



## Women Economic Empowerment and Gender Responsive Budgeting

Efforts to mainstream gender in Namibia are guided by local, regional and international policy frameworks. These all work collectively to ensure that the call for gender equity and equality in all sectors is addressed across southern Africa divide. Among such frameworks, Namibia has managed to sign, ratify and implement the following international frameworks: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) commissioned by the United Nations in 1979 and The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Within the continent, the government of Namibia is part of the AU Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women, and the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.

## Namibia

Total Population mid-2018	2,414,643
	51.3% women
	48.7% men
Population Annual Growth Rate	1.9%
Adult Literacy (15-64 years)	91.4% women
	91.6% men
Maternal Mortality Rate	265/100, 000 live births
Infant Mortality Rate 2017	28.5/1,000 live births
Total Fertility Rate, per woman	3.5
People Living with HIV and AIDS	176,000
HIV incidence(new infections) ages 15-64	0.36%
HIV prevalence (% of people living with HIV)	12.6%

Annual GDP (2018)	US\$14.446 million
GDP Annual Growth Rate (2018)	-0.1%

### Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women

Women with account at financial institution or mobile money	80.7%
Mandatory paid maternity leave	84 days
Proportion of:	
Women in engaged in Agriculture	59 %
Parliamentarians who are Women	45.2%

*Namibia Population-Based HIV Impact Assessment 2018, Government of Namibia Economic Development Report 2018; SADC Selected Economic and Social Indicators 2018; SADC Gender and Development Monitor 2018*



Within the SADC region, Namibia signed and ratified the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which was revised in 2016 and looks towards integration and mainstreaming of gender issues into the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building initiatives which is important to the sustainable development of the SADC region. Being part of the above mentioned frameworks has helped Namibia through its government, to achieve several sectoral developments in gender mainstreaming including the crafting of a domestic National Gender Policy which takes into account the stipulations of the frameworks that Namibia is tied to.

### **Productive Resources and Property**

The National Conference on Land Reform and the Land Question organized by the Government of Namibia in July 1991 recognised the disparities of access to land by women and therefore aimed to address dispossession and inequality, and promote productive and sustainable livelihoods through ensuring equal access to land. It resolved that women should have the right to own the land which they cultivate, inherit and bequeath along with other fixed properties. It further directed that women should be fairly represented in all district councils, land boards or other bodies which deal with the allocation and use of land in the communal areas.

The National Resettlement Policy of 2011 in Namibia makes provision to consider women when allocating land for resettlement. Thus, Namibian women are accorded opportunities to contribute to the improvement of socio-economic development through land productivity. In addition, the National Land Policy of 1998 states that, “all citizens have equal rights, opportunities and security across the range of tenure and management system,” to ensure equality of opportunities for women and to enable their full participation in all spheres of the Namibian society. According

to the land policy, women have been accorded the same status as men with regard to all forms of land rights, either as individuals or as members of family land ownership trusts. The Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act No. 6 of 1995 and the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 call for the equal recognition of women and men in the access and ownership of land in Namibia.

Communal Land Boards are established in all regions, in terms of the Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002, and these Land Boards consist of 12 members of which at least four members should be women. Two of the four women must farm in the area of the Land Board’s jurisdiction and the other two of the four women should have expertise in relevant functions of the board. The functions of Communal Land Boards include the supervision of customary land allocations and cancellations. As a result of these initiatives and according to national statistics, 70 percent of the population depends on agricultural land for livelihood, and women account for 59 percent of people engaged in agriculture, including subsistence agriculture. This shows the central role played by women in agriculture and the importance of securing land rights for women through policies and governance.

However, although a total 6.4 million hectares of land were acquired through the Agricultural Bank of Namibia and the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme Programme during 1992-2018, only 10 percent of women have benefited to date compared to 60 percent of men (NSA, 2018).

Gender	Number of Loans	% Farms	Amount Granted N\$
Men	386	60	476 361 058
Women	64	10	87 293 200
Men and Women (joint ownership)	198	30	212 799 680
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>776 453 938</b>

Source NSA, 2018

## **ICT**

With regard to Information, Communication Technology (ICT), Namibia has a Bill on Access to Information and a draft Information Policy. The main aim of the policy is to ensure access to ICT, however it is not gender specific in order to promote equitable access by both men and women. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare has therefore embarked on a process of reviewing the draft policy to ensure inclusion of women access to ICTs.

## **Trade and SMEs**

With respect to trade and industrialisation, the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare have worked with the Women in Business Association (WIBA) programme to support women in accessing platforms such as regional trade fairs that enhance exposure to the business world. In addition, the new Public Procurement Act, 2015, Section 70 subsection (1) (3) has made provision for the implementation of preferential treatment in procurement (services, construction, and supply) to promote the empowerment of women and the youth, as provided for in Article 23 (3) of the Namibian Constitution. Article 23(3) states that priority may be given to women who were socially, economically or educationally disadvantaged by past discriminatory laws or practices over any other category of previously disadvantaged persons.

The Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development recorded a sizeable increase in the number of registered Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) between 2000 and 2016. Of the more than 15,000 SMEs registered during this period, 605 were financed by commercial banks. Current statistics reveal that a total number of 1,719 registered SMEs closed down during 2015 to 2016. The closure of SMEs was as a result of challenges that included access to finance, high employee turnover and unavailability of affordable business premises. The majority of the SMEs that closed down were mostly owned by women. As of 2016, about 37 percent of SMEs were owned by women who were most frequent in the clusters of Textile and

Leather, Body Care, Health and Crèches, Food and Hospitality, Tourism and Crafts, in that order.

### Credit

According to Bank of Namibia (BON), the statistics currently collected from the commercial banks on credit extension to businesses and individuals are not gender disaggregated.

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare under the Income Generating Activities (IGAs) programme, makes

provision for a special fund that empowers women to own businesses by providing them with equipment, machineries and livestock. The IGAs fund, annually supports training of women on Basic Business Management (BBM) skills. During 2015/16 financial year, the Ministry supported 502 women, while in 2016/2017, 356 women benefited from the fund.

Regions	Number of Supported IGAs	Allocated Amount	Number of Beneficiaries	
			Female	Male
Erongo	12	N\$ 173,553.72	31	23
Hardap	14	N\$ 198,347.11	24	19
Karas	7	N\$ 173,553.72	24	19
Kavango East	10	N\$ 148,760.33	37	36
Kavango West	10	N\$ 198,347.11	20	11
Khomas	10	N\$ 247,933.88	20	11
Kunene	16	N\$ 173,553.72	23	17
Ohangwena	9	N\$ 297,520.66	30	15
Omaheke	19	N\$ 173,553.72	43	27
Omusati	23	N\$ 297,520.66	83	16
Oshana	11	N\$ 272,727.27	26	8
Oshikoto	19	N\$ 272,727.27	58	23
Otjozondjupa	11	N\$ 173,553.72	33	17
Zambezi	17	N\$ 198,347.11	50	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>N\$ 3,000,000</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>282</b>

Source: NSA, 2018

### Employment and Benefits

Although the Namibia population has more women than men and despite an increase in the participation of women in the labour force since independence, the various National Labour Force Surveys (NLFS) have all consistently shown that women are under-represented in the labour force as compared to men. The NLFS of 2000

## Employed Persons by Industry

Occupation	Men%	Women%
Agriculture forestry & fishing	22.4	17.4
Mining and quarrying	3.6	0.6
Manufacturing	8.3	4.6
Electricity & related industries	1.1	0.3
Water supply & related industries	0.9	0.4
Construction	16.6	1.1
Wholesale and retail trade	7.5	12.1
Transport and storage	5.4	0.9
Accommodation & food service activities	3.1	11.5
Information & communication	1.1	0.6
Financial and insurance activities	1.6	3.0
Real estate activities	0.1	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1.9	1.7
Administrative & support service activities	5.3	6.7
Public administration, defence, compulsory social security	4.8	4.1
Education	3.6	8.9
Human health & social work activities	1.5	4.3
Arts, entertainment & recreation	0.6	0.6

Source NSA, 2018

in the labour force compared to 69.1 percent of men (NSA, 2012). The latest NLFS report of 2016 shows that LFPR of men is 72.5 percent and women are at 66.6 percent.

In addition to women not being equally represented in the labour force, women are largely confined to non-technical fields as compared to their male counterparts as illustrated in the table above. Women dominate in wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food service activities and education while men are dominant in construction, mining and quarrying, transport and storage occupations and professional, scientific and technical activities.

With regards to employment benefits, particularly for women, in terms of Section 26 of the Labour Act (No.11 of 2007), a female employee who

showed that the labour force participation rate (LFPR) of women was 47.4 percent compared to 62.0 percent for men (Ministry of Labour, 2000). In 2004, the LFPR for women was 36 percent compared to 59.6 percent for men, while the NLFS of 2008 showed that the LFPR of women was 49.9 percent compared to 61.6 percent for men (Ministry of Labour, 2004 and 2008). The NLFS of 2012 shows that 63.2 percent of women participate

has completed six months' continuous service to an employer is with a view to her confinement (date of childbirth), entitled to not less than 12 weeks of maternity leave. During the period of maternity leave, the provisions of the contract of employment remain in force, and the employer must, during the period of maternity leave, pay the employee the remuneration payable.

## Gender Responsive Budgeting

Namibia adopted a revised National Gender Policy 2010-2020 premised on gender mainstreaming as one of its principles. The policy requires that all stakeholders provide financial, human and material resources required for coordination and review of existing laws, gender equality and women empowerment programmes, capacity building for service providers, law enforcement and legal machinery, and for training in gender mainstreaming, research, and monitoring and evaluation.

In 2014, the Cabinet directed all government offices, ministries and agencies in Namibia to comply with Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) guidelines. To support the integration of gender into the country budgeting process, the MGECW prepared and circulated Gender Responsive Budgeting Guidelines to all OMAs in August 2014. Subsequently, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) Treasury Circular/Budget Circular for the 2015/2016 Budget and the 2015/16-2017/18 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) emphasized that budget proposals for OMAs were to adhere to GRB Guidelines as per Cabinet directives. This was the first country Budget Call Circular to incorporate a gender paragraph since the inception of GRB in Namibia in 1998.

The MGECW with support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) commissioned analysis of the respective budgets and MTEF proposals in 2015/16 for 11 Ministries, which collectively are allocated about 70 percent of the total expenditure budget to assess progress in the implementation of the Cabinet directive on GRB and adherence to Paragraph 12 of the Budget Call Circular. The analysis

was to develop strategies to address any challenges found and map out a means of strengthening GRB in Namibia. The Ministry also conducted training for all government office, ministries and agencies using GRB manuals that targeted Training of Trainers (TOT). The National Budget of the Government of the Republic of Namibia allocates resources to cater for gender empowerment and development programmes.

Since its establishment, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, which is responsible for ensuring gender equality and socio-economic development of women and men and the wellbeing of children, has been a beneficiary in the national budget allocation. In the 2015/16 financial year, of the N\$67.08 billion national budget, 2.2 percent was allocated to the gender machinery and in the 2016/17 financial year, the ministry received 1.2 percent of N\$66.64 billion.

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