

MOBILE NAMIBIA:  
MIGRATION TRENDS  
AND ATTITUDES

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BRUCE FRAYNE AND WADE PENDLETON

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## EDITORIAL NOTE:

The current policy paper contains three chapters, authored by Bruce Frayne of Queen's University and Wade Pendleton, formerly at the University of Namibia. The first chapter provides an overview of Namibian international and internal migration movements since independence and also considers the likely future trends of migration in Namibia. The chapter draws heavily on research conducted by the authors for the Namibian National Migration Survey in 1998. The second chapter, with its recommendations for migration management, is drawn from the authors' earlier SAMP contribution: *Namibians on South Africa: Attitudes Towards Cross-Border Migration and Immigration Policy* (Migration Policy Series No. 10, 1998). The final chapter, by Wade Pendleton, is the product of a broader SADC survey conducted by SAMP in 2001 designed to assess public attitudes towards migrants, refugees and immigration policy. The findings for Namibia reported here suggest that Namibia faces a similar challenge to South Africa in terms of public education about the role and impact of migrants.

## CHAPTER ONE

# MIGRATION IN NAMIBIA: AN OVERVIEW

BRUCE FRAYNE AND WADE PENDLETON

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Namibia is a large, sparsely populated country, which shares common borders with Angola and Zambia to the north, Zimbabwe and Botswana to the east, and South Africa to the east and south. As a largely semi-arid country, drought is endemic to Namibia, yet at least 60% of the population live in the rural areas. The more fertile and better watered northern and north-eastern regions are home to more than half of the national population of 1.6 million. Windhoek is the capital city, and with a population of around 220,000, is about seven times the size of the second largest urban centres of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund, which are situated on the Atlantic coast, deep within the forbidding Namib Desert. Oshakati in the central north is growing rapidly, and is fast competing for second place to Windhoek in terms of population size and annual growth rate (Figure 1).

Namibia won its independence from South Africa in 1990, and this political liberation heralded a new era of border control between Namibia and South Africa, which had remained porous for both Namibians and South Africans until that time. Tighter cross-border controls were accompanied by the total removal of internal influx controls. Independence therefore brought with it considerable changes in the internal migration patterns and population concentrations in the country. On the one hand, migratory labour to South Africa all but ceased; yet, on the other hand, internal migration and urbanisation grew rapidly.

Because Namibia only became independent in 1990, statistics were not kept for the former South West Africa, as the territory was considered part of South Africa, and administered as a fifth province. Cross-border movement between Namibia and South Africa was therefore unrecorded until 1990, while formal cross-border movements between Namibia and its other neighbours were virtually non-existent, due to the war in the northern areas of the country, and the significant military presence and control of the borders.

Moreover, any formal movement between the former South West Africa and other countries would have been enumerated under the auspices of South Africa, and so remain undifferentiated for the period up

to 1990. Compounding this situation, Namibia has taken some years since independence to set up systems and controls relating to cross-border migration, thus contributing to the dearth of data in this regard.

There is no substantial research available which addresses the complete range of internal and international migration dynamics, particularly since 1980. The focus of migration research has been on internal migration to Windhoek, and to a far lesser degree, to other towns in Namibia.<sup>1</sup> This gap in the knowledge base of Namibian domestic migration justified the first national migration survey in Namibia, which focused on internal migration, and was carried out in 1998.<sup>2</sup> This chapter therefore draws significantly on these recent findings regarding migration trends and patterns in post-independence Namibia.

With regard to cross-border migration, particularly, between Namibia and South Africa, there is likewise little official documentation available. Nonetheless, where information has been made available by government sources, it is reported in this chapter. The South African government keeps contemporary statistics on Namibians in South Africa, and this data has also been included. The Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) commissioned a national opinion survey in Namibia on cross-border migration issues in 1998, and where possible, relevant data from that project have been used to substantiate cross-border migration trends reported.<sup>3</sup>

This overview chapter examines in some detail the cross-border and internal migration trends and patterns in Namibia after independence, and considers the central policy implications of the findings for the country. The chapter is divided into three major sections: (a) internal migration and urbanization, (b) cross-border migration, and (c) policy implications.

## 1.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF MIGRATION IN NAMIBIA

The first major migrations of people both within Namibia and across its borders in the last century commenced as a result of the German colonial occupation of Namibia from 1890 onwards. Urban migration to towns in central Namibia, especially Windhoek, was an early experience for the Herero and Damara, and early records of Windhoek show growing numbers of both groups.<sup>4</sup> Although limited conflicts took place between the German and Owambo people, the northern part of Namibia was not incorporated within the German colonial administration of the country.

Conflict over land between the Germans and the Herero and the Nama resulted in anti-colonial revolts during the period 1903-1907. These wars virtually destroyed the Herero population, leaving about 16,000 alive by the end of them (originally a population of 60,000-

## Population distribution in Namibia



Source: Frayne, B. 2001. *Survival of the Poorest: Migration and Food Security in Namibia*. Ph.D. Thesis. Kingston: Queen's University.

80,000), with 14,000 of that number held in concentration camps. The Nama population was also greatly reduced and, with about 40% killed, there were only some 10,000 Namas left in 1907.<sup>5</sup> Many of the Herero who survived the war went into exile in Bechuanaland (Botswana) where they and their descendants lived. Only after 1995 did some Herero who wanted to be repatriated to Namibia have the opportunity to return.

South Africa, as an ally of Britain in the First World War, invaded Namibia in 1915 and defeated the Germans. This marked the beginning of a vigorous and systematic programme of racially discriminatory policies to the detriment of the Namibian people. Discrimination intensified after 1948 when the Nationalist Party won the election in South Africa, and apartheid was introduced to both South Africa and Namibia.

In 1962 the Odendaal Commission provided guidelines for dividing Namibia into geographic and administrative regions. The recommendations were implemented in 1964. As a result, 11 regions were proclaimed, based on racial and ethnic criteria, akin to the “homelands” in South Africa. The 10 black regions received 40% of the total land area of the country, and the one white region received 43%. The remainder of the land fell under government control and was either put over to natural reserve or mining districts. The white “homeland” occupied much of the inland plateau, the richest farmland in the country and the capital city. In the black homelands, families could no longer subsist entirely off the land. Reliance on wage income therefore ensured a supply of labour to the white-owned farms, the mines and the towns.<sup>6</sup>

In many ways, apartheid in Namibia was tougher than in South Africa, largely because of the small size of the population and the remoteness of the country. In addition to the German settlers already present by 1915, many South African whites moved to Namibia and a commercial farming sector was established covering about 40% of the territory. As the capital city of Windhoek began to grow, and as other smaller towns come into being, the South African administration designated these towns primarily for white occupation. Again, much like the situation in South Africa, blacks were only allowed to reside in towns if they were employed or if they could prove years of uninterrupted residence.<sup>7</sup>

Areas that fell outside the commercial farms were known as communal areas, and black Namibians were required to live in them. Only farm labourers were allowed to live in the commercial farming areas, often in conditions of deplorable poverty and servitude on the white farms. With the communal areas receiving little commercial or social investment, pressures to migrate to urban areas in search of employment rose steadily during the colonial period. However, a host of influx con-

control laws and regulations limited the opportunities for migration from increasingly impoverished communal areas to towns in Namibia.

More than half of the country's population lived (and continues to live) in the communal area to the north of the commercial farming area. A 'veterinary' cordon fence was established along this boundary which was designed to prevent cattle and people from crossing.<sup>8</sup> The South African police patrolled the country and enforced the myriad of laws and regulations that restricted people's freedom and human rights, and military control of the northern communal areas by the South Africans also made for easy implementation of restrictions on a range of internal and cross border migration.

Migratory labour was always limited in Namibia, particularly with regard to South Africa. Labour migration from the populous north of Namibia was controlled until 1976 by the South West African Native Labour Association (SWANLA) which provided contract employment in the towns, mines, and farms primarily for Owambo people from north-central Namibia.<sup>9</sup> When the contract was finished they were required to return to the north. Limited labour migration took place from the Kavango to South Africa for work on the mines, but this ended more than twenty years ago.

In response to South Africa's refusal to relinquish its control of the country and to hand it back to Namibians, the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) waged a 23 year guerrilla war of liberation. The prolonged conflict led to a UN-brokered resolution (No. 545) in which Namibia gained its independence in 1990. The conflict was concentrated along the Namibian border with Angola and Zambia, and required the movement by the South African military forces of local people, often with devastating effects on the rural population.<sup>10</sup> In addition, military and security considerations led to considerable investments in roads, airports and urban infrastructure, partly as support for a "hearts and minds" programme aimed at co-opting local people and diluting resistance, and partly to facilitate the deployment of military power against SWAPO and its Angolan allies. During the Namibian War of Liberation, about 40,000 Namibians went into exile primarily in Angola, Zambia, Europe, Cuba, and North America. Most who went into exile returned to Namibia after Independence.<sup>11</sup>

Within the historical context described, the cessation of the war, independence and a new sense of political, social and economic freedom, have all influenced the substantial changes in internal and cross border migration trends and patterns observed over the past decade in Namibia.

### 1.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NAMIBIA

The size of the Namibian population is based on estimates and projections from the 1991 Population Census that reported the population to be 1,409,900 people.<sup>12</sup> The most recent population projection by Market Research Africa for the Namibian All Media and Broadcasting Survey was a comprehensive, detailed assessment of population estimates, projections, and actual population data from some localities where the data was available.<sup>13</sup> Tables 1 and 2 below show the 1996 population estimate to be 1,681,400 with about 49% male and 51% female. The Namibian population is young with about 44% of the population under 16 years of age.

Year	Total	Males	Females
1991	1,409,900	686,300	723,500
1996	1,681,400	818,600	862,800

*Source: Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (1996:2)*

Age Cohort	Males	Females	Total
0-15	360,900	371,800	732,700
16-24	154,000	160,600	314,500
25-34	113,500	124,000	237,500
35-49	99,000	102,100	201,000
50+	91,200	104,300	195,500
Total	818,600	862,800	1,681,400

*Source: Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (1996)*

Approximately 60% of the Namibian population are primarily rural dwellers and the remaining 40% are urban.<sup>14</sup> About 50% of the rural population live in the six northern regions of the country: Oshana, Oshikoto, Omusati, Oshana, Kavango and Caprivi. Most of the people cultivate crops and keep livestock. They live in dispersed homesteads and villages. About 5% of the national population live in the major towns found in these northern regions: Oshakati, Ondangwa, Rundu, and Katima Mulilo. The major ethnic groups found in the rural north are the Owambo, Thimbukushu, Ruciriku, Rusambu, Rumbunza, Rukwangali, Lozi, Sifwe and Subia.

The majority of the 5% of the population that lives in rural communal areas in the central part of Namibia keep livestock and only engage

in limited crop cultivation; no crop cultivation is possible in the southern communal area. The major ethnic groups found in these areas are the Herero, Nama, and Damara. Another 6% of the population live on the commercial farms where livestock and farming activities take place. Most of this land is privately owned by German and Afrikaner farmers. About 35% of the population live in the urban central towns with over 15% of the urban population concentrated in Windhoek.

In the 1991 Population Census, 119,218 people (about 8% of the population) were listed as foreign born out of a 1991 Census population of 1,409,920.<sup>15</sup> No figures exist on the place of origin of the foreign born; however, the majority appear to come from Angola, South Africa, Zambia, and Botswana in that order.<sup>16</sup>

#### 1.4 INTERNAL MIGRATION AND URBANISATION

Since independence in 1990 there has been a substantial increase in rural-urban migration, which has resulted in significant urban growth. For example, the 1991 Population Census urban percentage of population was about 32% and the estimated 1996 urban population was 40%. Given the recent increases in the population of major towns, this percentage is now even higher.

Post-independence urban migration is related to various historical factors that kept rural-urban migration limited in the past. In particular, prior to 1990, those urban centres situated in the communal areas of the country served primarily as administrative centres for the colonial power. In addition, in most of the northern parts of Namibia, the protracted guerrilla war ensured that migration to towns in these areas was tightly controlled by the South African security forces operating there. Migration was certainly allowed, but it was largely to serve the military machine of the South African government, and to provide domestic labour within those centres.

This situation of control changed within all communal areas after independence in 1990. The opportunities to move are significantly better than during the South African period of rule. People are also responding to the environmental stresses evident in rural areas, and the socio-economic forces of urbanisation, with both these factors contributing to rapid increases in population growth within the towns of the communal areas. For example, the town of Oshakati in northern Namibia was a central and large military base prior to 1990. However, the withdrawal of South African military and administrative personnel meant increased opportunities for people to move into the town from the surrounding communal farming areas. By 1993, the larger proportion of the town's population of 35,000 lived outside the formal urban sector, mainly in shanties on state-owned land. The latest estimate

(1999) is 50,000 people living within the townland boundaries, of which perhaps 80% live in nine informal settlements.<sup>17</sup> While this growth is perhaps the most dramatic example of post-independence urbanisation in the communal areas of Namibia, similar trends are evident across the country.

Windhoek remains the largest and fastest growing urban centre in Namibia, although the gap between it and the towns of Walvis Bay and Swakopmund on the west coast has narrowed since independence. The rapid urbanisation experienced by Walvis Bay and Swakopmund is partly a response to a growing tourist industry, but more importantly, it appears to be the result of the creation of an economic export-processing zone (EPZ) in Walvis Bay. The EPZ is intended to stimulate economic investment and growth within the region. In conjunction with the development of the fishing industry, it has created significant urban growth. Now that the government is building a seawater desalination plant in Swakopmund, fresh domestic and industrial water will no longer pose the limits to growth envisioned for the coast. In addition, the deep-water harbour at Walvis Bay will continue to ensure its key position within the Namibian economy.

Turning now to the capital city of Windhoek, this chapter examines the urbanisation dynamic evident in this important urban centre.<sup>18</sup> The population of Windhoek grew at an annual rate of 5.4% in the 1990s, the largest annual growth rate in its history. The 1997 population of Windhoek was about 200,000 people.<sup>19</sup> Most of the population growth is taking place in Katutura, the large township located to the north-west of the city, where about 60% of the urban area's population live on about 20% of the urban area's land. Most of the growth in the Katutura population is due to migration. Central Katutura is the older more established part of the township; the North-West areas, where most of the informal, shanty housing is located and much of the growth is taking place, surrounds central Katutura to the north and west. Virtually all the people who live in Katutura are black Namibians.<sup>20</sup>

It is estimated that the population of Windhoek will double to more than 400,000 by 2010.<sup>21</sup> Most of this growth will come from migration and the Katutura area will be unable to absorb it; considerable growth in the form of shanty housing will take place to the west and south of Windhoek. It is estimated that in the future 50% of the Windhoek urban area's housing may be shanties.<sup>22</sup>

The attraction of Windhoek and Katutura is easy to understand. Windhoek is a place of opportunity with better access to education, health, water, electricity and especially work opportunities. Subsidies also contribute to the attraction making the costs of food, housing and medical care cheaper for urban residents. Private and public sector

activities are centralised in Windhoek and account for 40% of the total labour force (including both informal and formal sectors) in urban areas in the country.<sup>23</sup> The 'primacy' of Windhoek is due in part to the fact that secondary towns received little economic stimulation during the South African apartheid era; what government investment took place was primarily to benefit white business activities and the commercial farming sector.

Windhoek accounts for about 15% of Namibia's urban population. It is the predominant economic, service, manufacturing, and political centre of the country. In the early 1990s, Windhoek accounted for 51% of national manufacturing activity, 94% of communications and transport, 96% of utilities, 82% of business and financial services, 68% of social and community services, and 56% of construction and trade activities.<sup>24</sup> The Namibian development budgets for recent years also reflect the dominance of the central region and Windhoek. Per capita spending on projects in the central region (which includes Windhoek as a major target) was N\$659 in 1995-96, which is about double the expenditure in the other regions.<sup>25</sup> Similar levels of expenditure are reported for 1995-96 and 1997-98.<sup>26</sup> The allocation of funds to the Khomas Regional Council (where Windhoek is located) is over ten times the amount allocated per capita to councils in other regions, and the importance of shifting development away from Windhoek to achieve more balanced regional development is discussed in the most recent UNDP report.<sup>27</sup> However, as illustrated below, Windhoek and Katutura are not equally attractive to people from different parts of Namibia.

The 1996 Katutura population was about 54% male, reflecting the fact that more male than female migrants come to the area. Oshiwambo speaking people (Owambo) are the majority ethnic group in Katutura making up about 40% of the 1996 population. There have been small increases in the percentages of Lozi (Caprivi) and Kwangari (Okavango) speaking peoples in Katutura that may reflect a pattern that could increase in the future.

Almost three-quarters of the adult 1996 Katutura population were migrants with about half having moved there within the last five years.<sup>28</sup> About 40% of the migrants moved to the North-West areas. The age/sex structure of adult migrant and non-migrant populations show important differences: the migrants have larger percentages of people in the 25 to 44 age categories and are more male (55%) than female (45%). When migrants first arrive in Katutura they usually stay with relatives (69%).

The report of the findings of the Namibian Migration Project (NMP) highlights several important aspects of the rural-urban migration process in Namibia.<sup>29</sup> While the data does not provide an in-depth

analysis of the situation, it does discuss relevant social and demographic issues. The report suggests that visiting and exchanging commodities are important ways of keeping social relationships active. Almost three-quarters of the respondents in the NMP survey say they visit their relatives and friends in the rural areas a few times a year or at least once a year, with some small differences in visiting patterns by language group and domicile. The most popular destinations for visits are the rural north and the central towns. Visits to the rural areas are important to maintain kinship ties, to avoid the label 'Ombwiti' (one who has lost roots) and to keep current rights to rural resources such as land and cattle. However, family issues and social events are the predominant reasons for all visiting. About a third of households are involved with exchanges of items; particularly money, food, and clothing.<sup>30</sup>

Tables 1.3 and 1.4 present data indicating trends in lifetime migration patterns in Namibia. The first, Table 1.3, is an analysis of 1991 Census data, which compares the place of residence at the time of the Census with the place of birth. The shortcomings of this data include the fact that only one move is captured, and that only moves between census districts are captured. Moves within districts are not revealed by this analysis. Table 1.4 is therefore included which is based on the findings of the NMP survey, and provides a more fine-grained indication of migrations patterns.<sup>31</sup>

The lifetime migration data shows that there are four major migration patterns at work in Namibia. The first pattern is rural-rural migration within the communal areas. This pattern accounts for over half of all lifetime migration reported, and only includes migration history data for people who have moved from their place of birth. For example, this migration pattern represents moves made by people who are born in the 4 'O's and currently living in the 4 'O's, born in Kavango and currently living in the Kavango, born in the western communal and living in the western communal, and so forth. It also includes moves to the rural north by people born outside Namibia. Since this is lifetime migration, some of these people may have made intermediate moves, although 38% of the migration histories reported only one move. This pattern reveals that internal migration within individual communal areas is very widespread. It also combines moves with high ranks with low ranks and it should be noted that moves within the same communal area are much more important to people in the rural north than in the rural central.<sup>33</sup>

The second pattern, accounting for about 15% of lifetime migration, is rural-urban migration. It includes two major types of moves. Type One moves are from rural areas to the rural communal towns such as Oshakati and Ondangwa in the 4 'O's, Rundu in the Kavango, Katima

Table 1.3: Main Lifetime Migration Patterns Between Census Districts. 1991			
District Born	District Resident	Rank Number	Primary Type of Migration
Ondangwa	Oshakati	1 22,959	R-R and R-U
Oshakati	Windhoek	2 18,884	R/U-U
Ondangwa	Windhoek	3 15,747	R/U-U
Oshakati	Ondangwa	4 12,966	R-R and R-U
Rehoboth	Windhoek	5 7,159	U-U
Gobabis	Windhoek	6 4,071	U-U
Outjo	Damaraland	7 3,809	R-R
Okavango	Grootfontein	8 3,746	R-U
Oshakati	Grootfontein	9 3,673	R/U-U
Oshakati	Luderitz	10 3,604	R/U-U
Windhoek	Hereroland East	11 3,320	U-R
Ondangwa	Swakopmund	12 3,179	R/U-U
Mariental	Windhoek	13 3,044	U-U
Keetmanshoop	Windhoek	14 3,021	U-U
Oshakati	Swakopmund	15 3,018	R/U-U
Windhoek	Rehoboth	16 3,006	U-U
Ondangwa	Tsumeb	17 2,879	R/U-U
Gobabis	Hereroland East	18 2,798	U-R
Ondangwa	Grootfontein	19 2,763	R/U-U
Windhoek	Damaraland	20 2,760	U-R
Oshakati	Tsumeb	21 2,749	R/U-U
Windhoek	Oshakati	22 2,742	U-U/U-R
Ondangwa	Luderitz	23 2,694	R/U-U
Windhoek	Okahandja	24 2,654	U-U
Keetmanshoop	Namaland	25 2,436	U-R
Windhoek	Hereroland West	26 2,366	U-R
Oshakati	Okahandja	27 2,354	R/U-U
Omaruru	Damaraland	28 2,229	R-R
Hereroland East	Windhoek	29 2,080	R-U
Okavango	Caprivi	30 2,076	U-U
Total		150,786	

*Source: Pendleton and Frayne, 1998: 12, based on the 1991 Population Census of Namibia (Republic of Namibia 1993)*

Table 1.4: Main Lifetime Migration Patterns Between Urban and Rural Areas, 1998 <sup>32</sup>			
Place Born	Place Resident	Rank Number	Type of Migration
4 'O's	4 'O's	1 388	R-R
Caprivi	Caprivi	2 133	R-R
Urban Central Major Towns	Urban Central Major Towns	3 116	U-U
Kavango	Kavango	4 92	R-R
Outside Namibia	Urban Central Major Towns	5 44	—U
Outside Namibia	Kavango	6 44	R-U
4 'O'	Urban Communal	7 33	—R
Windhoek	Urban Central Major Towns	8 28	U-U
Outside Namibia	Urban Communal Towns	9 28	—U
Urban Central Major Towns	Urban Communal	10 28	U-U
4 'O's	Urban Central Major Towns	11 27	R-U
Urban Communal	Kavango	12 26	U-R
Urban Central Major Towns	Eastern Communal	13 22	U-R
Urban Central Minor Towns	Urban Central Major Towns	14 21	—U
Outside Namibia	Windhoek	15 20	—U
Urban Central Major Towns	Windhoek	16 19	U-U
Southern Communal	Urban Central Major Towns	17 19	U-U
4 'O's	Windhoek	18 18	R-U
Urban Communal	Urban Central Major Towns	19 16	U-U
Urban Central Major Towns	Western Communal	21 13	U-R
Windhoek	Eastern Communal	22 13	U-R
Caprivi	Urban Communal	23 13	
Urban Central Minor Towns	Southern Communal	23 13	U-R
Southern Communal	Southern Communal	24 11	U-U
Urban Central Major Towns	Southern Communal	25 11	R-R
Windhoek	Windhoek	26 10	U-R
Urban Communal	Eastern Communal	27 10	U-R
Eastern Communal	Eastern Communal	28 9	R-R
Kavango	Urban Communal	29 8	R-U
Urban Central Minor Towns	Western Communal	30 7	U-R
Commercial Farms	Windhoek	31 7	R-U
Western Communal	Western Communal	32 6	R-R
Eastern Communal	Windhoek	33 6	R-U
Outside Namibia	Caprivi	34 6	—R
Total		1,218	

Mulilo in the Caprivi, Okakarara in the Eastern Communal, and Xhorixas in the Western Communal. Type Two moves are from the rural communal areas urban central major towns (especially Windhoek). It also includes moves to these urban central major towns from outside Namibia.<sup>34</sup>

Accounting for about 20% of lifetime migration, pattern three is urban to urban migration. This pattern includes moves from urban communal towns to major urban central towns, and moves between urban central major towns. Moves from and to Windhoek are a major urban-urban pattern. It also includes moves from minor towns to major towns.<sup>35</sup>

The fourth pattern is urban-rural moves accounting for about 9% of lifetime migration. It includes moves to rural communal areas in the central and north by people born in the urban communal and urban central towns. It is interesting to note that there are no Owambo who are born in the urban areas who report moving back to the rural north; people in all other areas report urban to rural moves of this type.<sup>36</sup>

## 1.5 CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION

The information on arrivals provided in Table 1.5 is a summation of data from all Namibian border posts. Complete data was obtained for 1997 and for 1998 through September. Data for previous years was not available. Table 1.6 details tourist arrival information for 1997. Non-tourist foreign arrivals for 1997 were 102,163; however, there is no detail available on the breakdown according to purpose of visit, although most are probably business-related visits.

	1997	1998 (January to September)
Total Namibian Arrivals	268,059	196,890
Total Foreign Arrivals	604,175	493,340
Total Arrivals	872,234	690,230
<i>Source: Ministry of Home Affairs</i>		

South African statistics on visitors to Namibia from South Africa are available, and the most recent report states that during 1997 some 28,938 South African permanent residents (including citizens) visited Namibia. The overwhelming majority visited for holiday purposes, although business reasons were given by a small number of these visitors.<sup>37</sup>

There is no data available from the Government for legal immigrants to Namibia. The South African Central Statistics Service reports

<b>Table 1.6: Tourist Arrival Information, 1997</b>		
	Number	Percent
African (excluding South Africa and Angola)	37,640	7%
South African	187,687	37%
Angola	158,188	32%
European	101,162	20%
North American	9,181	2%
Other: including Australia, South East Asia, Japan	8,154	2%
Total Tourist Arrivals	502,012	100%
<i>Source: Ministry of Environment and Tourism</i>		

that 545 South African permanent residents emigrated to Namibia in the period 1997-1998. It is interesting to note that only 41 people officially emigrated from Namibia to South Africa during the same years. The SAMP survey for Namibia tends to support these figures in that Namibians reported very little interest in migrating to South Africa on a permanent basis.<sup>38</sup>

There is no data available either for temporary or contract workers in Namibia. It is difficult to surmise with any justification what the trends might be in this regard, primarily due to the lack of official data and research material. Having said that, the Government in on record as opposing the issue of resident permits to foreigners, with the view that by reducing the number of foreign workers and residents, Namibians seeking employment will be assisted through reductions in job market competition. Thus it might be expected that the number of legal migrants is limited in Namibia.

There is even less data on unauthorised migration to Namibia. Movement between Namibia and South Africa is relatively easy in that the necessary visas are issued on a pro forma basis at the border to Namibian and South African passport holders and permanent residents. Almost all cross-border movement is also documented. In addition, the harsh environment typical of the entire border between the two countries makes off-road crossing a hazardous and unlikely event. This assertion is supported by the findings of the SAMP survey in Namibia, where only one respondent claimed to have made the crossing by foot; all others travelled by air or road.<sup>39</sup> The number of undocumented South Africans in Namibia is thus likely to be very small.

With regard to Namibia's other neighbours, certainly the strong historical and socio-economic ties between Namibians living in the central north of the country and Angola suggest that undocumented migration is likely to be higher than between Namibia and South Africa. In addition, the civil war in Angola increased the unauthorised migration

from Angola into Namibia (see below). The SAMP survey found that 14% of the Namibian sample had visited Angola, and it might be expected that a somewhat higher percentage of undocumented Angolans are in northern Namibia (given the attractiveness of Namibian peace and relative prosperity compared with Angola). Similarly, Caprivians in the north-eastern arm of the country are historically and culturally tied to the Lozi speaking people in southern Zambia, and some 12% of the Namibian sample had visited Zambia. The porous border, its lack of policing, and the common language and familial ties between the two countries make it highly likely that at least a similar proportion of Zambians are in Namibia and undocumented. The situations are not as pronounced with Zimbabwe and Botswana, although again a common language and heritage between some groups living near the border in eastern Namibia and western Botswana suggest that unauthorised movements do occur.<sup>40</sup>

The official figures prepared by the Government of Namibia on the arrival of refugees for the period 1997-1998 appear in Table 1.7. While the number of documented refugees over this period from Rwanda exceeds all other countries, the number of Angolans reported appears to under-represented. Not only is there a strong presence of Angolans in Northern Namibia, but the Government deported some 3,500 Angolan refugees during this same period. Moreover, a recent report describes the situation of Angolan refugees in Namibia as a “crisis”, and estimates the number to be approximately 25,000 in the whole of the country.<sup>41</sup> The Osire refugee camp in Northern Namibia is home to about 20,000 refugees from Angola (2002).<sup>42</sup>

In terms of outward migration from Namibia, there is only data available from the Namibian Government for legal exits from 1997, and the information is only available in an aggregated form (Table 1.8). This makes it impossible to disaggregate the data into meaningful categories, by citizens, purpose of departure, and by country of destination. Statistics South Africa (formerly the Central Statistical Service) keeps its own records of arrivals, and these are shown in Table 1.9 for Namibia.

There is no data available for emigration from Namibia. It is likely that most emigration is undeclared and typically undertaken by people with significant resources. This would include students who leave Namibia for tertiary education, either in South Africa or abroad, as well as skilled workers and business people who leave for better economic opportunities. The only data that could be found was for Namibians who have emigrated to South Africa, and again, these records are kept by the Statistics South Africa (SSA). There were only 29 declared immigrants from Namibia to South Africa in 1997, and 12 in 1998.<sup>43</sup>

<b>Table 1.7: Refugee Arrivals in Namibia, 1997-1998</b>	
Country	1997-1998
Angola	380
Burundi	58
Rwanda	1,958
Liberia	21
Somalia	4
Zaire	29
Sudan	3
Uganda	2
Cameroon	4
Congo Brazzaville	0
Democratic Republic of the Congo	29
Kenya	1
Total Refugees in Namibia (*)	2,713
<i>Source: Ministry of Home Affairs. 1997 (January to September) and 1998 (October 1997 to October 1998).</i>	
<i>(*) Total includes refugee arrivals prior to October 1997.</i>	

<b>Table 1.8: Legal Cross-Border Departures, 1997</b>		
	1997	1998 (Jan. to Sept.)
Total Namibian Departures	294,297	199,420
Total Foreign Departures	535,607	419,898
Total Departures	829,904	619,318
Angolan refugees repatriated to Angola	135 (Jan-Sept 1997)	132 (Oct 1997-Oct 1998)
Angolan Deportations	1,970	1,416
Other Deportations (African and Asian)	–	255
<i>Source: Ministry of Home Affairs</i>		

No research has been done in Namibia on either the scale or the possible consequences of skills emigration.

There is no data available for legal out-migration from Namibia. The SAA reported that in 1996 less than three percent of all visitors to South Africa were contract workers, and that of all visitors to South Africa in that year, five percent were from Namibia, and very few were visiting for purposes of work.

This trend is supported by the SAMP survey in Namibia, where only 11% of the respondents who had visited South Africa actually went to work. This percentage represents only about 25 people in the national sample of 600. Moreover, as the sample was designed to over represent

<b>Table 1.9: Legal Entries from Namibia to South Africa, 1991-1999</b>	
Year	Number of Arrivals
1991	140, 527
1992	180, 927
1993	163,772
1994	188,877
1995	213,063
1996	200,523
1997	n/a
1998	200,602
1999	201,685
<i>Source: SSA</i>	

urban areas, the actual percentage of all Namibians going to South Africa to work is very small indeed. Given that the SAMP survey showed conclusively that Namibians have a low propensity to migrate to South Africa, even though South Africa remains the most accessible and likely destination for work, legal out-migration to countries other than South Africa might be expected to be even lower.<sup>44</sup> Just the legal obstacles to obtaining the necessary permits to work in countries other than South Africa suggests that there would be few Namibians working outside the country. When this situation is considered within the context of limited economic and/or social opportunities in countries other than South Africa, the assertion of limited legal out-migration appears realistic.

There is also no data available on unauthorised out-migration from Namibia. Estimates have not been made, nor have studies been undertaken which consider this aspect of the labour market. Most unauthorised out-migration is likely to consist of informal cross-border movements between Namibia and Angola, Zambia, and to a lesser degree, Botswana. Socio-economic heterogeneity of populations along these common borders has been identified here as an important contributing factor in such movements. However, these trends do not, for the most part, appear to constitute an active pattern of cross-border migration with the kinds of economic objectives usually associated with undocumented migration. It is more likely that the cross-border migration witnessed in these areas is the result of family and kin associations which straddle these borders, and where economic concerns are motivating factors, they will be primarily within the so-called traditional agricultural productive spheres (cereal and livestock), rather than for purposes of formal or informal employment.

Turning to South Africa, the SSA estimates that there are fewer

than 20,000 unauthorised Namibians in South Africa.<sup>45</sup> The findings of the SAMP survey (1998), together with the trends noted in the NMP survey, support the notion that there are few undocumented border crossings into South Africa, and by implication, even fewer into other less accessible, less attractive countries within the region (with the exception of Angola and Zambia, for reasons discussed above).

## 1.6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings presented in this chapter indicate that urbanisation is proceeding rapidly in Namibia. Both the capital city of Windhoek and the secondary towns are experiencing unprecedented rates of urban growth. Policy is therefore required to meet the challenges of urbanisation that will likely be sustained well into the next century.

The expectation of sustained urbanisation provides an opportunity for government to reach substantial numbers of people in a cost-effective manner in its socio-economic development goals. While development efforts aimed at the urban centres may require creative private-public partnerships in order to maximise resource use and distribution, the absence of a coherent urbanisation policy for Namibia hampers this opportunity. Indeed, reducing subsidisation from central government to local authorities in keeping with the national decentralisation policy is contributing to the creation of critical fiscal, social and environmental problems in many secondary towns across the country. This situation calls for the urgent establishment of a coordinated and visionary urbanisation policy, which might make a direct contribution to the positive socio-economic development of Namibia's population.

While Namibia appears to be resistant to the idea of open borders within the SADC in the immediate future, resistance appears not to be based on the desire to maintain national borders and strict control over migration per se, but rather on pragmatic domestic concerns of limiting and controlling criminal activity within Namibia. The government is therefore interested in seeking out solutions for greater socio-economic and political integration within the SADC region, while safeguarding domestic security. It does not appear, however, that Namibia is as yet able to clearly articulate its position regarding regional integration, and the potential benefits that it might foresee for the country (and the region).

However, a key question in relation to free cross-border movement for Namibia relates to social and economic development: What is the potential of increased regional integration to improve domestic social welfare? If poverty continues unabated, even in the face of economic growth, then Namibia's crime situation is likely to worsen (a key argument made against integration by government officials in Namibia),

irrespective of the degree to which borders are porous. However, if Namibia is indeed committed to increasing regional integration, it would undoubtedly prefer a phased approach to the issue. Simply resisting participation is insufficient to safeguard domestic security, and a proactive approach is required, which includes the social and economic development objectives of the country as a central pillar to the emerging policy.

Moreover, the very limited statistics on skilled migration to and from Namibia raise concerns regarding the possible impact of the loss of skills vital to the national economy. Namibia urgently requires survey data to better articulate the nature and scale of any so-called 'brain drain' that may be underway. This information is critical to the question of Namibia's stance and role in the SADC-wide regional integration debate, and may provide much needed data for the government to develop its arguments in the debate surrounding migration policy. Greater regional integration and fewer restrictions on the employment of foreign nationals may improve domestic economic performance, and be in the national interests of Namibia.

## CHAPTER TWO

### NAMIBIAN IMMIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA<sup>46</sup>

BRUCE FRAYNE AND WADE PENDLETON

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Until Independence, Namibia was administered largely as a colony of South Africa. Nearly a century of close ties created a somewhat unique history that affected cross-border migration between the two countries in ways that are different from other countries in the Southern African region. This chapter focuses on Namibian immigration between South Africa and Namibia. It reports the findings of SAMP interviews conducted with 600 Namibians between May and June of 1998 about their experiences with, and attitudes towards, cross-border migration to South Africa. The sample was selected from the major geopolitical regions of Namibia, and is broadly representative of Namibia's heterogeneous and widely dispersed population. The questionnaire used for the interviews was the same instrument used by SAMP to interview people in Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in mid-1997.

#### 2.2 NAMIBIAN MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

Namibia's unique relationship with South Africa has shaped patterns of cross-border migration between the two countries. The first important finding of the survey is that 38% of the sample had been to South Africa (Table 2.1). When location and race are considered, a predictable picture begins to emerge. Ninety-seven percent of visitors to South Africa are urban residents, which exceeds the sample proportion of urban areas by 13%, suggesting that it is urban people who are largely the visitors, rather than rural dwellers. While 42% of the visitors were Africans, they are also primarily urban.

Of those Africans surveyed in the northern communal areas, only 8% had been to South Africa. In addition, the coloured and white populations (who have the strongest historical, economic and cultural ties with South Africa) comprise 58% of those who had visited South Africa at least once in their lives (even though they make up only 27% of the sample population). Again, these people are predominantly urban residents.

<b>Table 2.1: Profile of Visitors to South Africa</b>	
Been to South Africa?	%
Yes	38
No	62
Gender	
Male	56
Female	44
Urban or Rural	
Urban	97
Rural	3
Age	
15 - 24	16
25 - 44	51
45 - 64	26
65+	7
Marital Status	
Married	68
Separated/Divorced/Abandoned	3
Widowed	4
Unmarried	25
Household Status	
Household Head	46
Spouse	28
Child	16
Other Family	8
Other	2
Home Ownership	
Live With Others/Illegally Occupy	2
Accommodation as Part of Job	3
Rent	18
Own	77
Income/Household Member/Per Year (in Rands)	
160 or less	7
161 - 450	5
451 - 1200	9
1200+	79

<b>Table 2.1: Profile of Visitors to South Africa (cont.)</b>	
Level of Employment Activity	%
Inactive	27
Looking for Work	15
Part-time	11
Full-time	48
Level of Education	
No Schooling	4
Some Primary School	14
Primary School Completed	4
Some High School	34
High School Completed	23
Post-Grad and Further	21
Race	
African	42
White	18
Coloured	40

Namibian men only slightly out-number women as visitors. This is in sharp contrast with Zimbabwe and especially Mozambique, where men are far more likely to have been to South Africa.<sup>47</sup> This may be explained by the very limited labour migration from Namibia to serve South African economic needs.

With regard to age, marital status, home ownership, and employment, the survey showed that about 50% of Namibian visitors to South Africa are between 25 and 44 years of age, about half are married and heads of households, about three-quarters own their home, and almost 60% are employed on a full or part-time basis. It is noteworthy that Namibian visitors are generally better educated and have higher personal household income levels than visitors to South Africa from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho.

Most Namibians who visit South Africa do so only once or twice a year (see Table 2.2). Almost 90% of all visits are for less than a month, with 14 being the average number of lifetime visits.

## REASONS FOR MIGRATION TO SOUTH AFRICA

By far the most important reason cited for going to South Africa was to visit friends and family, and to go on holiday. In fact 63% of visitors to South Africa went for these reasons alone. In contrast, only 13% of the sample visited South Africa for work-related purposes (see Table 2.3).

<b>Table 2.2: Length and Frequency of Visits to South Africa</b>	
Number of visits	%
Average Number of Visits in Lifetime	14
Average Number of Visits in the Last Five Years	4
Frequency of visits (during past 5 years)	
More Than Once a Month	1
Once a Month	-
Once Every Few Months	9
Once or Twice a Year	25
Less Than Once or Twice a year	38
I Have Been Just Once	27
Average length of stay	
Less Than A Month	87
Between 1 and 3 Months	6
Between 3 and 6 Months	3
Between 6 Months and a Year	1
More Than 1 Year	3

Namibia's remoteness from the big urban centres of South Africa also ensures that very few people go to shop, which differs from the other countries, particularly Lesotho and Zimbabwe. Namibia also has the advantage of a having a well-supplied retail sector, thus reducing the need for Namibians to travel to South Africa specifically to shop.

Of those respondents who travelled to South Africa for work purposes, only four respondents actually went to look for work. Of the 11% who went to work in South Africa, over half (51%) had arranged employment before they left Namibia. Virtually all of the people who went to work were urban males, married, owned homes and represent a relatively stable sector of the population.

Approximately 85% of the Namibian sample reported that they returned from South Africa on their last visit because their holidays ended, or for family reasons, or that they simply wanted to come back. It is noteworthy that losing work, completing a contract, and deportation are significant reasons for people leaving South Africa to return to Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.<sup>48</sup> These factors are of limited significance for Namibia, with zero deportations being reported.

Perhaps the most significant finding is that those who go to South Africa are neither the destitute of the country, nor are they looking for work. Certainly the claim by the South African government that South Africa is being "swamped" by the neighbouring poor does not apply to Namibia.<sup>49</sup>

<b>Table 2.3: Purpose of Last Visit to South Africa</b>	
Purpose of most recent visit	%
To Look for Work	2
To Work	11
Buy and Sell Goods	2
School	1
Study at University/Technikon	3
Shopping	1
Business	7
Visit Family or Friends	44
Holiday/Tourism	19
Medical Treatment	4
Other	6
Reason for return	
Returned After Holiday	24
Wanted to Come Back	44
Family Reasons	18
Sick/Injured	-
Contract Ended	4
Retired From Job	-
Lost Job or Retrenched	2
Found Job at Home	1
Travel Documents Expired	1
Expelled/Deported From South Africa	-
Studies Ended	2
Goods Sold Out	1
Other	4

Almost all of the respondents who visited South Africa went by road or air. Only two people claimed to have crossed the border by foot (see Table 2.4). Given the remote and hostile environment in proximity to the Namibia/South Africa border, the opportunities for people to cross undocumented from Namibia into South Africa are few. In any event, there is little need to do this as temporary entry permits for travel to South Africa are readily issued at the border with the possession of a valid Namibian passport. In the past, when Namibia was administered by South Africa, there was no border crossing control and no documents were necessary.

Method	%
Foot	1
Bus	19
Plane	9
Car	59
Horse or Donkey	-
Train	9
Combi or Taxi	3
Other	-

These findings are supported by the information available from Statistics South Africa on Namibians in South Africa and cross-border movements between the two countries. In 1996, 200,523 Namibians entered South Africa legally. Of these, only 5,569 (3% of the total) overstayed their visas, providing further evidence that traffic between the two countries is highly legalized.<sup>50</sup>

In 1996 there were only 84 deportations of Namibians from South Africa. Further evidence of the limited number of Namibians illegally in South Africa at present is the fact that only 91 Namibians applied for the amnesty (77 successful) offered by the South African government to SADC citizens in 1996 who had lived in South Africa since at least 1991.<sup>51</sup>

Given the findings of the survey, and the corroborating statistics from South Africa, it seems that there are indeed very few undocumented border-crossings into South Africa by Namibians. Current estimates by the South African government are that there are less than 20,000 undocumented Namibians in South Africa. The data presented here would certainly not lead us to challenge these figures.

## FACTORS IN MIGRATION DECISION-MAKING

When asked what would be the most important reason that might cause them to go to South Africa in the future, only about one quarter of Namibians (24%) cited jobs. However, it is noteworthy that education was cited as an important reason by 21% of the sample. Healthcare and trade were cited by only 9% of the sample (Table 2.5).

In sharp contrast to the reasons people would consider going to South Africa, 23% of the respondents cited "peace" as the most compelling reason for remaining in Namibia. The second most important reason was safety for one's self and family (19%). The third most important response was that the respondents grew up in the country (12%). Personal safety

<b>Table 2.5: Factors in the Migration Decision-making Process</b>	
Most Important Reason For Going To South Africa (ie. conditions seen to be better in SA)	%
Land	-
Water	-
Food	-
Houses	2
Jobs	24
Treatment by Employers	1
Trade	9
Overall Living Conditions	9
Safety of Self and Family	1
Crime	1
Peace	1
Education/Schools	21
Health Care	9
Place to Raise Your Family	1
Diseases	-
HIV/AIDS	-
Freedom	1
Democracy	-
Travel Documents	-
Shopping	7
Nothing	8
Other	7
Most Important Reason for Remaining in Namibia (ie. conditions seen to be better at home)	
Land	6
Water	1
Food	-
Houses	2
Jobs	2
Treatment by Employers	-
Trade	-
Overall Living Conditions	5
Safety of Self and Family	19
Crime	7
Peace	23
Education/Schools	2
Health Care	1
Place to Raise Your Family	4
Diseases	-
HIV/AIDS	-
Freedom	8
Democracy	2
Travel Documents	-
Shopping	-
Grew Up Here	12
Other	6

and a peaceful environment are thus strong motivating factors for Namibians to remain at home.

Thus, while jobs are certainly considered an important reason for going to South Africa, they are by no means the key factor. There are a variety of factors which both induce people to move and hold people back and which demonstrate that the migration decision-making process is both diverse and complex.

## 2.3 FUTURE MIGRATION TRENDS FROM NAMIBIA

### PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF MIGRATION ON NAMIBIA

The survey showed that the majority of Namibians feel little personal impact from the migration of people to South Africa (63%). Likewise, Namibians feel that migration to South Africa has little or no impact on their families. More people are of the opinion, however, that migration to South Africa has some negative impact on community and country (19% and 24% respectively) (Table 2.6).

This is an important finding indicating that Namibians do not necessarily feel that migration to South Africa is of direct benefit to either themselves, their families or their communities, and that it may have some negative consequences for the country as a whole. Indeed, Namibians appear to be ambivalent about migration to South Africa. These results would indicate a propensity not to choose to migrate, or to encourage others not to do so, as the benefits are not apparent to the respondents.

### LIKELIHOOD OF MOVING TO SOUTH AFRICA

Nearly two thirds of Namibian respondents indicated that they would be able to go to South Africa if they wanted to. However, only 17% of the Namibians said that they had a strong or moderate desire to move to South Africa “permanently” (Table 2.7). It is noteworthy that when asked about the likelihood of actually doing so, the figure dropped to 12%.

When asked about living in South Africa for a “short period of time (up to two years)”, the responses were slightly more favourable. Even when asked about living in South Africa for a short period of time, a large proportion of the sample still said it was “very unlikely” (Table 2.7). These responses were polarized, however, with a significant number of respondents saying that it was “likely” that they might live in South Africa for a short period. Some 43% of Namibians have a strong or moderate desire to go to South Africa for a short period (with a likelihood of 35%).

<b>Table 2.6: Perceived Impacts of Migration on Person/Family/Community/Country</b>	
Personal Impact	%
Very Positive	4
Positive	13
No Impact	63
Negative	15
Very Negative	2
Don't Know	3
Impact on Family	
Very Positive	2
Positive	13
No Impact	63
Negative	15
Very Negative	3
Don't Know	5
Impact on Community	
Very Positive	1
Positive	10
No Impact	48
Negative	19
Very Negative	4
Don't Know	18
Impact on Country	
Very Positive	3
Positive	12
No Impact	30
Negative	24
Very Negative	10
Don't Know	22

Confirming the ephemeral interest of Namibians in South Africa, some 81% of Namibians have no desire to become permanent residents of South Africa, with 86% having no wish to become a citizen of the country either. Even fewer people indicated a desire to retire in South Africa or to be buried there (Table 2.8).

In sum, South Africa remains a place of interest for a significant minority of Namibians, but not as a place to go and live permanently. The findings of the survey confirm that for Namibians, like other

<b>Table 2.7: Desire and Likelihood of Moving to South Africa</b>	
Ability to Go to South Africa If Desired	%
Yes	62
No	37
Don't Know	1
Desire to Go and Live Permanently in South Africa	
A Great Extent	6
Some Extent	11
Not Much	15
Not at All	67
Don't Know	1
Desire to Go and Live Temporarily in South Africa (for up to two years)	
A Great Extent	12
Some Extent	31
Not Much	15
Not at All	41
Don't Know	2
Likelihood of Going and Living Permanently in South Africa	
Very Likely	4
Likely	8
Neither Likely nor Unlikely	6
Unlikely	19
Very Unlikely	61
Don't Know	3
Likelihood of Going and Living Temporarily in South Africa	
Very Likely	7
Likely	28
Neither Likely nor Unlikely	6
Unlikely	18
Very Unlikely	40
Don't Know	2

SADC country citizens, home is best, and South Africa is not a preferred place to live.

## 2.4 CONCLUSIONS

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the Namibian survey is the low propensity of the Namibian population to migrate to South Africa. It is clear from the findings that it is the more stable and wealthier sectors of

<b>Table 2.8: Desire to Stay in South Africa Permanently</b>	
Interest in Permanent Resident in South Africa	%
Yes	17
No	81
Don't Know	2
Interest in South African Citizenship	
Yes	12
No	86
Don't Know	2
Interest in Retiring in South Africa	
Yes	11
No	87
Don't Know	2
Interest in Being Buried in South Africa	
Yes	7
No	91
Don't Know	3

Namibian society who are the cross-border visitors to South Africa, not the poor and destitute. Also, it is urban residents who go to South Africa, not rural dwellers.

An important adjunct to this picture is the fact that most cross-border migration with South Africa is short term, and for non-economic purposes. In addition, the overwhelming majority of Namibians have no desire to become permanent residents or citizens of South Africa, and have no intention of retiring there either. These factors again reinforce the emerging trend that South Africa is not threatened with a flood of migration from other countries in the Southern African region, and this finding should be taken into account in any debate on national immigration policy reform, both within Namibia and South Africa.<sup>52</sup>

## CHAPTER THREE

### NAMIBIAN ATTITUDES TO IMMIGRATION AND IMMIGRANTS<sup>53</sup>

WADE PENDLETON

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Under South African apartheid policies, immigration to Namibia by anyone other than South Africans was very restricted. After independence in 1990, a 'new' influx of foreigners arrived including diplomats and foreign aid workers, foreign non-governmental organization personnel, temporary and permanent migrants from Africa, Europe and elsewhere, and refugees. Not surprisingly, the question of who is a 'Namibian' has become a difficult question to answer under these changing political, economic and immigration circumstances, and, perhaps even more difficult, is the question of Namibian attitudes to non-Namibians, i.e. foreign citizens.

Within the context of the situation described above and the influx of new foreign nationals, the SAMP National Immigration Policy Survey (NIPS) was conducted in Namibia in early 2001. This is the first Namibian project which attempts to assess Namibian citizens' knowledge, attitudes, and practice regarding non-citizens, national/ethnic identity and immigration policy.

#### 3.2 METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire used in the survey was collaboratively developed by SAMP partners at a project workshop in Pretoria in November 2000. The data collection was conducted in three major urban centres during February 2001. A total of 750 questionnaires was administered. The urban centres chosen are broadly representative of the Namibian urban population. In the capital city of Windhoek, located in the centre of the country, 450 interviews were conducted (449 in the dataset). The decision to do 60% of the interviews in Windhoek - with an estimated population of over 240,000 people - was based on budgetary considerations, as well as the fact that over half of the urban residents of the country live there.

Windhoek was divided into four areas based on data from the 1995 Resident's Survey. These four areas represent the socio-economic, ethnic, and demographic diversity of the city.<sup>54</sup> The number of interviews conducted in each of the four areas of Windhoek was based on the size of the area's population with almost half of the interviews being carried

out in Katutura, the large and almost exclusively black township where most of the urban area's poor people live.

One hundred and fifty-one interviews took place in Oshakati, the major urban centre in the north-central area of the country with an estimated population of over 50,000 people. The four regions making up north-central Namibia (Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana, and Oshikoto) are home to over 40% of the Namibian population and nearly all are Owambo who speak various languages collectively called Oshiwambo. Oshakati is also one of the fastest growing urban areas in the country receiving most of its urban population from the surrounding rural population. Keetmanshoop, the major urban centre in southern Namibia, also has an estimated population of over 50,000 people (for more details of the sampling methodology see Appendix).

### 3.3 DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The major demographic characteristics of the respondents in the survey are reported in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. The sample selection includes people from households that are poor and more affluent; people with diverse education, age, ethnic, and racial group identities; and almost equal percentages of women and men. The sample is broadly representative of the Namibian urban population.

Travel and living outside one's home country often provides exposure to different cultures and ways of life, resulting in greater tolerance and more liberal attitudes towards people who are different. It might be expected that those who have traveled/lived abroad would, on their return, be more tolerant of foreign nationals in Namibia. Respondents were asked if they had traveled outside Namibia, where they had traveled, and if they had lived outside Namibia for more than six months.

Only 25% of respondents said they had traveled outside Namibia. Countries sharing a common border with Namibia were the most common destinations including South Africa (42%), Angola (11%), and Botswana/Zimbabwe/Zambia each with between 6% and 8%. North America/Europe was also high with 13% (percentages based on total responses not cases). Those who have traveled are more likely to be white or coloured, to be higher educated, and to live in households with higher incomes. About 18% of respondents have lived outside Namibia for more than six months and include many 'returnees'; that is, Namibians who lived in exile before independence and then returned. With the exception of Botswana, which was not a popular destination for those who have lived outside the country, the socioeconomic and destination profile is about the same as for those who have traveled. In the analysis of attitudinal questions, it was often found that people who had traveled/lived outside Namibia were more tolerant of outsiders (see below).

<b>Table 3.1: Characteristics of the Respondents</b>		
Age	No.	%
16-24	215	29.3
25-34	194	26.5
35-49	186	25.4
50-98	138	18.8
Total	733	100.0
<b>Formal education</b>		
None	43	5.7
Grades 1-7	101	13.5
Grades 8-12	455	60.7
Post-graduate diplomas	150	20.0
Total	749	100.0
<b>Race</b>		
White	90	12.0
Black	562	75.0
Coloured	97	13.0
Total	749	100.0
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	367	51.0
Female	353	49.0
Total	720	100.0
<b>Household income</b>		
0-900 \$N	157	27.4
901-2000 \$N	136	23.8
2001-5000 \$N	150	26.2
> 5001 \$N	129	22.6
Total	572	100.0
<b>Work status</b>		
Formal employment	299	39.9
Informal employment	69	9.2
Unemployed – looking for work	202	27.0
Unemployed – not looking for work	179	23.9
Total	749	100.0
<b>Class</b>		
Poor	280	37.8
Working class	269	36.3
Middle class	151	20.4
Upper middle class	41	5.5
Total	741	100.0
<b>Travel history</b>		
Never left the country	436	58.1
Travelled outside	179	23.9
Lived outside	135	18.0
Total	750	100.0

<b>Table 3.1: Characteristics of the Respondents (cont.)</b>		
What language do you speak most at home?	No.	%
English	42	5.6
Afrikaans	192	25.6
Nama/Damara	174	23.2
Oshiwambo	275	36.7
Otjiherero	41	5.5
Kwangari	9	1.2
Loszi	2	0.3
Other	15	2.0
Total	750	100.0
What is your primary religious affiliation?		
Christian	651	87.0
Christian Independent	71	9.5
Traditional	12	1.6
Other	14	3.5
Total	748	100.0
Ethnic groups		
Coloured	93	12.5
English	27	3.6
Afrikaner	56	7.5
Nama/Damara	171	23.0
Owambo	274	36.9
Herero	41	5.5
Other white	7	0.9
Other black	73	9.8
Total	747	100.0
Place of residence		
Windhoek	449	59.9
Keetmanshoop	150	20.0
Oshakati	151	20.1
Total	750	100.0
Consider leaving Namibia		
Strong consideration	97	13.4
Some consideration	183	25.2
No consideration at all	445	61.4
Total	725	100.0

### 3.4 ATTITUDES TO CONDITIONS IN NAMIBIA

Personal and national economic conditions were the topic of the first set of questions on the survey. Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with current economic conditions and their expectations about the future, for both their personal economic conditions and for the country as a whole.

The findings on this first set of economic questions are very important for interpreting Namibian attitudes towards immigration. On many subsequent questions, respondents' answers varied according to their economic circumstances. Those who are better off economically are generally more tolerant and less xenophobic than those who are poor. This finding about the importance of economics is valid by itself, and it is also valid within individual racial and ethnic groups. For example, blacks living in households with higher incomes are often more tolerant than those in households with lower incomes. Since household income, socio-economic class, and work status are inter-related, the findings on these variables tend to be similar. Likewise, economic conditions are also strongly related to educational achievement; those with higher educational achievements also tend to be in households with higher incomes.

With regard to personal economic situation, about half were "satisfied/very satisfied" with about 33% "dissatisfied". Those who were "satisfied/very satisfied", were more likely to be better educated, white, have the highest household incomes, be employed, and think of themselves as middle and upper middle class. Blacks had the largest percentage who were "dissatisfied/strongly dissatisfied" (38%). The personal economic future generally looks "better", in particular for those who are younger, higher educated, and with higher incomes. A large percentage of respondents were "dissatisfied"/"very dissatisfied" with current economic conditions in Namibia (32%), but this percentage decreases to 20% for the future reflecting some optimism. The perception of the present and future economic situation in Namibia is not statistically related to any demographic variables. That is, those in households with higher or lower incomes are no more or less pessimistic about the present or optimistic about the future, suggesting that these attitudes are widely shared (see Table 3.2).

Other variables likely to influence attitudes to immigration include race, class, language, religion and national identity. In terms of how Namibian people see themselves, religion and language are more "important/very important" (over 85%) than race (67%) and class (58%). The importance of language and religious identity declines somewhat for those who are better educated and in households with higher incomes.

Although the Namibian nation is only a little more than a decade old, most respondents have a very strong sense of national identity (Table 3.3). Over 90% of respondents "strongly agreed/agreed" that being a Namibian is "a very important part" of how they see themselves. Similarly, most want their children to think of themselves as Namibian. Given the decades of living under South African apartheid, with its

<b>Table 3.2: Attitudes to Economic Conditions</b>		
Opinion about personal economic conditions	No.	%
Very satisfied	46	6.1
Satisfied	302	40.3
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	150	20.0
Dissatisfied	205	27.4
Very dissatisfied	40	5.3
Don't know	6	0.8
Total	749	100.0
Opinion about personal economic conditions in one year's time		
Much better	70	9.4
Better	324	43.3
Same	188	25.1
Worse	84	11.2
Much worse	19	2.5
Don't know	63	8.4
Total	748	100.0
Opinion about economic conditions in Namibia		
Very satisfied	15	2.0
Satisfied	275	36.7
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	183	24.4
Dissatisfied	196	26.1
Very dissatisfied	44	5.9
Don't know	37	4.9
Total	750	100.0
Opinion about economic conditions in Namibia in one year's time from now		
Much better	78	10.4
Better	295	39.4
Same	142	19.0
Worse	98	13.1
Much worse	33	4.4
Don't know	103	13.8
Total	749	100.0

emphasis on ethnic identity, it is not surprising that many respondents had strong attitudes about the importance of their ethnic identity. When asked about their ethnic group, people “agreed” that ties to their ethnic group are strong (74%). Over half think their ethnic group is “very different from other Namibian ethnic groups”, but less than half

say their ethnic group is “best.” Those who have lived outside the country and those with higher incomes feel less strongly that their ethnic group is best (Table 3.3).

<b>Table 3.3: Attitudes Towards Namibian Identity</b>		
Being a Namibian is very important to how you see yourself	No.	%
Strongly agree	426	57.1
Agree	282	37.8
Neither agree nor disagree	27	3.6
Disagree	10	1.3
Strongly disagree	1	0.1
Total	746	100.0
You want your children to think of themselves as Namibian		
Strongly agree	419	56.7
Agree	276	37.3
Neither agree nor disagree	37	5.0
Disagree	7	0.9
Total	739	100.0
It makes you feel proud to be Namibian		
Strongly agree	465	62.4
Agree	240	32.2
Neither agree nor disagree	32	4.3
Disagree	7	0.9
Strongly disagree	1	0.1
Total	745	100.0

A series of questions were asked about how people felt about interacting with people from different cultures, about whether exposure to different cultures enriches one life and the level of acceptance of people from different cultures. In each case, the respondents “agreed/strongly agreed” with these sentiments (96%, 73%, and 71% respectively). The responses generally suggest a positive attitude and curiosity about people from different cultures.

Who is a ‘true’ Namibian? The importance of various characteristics were ranked from “essential” to “not at all important.” The importance of various characteristics falls into two categories. The first are those characteristics which people have a choice about and where demographic variables make no difference. In order of importance they are: working/contributing to the Namibian economy (78% important/essential), speaking a Namibian language (62%), supporting the Namibian

constitution (75%), supporting non-racialism (61%), owing your ultimate loyalty to Africa (50%), and being willing to give up citizenship in any other country (30%).

For the second set of characteristics, many are ascribed (i.e. they are determined by birth). They are less important to people who live in households with higher incomes, those who are better educated, and those who have traveled and lived outside the country. However, most of these characteristics are more important to black Namibians than to other racial groups. They are, in order of importance: being born in Namibia (82%), having parents who were born in Namibia (79%), having grandparents who were born in Namibia (72%), being willing to fight in a war for Namibia (50%), speaking an African language (43%), and being black (34%) (see Table 3.4).

### 3.5 ATTITUDES TO MIGRANTS IN NAMIBIA

Respondents were asked to choose as many reasons as they thought applied to the question, “Why do you think people from other countries come to Namibia”? From the answers presented in Table 3.5, it is clear that Namibians believe that people come to Namibia for numerous reasons. Choices include both ‘push’ reasons in their home country and ‘pull’ reasons in Namibia. The most frequently given answers are: economic reasons (27%) and political conditions (16%) and to visit for a variety of reasons (to visit friends, as tourists, etc).

Words and phrases exist in Namibian languages for foreigners with only a few having negative connotations. In Oshiwambo, *enhauki* refers to “those who have run away” and is frequently used to refer to refugees, and *omunzainzai* means foreigners “those who come from another country.” In Damara>Nama, *!hao hu //in* refers to people from other lands and *//husaben* to unknown people (refugees). Foreigners are called *buitelanders* (outsiders) in Afrikaans.

How much of a foreigner’s own language and culture must they give up if they want to become Namibian? Almost 50% say they “must abandon their own language and culture completely” or “only use it in their home.” Those with more education, and those in households with higher incomes, are more accommodating and have the strongest belief that foreigners can use their language and culture regardless of where they are. The same pattern about education and income is found for each racial group, i.e. blacks who have more education or who live in households with higher incomes are more tolerant on this question.

Namibians were asked if the country or region of origin of a foreigner influenced their acceptance. The positive answers are fairly uniform with ‘yes’ for Europe/North America (46%), Southern Africa (44%), Asia (42%), and the rest of Africa (41%). However, over half of the

<b>Table 3.4: Defining Namibian Identity</b>		
	No.	%
<b>Being black</b>		
Essential	87	11.8
Important	169	22.9
Not very important	225	30.5
Not at all important	256	34.7
Total	737	100.0
<b>Speaking an African language</b>		
Essential	89	12.0
Important	223	30.1
Not very important	219	29.6
Not at all important	209	28.2
Total	740	100.0
<b>Owing your ultimate loyalty to Africa</b>		
Essential	88	12.2
Important	282	39.2
Not very important	207	28.8
Not at all important	143	19.9
Total	720	100.0
<b>Being born in Namibia</b>		
Essential	306	40.9
Important	308	41.2
Not very important	89	11.9
Not at all important	45	6.0
Total	748	100.0
<b>Having parents who were born in Namibia</b>		
Essential	287	38.7
Important	301	40.6
Not very important	100	13.5
Not at all important	54	7.3
Total	742	100.0
<b>Having grandparents who were born in Namibia</b>		
Essential	226	30.5
Important	305	41.2
Not very important	147	19.8
Not at all important	63	8.5
Total	741	100.0
<b>Speaking a Namibian language</b>		
Essential	175	23.5
Important	292	39.1
Not very important	165	22.1
Not at all important	114	15.3
Total	746	100.0

<b>Table 3.4: Defining Namibian Identity (cont.)</b>		
Being willing to fight in war for Namibia	No.	%
Essential	136	18.7
Important	231	31.8
Not very important	183	25.2
Not at all important	177	24.3
Total	727	100.0
<b>Supporting non-racialism</b>		
Essential	170	23.2
Important	284	38.7
Not very important	151	20.6
Not at all important	128	17.5
Total	733	100.0
<b>Being willing to give up citizenship in any other country</b>		
Essential	48	6.8
Important	172	24.2
Not very important	255	35.9
Not at all important	235	33.1
Total	710	100.0
<b>Supporting the Namibian constitution</b>		
Essential	290	39.2
Important	267	36.1
Not very important	89	12.0
Not at all important	94	12.7
Total	740	100.0
<b>Working and contributing to the Namibian economy</b>		
Essential	280	37.9
Important	295	40.0
Not very important	79	10.7
Not at all important	84	11.4
Total	738	100.0

respondents think that people from all four regions of the world cannot be accepted as part of the Namibian nation. For all four regions of the world, acceptance is greater for respondents who are better educated, employed, middle/upper middle class, and who have traveled or lived outside the country.

Respondents were asked what someone had to do to be accepted as part of the Namibian nation? From Table 3.6 it can be seen that the three most important issues are legal requirements, being a good citizen, and contributing to the economy.

Namibians who think foreigners cannot become part of the Namibian nation, think they will cause over-population (22%), harm the economy (21%), engage in illegal activities (19%), and cause health problems/diseases(16%) (see Table 3.7).

<b>Table 3.5: Perceived Reasons Why People Come to Namibia</b>		
	No.	%
Worse/bad economy in foreigner's home country	155	7.6
Better economy here	388	19.0
Political conditions in foreigner's home country	173	8.5
Political conditions here	145	7.1
To commit crimes/cause trouble	159	7.8
Hunger/famine in foreigner's home country	75	3.7
Better health care etc and quality of life here	144	7.1
To develop our country	165	8.1
Visit, holiday, meet people	384	18.8
Move here permanently/to immigrate	57	2.8
Worse/bad environment in foreigner's home country	70	3.4
Better environment/population conditions here	119	5.8
Other	5	0.2
Total responses	2039	100.0
<i>Note: Total is the total responses since the question is multiple-response.</i>		

<b>Table 3.6: Requirements for Citizenship</b>		
What do people have to do to be accepted as part of the Namibian nation?	No.	%
Comply with legal requirements	307	36.7
Be a good citizen	167	20.0
Adapt culturally/socially	34	4.1
Contribute to economy/development	146	17.5
No illegal activities	73	8.7
Good health	57	6.8
Literate/educated	48	5.7
Other	4	0.5
Total Responses	836	100.0
<i>Note: Total is total responses since the question is multiple-response</i>		

A series of questions were asked about the frequency of contact with foreigner nationals. About 55% of respondents have “some/great deal” of contact with those from South Africa. Respondents with more formal education, whites, higher household income, the upper middle class, and those who have traveled/lived outside the country have more contact with those from other regions of the world.

Respondents were asked what type of personal contact they have

	No.	%
Harm the economy	193	21.4
Engage in illegal activities	170	18.8
Unable to adapt culturally/socially	37	4.1
It is our country – keep them out	78	8.6
Cause shortages on housing, food and services	74	8.2
Cause health problems/diseases	146	16.2
Cause over-population	204	22.6
Other	1	0.1
Total responses	903	100.0

*Note: Total is total responses since the question is multiple-response*

with foreign nationals from other regions. Friendship and family forms of contact are most important with those from South Africa (Table 3.8). Commercial interactions are generally the most frequent type of contact with those from other regions. Between 14%-20% of contacts are work-place related. Respondents with lower educational achievement, lower household income, and women have more contact with foreign nationals from whom they buy/sell. Those with higher education, higher household income, and men have more contact at the work place.

Interactions with foreign nationals from the regions in Table 3.8 were evaluated on a scale going from “very positive” to “very negative.” Respondents say their interactions are “very positive/positive” with those from South Africa (75%), Southern Africa (63%), elsewhere in Africa and Europe/North America (about 60%), and Asia (53%).

Respondents were asked to estimate the number of foreign nationals they think come legally to work and live in Namibia each year. Only about 15% of respondents were within the correct range of 1,000 to

	South Africa %	Southern Africa %	Africa %	North America /Europe %	Asia %
Work for/with	14	17	21	20	15
Live next to	8	10	10	10	6
Are friends	39	29	21	32	14
Children go to school with	6	10	7	6	4
Buy/sell with them	26	32	40	31	61
Family/relatives	7	2	1	1	0
Totals	100	100	100	100	100
	N=601	N=391	N=291	N=363	N=250

3,000 per annum. About half of the respondents over-estimated. For comparison, respondents were asked to estimate the size of the Namibian population. About 35% of respondents did not know, about half estimated correctly (between 1.5 and 2.0 million), and about 20% over-estimated.

Respondents estimated the proportion of foreign nationals in the population to be 25% on average. That would equal over 400,000 thousand people out of a population of 1.7 million which is a significant over-estimation. Of the those presently in Namibia, about half are thought to be in the country illegally. Respondents think about one-third plan to remain permanently, about one-third are there temporarily, and about one-third are refugees. About 90% of respondents think the number of has “greatly increased” or “increased.” Over 80% of respondents think there are “too many” in Namibia. Yet there is clearly significant misperception and lack of knowledge.

About one-third of respondents have heard “once” or “more than once” about someone being denied a job because it went to a non-Namibian. But only 20% of respondents personally know of someone being denied a job that went to a foreign national. Just 9% of respondents say they have personally been denied a job because it went to a foreign citizen.

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they think people from Southern Africa in Namibia do various activities. Most respondents evidently think they take jobs, commit crimes, send earnings out of the country, use welfare services, and bring disease to Namibia (the mean scores for the above activities are about 7 and greater out of ten). On the other hand, the mean scores for job creation and skills transfer are only at about the mid-point of the scale indicating many do not think people from Southern Africa contribute very much in this area (see Table 3.9).

When asked what they would do about a foreign national they

	No.	Mean	Median
Take jobs from Namibians	736	7.1	8.0
Commit crimes in Namibia	727	6.9	7.0
Send earnings out of Namibia	732	7.3	8.0
Use Namibia's welfare services	724	7.2	8.0
Bring diseases to Namibia	731	7.0	8.0
Create jobs for Namibians	732	4.8	5.0
Bring skills needed by Namibia	731	5.4	5.0

*Scale: "0" is none of them do this and "10" means all of them do this*

thought was in the country illegally, about 80% say they would report them to the police and 12% said they would do nothing. Regarding people from Southern Africa, respondents were asked four questions about the likelihood that they would take part in action to prevent people from doing the following activities: (1) moving into their neighbourhood, (2) operating a business in the area, (3) sitting in the same classroom as their children, and (4) becoming a co-worker. More than 70% of respondents answered that they were unlikely/very unlikely to take any action.

### 3.6 IMMIGRATION POLICY ATTITUDES

When asked what the government should do about foreign migrants coming to Namibia, over 80% said it should strictly limit the number who can enter Namibia. Given this attitude, it is not surprising that on specific government policy questions, respondents were rather harsh in their opinions. The first set of questions concern treatment of migrants in gaining work permits or permanent residence. Respondents are clearly more supportive of special treatment for those who want to work temporarily and then go home (49% support/strongly support) compared to those who want to stay permanently and possibly become citizens (31% support/strongly support). Whites are more supportive of foreign nationals being granted permanent residence/citizenship. The region where the person comes from makes little difference. Those with greater educational achievement were, however, more supportive of migrants from particular regions of the world receiving preferential treatment. However, the strongest support (about 89%) is for migrants with skills not present in Namibia or those who would invest money in the economy and create jobs.

Respondents were asked a series of questions about immigration control. They support/strongly support strong measures including: electric fences on the border (80%); allocating more money to border protection (81%); using the army to patrol Namibia's border (95%); requiring foreigners to carry identification at all times (90%); giving police the right to detain suspected illegal immigrants (90%); and penalising businesses who employ them (95%). Only on the issue of increasing taxes to cover the expense of increased border patrols does support decline to 50%.

Respondents were asked about their support for various government policies relating to legal immigration. About 30% supported making it easier for families of contract workers to come and live in Namibia; whites, better educated, and households with higher incomes are the strongest supporters. Only about 20% supported making it easier for contract workers to qualify for permanent residence after the completion of

their contracts. About 40% supported making it easier for hawkers/traders and small business operators from Southern Africa to trade in Namibia.

What should Namibia's policy be on the deportation of undocumented migrants? From Table 3.10 it can be seen that deporting migrants who are in the country legally has some support (20%). For those who do not contribute to the economy, there is strong support (71%) to deport them, although households with higher incomes and the middle/upper middle class give less support. About 96% support deporting those who have committed crimes or who live in Namibia without permission. Given these answers, it is perhaps surprising that 60% support offering amnesty to people in the country illegally.

### 3.7 REFUGEE POLICY ATTITUDES

Respondents were asked a series of questions about refugee issues. From Table 3.11 it can be seen that about 70% of respondents support giving refugees asylum. However, there is little support for increasing the number of refugees or for giving them permanent residence. There is support for sending refugees back to their own country (85%) and requiring all refugees to live in camps near the border (67%). About 44% support using money from the Namibian budget to shelter refugees. Regarding refugees, respondents were asked if they deserved protection in other countries? About 60% agreed. However, about 54% thought that it is impossible to determine whether a person is really a refugee.

### 3.8 RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the civil rights of citizens, temporary workers/visitors, refugees, and illegal immigrants. The first question was about the right to free speech. Most feel the right should only be granted to Namibian citizens (75%) and should never be granted to temporary workers/visitors (61%), refugees (76%), and illegal immigrants (91%). Regarding the right to vote, 99% say it should only be granted to Namibian citizens and not to any others (over 90%). The right to legal protection is strongly supported for Namibian citizens (96%). For temporary workers/visitors and refugees about 50% think it should always be granted and about 25% say it depends on circumstances. Over half of respondents think illegal immigrants should never be granted this right. The right to be protected by the police, to be free from illegal searches, and to have your property protected is a right that should always be granted to Namibian citizens (99%). About 75% of respondents say temporary workers/visitors should always have this right, 64% say refugees should always have this right, but only 24%

<b>Table 3.10: Namibia's Policy Regarding Deportation</b>		
	No.	%
<b>Deporting all foreigners even if they are here legally</b>		
Strongly support	34	4.7
Support	110	15.1
Neither support nor oppose	66	9.1
Oppose	349	48.0
Strongly oppose	168	23.1
Total	727	100.0
<b>Deporting all foreigners who don't contribute to the economy</b>		
Strongly support	274	37.1
Support	253	34.3
Neither support nor oppose	49	6.6
Oppose	152	20.6
Strongly oppose	10	1.4
Total	738	100.0
<b>Deporting all foreigners who have committed crimes</b>		
Strongly support	507	68.2
Support	209	28.1
Neither support nor oppose	5	0.7
Oppose	16	2.2
Strongly oppose	6	0.8
Total	743	100.0
<b>Deporting all those who live here without permission</b>		
Strongly support	477	63.9
Support	244	32.7
Neither support nor oppose	10	1.3
Oppose	9	1.2
Strongly oppose	6	0.8
Total	746	100.0
<b>Offering amnesty to people who are here illegally</b>		
Strongly support	173	24.2
Support	255	35.7
Neither support nor oppose	108	15.1
Oppose	86	12.0
Strongly oppose	93	13.0
Total	715	100.0

<b>Table 3.11: Would You Support/Oppose the Government Policies about Refugees?</b>		
	No.	%
Giving asylum to people escaping war and persecution		
Strongly support	116	15.9
Support	396	54.4
Neither support nor oppose	53	7.3
Oppose	121	16.6
Strongly oppose	42	5.8
Total	728	100.0
Increasing the number of refugees entering Namibia		
Strongly support	5	0.7
Support	66	8.9
Neither support nor oppose	63	8.5
Oppose	353	47.6
Strongly oppose	254	34.3
Total	741	100.0
Granting permanent residence to refugees (5 years)		
Strongly support	13	1.8
Support	139	18.8
Neither support nor oppose	59	8.0
Oppose	331	44.8
Strongly oppose	197	26.7
Total	739	100.0
Sending refugees back to their own countries		
Strongly support	292	40.0
Support	331	45.3
Neither support nor oppose	37	5.1
Oppose	42	5.8
Strongly oppose	28	3.8
Total	730	100.0
Requiring all refugees to live in camps near the border		
Strongly support	197	26.7
Support	302	40.9
Neither support nor oppose	43	5.8
Oppose	119	16.1
Strongly oppose	78	10.6
Total	739	100.0
Using the money from the Namibian budget to shelter refugees		
Strongly support	48	6.5
Support	275	37.5
Neither support nor oppose	110	15.0
Oppose	175	23.9
Strongly oppose	125	17.1
Total	733	100.0

thought illegal immigrants should have this right. The final question in the series was about the right to social services, such as education, housing, health care and water. Respondents strongly support Namibian citizen's rights to these services (98%). About 70% say it should always be granted to temporary workers/visitors and refugees, and about 50% say illegal immigrants should never be granted this right.

## CONCLUSION

**H**ow intolerant are Namibians of outsiders? The answer seems to be "it depends." It depends, in part, on your racial group, your household income, and your education. It does not depend on your gender, as that seems to make no difference in attitudes or knowledge. A consistent, statistically significant finding in the survey was that less tolerant attitudes about outsiders and other ethnic/racial groups are strongest among poor and less educated Namibians; conversely, middle class, and better educated Namibians are more tolerant and accepting. On some questions, those who have traveled or lived outside the country and those who live in Windhoek, are somewhat more tolerant. However, a majority of respondents have strong negative opinions about foreign migrants with over 80% of respondents favouring placing strict limitations on the number who can enter Namibia.

Namibians have strong national, racial, language, ethnic, and religious identities. To be accepted as a Namibian, almost 50% say a foreign person must abandon their own language and culture, and wanting to become a citizen only slightly improves the Namibian view of the foreign national. Nor does the region of origin of the immigrant improve their chance of acceptance. Namibians fear that foreign migrants harm the economy, engage in illegal activities, cause health problems, and contribute to over-population. It is certainly not easy to become a Namibian.

Foreign citizens from all over the world, and especially South Africa, are not strangers to Namibians. Namibians encounter them in economic activities (employment and trading), some are friends, and a few are related. In general, people rate their contact as positive in spite of the fact that they think there are too many. The size of the foreign population is greatly exaggerated with over half the respondents over-estimating its size. About 80% think there are too many in the country and about half are in the country illegally. About one-third of the foreign population is thought to be refugees with about 40% being genuine refugees.

When specifically asked about Southern Africans, Namibians rate

negative behaviours such as taking jobs, committing crimes, sending earnings out of the country, and bringing diseases, rather high. The media plays an important part in the development of stereotypes about foreigners with radio, television, newspapers, and magazines the primary sources of information. Economic reasons dominate Namibian stereotypes about why foreign migrants come to the country, and many (63%) believe that most are just in Namibia to earn money and then go home. However, only a small percentage of Namibians believe that migrants take jobs away from Namibians.

Although mildly supportive of preferential treatment for foreign citizens with needed skills and those who create jobs, there is little support for making it easier for legally resident migrants to bring their families to Namibia. And there is little support for permitting them to remain permanently after their contracts are completed. Deportation is strongly supported for those who are not contributing to the economy as well as those who are in the country illegally. There is very strong support for extreme measures such as electrified fencing on borders to keep illegal immigrants out. However, when it comes to taking action against foreigners, most say they would just report them to the police or do nothing.

Regarding the civil rights of citizens, temporary workers/visitors, refugees, and illegal immigrants, Namibians clearly distinguish between their rights and those of outsiders in the country. Foreign citizens should not criticize the government, and they should not vote. Only about half thought they deserve equal police or judicial protection under the law, and illegal immigrants deserve little police or judicial protection. Surprisingly, access to social services is more generously offered than legal/judicial rights.

Regarding refugees, the attitude is ambivalent. Namibians support giving refugees asylum, but they are uncertain about their legitimacy and about using Namibian government money to support them. Refugees may come to Namibia, but they should stay in camps near the border, their numbers should be kept low, and they should go home when it is possible.

How xenophobic are Namibians towards outsiders? It depends on whether or not you are legal or illegal foreigner, a refugee or migrant, perceived to be doing something to develop the country or taking jobs away from Namibians. It may also be influenced by the current economic and political climate of post-independence disappointment. But it also depends on who is speaking. The President of Namibia, Sam Nujoma, has recently made public statements that Namibians should not marry foreigners and he has publicly criticized gays, most recently saying they would be barred from entering Namibia.<sup>55</sup> Although ques-

tions on homophobic attitudes were not included on the questionnaire, official pronouncements contribute to a perception that it is government policy.<sup>56</sup>

Among the important findings of the survey is the fact that many Namibians are uninformed about immigrants and migrants: their numbers, their legal status, where they come from, and what they do. Some fear migrants will take their jobs. There appears to be an attitude that they should be helping the Namibian nation or go home. In reality, many make significant contributions to Namibian economy and society.

A public information campaign, led by national leaders, to better inform citizens about foreigner and Namibian civil and immigration rights might help to better inform citizens, and make it more difficult for people to retain inaccurate and unjustified negative attitudes.

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## APPENDIX: SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Households were chosen using a stratified, systematic, cluster method. That is, the urban area's stratification was taken into account by selecting areas that represented the diversity of the area, e.g. shanty areas, built-up areas, middle class areas, upper class areas, etc. Areas of the city/town were chosen by making reference to maps of the city/town. Once an area was identified, the number of interviews allocated was in proportion to the size of that area. For example, if the chosen area had 10% of the city/town's population, then 10% of the interviews took place there. Within each selected area, a sample interval was calculated and clusters of households selected. If the chosen household was vacant or abandoned or no people were living there, then the plot on the right was selected. If more than one household occupied the plot, the principal/main household was selected.

Once a household was selected, the person to be interviewed was selected using gender and age categories. Interviews alternated between interviewing males and females. Only people 16 years of age and older were interviewed, with people selected alternately from four age categories: 16-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50+. If there was more than one person available in the selected household, the person whose age was closest to the mid-point of the category was chosen. For example, for 16-24 it would be 20, for 25-34 it would be 30, etc.

Interviewers were trained in a two-day workshop held at the Social Sciences Division (SSD) of the Multi-Disciplinary Research Centre of the University of Namibia. A group of experienced interviewers was selected from the pool maintained by the SSD. The ten interviewers were organized into teams based on language abilities and supervised by an SSD researcher. Interviewers translated the survey into various languages appropriate for the respondent including Oshiwambo, Damara>Nama, Afrikaans, and Otjiherero. Interviewers encountered relatively little opposition to the questionnaire; in fact, once the topic and purpose of the survey was explained, most people were willing participants. This was even true in the primarily white eastern and southern areas of Windhoek where refusals to participate are common. Interviewers reported that the only major complaint about the survey was that it was too long; most interviews took forty-five minutes to an hour. Household substitution was less than one-percent.

Regarding the data analysis of the findings from the survey, each question was examined by major demographic independent variables to assess the extent to which they influenced respondent's answers. It should be noted that race, ethnic group, language, education, income,

and class are highly inter-correlated and influence each other, e.g. more white households have higher incomes than black households, black respondents have lower educational achievement than coloured respondents, etc. The interrelationship between these independent variables is very much a result of the apartheid policies implemented in Namibia for many decades under South African colonial rule. The influence of each, with the exception of language, was separately evaluated in the data analysis. Language was not included in the analysis because Afrikaans is spoken at home by both coloured people (who were marginalized during the apartheid era) and Afrikaners (who were a privileged group during the apartheid era); it would be unclear in the data analysis which group was being evaluated. An ethnic group variable was computed from race and language variables; the findings for ethnic group were consistent with racial group so they are not separately reported.

In order to do the data analysis, it was necessary to recode the five category response questions into three categories so that valid chi square tests could be done. For example, on question 10, “strongly agree” and “agree” were combined, “neither agree nor disagree” remained the same, and “disagree” and “strongly disagree” became one category; otherwise, there were too many cells with expected frequencies of less than five and the chi square test was invalid for bivariant tables. Only where statistically significant differences were found on bivariant tables were they commented upon; when no independent variables are mentioned in the text (such as sex, race, age, etc) it is because their influence on answers was not statistically significant).

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- 23 Central Statistics Office, *Living Conditions in Namibia* (Windhoek: National Planning Commission, 1996).
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- 25 Region in the development budget reports refers to clusters of Regions; the regions identified are North, Central and South. Central includes Erongo, Khomas, Omaheke and Otjozondjupa. Reference to the actual development projects shows the centrality of Windhoek, which is located in the Khomas Region, in the development process.
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- 47 For more detailed discussion on this point, see Frayne and Pendleton, *Namibians on South Africa*.
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- 54 Details on the population of Windhoek and the socio-demographic characteristics of the various areas are based on the City of Windhoek's 1995 Resident's Survey (1996:20,22,23).
- 55 *The Namibian*, April 6, 2001.
- 56 *The Windhoek Observer* (April 7, 2001) reported under the headline "Disquieting Petition" the delivery of a petition to the President by about 400 people attacking the judiciary for unpopular decisions, the removal from the country of unpatriotic people, and, "seriously condemned and were undertaking to fight all the ungodly, un-African and un-Namibian tendencies and the culture of "satanist cults, demonism, homosexuals, the gays and the lesbians". "We shall support the deportation of all foreigners who are inclined to support such activities". The petition also attacks foreign consultants and foreign-funded non-governmental organizations.

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