Control Officer at Nkurenkuru.

With the exception of Causa, all settlements visited had Village Development Committees with Constituency Development Committees (CDC’s) established in all constituencies. All CDC’s were operational and scheduled meetings are conducted on a monthly basis. As far as could be determined, none of the VDC’s were trained in terms their responsibilities and operational duties. It was also determined through fieldwork that VDC members in general did not understand the decentralisation process nor the procedures to be followed in terms of channelling projects or information through these structures. In Katomene Mavenge and Kehemo a number of individuals, mostly employed people, had knowledge of the structures and were able to identify the various decentralisation structures.

Not all VDC’s knew that they automatically had representation on the CDC through their secretariat. In cases were this was known, VDC members acknowledged that this does not happen as the communities could not afford to pay for transportation and subsistence while attending the meeting. In Korokosha, the community also felt excluded from the Councillor and did therefore not have the courage to enquire about VDC related matters.

After having explained the aims and structure of decentralisation, a number of participants and VDC members alike were visibly upset when they had learned of the decentralisation structures and other bodies through which problems are supposed to be channelled. In Murere, Community members felt that all their hard work done on presenting community projects to the Councillor was wasted and that they had to start over again. The secretary of the VDC was informed that there would be a CDC meeting the following day in Rupara at the Agricultural Training Centre near Nkurunkuru. It was decided that the secretary of the VDC, Mr. Mazambo, would attend the meeting. The headman and the chairperson of the VDC decided that each member of the community had to contribute N$5.00 to allow Mr Mazambo to pay for transportation back to Murere after the CDC meeting. The PPA team offered Mr Mazambo a lift to Rupara and provided him with some food for the time gone.
The urban site of Kehemo had a good understanding of what decentralisation is and how it is supposed to work. Participants explained that the VDC is responsible to meet with the community and discuss certain issues and problems with them. After a decision is made, the VDC will then take the problem to the CDC from where the CDC will convey the problems to the Regional Councillor. However, members of the VDC stated that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the VDC would visit the Regional Councillor directly, but it would only happen when the Councillor request them to do so. Although they had a good understanding of decentralisation it was not sure why the urban site has a VDC and not a LDC (as is normally the case in urban areas). It could not be determined why Kehemo residents have such a strong inclination towards the Regional Government and Councillor when they are located inside the jurisdiction of the Rundu Town Council. During discussions with regard to governance and decentralisation no mentioning was made of the Local Authority or any of its Councillors. However, as far as land issues or service infrastructure was concerned, participants knew they had to work through the Town Council. In conclusion one could say that a strange confusion exist about the governing authority of Kehemo. Some issues are channelled through and reported to the Constituency Councillor of the Regional Council while other issues such as water and roads, are reported to the Town Council. To add to this confusion, the traditional authority (the headlady) of Kehemo was also welcomed at the PPA discussions!

Although this was not said during discussion anywhere, Regional Councillors played a very important role in constituencies and occupied powerful positions in the rural areas of Kavango. The importance of Regional Councillors in the development process stems from the fact that they are the main link between rural communities and regional government. The fact that they are in close contact with their constituencies enable them to contribute towards the planning of services and infrastructure in rural areas. This involvement included the following:

- Participation in planning meetings of Rural Water Supply and deciding on priorities for water infrastructure development;
- Identification of and alerting the regional education ministry to the need for educational infrastructure;
- Identification of food-for-work projects with rural communities and monitoring these;
- Identification of candidates for adult education in association with the Ministry of Education;
- Assistance in the nomination of people for the National Youth Service;
- Assistance in the registration of poor and vulnerable people to access government grants; and
- Providing poor households and orphans with letters recommending exemption from school fees.
CHAPTER 6: INTERVENTIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As a conclusion to the PPA exercise participants in each location were asked to rank their main problems. A PPA tool called pair wise ranking was employed to facilitate the ranking. Care was taken to explain to participants that the ranking did not imply that problems, which were given a lower ranking, were unimportant. The intention was to use this ranking matrix as a basis for Community Action Plans. During that exercise communities were asked to consider each one of the problems ranked and remind themselves of their current coping strategies, suggest actions that could be taken by the community to address these problems, identify persons or bodies in the community that should take responsibility for implementing these actions, set due dates for such actions, determine what outside assistance was required and determine how they should measure the success of their actions.

Regrettably, it was not possible to carry this exercise to the same extent in all sites. The fact that it came right at the end of a long week – normally late on Fridays or on Saturdays - meant that most participants were not inclined to spend a lot of time on this exercise. These problems were compounded by the fact that none of the rural communities had ever developed a community action plan. Asking people what they could contribute towards improving their own well-being proved to be a major challenge in communities that were dependent on the state for everything. This must be regarded as one of the more pervasive and long lasting legacies of the pre-Independence socio-political dispensation: to have disempowered rural communities. It is however believed that the introduction to community action plans in the sites visited was an important start along the long road of empowering rural communities. This is not an end in itself but is also required by Namibia’s Decentralisation Policy which expects people at village level to become much more actively involved in identifying their development needs and strategies to address them.

Despite the above problems, Community Action Plans were done for 5 of the localities visited. Although a number of priority areas had been identified at Causa during the pair-wise ranking, it was not possible to conduct a Community Action Plan. After having discussed issues for the first CAP priority problem and spending approximately 2 hours on the subject, participants did not want to engage in commitments to involve decentralisation structures, which they had never heard of. As Causa had no Village Development Committee, it was eventually decided by the community that a Community Action Plan would not be conducted. Instead, with support of the Kavango Regional Planner, Mr F Kabozu, the PPA team again explained the process and objectives of the decentralisation policy. The community members and Traditional Councillor were advised to take up the matter with the Headmen and the Regional Councillor and establish the Village Development Committee for Causa in order to address the developmental needs of the community.

But if this approach is to succeed, it needs much more support. The capacity of people at village and constituency level to develop and monitor Community Action Plans needs to be developed. Furthermore, CAPs have to be integrated into the regional planning process, so that those who develop it understand how they fit into the larger scheme of things. Without this step, CAPs are likely to raise expectations that may not be fulfilled. Needless to say, this will contribute towards a culture of poverty, where people have no hope and see no future.
6.1 PRIORITIES FOR POVERTY REDUCTION AND ITS RATIONALE

In order to assist with determining which of the poverty causes are the most important and should be addressed first in poverty alleviation programmes, a system of card sorting followed by pair-wise ranking was used to determine the priorities for each of the communities visited. As could be expected, these rankings differed from site to site. The overall conclusion made is that remote rural sites placed more emphasis on the access to various social and governmental services such as schools, clinics and pension payout points. The more accessible localities indicated unemployment and lack of government support to be the major priority problems.

The priority problems as identified in the various villages are presented in summary format in the table below, reflecting their respective rankings and frequency of occurrence between various sites. The matrix reflects a wide range of problems, some very specific to particular sites while others were mentioned by as much as 5 of the sites.

Table 26: Ranking of main poverty cause by PPA site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Problems</th>
<th>Rank received in each village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Causa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Access to medical facility</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Access to education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Unemployment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Inaccessibility of village poor roads</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Not getting proper AE support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Tribal Discrimination</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Unwilling to pay for water</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Veldt fires</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Drought</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Alcohol Abuse</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 No access to credit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Crime</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 No supermarkets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 No electricity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 No public phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Lack of orphan support from GRN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Access to safe water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Distance to national documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Distance to pension payout and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is reasonable to assume that although not all villages have ranked all problems in the matrix, they do share them to a greater or lesser extent. In general discussions
this issues below featured in most sites. For discussion purposes, the five most common problems are briefly discussed below.

6.1.1 The availability of medical services

In 5 of the communities visited, the provision of medical services was ranked as a high priority problem. Generally, the nearest clinic was far away and transportation to these facilities was always a problem. The problem was further compounded by the quality of the roads. The frequency of the mobile clinic was considered far too low while the general service provided by the staff of the mobile clinic was considered to be inefficient and unprofessional.

6.1.2 Unemployment

Unemployment was identified as a problem in 5 out of the 6 communities. In the urban community of Kehemo it was ranked 2nd most important problem (after no access to capital). Participants stated that employment opportunities were only provided to people belonging to certain tribes from other regions. Nepotism, favouritism and corruption were also regarded as major key players to employment opportunities. Apart from being denied opportunities, participants stated that unemployment was also linked to not having access to loans, as people were not able to create employment for themselves. The remote village of Murere did not include unemployment as part of the exercise. Although it can be assumed to be a problem one has to consider the difficulty people have in accessing support services, obtaining water and the likes.

6.1.3 Poor road network

Two of the sites visited regarded the quality of the road network as a priority problem. The result of the poor road network manifests in the inability of various service providers to render services effectively and on time. It is also believed that irrespective of the demand and local situation elsewhere, bad roads cause the community of Causa to be neglected. Examples given are: the pension payout point which had been located elsewhere and scheduled visits from the mobile clinic. It was also stated that benefits from the DAPP programme failed to be delivered as a result of not having transport to deliver these benefits.

6.1.4 Availability of potable water

In 4 of the sites, the availability of potable water was regarded as a priority problem. Although all sites did not address the same problem, the concerns included the following: In Murere the water point was located in the centre of 7 villages and some had to travel 13 kilometres to collect water. Katomena Mavenge (located next to the river) residents complained about not having a borehole. Water is collected and then used for domestic purposes. Tam-tam villagers also complained about not having potable water as their infrastructure were not conducive for human consumption. Lastly, in Korokosha residents were not willing to pay for water provision.

6.1.5 Distance to schools

In two of the villages, the distance to the nearest school resulted in children not getting an education. Causa had no school and almost all children and youth do not attend school or has never attended school. In Murere, the nearest school is located at the waterpoint which is approximately 13 kilometres from the centre of the 7 villages.
6.2 COMMUNITY ACTION / CONTRIBUTION

For the problems identified through the pair-wise ranking exercise, villagers selected the most important ones which were then addressed through the Community Action Plan. In some cases only one problem were discussed while others felt a need to discuss more issues. This exercise normally took very long and after having done one or two problems, members felt confident to finalise the other problems by themselves through facilitation of the VDC Chair person. Issues discussed in the Community Action Plans included the following:

- **Access to medical facilities** (Korokosha, Tam-Tam, Katomena Mavenge, Murere)
- **Access to safe water** (Murere, Tam-Tam)
- **Unemployment** (Korokosha)
- **Tribal Discrimination** (Korokosha)
- **Drought** (Korokosha)
- **Attending the CDC meeting in Rupara** (Murere)
- **No access to Credit** (Kehemo)

6.2.1 Access to medical facilities

The problem of access to medical facilities was listed in 5 of the sites. However only 4 of the communities decided to include this topic in the community action plan discussions.

6.2.1.1 Current Coping Strategies

Despite having a clinic with a voluntary nurse in Murere, villagers stated that the nurse only provide minimal medicine for treatment of headache and malaria. This service was not able to treat serious illnesses. Villagers who were seriously ill had to travel to Tondoro which is ±50km away in order to obtain formal medical attention which sometimes resulted in deaths on the way to the clinic. The nurse in Murere was reported to be a female villager who volunteered to receive training for only minor treatments and was not a qualified nurse. It was reported that she had to assists a total of 106 households that lived in all seven surrounding villages. Apart from the voluntary nurse, there was no formal clinic building, as a traditional thatch grass roof was utilised as a clinic. The clinic was also situated close to the water point which meant that it was far away from most of the households in the area.

Villagers stated that if they needed more serious treatments, they would be forced to make use of traditional healers who were reported to be very expensive. Villagers stated that if a person were not cured, the traditional healer would try a different treatment but would have to be paid again. Villagers reported that they would like to see a formal government clinic with a qualified nurse situated more centrally in Murere that would provide all households including those from surrounding villages with proper medical attention.

The above was also true for most sites with this problem. However, none of the other sites had a local volunteering nurse. People were therefore left with either travelling the long distances or in some cases make use of the traditional healer.
6.2.1.2 Community Visions
The community vision for having access to medical services was to have a clinic established at the respective villages. Although this would never be viable, the community of Tam-Tam had already a formal building which had been constructed for this purpose. The vision therefore included only the deployment of a full time nurse for this problem to be addressed.

6.2.1.3 Community Action
In all cases, villagers decided that the VDC had to write letters to various people in order to obtain the policy on establishment of clinics in rural areas. Specific people were made responsible for obtaining information about applicable policies, writing and delivering letters, dates were specified when to finalise delivery as well as to provide feedback to the community members.

6.2.1.4 External Interventions
These included mostly the establishment of the clinic, deployment of staff in the case of Tam-Tam or at the very least communities wanted replies on their efforts to have a clinic established.

6.2.2 Access to Safe Water
Again, three communities reported this to be a problem. However, only Murere and Tam-Tam chose to discuss the issue during the Action Plan.

6.2.2.1 Current Coping Strategies
Villagers of Murere reported that the distance travelled to the water point was considered a problem to the whole community including to the surrounding six villages who make use of the same water point. Villagers stated that people would resort to using natural water from pans during the rainy season, which caused illnesses and sometimes death. It was reported that when people became ill, they would not be able to work in fields resulting in fewer yields. Villagers also stated that the distance to the water point was an inconvenience to the majority of households living further away as villagers had to collect water under difficult conditions during the dry season.

For villagers of Tam-Tam, the main issue with the water is that villagers have no choice but to consume the polluted water retained in the open air corrugated reservoir. Apart from pollutants falling into the reservoir such as birds and insects, another concern was the pollution of water from the cattle trough. The cattle trough is located approximately 50 yards away from the borehole and a concern was raised that standing water and cattle urine could also lead to underground pollution before consumption by the villagers. In order to address the issue, Villagers reported that the reservoir is cleaned from time to time to manually remove all dirt. This is however only seen as a temporary measure to remove solids from the dam.

6.2.2.2 Community Visions
Villagers of Murere stated that they envisioned a water point that was located more centrally for the majority of all the households to be able to obtain fresh drinking water. Tam-Tam residents wanted a closed plastic tank to be installed for human consumption.
6.2.2.3 Community Action
In considering what the community could do to solve their water problem themselves, they felt that the first action required was to find out what the policy was regarding the provision of a water point from the Rural Water Supply. The VDC was tasked to write a letter to Mr Hamutenya from the RWS, requesting a copy of the policy on the provision of water points in the rural area. The community further resolved that the VDC had to read the letter to the whole community on the 28th January 2006. The intention was to write a second letter requesting another borehole within the framework of the policy that would be provided by the RWS.

In Tam-Tam, community members and Villagers agreed to once again empty the dam and clean it thoroughly on the inside. In addition to this, participants agreed to fill up the area surrounding the cattle trough to prevent standing water, cow manure and urine to pollute the ground water extracted for human consumption. Again, specific tasks, dates and people were given the responsibilities and feedback to the community was set for a specific date. Lastly, the VDC agreed to write a letter to the CDC and RWS (Mr Mpareke) to inform them of the situation and apply formally for a closed water tank to be installed.

6.2.2.4 External Interventions
In both instances, villagers wanted their respective problems to be addressed and explained. As in the case of medical facilities, feedback from RWS was considered to be very important and villagers wanted a response on their endeavours before the problem was rectified.

6.2.3 Unemployment
Although unemployment was also discussed as a major contributor to poverty only Korokosha villagers wanted the problem to be discussed in detail. The residents of Kehemo also put a lot of emphasis on unemployment but elected to discuss “access to loans” instead of unemployment.

6.2.3.1 Current Coping Strategies
Villagers stated that there are no formal employment opportunities in Korokosha and very few temporary employment opportunities. The lack of markets further contributed to unemployment and the lack of income and cash. The only way for villagers to survive is to partake in subsistence agricultural activities. It was mentioned that employment could provide villagers with an income to improved their living conditions and provide their children with better education.

6.2.3.2 Community Visions
Villagers envisioned more projects that would create employment opportunities for the people of Korokosha.

6.2.3.3 Community Action
The community living in Korokosha stated that they want to partake in community projects that will benefit the whole community, but they stated that it would not be possible if the Councillor or Government provided some form of assistance to aid them through the process. It was also mentioned that the villagers would talk to the Councillor about the existing proposals, which were handed to him and discuss how they would be able to implement their ideas. Furthermore, the community stated that they would contribute by offering their services to the Ministry of Forestry to clear
grass in order to prevent veldt-fires from spreading to other areas. It was mentioned that they have done it before in the past for payment of N$120.00.

Villagers indicated that everyone in the community including the headmen and the VDC would have a meeting to discuss the details of all the project proposals and decide how they were going to implement them. It was agreed that the VDC would provide the CDC with a project proposal before the end of January 2006 and request feedback from the CDC before the end of May 2006. Villagers felt that this should provide enough time for the CDC to provide them with a response. The headman was tasked to make sure that the community members were all motivated to assist in the abovementioned process and to make sure that the project proposal was delivered to the CDC. The headman were also responsible to provide feedback to the community should he hear anything from the CDC.

6.2.3.4 External Interventions
Participants wanted the Government and Councillor to provide positive responses and immediate support on project proposals in Korokosha.

6.2.4 Drought

6.2.4.1 Current Coping Strategies
Villagers stated that droughts not only affected their food security, but it also depleted their resources and made them vulnerable. It was reported that villagers last received drought relieve in 2004 and those who were less well-off were forced to depend on wild fruits as crops yields were very low in 2005.

Reportedly, drought relieve programs were only available to certain people and all did not benefit from it. In order to register and qualify for drought relief, a person must either have children younger than 5 years old, be disabled or be too old to do work. Villagers felt that this was unfair as many people were simply not able to produce enough food for themselves. It was argued that drought affects every person negatively and that everyone should be given an equal opportunity to receive some form of support. Apart from being unfair towards some people, it was also mentioned that the quantities supplied for drought relieve was too little to support a person for a month.

6.2.4.2 Community Action
Villagers stated that they would like to invite the Agriculture Extension to visit Korokosha and share information on different types of agriculture production during times of hardship and drought. A request was also made to provide seeds after a period of drought in order to replant what was lost.

6.2.5 Tribal Discrimination

6.2.5.1 Current Coping Strategies
Villagers of Korokosha indicated that their Councillor belonged to a different tribe and this was the reason why they were being discriminated against as they were not being visited nor supported by their leader. It was stated that even though the community made some development proposals, no feedback was ever provided since March 2004. People also felt left out from development as the issue between the Mbukushu tribe and the Rugciriku tribe was felt very strongly.
6.2.5.2 Community Visions
Villagers envision a good relationship with their current Councillor, but if nothing happened, they would rather be part of Ndiyona Constituency.

6.2.5.3 Community Action
Villagers agreed that the VDC would write a letter to the Councillor and invite him to visit Korokosha before the end of January 2006. It was decided that the letter would be written before the 5th of December 2005 and it would be delivered to the Councillor on the 7th December 2005. It was further agreed that the letter should clearly indicate that the villagers of Korokosha felt left out and would like clarification from the Councillor himself.

A milestone was set by the villagers that if they had not been visited by the Councillor before the 10th February 2006, they would send a member from the VDC to phone NBC radio and ask the Councillor over the ‘open line’ to visit Korokosha. Villagers agreed to listen to NBC radio between the 10th and 15th February 2006 to confirm that their message was broadcasted over the radio.

6.2.6 Attending CDC meeting in Rupara
This item was not identified as a major problem. However, when members of Murere had difficulty to forward community issues through the decentralisation structures, it was decided to include the issue as part of the process to empower the community and partake in the CDC meeting which had been scheduled shortly after the PPA team visited the community.

6.2.6.1 Current Coping Strategies
In Murere, participants stated that they were waiting for a member of the CDC to visit Murere, but it was reported that the secretary of the CDC did not own a vehicle and were unable to visit villages. Given the fact that there was a CDC meeting the following day in Rupara, villagers felt that their VDC secretary had to attend the meeting, as there had been no development since the VDC came into existence.

6.2.6.2 Community Action
Villagers stated that they would be willing to donate some money to Mr Mazambo who was the secretary of the VDC to pay for transportation, food and accommodation. The PPA team offered Mr Mazambo a lift to Rupara in order to be in time for the meeting. Additional food was also donated to Mr Mazambo as he had to leave on such short notice. The meeting in Rupara was held on the 21st of January 2006, where Mr Mazambo had to collect information regarding project proposals from villages and how they should be handled by the VDC. Mr Mazambo had to report back to the whole community, headmen and VDC members about what was said at the meeting and provide feedback regarding project proposals. The date set for providing feedback was 28 January 2006.

6.2.7 No access to credit

6.2.7.1 Current Coping Strategies
Participants stated that they could not start their own small businesses due to not having any access to cash loans. People who had ideas for a business and community projects could not implement these as there were no finances available. As a result people were not employed and had to rely on others to make a living.
6.2.7.2 Community Visions
The community envisioned access to capital and through the implementation of subsequent projects, other issues like unemployment and crime and violence would also be addressed.

6.2.7.3 Community Action
Participants agreed that they would contact the Councillor to provide the community with contact details of a person from the Ministry of Trade who were able to formulate a business plan. The representative from MTI would be approached to assist them in writing a business plan for certain community projects in Kehemo. It was resolved that the VDC would write a letter to MTI to arrange an appointment with the community where they would discuss different community projects as well as individual interests.

Ms Margaret Newaka was tasked to obtain the contact details form the Councillor before the 10\textsuperscript{th} of March 2006, after which she would provide feedback to the community and VDC on the 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2006 regarding the contact details obtained from the Councillor. Mr Clement who was the Vice Chairperson of the VDC was tasked to write the letter on behalf of the community of Kehemo to request a meeting with the representative of the Ministry of Trade who could assist in formulating a business plan. It was agreed that the letter would be finished before the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of March 2006 and after obtaining the contact details, would read out loud the letter to the community and discuss whether it was acceptable. Mr Clement would then deliver the letter after the 12\textsuperscript{th} March 2006 requesting a meeting.

6.2.7.4 External Interventions
External interventions for the above problem was to be given support from the MTI on how to access capital for community projects.

6.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The policy implications of the findings of the PPA dialogues are many and varied. It is believed that the following policy implications are to be considered in order to effectively reduce poverty within the Kavango Region.

6.3.1 Assets of the Poor
Probably the most important cause for not being able to produce sufficient crops in Katomena Mavenge is the absence of productive assets such as ploughs and oxen, which directly influence the availability of food. Intervention is needed to concentrate specifically on this segment of the rural poor to assist these particularly vulnerable households to regain their productive capacity. By providing safety nets, access to productive resources and access to credit will allow the poorest villagers to improve their own living condition with the aim of breaking through the poverty trap.

6.3.2 Accessing Grants
The very poor group in Murere and the surrounding villages mainly consists out of orphans, disabled people, old people and San people. A major contribution to poverty for these people are the inability to obtain their National Documents which is needed to register for social-support, drought relief, disability grants, orphan grants and old age pension. Accessing these support structures are made impossible due to the
need of I.D’s, Birth Certificates, Death Certificates and Disability Certificates. The major constraint of obtaining these documents was the distance and travelling cost to go to Rundu to apply for the documents only to be sent back due to the lack of additional documents required to apply for the abovementioned. Intervention is required to streamline the process of applying for National Documents and bring the application points closer to the poorest people who are unable to pay the high costs of obtaining National Documents.

More application points should be distributed more evenly throughout the region and could be established at the Constituency Offices which deals with applications within that specific constituency. This will not only make it easier to apply for National Documents, but will also cut back on travelling costs. As each constituency office will deal only with applications from within that constituency, names of completed documents can be aired over the radio to inform people to collect their documents.

6.3.3 Unemployment

Looking at Tam-Tam only one teacher was formally employed, as all the villagers were subsistence farmers. However, younger people who completed their schooling in order to obtain formal employment were unable to do so as there were no employment opportunities in or around Tam-Tam. Younger people resort to go to larger settlements such as Rundu only to be unsuccessful in finding employment. Having neither employment nor agricultural knowledge they become involved in activities such as alcohol abuse, crime and violence which all contribute to poverty.

Unemployment levels are unacceptably high and rising. Young and old are unable to find employment and become despondent. Community members reported that unemployment is caused by a lack of education and financial support to create employment opportunities. Participants felt that a lack of money is caused by a lack of financial support from family members and specifically from the Government with regard to projects. It is a general belief that employment can be created through projects such as cutting trees for timber, clearing road reserves and cutting thatch grass.

Due to the lack of knowledge of accessing certain loans for community based projects, not obtaining financial support has always played a huge role in disempowerment of communities in creating their own employment opportunities. Information regarding different organisations, ministries and NOG’s that provide financial support for community based projects and how they could be approached on applying for financial assistance should be made available freely over the radio stations.

6.3.4 Service Delivery to the Poor.

Service delivery in Murere is almost non-existing due to the remoteness and poor accessibility. Apart from the poor road conditions service providing ministries are limited in providing adequate services due to policies such as kilometre limits to extension personnel, gross understaffing, vehicle problems such as old fleets, too few vehicles and abuse must be addressed if the situation is to be improved. This needs some re-organisation and the decentralisation programme is likely to improve the situation.
6.3.5 HIV/AIDS and Gender

HIV/AIDS awareness levels is relatively high in Katomena Mavenge especially amongst the younger people, but so far not been translated into changes in sexual behaviour patterns. Body selling forms part many young women which makes them extremely vulnerable to become infected with HIV/AIDS. It was mentioned that men would refuse using a condom as it desensitises the effect of having sex. It is important to not only increase the awareness of HIV/AIDS, but also to focus on gender. By focusing on males and conveying the importance of using condoms in preventing HIV/AIDS infections in such a manner as to make it socially acceptable within communities. The same should be done with females in an attempt to empower them in sexual decision-making.

Gender development and equality needs more emphasis in the rural areas. Men own and control most of the valuable resources at household level and women play a subservient role without much say in important decisions.

6.3.6 Favouritism, Nepotism and Corruption

Favouritism, Nepotism and Corruption plays a huge role on employment opportunities in the Kavango region as people from other regions are awarded employment opportunities which effects the economic growth of the Kavango region as money is spent in other regions. Recruitment procedures at the higher levels should be transparent allowing for men and women to fill positions for which they are firstly, qualified and secondly competent to do. At a lower level unskilled employment opportunities such as cleaning and care taking should be made available in each constituency for the people in that specific constituency.

6.3.7 Alcohol and Substance Abuse

It is commonly known that the abuse of drugs and especially alcohol has demoralising effects on all societies. Alcohol abuse contributes to almost all poverty related problems as it increases crime and violence, destroys cultural beliefs, deprives children from education and healthy household environments, contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDS, drains financial resources, undermines the Law and many other’s. Alcohol abuse occurs throughout the whole of Namibia and is mainly based on the convenient accessibility thereof. Action should be taken to reduce the availability of alcohol, as higher taxes should be paid for purchasing alcohol, stricter control measures by the police force on illegal selling of alcohol especially in the northern regions where no control exists. If alcohol consumption is not reduced, poverty will always have a firm grip on the poorest people.

6.3.8 Lack of Government support for HIV/AIDS and Orphan Support Groups

A total of seven HIV/AIDS support groups were identified in Kehemo. Of these seven only three were able to provide some kind of assistance to HIV/AIDS victims. A lack of donations and financial support meant that these organisations were unable to provide adequate support to those people who where unable to support themselves. Compared to the rural areas where very little or no support was found for HIV/AIDS victims, Kehemo had a number of these organisations which creates an opportunity for Government to provide more support to HIV infected people through these structures.

Action is needed to create international exposure for these organisations with the backing of the Government to allow these support groups to receive
donations from international agencies. Government support structures should be set up in such a manner as to allow these support groups to apply to the Government for assistance in creating international exposure for donations and assistance.

6.3.9 Governance and Decentralisation

Although the majority of villagers knew about governance and the decentralisation system currently in place, the effective implementation of the system is not discernible. Although some progress has been made in this regard, a lot still needs to be done. Of particular concern is the seeming unwillingness of some government ministries to let go of its power base and the resultant disempowerment of officials in the regions to take any meaningful decisions, to execute their tasks or to co-operate meaningfully without a mountain of bureaucratic red tape and meaningless or poorly designed systems.

Of particular concern is the dissemination of information to rural communities of how government works. Information is not conveyed effectively and there are many misconceptions or a complete lack of knowledge of what to do and where to go to get assistance when they experience problems or need to access certain benefits.

6.3.10 Community Based Management

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the ability of communities to actively maintain infrastructural services. The handing over of certain services to the community proved to be unsuccessful, as the ability of the committees within the community to properly maintain the services is problematic. Although committee members received training, members do not stay within the committee and it was difficult to replace these members due to the unwillingness to serve on these committees. Another problem was that it proved to be financially unaffordable for these committees to maintain the services once they were handed over to the community. In particular was buying diesel for the water pump, as it was difficult for the WPC to collect enough money from villagers to buy diesel.

The Community Based Management Policy needs to be revised in such a manner as to consider the reality of the community’s ability to maintain these services on a long-term basis. Intervention is required to allow exemption for the poorest people as well as adequately informing communities about these policies creating awareness of how they work and why they are in place.

6.3.11 Discipline of Children

Participants stated that children misunderstood the meaning of human rights and freedom of speech. As a result children grow up without any discipline as parents and schools cannot punish children who are disobedient. Children are free to drink alcohol at early stages and ignore their parents and teachers when they need punishment. Participants stated that more and more children grow up without any discipline as the policy on corporal punishment prohibits parents and schools from adequately disciplining children.
The lack of adequate discipline among the younger generation contributes to high levels of alcohol abuse, crime and violence and has a demoralising effect on society as a whole. If discipline is to be restored to the younger generation, then serious attention should be given to the way in which parents and schools may punish undisciplined children. Corporal punishment should be brought back into society and schools to allow discipline to prevail amongst the younger generations.
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