

The Land Matters Report



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In 2007 she became involved in the shooting of the documentary *Land Matters* to give support and guidelines to the director from *inter alia* a land law perspective. In 2008 she was elected as faculty representative for the Law Faculty at the University of Namibia after serving as member of the Law Students Society of the University. This role included active participation in the faculty's affairs as well as representing the law students and the faculty at various platforms.

Currently she is working for the German Technical Corporation (GTZ) for the Support to Land Reform Programme as Support officer legislation and research.

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In his professional work experience, since 2006, Clever has worked at one of the top Windhoek law firms, Sisa Namandje and Co. Incorporated where he still is engaged as a legal consultant.

Apart from this Clever is also a researcher, general legal consultant, Legal Advisor to the University of Namibia Student Representative Council (SRC) and a PhD (Law) Candidate specialising in environmental law and the law of shared international water courses.

Foreword

The book in front of you may be the final part of a documentary film project called *Land Matters*. This book wouldn't exist without the film and all the people who were involved in it. By the time we started with the film project we never ever would have thought how far this project would carry us and how fruitful and versatile the tool of an independently produced documentary film can be. For a better understanding of how the film with all its side- and after effects came to happen, I as a filmmaker would like to give you a brief introduction to the pretty unusual genesis of this production.

The idea for the *Land Matters* documentary evolved in 2004, shortly before elections in Namibia. By this time I was working on a documentary called *Namibia Generation X*, a film that investigated over three years, how far a multi ethnic school class, (the so to called first *post apartheid generation* or now in contemporary political discourse the *born free*), is still affected by the shadows of the past. In this context I got to know several kids from the white farming community. All of them were quite worried about their future, as the land question was one of the big topics in the 2004 election rally and the violent expropriations in Zimbabwe were the talk of the day on the school premises and within their families' homes.

The moment I addressed my interest in a possible documentary about land reform in Namibia, the kids parents made it very clear to me that I would barely find anybody who felt free to talk openly about what one thinks about land reform and what was going on in the white farming communities at this special moment. Furthermore I had to learn that the attitude towards me as an representative of German media was very hostile, because of recent TV reports and newspaper articles by my fellow countrymen who hadn't anything better to report than repeating the usual prejudices and stereotypes of a backwards driven, racist and ultra conservative white farm community in Namibia. Needless to say, that everybody looked at me with a lot of suspicion and mistrust throughout the screening processes that we had in the various regions of the country. Luckily this attitude changed a little bit a year later, once the before mentioned documentary *Namibia Generation X* premiered in Windhoek.

The film gained some recognition in Namibia as it was broadcast several times on tv and was shown at various film festivals. The echo of the local press was good, and suddenly I somehow was looked at as an *ok* guy who did an *ok* film. Never before were public opinion and press comments so useful to me as in this special case. The basic acceptance through the general public finally opened decisive doors in the Namibian farmers unions NAU and NNFU. Their representatives, people like Raimar von Hase, Klaus Hager and Vehaka Tjimune, were the ones who paved the way for the *Land Matters* film project. Without their benevolence, trust and openness the film project would not exist. It was the three of them who because of their appreciation of *Namibia Generation X* were curious to hear what I planned to do next. It was those people who had an ear for what I wanted to address, who took time for long debates and who put me in touch with all the different kinds of people who were instrumental in the farming world. Their recommendations, calls and personal interventions were priceless and helped a lot to touch base with the black and white farming community on a basis of trust.

After this first hurdle was taken I gained confidence that a film about land reform wasn't impossible. Still, a budget for a countrywide research was needed. Until now all my studies were theoretical. Also my first project description was based only on information I collected in numerous articles about land reform in Namibia and still far from being experienced firsthand.

Fortunately the core message of the first treatment was good enough to attract two decisive partners who finally became fruitful networkers, matchmakers and advisers throughout the whole *Land Matters* project. Albert Engel from GTZ in Namibia and Theo Kneiffel from KASA in Heidelberg not only helped very much to get the first budget together that allowed me to go on a two month research trip, they also were more than instrumental in providing me with plenty of contacts for further fundraising and helping to establish relationships with Namibian authorities in the Ministries.

The research trip in late summer 2006 was an eye opener. On a grass-roots level I collected first hand information from farmers, workers, extension officers and local politicians about how the different farming communities in the country felt about land reform, affirmative action, resettlements, ancestral rights, landless people etc.

Almost everybody stated that the commercial farming areas were going through a fundamental structural change. Communities that were predominantly white in the past now found themselves with new neighbours left and right of their fences.

While the unions were positive that I would encounter a lot of get-togethers and joining hands in the black and white farming communities, my experience was very much the opposite. The cultural differences were too big, the historical burdens too heavy, the mistrust too fundamental to overcome prejudices and to reconcile and bring together the new neighbours. Throughout the whole country I encountered only two farming communities, Outjo and Nina, where there seemed to be something like a will for cooperation on a larger scale. Not that their neighbourhood was free of problems but there was a clear initiative going on containing training sessions, get-togethers and a regular exchange of thoughts between the black and white farmers.

I finally decided to make this clearly stated will for cooperation in a drastically changing farming community the core of my documentary. Turning away from the usual strategies in focussing on obvious conflict and drama was a conscious decision for me. To tell a story of a community who tries to join hands despite all the differences around would set a much better example for the general public to debate and dispute than repeating the usual prejudices and mishaps only to fulfil the audiences expectations. And who knows what might happen in the process of filming, maybe the drama sneaks in unexpectedly.

At the end of my two months research I decided to ask the people in the Nina area if they would allow me to follow their activities with a film team. Clara Bohitile, Helmut Stehn, Lothar Rüchel and Jan Basson, four of the main protagonists in the final film agreed right away to participate in a documentary about the daily life in their neighbourhood. Elisabeth Hoabeb and Immanuel Xoagub entered the picture after we already had started filming one year later.

I left Namibia with the plan to get the financing for the film together within a year so that we could start shooting in late summer of 2007. The final treatment sent to the broadcasters was called *Feldfeuer*, speculating on the fact that filming in the times of field fires would add a little more suspense to the whole project.

Well, for those who haven't seen the film, there was no fire. Due to little rain in 2007 and low grass growth it never burned while we were filming in the Nina area. I am mentioning this as we originally planned to coproduce the film with a broadcaster and for some time we hoped to position the land reform subject as a whole theme evening on a German/French TV channel. But two months before the scheduled start of the production we got the news that the broadcaster had dropped our proposal, explaining to us that land reform wasn't such a big issue in Africa, and that they'd rather commission a film project on the abuse of natural resources.

What we didn't know by then was that this backlash turned out to be a blessing in disguise. In order to make sure that the film project would be realized on time we had to look immediately for alternative financing. With the support of Albert Engel and Theo Kneiffel and their network we proposed the film project to various church-, parastatal-organisations and foundations, offering them non-exclusive non-commercial exploitation rights of the film if they would co-finance us.

Within three months KfW, GTZ, Brot für die Welt, EZEF, DED, EED, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, das Evangelische Missionswerk, InWent, Misereor, the Council of Churches of Namibia, Deutsch-Namibische Gesellschaft, BGR und Deutsch-Namibische Entwicklungsgesellschaft agreed to join in and to provide us with the budget necessary to start the production. Furthermore Cine Plus, a Berlin based film production company confirmed they would supply us with free film equipment for two crews and on top of all this the zivik Funding Programme of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) greenlit an application for funding, that allowed us to tour with the documentary after its completion through Namibia, including discussion panels with the people in the different farming communities. Having so many partners on board finally allowed us not only to do the film we wanted to do but also to bring the final product much closer to those, who are dealing with land reform on a daily basis, the Namibian people.

In June 2007 all agreements, contracts and filming permissions were sorted. My cameraman Marcus Zaiser and I went for a short pre-production visit to reassure all our protagonists that the project was about to start soon and last preparations for car rental, accommodation etc. were done. Finally in August 2007 the Land Matters production

took off. On board my cameraman, our driver and translator Franziskus Katjipu and me taking care of the sound and the rest. For about two months we lived with our protagonists, following them around in their daily routines, in public and in private, in the field and at home, listening to their stories and witnessing their daily struggles and hardships. For those of the readers who aren't familiar with documentary filmmaking I would like to stress that none of the scenes in the film were staged, as some people claimed at a later stage. All the moments captured were part of daily life activities. Please also bear in mind that the protagonists you see in the film are there, because they were the few who dared to speak openly about their situation in front of a camera, unlike many others refused for various reasons. As I already mentioned in the end credits of the film, only because of the trust and openness of our protagonists, the film came out like this.

To cut a long story short, in October 2007 we returned to Germany with 40 hours of footage. My assistant Chriszelda Muenjo worked for four months on the transcripts and translations. About two months were needed to prepare the footage for the editing process, the editing itself, done by Nico Schlegel plus the mixing and subtitling which took us another five months. As soon as we had a presentable version of the film we showed it in private to all protagonists in order to give all participants the chance to comment and criticise. None of them wanted anything that was filmed or said to be changed. The same goes with our donors. None of them ever interfered in the making, no rules, regulations or censorship were imposed on the final cut.

Land Matters had its world premier on 22. September 2008 at Government Office Park in Windhoek. The German film premier took place in November 2008 in Berlin, followed by a screening tour through several German cities together with some of the protagonists of the film. This tour was made possible with the kind support of ifa/zivik, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Misereor, Brot für die Welt and InWEnt. Parallel to the German screenings the Land Matters Initiative started. Funded by ifa/zivik and acted out by KASA in Heidelberg and the LEAD-Project in Windhoek the film was shown and discussed in many field screenings all over Namibia. (see Chapter IV) In 2009 Land Matters entered the international film festival circuit and was shown at the One Word Film Festivals in Berlin and Paris, at the Dokumentarfilmwoche Hamburg, at the Wild Cinema Festival Windhoek, etc. The festival exploitation is still continuing.

Also One Africa TV and the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation broadcasted the film twice in primetime, followed by public debates and TV talk shows in March and August 2009. (see Chapter V) By the end of 2009 one thousand free promotional copies of the Land Matters DVD available in four languages were delivered to all our partner organisations and to the Namibian farming community. At the same time the *www.landmatters.de* website was launched. The homepage contains further information about the project and about land reform in general. Last but not least, *Namibiana Buchdepot*, took over the international distribution of the Land Matters DVD. (see www.namibiana.de)

The *Land Matters Report* brings to you a summary of how the general public reacted to the film. The discussions are full of criticism, dissent and dispute. Furthermore the report contains a collection of interviews that were done two years after the actual filming with some of the film's participants, to have a better idea of what happened to them in the meantime. A brief history of land reform in Namibia opens the book for an overview of land reform itself, followed by a discussion of activities of some of the things that have been undertaken to support emerging farmers in chapter two. This chapter is aims to better understand the subject scrutinized in the chapters to follow. As the final document on the Land Matters Initiative the *Land Matters Report* embraces and highlights the impact the whole project had on the general public. It is a reflection on to what extend a documentary film project with all it's controversial feedback can be exploited and how it can bring together people and stimulate a debate that is more than necessary.

Thorsten Schütte, Windhoek, 18. March 2010

Preface

The documentary film *Land Matters*, by Thorsten Schütte which was made in the Nina area, accompanies farmers and farm labourers and allows them to voice their perceptions and the visions about the significance of land ownership. In the film the protagonists register their observations about their neighbourhood and raise their views on certain developments.

The documentary invites the farming community in the country to join this debate. Shadrack Tjiramba from the LAC and Dudley Vial, a consultant to the *Land Matters* project, were tasked with taking the film to farming communities in Namibia. The project started in October and ran through to mid-December 2008. During this period fifteen screenings should be showed across the country.

The team started with obtaining lists and contact numbers of farmers from stakeholders, the Namibia Agricultural Union and the Namibia National Farmers Union. The approach was to get a slot within the schedule of the already planned annual programme of the farmers unions. The target groups were farmers resettled and Affirmative Action Loan Scheme beneficiaries, farm labourers, churches and students.

The screenings of the film took place in two phases. The first phase covered a period of about one month from 2 October 2008 to 4 November 2008. The film was broadcasted to the following audiences: Drimiopsis Resettlement Scheme; UNAM Economics Department; Summerdown Farmers Association; Kunene Emerging Farmers Association; Land Management students of the Polytechnic of Namibia; Otavi Farmers Association; and Osire Farmers Association. The Second Phase was done over a period of about one month from 5 November – 6 December. The film was screened at the following places/events: Matlahoehe Hotel/commercial farmers; Dorsland Farmers Association; Omaheke San Trust; Grootfontein farmers; Khorixas; Omatjete Farmers Association; Epukiro Farmers Association and the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

This Report embodies the reactions, of people who watched the film. Chapter 1 shows the background to the land reform Programme in Namibia. It explores the history of land dispossession from German colonial times through South African occupation to the post

independence times. Chapter 2 delves into some of the ongoing efforts that have been initiated to support emerging commercial farmers. Chapter 3 summarizes the discussions after the screenings. The full transcribed discussions to this Report are documented in Appendix 1. Chapter 4 deliberates on the discussions on national TV, a panel discussion and some independent interviews conducted with people involved in the land reform programme. Chapter 5 is the evaluation of the reactions of the viewers of the film. It also analyses the reasons behind some of the views which both the old and emerging farmers had. This evaluation is done in the light of the history of land dispossession and the current policies and political approach of the government. It further analyses whether the people are happy with the way the government of Namibia is doing enough to assist especially the emerging farmers, and what can be done to otherwise improve the livelihoods of emerging farmers.

Acknowledgements

The screenings could not have been possible without the assistance of many people. Special thanks for all the trust, support and cooperation goes to all our protagonists: Lothar and Sabine Rüchel, Helmuth Stehn and family, Elisabeth Hoabeb and family, Immanuel Xoagub and family, Jan Basson and family, Eliphaz Kauhungua and Clara Bohitile.

A very special thank you goes to Peter Kuczinski, my production manager who was always there when the fire wasn't burning and even moreso when the flames were about to go too high. A big hand again to our technical and editorial team: Marcus Zaiser, Nico Schlegel, Franziskus Katjipu, Erika von Gierszewski, Eva Riekert, Leon Beukes, Michael Diehl, Mario Krupa, Karin Saarmann, Ute Dieckmann.

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Thorsten Schütte, Windhoek, 18. March 2010

Chapter 1

Background to Land Reform in Namibia

1. Introduction

The past inequities in land distribution in Namibia necessitated the land reform programme under the new constitution and other pieces of legislation after 1990. The land issue remains one of the topical issues in the country yet it is very sensitive and often, highly political. The decision of the government to redress the land problem arose out of the general acceptance by the people, the empowering laws and policies and was also inspired by political reasons behind the liberation war.

This chapter will lay a background to the land reform programme in Namibia. It starts with the history of land laws and policies of the Germans followed by that of the South Africans. The Chapter then moves on to consider the development of the reform process that came after independence in 1990 and provides an exposition of salient parts of the constitution and the two major pieces of legislation affecting land reform in the country. The Chapter concludes with a brief philosophical outline of the rationale of the land reform programme in Namibia.

2. Land Tenure Systems before Independence

2.1 *The Pre-Colonial Era*

The pre-colonial period was characterized by a variety of forms of subsistence, in the barren coastal Namib Desert there were some isolated communities living on the produce of the sea and the game and plant life that existed in the valleys of the few seasonal rivers in the area.¹The United Nations institute for Namibia (1988) reported that because the central and southern parts of Namibia are drier the people there did not keep cattle since the area was too dry for cattle and so they herded goats and sheep. Thus pre-colonial Namibia had the following forms of economic activity: hunting and gathering; cattle pasturing; small stock herding; and mixed stock and farming and even mining. These various forms of production did not exist in isolation from each other; indeed, there were elements of economic

¹ Justine Hunter 2004: 1.

integration no wonder why Amoo² says that Pre-colonial South West Africa cannot be described as *terra nullius*, i.e. devoid of any land tenure system.

In support of the point above the learned author says that there are various groups who occupied the land in small groups on widely dispersed territory in order to utilize existing resources efficiently. This then resulted in no fixed boundaries existing among different communities, although there were scratchily defined areas of the Chiefs' jurisdictions where people recognized and practiced communal ownerships of land and natural resources. Permanent usufruct was however granted to arable plots but the community was the one vested with allodial title. It was therefore the colonizer who came with her policies which shaped a new order which the recent of present tenure systems reflect.³ Land conquest, land protection treaties and other legislation were introduced and the Germans got the rights of conquest which enabled them to control land use and expropriate or deprive natives for their land and land rights.⁴

2.2 Under German Administration

Namibia was formally colonised in 1884. Germany declared the land formerly known as Namaqualand a Protectorate and the boundaries of the territory became known as German South West Africa after a number of agreements concluded in 1886 with Portugal and in 1890 with Great Britain. A Governor's Council representing the colonial settlers was established in 1908.⁵ This body was supplemented by a *Landesrat* comprising both elected and appointed members of the colonial community, in terms of the *Verordnung* of 28 January 1909. After this annexation the Germans divided the land into two sections. One of these sections was named the Police Zone which was the Southern part of the territory and the Northern parts including Owambo, Kaokoveld, Okavango and Caprivi were not directly affected by German rule with the Police Zone was policed directly by the German Administration. This was done with a purpose of protecting known economic resources and the best agricultural land (at least to them), it was in this zone where they established what were called settler farms which were only owned by whites.

² Amoo S.K. 2001: 88.

³ Amoo S.K. 2001.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Legal Assistance Centre. 2004: 8

North of the so called Police Zone comprised of the northern and the north eastern parts of the territory. Blacks or indigenous people were forced to live there in what were called reserves or homelands.⁶ This clearly means that the Germans other than South Africans as we shall see used legal means or passed laws to enforce these creations of different land holdings, they in addition to this used force and threats. Thus people were forced to live north of the red line which demarcated the white man's land and the black man's land. However with regard to land appropriation, in order to empower itself the German Administration passed regulations in 1905 1906 and 1907. The 1905 ordinance gave the Governor the power to confiscate either completely or partially the lands of natives who engaged in any wars or other belligerent activities against the German Colonial Administration, non natives or other natives. The one for 1906 empowered the Governor to expropriate Toopnar, Zwardbooi and Herero land.

By the early 1890s eight concession companies had acquired rights to virtually all the land utilised by pastoralist communities.⁷ It was not until after the rinderpest of 1897, however, that the acquisition of land by settlers started in all earnest.⁸ By 1902 only 38% of the total land area remained in black hands.⁹ The rapid loss of land contributed greatly to the Nama and Herero war of resistance against the German colonial forces in 1904, which led to the large-scale extermination of Herero and Nama pastoralists.¹⁰ Regulations enacted in 1906 and 1907 empowered the German colonial authorities to expropriate nearly all land of the Herero and Nama. As a result, German settlers owned 1331 farms and some 90% of all livestock in the Police Zone by 1913.¹¹

Amoo submits the protection treaties by the Germans with the tribal communities in the North like the Owambo. These were sometimes resisted and rejected and as a result German

⁶ The Germans to ensure that the Namibians move out of the lands that they did not want them to be used force. General Lothar von Trotha in a widely quoted statement said:

The Herero people will have to leave the country. Otherwise I shall force them to do so by means of guns. Within German boundaries, every Herero, whether found armed or unarmed with or without cattle will be shot. I shall not accept any more women or children. I shall order them to be shot.

⁷ Werner W. 1993: 139.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.: 138

¹⁰ Wolfgang, W. 2003. p.3.

¹¹ Ibid.: 140

had no formal jurisdiction over them.¹² These communal lands were governed by the customary laws of such communities. Expounding this point he says:

Customary law applied to areas reserved for natives. In most cases the reservation of land for the occupation and use of the natives did not imply the complete ownership of that land by that particular tribal group rather the tribal group had rights of occupation and use, or usufructuary rights. The reversionary rights were vested in the colonial administration.

As a result of German inability to subdue native kingdoms in the Northern part of the Country, the German colonial government announced in 1907 that police protection should be confined to those areas that fell within the sphere of influence of the railway line or main roads.¹³ A similar point is explained by Hinz who then adds that this was the genesis of the repugnancy clause against customary laws in many colonies in southern Africa depriving most communities of their allodial rights to the land that they occupied and used from time immemorial.¹⁴ This Northern area of the country was henceforth referred to as the Police Zone. Dispossession and colonial settlement occurred exclusively in the Police Zone.¹⁵

According to du Pisani, “German land policy with regard to the acquisition of land had been formulated in 1892, on the premise that, after the demarcation of so-called “native reserves”, the colonial authorities would gradually acquire by proclamation the remainder of the Territory, as Crown Land.¹⁶ However, the German colonial administration did not manage to complete the implementation of this policy before Germany lost control of South West Africa as a result of World War I.¹⁷ At the outbreak of World War I, troops from the Union of South Africa conquered the German colonial forces in South West Africa. In the same light Werner comments:

Simultaneously with the process of white settlement, the South African colonial government began to set aside land for the exclusive use of dispossessed, black communities. These areas became known as ‘native reserves’, and by 1926, 16 such reserves covering 2,4 million hectares had been established. While these reserves reversed the total ban on land possession by blacks imposed by the Germans, most reserves were established on marginal land.¹⁸

¹² Amoo S.K. 2001: 90

¹³ Wolfgang, W. 2003. p.2.

¹⁴ Hinz M.O. 1998: 183-88.

¹⁵ Wolfgang, W. 2003. p.3.

¹⁶ du Pisani, A. 1985. 25.

¹⁷ Adams, F. & Werner, W. 1990:7.

¹⁸ Werner W. 1993: 139.

The new colonial regime continued with the establishment of white farms in the Police Zone after 1915. In 1915 South West Africa was under South African military rule and Martial law was declared.¹⁹ This Martial law did not change German Law regarding the divisions of land until 1921 when the actions of the military government were ratified by the South African government in 1920²⁰ and the Proclamation which declared Martial Law was repealed in the same year.²¹ By the early 1950s the process of white settlement had largely been concluded. The total number of farms established by then was 5214.²² This process is well explained below.

2.3 Under South African Administration (1915-1990)

Whether it was question of kind or mines or “reserves” the South-African government proceeded on the assumption that it had acquired not a Mandate but a colony.²³ The fact that the Germans had already displaced most African native groups pleased the South African administration which started passing legislation to regulate its policies on land tenure in South West Africa.

2.3.1 Crown Land

As mentioned above legal mechanisms were used by colonial powers aiming at dividing the land on the basis of settler native dichotomy. This was done by the initial declaration of the territory as crown land. In order to declare land inhabited by native groups the South African government passed a plethora of legislation. In 1903 the South African Administration had enacted an ordinance - The *Transvaal Crown Land Disposal Ordinance* - to achieve this goal in South Africa.

In 1920 the Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act,²⁴ of 1919, gave effect to the Mandate for South West Africa established pursuant to the Peace Treaty of Versailles. In general, this Act delegated the administration of the territory of South West Africa to the Governor-General of South Africa, who was given both legislative and executive powers. The Governor-General subsequently delegated administrative powers over the Territory to the Administrator of South West Africa. Now that South West Africa became a territory under its mandate the ordinance was applicable to South West Africa by virtue of the *Crown*

¹⁹ Proclamation of Martial Law 15 of 1915 (13 August 1915).

²⁰ Ratification was done in terms of Proclamation 1 of 1921 (Union Gazette Extraordinary of 2 January 1921).

²¹ Martial law was ended by Proclamation 76 of 1920.

²² Werner 1993. p.144

²³ United Nations Institute for Namibia. 1988:

²⁴ Act 49 of 1919

land Disposal Proclamation of 1920.²⁵ This extension was made possible in terms of section 4 (1) of the Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act of 1919.

In terms of the of the Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act of 1919 the land held by the German colonial administration effectively became Crown Land of South West Africa, with the South African Parliament retaining authority over land rights. The Act stated that "no grant of any title, right of interest in State land or minerals" within South West Africa could be made without the authority of Parliament, except pursuant to the provisions of several specified laws which the Governor-General could make applicable to South West Africa. These specified laws included the abovementioned Crown Land Disposal Ordinance 1903 of the Transvaal, which authorised the Executive decision to set aside native reserves without specific Parliamentary authority. Disregard of Parliament in some of these essential decisions was a typical practice of colonial masters across the world. In *Post Office v. Estuary Radio Ltd.*, Diplock L.J. said:

It still lies within the prerogative power of the Crown to extend its sovereignty and jurisdiction to areas of land or sea over which it has not previously claimed or exercised sovereignty or jurisdiction. For such extension the authority of Parliament is not required.²⁶

Although the question whether a territory has been acquired by the Crown was not and even now is not justiciable before municipal courts, those courts have jurisdiction to determine the consequences of an acquisition under municipal law but never did. At the moment the current position can be challenged thus accordingly, the municipal courts can determine the owner of land and trees on communal land.

Section 12 of the Crown Land disposal Proclamation of 1920 as Amoo writes provided that certain areas of crown land could be reserved for the use and benefit of aboriginal natives although in general term the whole territory was declared crown land of state land.

Amoo submits

The declaration of the territory as crown land meant by necessary implication that the received law was to be used to determine property relations by this did not rule out completely the application of the relevant customary law in areas where the land was substantially occupied by tribal groups.

²⁵ 13 of 1920

²⁶ *Post Office v. Estuary Radio Ltd.* (1968) 2 QB 740, at p 753

The learned author goes on to say that one must also take recognition of Section 4 (3) of the Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act which authorized the Governor general in respect of land contained in any such reserve to grant individual titles to any person lawfully occupying and entitled to such land.

2.3.2 Effects of the Crown Land Disposal Ordinance

The passage of transference of the Crown land disposal Ordinance of 1903 meant that all land that was under the ownership of tribal groups became state land. The land now belonged to the Mandatory Power and hence initial stages by the South African Administration to deprive native owners of their dominium and rights to land. The South African government thus expropriated the land even of concessionaire companies and declared all unallocated areas crown land. It not only encouraged Germans farmers to stay on but also invited more whites from South Africa to come and settle in South West Africa.

In 1967 another piece of legislation was passed, the reservation of state land or Natives Ordinance.²⁷This had similar provisions where natives were only granted usufructuary rights over state land reserved for them.

Thus in 1922 they passed the Native Administration Proclamation.²⁸ This was issued by the Governor General who managed the mandate on behalf of the Imperial king of Britain.²⁹ It therefore led to the foundation of Native reserves meant for occupation by Native groups only. After recognizing that the ordinance may not be effective enough in gearing their land grab, the Administration in 1928 which gave the administrator more power and authority to designate and define tribal areas. Amoo reports that “as early as the end of 1923 about 14 native reserves had been established.” This means that the tribal communities who claimed rights to their land by virtue of occupation from time immemorial lost their land and land rights.³⁴

By virtue of the Native Reserve Regulations 1924.³⁰, the ownership of land rested in the colonial administration and such kind in terms of this regulation could not be alienated or be designated for any other purpose without the consent of the bicameral parliament of the

²⁷ Ordinance 35 of 1967

²⁸ Proclamation 11 of 1922

²⁹ Under the *Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act*

³⁰ 68 of 1924

South African Administration. In their article entitled Adams & Werner³¹ submit that this caused those traditional leaders who were in the police zone to lose their powers of their own with regard to the allocation of land in reserves.

The regulation vested superintendents appointed by the Administrator with the power of allocating land in the reserve . It should be mentioned that these statutes should not be interpreted to be a way through which native title to land and trees on them was extinguished, as we shall see in Chapter 3 below.

South Africa went further and contemplated the integration of the white areas with the republic while the African areas were divided into eleven "homelands". One of the most abominable features of the report of the Odendaal commission was that it envisaged the "homelands" as separate states with separate citizenships.³² These homelands were created by the Development of Self Government for Native Nations in South West Africa Act of 1968.³³ This Act gave the various prices of land assembled in the development Trust special status by transforming them in to areas for nature nations. Thus Amoo calls them Nature Nations deriving the name for the legislation that created them but in social practice people called them homelands.

Section 2 (g) empowered the state president of South Africa to "reserve and set apart such other land or area for the exclusive use and occupation by any nation by proclamation" an example of this is the Bushman land which was created by virtue of the Bushman Nation Advisory Board Proclamation of 1976.³⁴ whose section 2 recognized Bushman's land as defined in GN 1196 of 1970 as an area for members of the Bushman Nation. The United Nation Institute for Namibia wrote that the idea behind the proposal for creating these "homelands" or Nature Nations was to prevent the emergence of one nationalism in the territory which could pose a challenge to South African presence in Namibia in the future.

³¹ Adams F & Werner W. 1990: 9

³² United Nations Institute for Namibia. 1988

³³ Act 54 of 1968

³⁴ Proclamation R208 of 1976

2.3.3 Land Tenure in former Homelands

Land tenure in these areas was officially defined by the Proclamation 188 of 1969 as "un surveyed land" as "permission to occupy". Under this proclamation, a male person held rights to various land allotments for residential use, arable farming and grazing. Land access was usually by virtue of membership to a community, not through sale lease or rent. Only men had land inheritance rights. De Wet³⁵ submits that people did not legally own their residential arable allotments, rather they were allowed the right of occupation and cultivation subject to conditions stipulated by the homeland authorities.³⁶

The South African Administration having established nature nations proceeded to pass more legislation which made some of those nature lands communal lands.³⁷ South African reserve policies culminated in the mid-1960s in proposals put forward by the Commission of Enquiry into South West Africa Affairs to consolidate existing native reserves into tribally based 'homelands'. In time, these homelands were to obtain some measure of autonomy through the establishment of tribally based legislative assemblies and executive committees. The recommendations of the Odendaal Commission completed the system of racially structured access to land in Namibia.

The Commission recommended the creation of Homelands which are even today reflected in the repeal Schedule of the Namibian Constitution. Schedule 8 of the Namibian Constitution contains some of such legislation which are the Representative Authority of the Caprivians Proclamation of 1980³⁸, The Representative Authority of the Kavango's Proclamation of 1980³⁹ and the Representative Authority of the Ovambo's Proclamation of 1980.⁴⁰ Section 5 (a) lists the recognised and represented groups and Section 6(1) refers to Owambo Tribal authorities as recognised by Proclamation R290 of 1968.⁴¹ It should be mentioned however that the reservation was in no way a recognition of any traditional land rights.

The policy behind the creation of reserves on the mainland was accurately described by Blackburn J. in *Milirrpum*.⁴²

³⁵ De Wet C. 1987: 459-478.

³⁶ According to Murray in South Africa approximately 15% of the land in the homelands was held an freehold or conditional (quitrent) title. See Murray.2006.

³⁷ This Commission is commonly known by the name of its chairman, Odendaal, thus 'Odendaal Commission'.

³⁸ Proclamation AG 29 of 1980

³⁹ Proclamation AG 26 of 1980

⁴⁰ Proclamation AG 23 of 1980

⁴¹ as amended by Proclamation R72 of 1971

⁴² (1971) 17 FLR, at p 255:

The creation of aboriginal reserves - a policy which goes back at least to the time of Governor Macquarie – implies the negation of communal native title; for they are set up at the will of the Government and in such places as the Government chooses. There is never the slightest suggestion that their boundaries are negotiated between parties by way of the adjustment of rights.

Indeed, the creation of reserves out of Crown land was itself the exercise by the Crown of its rights of absolute ownership over the land.

In 1981 the *Representative Authorities Amendment Proclamation* AG1981 made the Administrator General Trustee of communal lands. This Proclamation gave the executive authority of the representative authority to the extent that it was authorized by an ordinance of the legislative authority or any other law - the power to confer ownership or any other right into or over, and portion of such communal land, thereby maintaining the alien concept of private individuals ownership among the tribal communities. There were however some amendments that were made subsequently for example, the Representative Authorities Proclamation and those proclamations establishing Representative Authority Powers Transfer Proclamations of 1989⁴³ which dissolved the Representative Authorities and transferred their powers back to the Administrator General. Article 47 read together with schedule 8 of the Namibian Constitution repealed the remaining parts of the various representative authorities' proclamations.

Ironically this seems to have been done for no change at all. Following the argument by Hinz no changes took place with regard to the ownership or the nature communal lands. Hinz takes his authority from section 11(2) (c) of the Interpretation of laws Proclamation of 1920⁴⁴ which provides that the acts performed under the repealed laws will remain valid hence no changes were seen on the ground as a result of these repeals.⁴⁵ This will be much clearer in the explanation below. This philosophy connects to what happened after Independence in Namibia as illustrated elucidated below.

⁴³ Proclamation AG8 of 1989

⁴⁴ *Proclamation* 88 of 1920

⁴⁵ This argument is even supported by the constitution Article 105 (5) which vests power to control and utilize communal land in the state.

3. Post Colonial Land Tenure Systems

3.1 *The Land Issue after Independence*

At independence in 1990 the new Namibian government inherited a highly tilted distribution of land. In 1990 Commercial Farms constituted the largest part of the land surface being 44% of the total landmass, communal land constituted 41% and national parks together with local authority areas constituted 19%. A World Bank study noted that at independence the average size of a white-owned farm was 7 836 hectares, 23 times larger than the average black-owned cattle farm.⁴⁶ By 1995, the situation of inequality in land ownership had not changed, not only did commercial farmers own more land than communal farmers, they also held freehold titles to 74% of the potential arable land.⁴⁷ Given that there were only 6,300 commercial farms owned by just 4,200 commercial farmers,⁴⁸ it is obvious that some farmers owned more than one farm. Up to 382 or 6.1 % of commercial farms were estimated to be the private properties of 272 foreigners, most of whom were alleged to be absentee landlords.⁴⁹

Even if there has been land redistribution right from early 90s, approximately 36,2 million hectares of land representing 44 percent of the total land area were held under freehold title until 2003.⁵⁰ This land was commonly referred to as the commercial farming sector and was privately owned. Under previous Apartheid policies, access to this land was reserved for white farmers, and the freehold farming sector is still dominated by white land owners.⁵¹ By contrast, today, freehold areas, formerly known as native reserves and referred to today as communal areas, comprise about 33,4 million hectares, representing 41 per cent of total land area. This shows that the size of communal area has not changed at all yet population has grown in those areas and the government has warned of overcrowding in arable parts of communal areas especially in the five northern regions of the country.

Karuumbe writes that the already overcrowded Communal Areas are increasingly facing private enclosures by wealthier communal farmers, and this has become a threat to poor farmers' livelihoods.⁵² The National planning Commission reported that although agricultural contribution to GDP is only 9.4% (mostly derived from commercial agriculture),

⁴⁶ World Bank 1991: 21

⁴⁷ Pankhurst, 1996: 14

⁴⁸ NPC, 1995: 205

⁴⁹ Pankhurst, 1996: 29

⁵⁰ Wolfgang, W. 2003. p.3.

⁵¹ RoN 1991b: 147

⁵² Karuumbe, 2003, p.6. taking authority from Tapscott and Hangula, 1994; and Werner, 1997b

subsistence farming is the principal source of income of up to 41% of all households in the country.⁵³ The Ministry of Agriculture Water and Rural Development (MAWARD) reported that up to 200,000. farmworkers and their dependants (or roughly 22% of the total population) are believed to derive their livelihoods from working on commercial farms.⁵⁴ Pomuti and Tvedten write that with unemployment estimated at 41%,⁵⁵ and 53% of all households in Namibia classified as 'poor' or 'very poor',⁵⁶ people adopt different livelihoods strategies. One such strategy is rural-urban migration, such that it is estimated by the Central Statistics Office that 3.6% of rural households rely on cash remittances as a source of household income.⁵⁷ Urban migrant workers as well as those who are working on commercial farms send remittances to their families and friends in communal Areas.

In addition to the high unemployment figures and the percentage of households in poverty given above, Namibia's average annual household income estimated in 1993 by the Central Statistics office is N\$ 17,198.⁵⁸ Karuumbe comments that this meagre income makes it imperative for the majority of urban households to rely on land and land-based resources as a safety net (fallback mechanism).⁵⁹ Further, this household income, however, masks the vast inequality in the income distribution of different households, as wealth in Namibia is mainly concentrated in the hands of 5.3% of the population according to statistics compiled by the Central Statistics office.⁶⁰ The effectiveness of land reform, therefore, will be seen in whether it addresses the unequal land ownership as explained above in a manner that takes cognisance of the different coping strategies landless and poor people adopt.⁶¹ The major laws and policies which impact on land reform in Namibia are discussed below.

⁵³ NPC, 1995: 160; SIAPAC, 1998: 54

⁵⁴ MAWARD, 1991: 107; Pankhurst, 1996: 29

⁵⁵ Pomuti & Tvedten, 1998: 120

⁵⁶ SIAPAC, 1998: 1

⁵⁷ CSO, 1993: 157

⁵⁸ CSO, 1993: 157

⁵⁹ Karuumbe, 2003, p.6.

⁶⁰ CSO, 1993: 14

⁶¹ Karuumbe, 2003, p.6.

3.2 The Constitution

A number of other authors on the land question have always submitted in their writings that the Constitution of Namibia which came into Force on 21 March 1990 has done very little to change the status quo. In fact Constitutional property clauses like Article 16 entrench the status of private ownership. Article 100 provides that all natural resources (including land) belong to the State unless otherwise 'lawfully owned'. This 'lawful ownership' can be interpreted to mean private ownership which existed before independence. This position of the constitution basically acknowledges ownerships which existed before hence land reform may be a hard task for the government of Namibia under the Constitution.

The constitution is based on western style of governance with separation of powers and governance which is based on the rule of law. Article 16 is part of the entrenched Bill of Rights, (Chapter 3). It provides for the acquisition of land but that should be in accordance with the rule of law. The Article says:

Article 16 Property

(1) All persons shall have the right in any part of Namibia to acquire, own and dispose of all forms of immovable and movable property individually or in association with others and to bequeath their property to their heirs or legatees: provided that Parliament may by legislation prohibit or regulate as it deems expedient the right to acquire property by persons who are not Namibian citizens.

(2) The State or a competent body or organ authorised by law may expropriate property in the public interest subject to the payment of just compensation, in accordance with requirements and procedures to be determined by Act of Parliament.

In terms of this Article land transactions therefore have to be based on the willing-seller/willing-buyer principle, and this is believed by the Land Alliance to have increased land prices since independence.⁶² It is clear as Karuombe, comments that compensation is clearly a constraint on how far government can go in acquiring and redistributing land, but it should not be used, as is often the case, to suggest that there is no opportunity to implement land reform.⁶³ For instance, as Pankhurst writes, government is constitutionally free to establish minimal compensation in the case of expropriation of unutilised or under-utilised land.⁶⁴

Upon assumption of duty for an independent Namibia, the new government decided to address the land issue which had been contentious during colonial times as elucidated above.

⁶² Land Alliance, 1999: 3

⁶³ Karuombe, 2003, p.7.

⁶⁴ Pankhurst, 1996: 116

Cabinet adopted a resolution stating that all stakeholders should be consulted on this issue hence a Land conference was supposed to be held where they would present their views. In terms of this land conference resolution, the Prime Minister appointed the Technical Committee on Commercial Farmland (TCCF) in December 1991.⁶⁵

This led to the holding of the first Land Conference in Namibia. After the conference the Technical Committee had to compile recommendations to the government based on the presentations made by stakeholders during the Conference.⁶⁶The recommendations were produced but a close scrutiny thereof shows that they were guided by concerns to bring abandoned, under-utilized and unused land back into production by expropriated land reallocated to the land reform Programme. This led to the promulgation of various pieces of legislation whose exposition is done below.

3.3 The Agricultural (Commercial Land) Reform Act

According to the LAC, “commercial land is the land that can be bought by private individuals, who then become the owners of the land.”⁶⁷ as noted above, under the colonial government, commercial land allocations were made on racial lines, with the result that there are long-standing grievances with regard to these lands. The Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act of 1995 was enacted to address some of these concerns. In particular, this Act gives the State the right of first option to buy commercial farm land when an owner wants to sell land. The State must decide whether it wants to buy a particular farm before the farm can be sold to another buyer. This is called selling the land on a willing buyer–willing seller basis. The Act allows the State to acquire commercial land where the land is too big, has been abandoned or is under-utilised.

⁶⁵ Office of the Prime Minister. 1991:13

⁶⁶ Wolfgang W. 1997: 5.

⁶⁷ LAC, 2003. p.xi.

3.3.1 Willing Buyer Willing Seller under the Act

Under this Act the process of land acquisition in terms of the willing buyer willing seller is well spelt out. Ministry of Lands Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR), has the right of first refusal should a farm be ready to put on sale. It is only when the government has refused to buy the farm that the seller will be allowed to offer the farm to anybody else. This has led the government to acquire unproductive land because the productive ones are not opening for sale.

Harring and Odendaal comment that the Government's announcement in 2004, through then Prime Minister Theo-Ben Gurirab, that land expropriation would begin, recognised the failure of the "willing buyer, willing seller" process: it simply did not acquire enough farm land, fast enough, to ensure a politically sustainable land reform process.⁶⁸ Harring and Odendaal further comment that at the rate of 209 farms in 17 years, resettling only about 9 000 poor people,⁶⁹ it would take almost 100 years to acquire only a quarter of the white owned farms, leaving the Namibian poor and landless, most of whom support the SWAPO Government, politically and economically marginalised according to the report by Harring and Odendaal released by the Legal Assistance Centre. The report further says that:

The AALS farmers can be expected to acquire some proportion of these farms, but this will not alleviate poverty since those who can afford to buy these farms are obviously not poor. Also, with the spectre of Zimbabwe looming over land reform in Southern Africa (an issue raised in Kessl, para 10), the failure of land reform represents a potential problem of political instability that goes to the core of the SWAPO majority and strong support among the poor.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Gurirab 2004.

⁶⁹ Harring and Odendaal 2007, p.17.

⁷⁰ Harring and Odendaal 2007, p.17.

Farms acquired during the financial year 2007/2008

No.	Farm Name	Farm No	Reg. Div.	Region	Size (ha)	Price	Transfer Costs	Date of Purchase
1.	Farms Buschfeld	256	B	Otjozondjupa	5038.0000	1,753,224.00	7,920.00	17.04.2007
2.	Ptn 48 of farm Consolidated farm Tsumore	48	B	Oshikoto	2439.0000	2,551,235.00	8,880.00	26.04.2007
3.	Farm Lukasbank	63	G	Erongo	6996.6228	1,189,425.88	6,000.00	08.05.2007
4.	Farm Franken	242	A	Kunene	2103.2359	3,573,722.00	12,240.00	31.05.2007
	Ptn 2 (named Franken) of farm KAMANJAB	190	A	Kunene	5032.6250			31.05.2007
	Farm Gauss	265	A	Kunene	3693.6009			31.05.2007
5.	Rem Ext of Ptn 6 of Farm Ludwigshafen	480	B	Oshikoto	90.1782	2,659,436.68	9,600.00	31.05.2007
	Ptn 7 of the Farm Ludwigshafen	480	B	Oshikoto	199.9321			31.05.2007
	Ptn 1 of the farm Mannheim	100	B	Oshikoto	308.8259			31.05.2007
6.	Farm Korabib	327	V	Karas	19789.1821	1,503,997.68	7,440.00	10.07.2007
7.	Farm Bonna	230	K	Khomas	5105.3721	1,276,343.00	6,720.00	31.07.2007
8.	Farm Aurus	149	T	Karas	8644.005	1,253,380.00	6,720.00	10.08.2007
9.	Farm Schwarzeck	130	V	Karas	12736.931	1,018,954.00	6,240.00	28.09.2007
10.	Ptn 1 Farm Vredendal of Farm Goabis	138	V	Karas	14009.4770	1,092,739.00	6,240.00	28.09.2007
11.	Farm Ausserkerhr	147		Karas	778.3760	56,600,000.00		02.10.2007
12.	Farm Lekkerrus	732	M	Hardap	1857.0048	677,806.00	4,462.00	10.10.2007
13.	Farm Seringkop	454	A	Kunene	6531.1945	1,894,046.48	8,360.00	11.02.2008
14.	Ptn 14 B of Farm Ludwigshaven	480	B	Oshikoto	50.0000	1,703,000.00	7,200.00	28.02.2008
15.	Farm Duenkirchen	716	B	Otjozondjupa	2092.5302			28.02.2008
16.	Farm Edinburgh	717	B	Otjozondjupa	1412.5987	1,440,238.00	7,250.00	28.02.2008
17.	Rem Ext of the Farm Noethvlei	190	S	Karas	7999.9995	648,000.00	4,560.00	10.03.2008
18.	Portion 1 of the Farm Noethvlei	190	S	Karas	8486.7272	721,372.00	5,040.00	10.03.2008
					115395.4272	81,556,919.72	81,556,919.72	
18 Farms Purchased			Total (Price)			81,671,791.72		

Table showing the number of farms acquired. Source: RoN: 2009: 1.

As Haring and Odendaal put it, the “willing buyer, willing seller” process did not allow for any parallel and systematic rural land reform and land use planning.⁷¹ Further, farms could not be acquired according to any plan, so there could be no reorganisation of the agrarian order to bring about the necessary transformation of an agricultural economy that depends on a single product (cattle) which is both destructive of the land if improperly managed, and a risky strategy in a highly competitive world market.⁷² Most of Namibia’s remaining white farmers had built their operations under apartheid with favourable government subsidies, and it has become clear that black farmers would not be able to sustain profitable farming operations without similar levels of support under either the resettlement programme or the AALS.⁷³

According to the report Government refused to buy most farms offered as they were unsuitable for farming operations – a reflection of what Haring and Odendaal call “the wasteful nature of the farming system established under the South African Administration.”⁷⁴ Vast tracts of farmland in parts of Namibia’s environmentally sensitive areas have become barren as a result of ineffective and poorly supervised livestock management and land use policies as described in the Haring and Odendaal report.

The policy of willing buyer willing seller escaped any form of judicial review from its inception in the first decade of Namibia’s Independence, celebrated in 1990, until the handing down of the judgements in the case of *Gunther Kessl v Ministry of Lands and Resettlement*,⁷⁵ and two essentially identical companion cases, in the High Court of Namibia on 6 March 2008.

Kessl addresses many aspects of the Ministry’s land reform programme, and repeatedly upholds the legality of the principle of land expropriation, grounded in Article 16(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, but it finds that the Ministry’s administration of the expropriation process has violated Namibian law on several grounds. While the final pages of the judgement set out very explicit requirements that the Ministry must fulfil to legalise the process, the judgement also raises difficulties with the ongoing land reform programme that will not be easy to remedy.

⁷¹ Haring and Odendaal, 2008, p.3.

⁷² Ibid, see also Haring and Odendaal 2007, p.13-14.

⁷³ Fuller and Eiseb, 2002.

⁷⁴ Haring and Odendaal, 2008, p.3. This underscores the fact that most farms in Namibia are only marginally suited to agriculture, a devastating critique of colonial and apartheid-era agricultural practices, but also an indication of the serious problems that Namibia’s land reform programme faces. Some part of the land reform process must start with environmental restoration, another expensive process that will eventually result in the availability of additional lands for the resettlement of poor people, but only in the future. This is a difficult political problem in a country with thousands of poor people and limited economic resources.

⁷⁵ Unreported case number (P) A 27/2006.

The Court, uncharacteristic of Namibian courts, explicitly criticises the Ministry for mismanaging the expropriation process and thereby leaving the land reform programme in a state of disarray. After nearly 20 years of independence, with the former Minister of Lands and Resettlement and current President of Namibia, Hifikepunye Pohamba, directly involved in this debacle, this judgement undermines the Government's credibility in terms of its ability to plan and manage its own land reform programme.

3.3.2 Compulsory Acquisition of Land

On the other hand, the Constitution does provide for compulsory acquisition of property, although this is subject to the payment of just compensation in terms of Article 16(2) of the constitution. The Act allows in Article 14 (2) (a-d) for the compulsory acquisition of agricultural land classified as under-utilised, excessive or acquired by a foreign national, or of land where the application of the willing-seller, willing-buyer principal has failed. The crucial questions are what requirements the "public interest" criterion sets and whether the envisaged expropriations for the purposes of redistribution as part of the land reform and resettlement programme are indeed in the "public interest". It seems that public interest will be determined by the government according to its developmental goals.

Section 14 (3)(a) of the Act defines any agricultural land which is not substantially utilised for agricultural purposes or which, with regard to the agricultural potential of the land, is not utilised adequately, as being under-utilised land. The assessment of when land is not utilised in a sense that qualifies it for expropriation is, however, the discretionary prerogative of the government and is part of the land reform policy programme. As determination of "public interest" is at the discretion of the government, as stated above, it is hardly possible to set aside an expropriation order on the grounds of its purpose.⁷⁶ Treeger comments that the choices made by the legislature or executive as to where the public interest lies will have to be respected, unless they clearly constitute an arbitrary or discriminatory deprivation of property and are deemed to be against the rule of law.

Therefore even if there is this power to compulsorily acquire land, the Minister responsible for land has to apply reasonable and objective criteria in order to satisfy himself that the lands to be acquired were reasonably necessary for resettlement purposes in conformity with the land reform programme and in accordance with the principles of natural justice. This is a very stringent criterion which has its foundations in international law which is part of Namibian law under Article 144 of the Constitution.

⁷⁶ Treeger, 2004, p.4.

One of the controversial expropriations was done on the Ongombo west farm. The farm Ongombo West was expropriated in the middle of a dispute with its workers⁷⁷ that ultimately provoked the rage of former Namibian President Sam Nujoma who pronounced the following at a May Day rally: “Some whites are behaving as if they came from Holland or Germany. Steps will be taken and we can drive them out of the land. We have the capacity to do so.”⁷⁸ Harring and Odendaal report that:

The white owners of Ongombo West purportedly mistreated their workers, degraded their land, shot off their game animals, and behaved in a racist and colonial manner reminiscent of apartheid. The owners asked N\$9 million for the farm, and the amount offered was N\$3,7 million. The owners did not challenge the expropriation order in court, perhaps for obvious reasons given their behaviour, but perhaps they also did not challenge it due to feeling intimidated by the Ministry and Nujoma.⁷⁹

In terms of legal process stipulated under the Act, it is not clear what procedures were followed in this expropriation, but as reported, it is clear that Ongombo West was not selected for expropriation through any rational process other than simple retaliation for poor treatment of workers.⁸⁰ More importantly, no use has been made of this farm for resettlement purposes, so this expropriation was not driven by any plan to resettle poor people there or was not in the public interest as such. Harring and Odendaal report however that this is not true of the second and third expropriations, of the farms Okorusu and Marburg, neighbouring farms expropriated together in order to resettle a group of five previously resettled farmers displaced from Cleveland, a farm acquired some years before under the “willing buyer, willing seller” scheme, now being re-sold by the Government to the owners of a private cement factory.⁸¹ Further,

The Okorusu/Marburg expropriation seems to have been haphazard in its conception, given that the owners had offered the farms to the Government under the “willing buyer, willing seller” scheme, only to have been ignored, which forced them to sue the Government for a waiver so that they could sell on the open market. After this lawsuit was decided in the owners’ favour, the Ministry served them a notice of expropriation. This was completely unnecessary in view of their willingness to sell, and no explanation for this seemingly arbitrary or even incompetent action has been given. Since the owners wanted to sell anyway, the only issue remaining was compensation. The Government’s initial offer of N\$3,675 million in total for the two farms was rejected and the price was challenged in court. However, the Ministry settled the matter with an offer of N\$8 million, which was accepted, ending the litigation, again with no legal challenge to the administrative process which, in light of *Kessl*, was unlawful.⁸²

⁷⁷ Harring and Odendaal, 2008, p.4.

⁷⁸ Ibid quoting from Maletsky, 2005, p.1.

⁷⁹ Harring and Odendaal, 2008, p.4. the authors comment that it might also be that the farmer groups generally believed that this was a poor subject for a test case, given the conduct of the owners, and that better farms for test cases were certain to come along soon. This would have meant that the owners of Ongombo West would have had to have financed their lawsuit themselves, a prohibitive cost.

⁸⁰ ibid

⁸¹ ibid

⁸² ibid

In the *Kessl* case the High Court ruled that the compulsory acquisition of land belonging to Kessl and two other farm owners by the Namibian government was illegal for it was done outside the requirements of the law. The court ruled out that the requirement of “public interest”, as a prerequisite to expropriation in Article 16(2) discussed at hand of international authorities and the case of *Aonin Fishing (Pty) v Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources*.⁸³ The court went on to say that that the Minister can only act within the limits of his statutory discretion and should apply his mind to the requirements of the enabling Act. Furthermore, in order to expropriate land, it must be done within the provisions of the Act and involves a double-barrel process, namely, firstly in terms of section 14 of the Act and then in terms of section 2 of the same Act. This must be done before the Minister takes a decision.

The Court went on to hold that before compulsory acquisition is had, the Minister must have proper consultations with the affected parties. It emphasised that it should be noted that consultation by the Minister with the Commission is a prerequisite for involving the section 20 expropriation process under the act and noted that “the essence of consultation is the communication of a genuine invitation, extended with a receptive mind, to give advice”. Such consultation should be done already at the section 14 stage of willing buyer/ willing seller and before the Minister decides to purchase a particular farm. Since these provisions were not followed and principles of natural justice embodied in the Constitution were flouted, the Court held that the expropriation was illegal. On this note Harring and Odendaal comment:

This new model of legality is critical in a land reform process that is, for all the statutory detail of the Act of 1995, primarily discretionary. Neither Parliament nor the Courts are going to decide on a plan for land reform, acquire thousands more farms through expropriation or on a “willing buyer, willing seller” basis, at a cost of billions of dollars to the Namibian state, and redistribute this land to up to 240 000 poor Namibians, together with adequate financial and infrastructural support. It is the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement that must have the legal capacity to carry out land reform. But all the evidence before us now suggests that the Ministry simply does not have this capacity, which flows from a legal culture that has not been instilled in the Ministry since its founding in 1990. Instead, the Ministry has produced a culture of secrecy, conspiracy, insiders and outsiders, and bureaucrats who think that their job is to shuffle papers; a culture of “getting by”. All this became apparent as the Ministry proceeded to defend the expropriations in the *Kessl* case.

According to the report of the Legal Assistance Center by Harring and Odendaal, in 2008, “the situation for the beneficiaries resettled since Independence hasn’t changed much; to date no resettlement farm leaseholds have been registered at the Deeds Office.

⁸³ 1998 NR 47

Consequently, resettlement beneficiaries cannot obtain loans if they have insufficient collateral. Resettlement beneficiaries cannot offer the land on which they are resettled as collateral, as the land belongs to the State. Natural justice must afford legal recognition of those whose property rights were denied in the past. Poor people's land rights have to have the same protection in law as wealthy people's land rights."⁸⁴

3.3.3 Land Tribunals

The Act also creates Lands Tribunals. This provision of the Act enables disputes to be solved amicably especially between the government and commercial farmers in cases such as events when a farmer wants to sell his/ her farm for more than what the government wishes to pay for it in terms of the Act. Despite allegations that commercial farmers are artificially inflating their farm prices when offering them to government, the available literature does not show any price disputes that have reached the Lands Tribunal to date. Even if there are cases, they will be very few which were settled out of the tribunal. Pankhurst comments that the lack of clarity on what an economic unit constitutes and the reliance on pre-independence ecological zone measurements of the various regions makes the identification of unused or under-utilised land almost an impossible mission.⁸⁵ Similarly Karuombe says:

Thus, compulsory expropriation or taxing holders of such land remains more of a piece of political rhetoric. The emphasis here is that, whilst not negating constitutional limitations, there is ample room for manoeuvre if government wants to accelerate the pace of land reform and deliver on its promise of giving land to the landless.⁸⁶

The Agriculture (Commercial) Land Reform Act also limits the ownership of land by foreign nationals, by requiring express ministerial permission for the acquisition of land rights. The LAC comments that the system under which commercial land is regulated is well organised. Land is properly surveyed and is held under title deeds kept in the central deeds registry for commercial land in Windhoek. A separate deeds registry exists for property in the Rehoboth Gebiet. When a farm is sold, the transaction is recorded on the title deed of the particular piece of land. This is proof of ownership. Leases of commercial land for periods longer than ten years are also recorded on the title deed. Holders of title deeds are free to sell their land subject to the conditions of the title deed. For example, if two people are married in community of property, the Married Persons Equality Act and the accompanying Deeds Registry Amendment Act prevent the sale of commercial land by one spouse without the other spouse's consent.

⁸⁴ Haring and Odendaal, 2008, p.18.

⁸⁵ Pankhurst, 1996: 136

⁸⁶ Karuombe, 2003, p.8.

Commercial ownership of land may be used as security for a bank loan. In such a situation, the bank will lend money to the owner, but the bank will register a mortgage bond over the property. This means that if the owner cannot repay the money borrowed, the bank can sell the property to recover the outstanding debt.

3.3.4 Land Reform Advisory Commission and Land Acquisition and Development Fund

Critical to an effective agricultural land reform process is reliable data and experience with the land itself. According to Haring and Odendaal, the Government of Namibia is not an experienced farmer.⁸⁷ Moreover, the agricultural sector in general, and farmers in particular, were distrustful of both the Government and the land reform process. It was therefore important to take measures to both expose the process and incorporate a broad set of views.⁸⁸ The first provision of the Act was to create a Land Reform Advisory Commission to take these measures. The 12-person Commission consisted of three from the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, including the Permanent Secretary acting as Chairperson, one from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, one from the Ministry of Justice, three from “Associations or bodies involved in agricultural affairs”, including the Agricultural Bank of Namibia, and four other persons – “at least two females”, “not employed in the public service” or generally representative of the public.⁸⁹ According to the 1977 LAC Report by Haring and Odendaal in theory, the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement was outvoted in this body by 9 to 3; and the Government as a whole was outvoted by other Commission members by 7 to 5 – both measures indicating a suspicion of the Government’s intent and a lack of public representation in the process.⁹⁰ They go on to say:

However, the role of the Advisory Commission is entirely advisory, and in this respect, the body has not been effective. The idea that the Ministry needed outside information and input in order to carry out an effective land reform programme is embodied in this provision for the creation of an advisory body, but there has not been adequate consultation or research in the land reform process.⁹¹

Similarly, the creation of a Land Acquisition and Development Fund was, on the one hand, a simple means to establish both a fund for land acquisition and a body to administer it, but on the other hand it was unnecessary, since the Government has the capacity to buy land with public funds from any source, and setting up this Fund effectively limited the capacity of the

⁸⁷ Haring and Odendaal, 2007, p.11.

⁸⁸ *ibid*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Ministry to carry out land reform because it linked land reform directly to the availability of money in this Fund.⁹²

3.3.5 The Civil Society and the Land Policy Process

The government responded to the land issue by adopting a National Land Policy in 1998, in which a unitary land system is proposed. Under this unitary system, “all citizens have equal rights, opportunities and security across a range of tenure and management systems.”⁹³ This proposed system would ensure that communal forms of land tenure are equally recognised and protected by the law, and that communal land is administered according to a uniform system.⁹⁴ The National Land Policy also aims to ensure:

- Equality before the law with regard to access to land.
- That women have the same status as men with regard to all forms of land rights, whether as individuals or as members of a family. This means, for example, that women are entitled to be allocated land, and that they can bequeath and inherit land. Importantly, widows are entitled to maintain the land rights they enjoyed while their husbands were alive. This will have an impact on customary and civil law rules with regard to women’s rights to land, which rules government has undertaken to reform.
- Equal access to land and security of tenure.
- Environmentally sustainable natural resource use, including the use of land.

4. The Philosophy of Land Redistribution in Namibia

Land reform in Namibia is not just one process; it has to do with a number of rationale. It is a cross cutting process incorporating development and national reconciliation. The concept of ‘land reform’ in Namibia has been limited to the redistribution of formerly white-owned commercial farms to black farmers. Equally important, and completely missing from current political discourse in Namibia, is the acquisition of degraded commercial farmlands for the purpose of environmental rehabilitation.⁹⁵ The two processes might be linked as follows: redistributing degraded farmland from white farmers to black farmers will simply continue the colonial process of land degradation. The Government needs a plan to rehabilitate environmentally degraded farmlands – at least several thousand commercial farms.⁹⁶ Ultimately these rehabilitated farms might also be suitable for some types of farming and

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ LAC, 2003. p.xiii.

⁹⁴ LAC, 2003. p.xiii.

⁹⁵ Haring and Odendaal 2007, p.14.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

allocated to black farmers, but this type of long-term planning is not currently undertaken as part of the land reform process.⁹⁷ Below is a brief analysis of the philosophy behind the land reform processes in Namibia.

4.1 Land Reform for Development

Settlers raised another issue that plagued the colonial tenure policy. Settlers justified their taking over of land, even when subject to compensation to the prior local occupiers, with the argument that they could develop the land and make the colony prosperous more so than the African inhabitants. This was an old and tried argument that underlay the legal justification a century before in America for removing native Americans from the land. The civilising development mission had precedence over rights.

After independence despite economic setbacks, development became one of the bases of the land tenure policy. The government granted occupation rights on resettlement areas and communal areas. The grant of occupation was limited to 99 years. The reason was that the government grant entailed no more than a lease. It was not a freehold. For a grant of freehold would have implied prior extinction of customary tenures especially in communal areas. With an occupancy/lease customary rights remained intact.

As in other settler colonies, demands for land reform and redistributive land reform in particular derive their impetus and strength from colonial land dispossession. They are as much a demand to bring about more equitable socio-economic development in the country as a desire to have past injustices addressed. Land dispossession was the foundation which underpinned the wealth and power which colonial settlers managed to achieve within a century of colonial rule. A reversal of the status quo would mean economic empowerment of the black populace and alleviating poverty among them.

In the long term, it is unclear how substantial the land reform issue really is in the context of poverty alleviation in an increasingly urbanised Namibia. It has been suggested that one reason for the slow progress in land reform is that the Government, increasingly responsive to an urban base, is not fully committed to it, but since land reform has always been central to the SWAPO platform and is still popular with the ruling party's rural support base, the Government cannot abandon this reform. Related to this, it is not known to what extent Namibia's poor really want small farms as opposed to urban jobs. Farming is a hard way to make a living in most countries, especially in Africa and the Third World.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Harring and Odendaal, 2007, p.32.

At the same time, as Haring and Odendaal comment, “the popular demand for the expropriation of white-owned commercial farms is ever-present; it has deep roots in Namibia’s political culture, and is a powerful symbolic issue too as the expansive white commercial farms in the heart of the country remain a highly visible symbol of white rule and white wealth, especially to black people still living in poverty.”⁹⁹

Redistributive land reform with an aim of alleviating poverty is thus not only an economic process but also eminently political. The land question will therefore not be solved on a purely technical level, but must take cognisance of political and emotional issues as well. However, economic and environmental considerations will have to be taken seriously if we want to solve this issue sustainably.

4.2 A Tool for the Achievement of Equality

The current imbalance in the distribution of land in Namibia is the direct result of the land policies of the colonial government. The land reform process had also been premised on the notion that the past inequalities should be ironed out. The government of Namibia has demonstrated the will to establish a new unitary land tenure system that will ensure that secure forms of land tenure are available to the ordinary citizen in both commercial and communal areas. The efforts of the government have not, however, gone unchallenged.¹⁰⁰

Expropriation is one of the legal means of fast tracking land reform but it requires a balancing approach – respecting the rights of property owners and also providing land to those who were deprived of it and disadvantaged. The reason that land expropriation was given constitutional status is that the racist and colonial character of Namibian land law had created a grossly unequal society based on land. As explained above, at independence in 1990, white farmers controlled almost half of the land, in the heart of the country, while almost one million black farmers lived in overcrowded conditions on less than half of the land.

The very legitimacy of the new State required redressing that highly visible imbalance, and doing so quickly. Expropriation was enshrined in the Constitution to ensure that this

⁹⁹ Ibid, p.33.

¹⁰⁰ Amoo 2001.

happened fast enough to achieve equality. The Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act is a popular measure designed to implement this constitutional provision.

5. Emerging Commercial Farmers under the Land Reform Process

Under the abovementioned land reform process and its philosophy, the Namibian government implemented two parallel land reform programmes, namely, the Resettlement Programme (RP) and the Affirmative Action Loan Schemes (AALS). The Resettlement Programme is run by the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement in order to resettle poor and landless Namibians on state-acquired commercial farmland. The aim of the Resettlement Programme is to make settlers “self-reliant, either in terms of food production or self-employment and income generating skills” (MLRR 2001:2). The AALS is implemented by the Agricultural Bank of Namibia (Agribank), primarily to assist strong communal farmers to acquire commercial farms through subsidised interest rates and loan guarantees by the state. The two are dealt with separately below.

The Resettlement Programme

Among the most important objectives of the Resettlement Programme are to redress past imbalances in the distribution of natural resources, particularly land; to give an opportunity to the target groups (i.e. poor and landless Namibians) to produce their own food with a view to attaining self-sufficiency; and to bring smallholder farmers into the mainstream economy by producing for the open market.

According to the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, approximately 243 000 poor and landless Namibians are in need of resettlement. In March 2004, the Ministry considered plans to expropriate 9 million hectares of commercial agricultural land to resettle 230 000 applicants in the next five years.¹⁰¹ However, resettlement statistics obtained from the Ministry in February 2005 show that only 1526 families had been resettled on 142 commercial farms, comprising some 843 789 hectares at a total cost of N\$127 836 132.¹⁰² On average, this means that approximately 610 persons were resettled per year on commercial agricultural land over the last 15 years. If the total costs of buying 142 farms are divided by the total number of people who have been resettled since independence, then the

¹⁰¹ Government of Namibia 2004

¹⁰² Odendaal 2007

average cost it takes to resettle one person amounts to approximately N\$14 000.¹⁰³ This amount excludes food rations, housing and technical services that the Ministry provides for resettlement beneficiaries, judging by the number of people who have been resettled over the last 15 years, it is clear that to resettle 230000 people over the next five years is not only economically unrealistic, but also logistically impossible.¹⁰⁴

The National Resettlement Policy stipulates that beneficiaries be self-reliant and self-sufficient by the fourth year.¹⁰⁵ However, virtually all resettlement projects older than four years still depend heavily on government support for things like food, drought aid and technical assistance and, as a result, have not achieved self-sufficiency.¹⁰⁶ A major shortcoming of these resettlement projects seems to be a lack of management capacity, a crucial element in achieving self-sufficiency. Moreover, it appears that beneficiaries are not encouraged to participate in the decision-making processes of their respective projects (Odendaal 2007). In most instances, resettlement beneficiaries seem to wait for the Ministry to make decisions for them.

As shall be seen in the results of the public filming of the Land Matters Film below, on most projects, beneficiaries complain that the Ministry seldom visits the projects and, as a result, they are not always aware of the beneficiaries' needs and concerns. In addition, a lack of basic agricultural skills among beneficiaries results in sporadic and low incomes and continued reliance on government. In other words, providing specific agricultural training and skills to resettlement beneficiaries is important in making resettlement projects self-sufficient, as this would lead not only to more skilful farming methods, but also to more frequent and higher income.¹⁰⁷ Further the lack of tenure security for resettlement beneficiaries remains a contentious topic in the Resettlement Programme as shall be seen in the results of the public filming of the Land Matters Film below. It should be mentioned however that beneficiaries of the resettlement programme have a legal interest in the land that they farm because it gives them a sense of ownership, the social status that accompanies land ownership, stability in their communities, confidence that their work will permanently benefit

¹⁰³ *ibid*

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*

¹⁰⁵ MLRR 2001

¹⁰⁶ Odendaal 2005

¹⁰⁷ Odendaal 2007

their families, and, perhaps in the first place, collateral for accessing post-settlement support funds.

Connected to the above, the Resettlement Policy stipulates that land acquired for resettlement purposes will be provided to beneficiaries on leasehold of 99 years. This will be arranged so that beneficiaries can use the lease agreement as collateral to get a loan from lending institutions for agricultural production purposes.¹⁰⁸ Once acquired the leases are registered with the Deeds Office as soon as the MLR has completed the process of providing ownership certificates to the beneficiaries.¹⁰⁹ This process is well underway in February 2010.

However, many questions regarding the legal implications and practical implementation of leasehold agreements and their use as collateral remain unanswered. Agribank is cautious with regard to granting loans to resettlement beneficiaries because to date not a single resettlement beneficiary has received a leasehold agreement from the government; therefore, beneficiaries have no legal ownership interest in their land. For example, it is not clear whether leases will be renewable after the 99-year period elapses, and if they are renewable, whether a leaseholder's family will inherit the lease as a matter of right or only with government approval of a transfer to the family.¹¹⁰ As indicated in the discussion above, it appears that it will not be possible to trade these leases with commercial banks.

Furthermore, Agribank is not clear about what procedures to follow should such a resettlement farmer default in repayment. . The repossession of land, should a resettlement farmer default on his or her mortgage bond, would surely defeat the aims of resettlement. At the same time, denying resettlement farmers commercial credit may undermine their ability to farm successfully.

Affirmative Action Loan Scheme

The government planned to come up with what it is intended to be an instrumental apparatus of equitable distribution and proper utilisation of land for sustained economic growth. This Loan Scheme is tailored to the emerging commercial farmers and is an important component

¹⁰⁸ MLRR 2001

¹⁰⁹ National Resettlement Policy, 2001: 6

¹¹⁰ Harring and Odendaal, 2002:101

of the land reform programme, which enables innovative new farmers from the previously disadvantaged communities, to acquire farms in commercial areas. Loans are granted against security of the mortgage bond and are repayable over a period of 25 years. For one to qualify for this the following requirements should be met:

- Applicants must have a clean credit record. Bi-annual or annual. Loans are granted
- Applicants can either be full or part time against security of fixed property farmers. (mortgage bond) or any other
- Applicants should be Namibian citizens, acceptable form of security.
- Applicants must provide a business plan and
- Applicants should provide an income and expenditure statement and provide a contract
- Agribank offers flexible installments of purchase to suit client's financial needs.

The available installment options are: monthly, quarterly, installment options.

The Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) is complemented by the North South Incentive Scheme (NSIS), which is a vehicle for communal farmers to sell off their livestock north of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (VCF) and purchase disease-free livestock south of the VCF on a newly acquired farm.

Approximately 612 farms have been bought, by emerging black commercial farmers through the AALS - nearly four times the number of farms that the Ministry has acquired for its Resettlement Programme.¹¹¹ Despite this impressive exchange of landownership from mainly white to black hands, the AALS has not been without its controversies. In March 2004 it was reported that at least 199 of 544 AALS farmers, approximately 37 per cent, have defaulted on their payments;¹¹² as a result, in December 2004 the government suspended its 35 per cent guarantee on AALS loans. This means that prospective farmers now have to pay 10 per cent of the purchase price before they can qualify for the AALS.¹¹³

Later, in January 2005, the Agribank put a moratorium on the AALS, arguing that farmprices had gone out of control, mainly because buyers had access to large loans and were buying

¹¹¹ Odendaal 2007

¹¹² The Namsbitw 21 September 2004.7

¹¹³ Odendaal 2007

farms at inflated prices, in some cases, farms had less production value than quoted when loans were applied for, while in other cases the valuation was based on full production. In this regard, and as will be shown in the results of the public filming of the Land Matters Film below, some of the AALS farmers are currently underutilising their farms, in that they have fewer cattle on the farm than the number the farm could carry as a result of the inaccurate valuation. As Odendaal notes, this appears to have had a negative knock-on effect on the AALS, as full-scale production is a crucial factor in being able to pay back AALS loans.¹¹⁴

Currently, AALS loans are available for periods of 25 years. Years one to three are interest-free for full-time farmers, while over the remaining 22 years the capital amount is to be repaid at an escalating rate, starting with 2 per cent and reaching 14 per cent after the tenth year in the case of full-time farmers. Farmers have several complaints regarding the AALS, which they claim lead to the difficulties in repayment. A major issue surrounds interest rates, which farmers claim are too high, and the grace period of one to three years, which is too short. Part-time farmers with a gross annual income of N\$300 000 to N\$400 000 start with an interest rate of more than 1.2 per cent during the first three years, increasing to 14 per cent during the fourth year and continuing until the loan is fully repaid.

. Part-time farmers may elect to service the interest portion only for the first three years, where after the outstanding amount is redeemed over the remaining 22 years at the appropriate interest rate.

The end result for many AALS farmers is that in trying to make ends meet, they must sell off their cattle herd which in turn has negative effects on farming profitably and paying off mortgages. Alternatively, part-time farmers may elect to capitalize the interest portion for the first three years where after the outstanding amount is redeemable over the remaining 22 years at the appropriate interest rate. The applicant must own productive livestock equivalent to at least 35% of official carrying capacity of the farm which, he/she intends purchasing, and /or have the financial capacity to purchase such livestock.

The above exposition of the state of AALS farmers is a cyclical problem, where the immediate action to stay afloat impairs the ability for long-term financial planning and

¹¹⁴ Odendaal 2007

success. These decisions demonstrate the complications caused by the Agribank not requiring that prospective farmers be equipped with the much-needed practical and financial information to assist them in the transition from communal farmer to commercial farmer. In recent years, to assist with this difficult transition, some established farmers have offered training to emerging farmers (mostly AALS) under the Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Programme on issues such as livestock breeding, selection, animal husbandry, infrastructure maintenance, sustainable rangeland management, the sustainable management and protection of wildlife and, most importantly, financial management. Such technical support would have to continue over the long term in order for the Programme to achieve its desired results; however, its future is precarious as it depends on European donor funding. The Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Programme (ECFSP) under the auspices of the Namibian Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum (NECFF) and framers' unions which will be discussed in the following Chapter.

6. Conclusion

This Chapter has laid a background to the analysis in the following Chapters. It has been shown that the land issue in Namibia has a long history and it still has a long way to go. The past inequities are still clear and thus the pace at which the process is going is very slow. As Haring and Odendaal comment, the speed of land reform now depends largely on an increased pace of expropriation.¹¹⁵ In turn, an increased pace of expropriation probably depends on public confidence that land reform is being successfully implemented at grassroots level, i.e. that small black-owned farms are being created successfully.¹¹⁶ All of these factors are complex and interconnected; hence a successful land reform programme is a great legal and political achievement. However, to return to our starting point, the land expropriation process needs to be more carefully planned and implemented.¹¹⁷

The status of redistributed land and its utilisers being the Resettlement Programme and the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme farmers has also been pinpointed in this chapter. It has gone further to highlight the current projects which are underway or which are being implemented in order to support emerging farmers. These programmes include especially the

¹¹⁵ Haring and Odendaal, 2007, p.33.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Programme (ECFSP) under the auspices of the Namibian Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum (NECFF). These initiatives form the crux of the following chapter.

Chapter 2

Existing Initiatives towards Supporting Emerging Farmers

1. Introduction

An outline of the general background of Land Reform in Namibia was given above in chapter one. As is evidenced there from land Reform in Namibia is a broad subject. It is thus important to note from the onset that the focus of this book is specifically the support given to emerging commercial farmers in the country. This chapter which gives an overview of the challenges identified in conjunction with the emerging commercial farmers themselves and the support given to emerging farmers to address such challenges, is mostly based on the findings of Bertus Kruger the former coordinator of the Emerging Farmers Support Programme which was sponsored by the European Union and ended on the 30th of October 2009.¹¹⁸

In 2007 the Emerging Commercial Farmers representatives from over the whole of Namibia participated in a two-day workshop from 28-29 July 2007. These representatives identified the following as being the major challenges to emerging commercial farmers in the country:

- Inadequate management capacity of farmers' organizations.
- High level of ignorance amongst emerging farmers regarding the value of organized agriculture.
- Inadequate government support to emerging farmers.
- Inadequate training and development for emerging farmers.
- Poor organization at regional and local levels.
- Insufficient finances to become part of an organized agriculture.
- Current unions (NNFU and NAU) are not able to fully cater for emerging farmers.

Emerging farmers furthermore agreed that they have special needs that neither of the two unions (NNFU & NAU) is able to address at that stage. These special needs were:

- Government guarantee to bank loans

¹¹⁸ This programme has now been taken over by GTZ Support to land reform programme under the new heading "Support to Farmers"

- Grace period before first payments are done
- Remedial actions needed
- Entry criteria
- Subsidies
- Land Tax
- Agricultural Interest Rates
- Tax concessions
- Re-financing (multiple bonds)
- Follow-up on recommendations regarding emerging commercial farmers

In recognition of the challenges or problems which emerging farmers encounter, it was decided as a first step to form the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forum (NECFF). The Forum has the following vision: "The NECFF aims at creating an agricultural environment conducive to full participation and sustainable production of all emerging commercial farmers."

2. The Structures of the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forum(NECFF)

The project is headed by the Joint Presidency Committee which consists of the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) and the Namibia National Farmers' Union (NNFU) and this project is a joint action of the JPC. The JPC is however not a legal entity and the contract was signed between the National Authorising Authority (NPCS) and the Namibia Agricultural Union. The relationship with the NNFU in the steering and execution of this project is good and several mechanisms have been put in place to make provision for joint management. The Steering Committee was chaired by the President of the NNFU, while the vice-chairman was the President of the NAU. The Chief Executive Officers of the NNFU, the NAU and the Project Coordinator formed the Project Management Committee that meets monthly to agree on important project management issues. Later on a representative of the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union (NECFU) was added to the management committee.

One of the structures, the Executive Committee, representing emerging farmers from all regions in the country, was formed and specific resolutions were taken paving the way for a long lasting organisation which would deal with issues concerning emerging farmers. This Executive Committee was mandated to seek representation for emerging farmers at national bodies and to put their specific issues on the national agenda. At the same time, the Executive Committee was tasked to organise and strengthen farmers at regional and local

levels. Through this initiative, NECFF got representation on the Joint Presidency Committee (JPC) of the Namibia National Farmers' Union (NNFU) and the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU), The Livestock Producers Forum (LPF), the Chamber of Agriculture in Namibia (CAN) and the Steering Committee of the Emerging Commercial Farmers' Support Programme (ECFSP). At the end of this meeting, the following resolutions were made to serve as basis for the way forward:

- Namibia's emerging commercial farmers feel excluded from organized agriculture in the country
- Their special needs are not really addressed by the NNFU or NAU
- They expressed a strong need to unite and organize themselves better at local, regional and national levels
- They agreed that one common overarching structure representing the needs of communal, emerging and established farmers is beneficial
- They expressed the desire to become part of the process of working towards such a common structure
- They selected an interim Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forum (NECFF) representing all emerging commercial farmers in the country
- They actively pursue efforts to become part of the Joint Presidency Committee (JPC) as soon as possible
- They endeavour to organize emerging commercial farmers at regional and local levels
- They undertake to keep all emerging commercial farmers regularly informed regarding progress

NECFF was supported in developing a basic strategic plan, indicating their vision and major objectives and to guide them in their activities.

3. Activities of the NECFF

The Activities of the NECFF are well encapsulated in the Final Narrative Report compiled by Bertus Kruger.¹¹⁹ In the Report it is noted that the Project had 3 major results to achieve and under the tasks there were a number of activities. The three major results are:

¹¹⁹ See Kruger, B. 2009. Final Narrative Report: Emerging Commercial Farmers' Support Programme (ECSFP). Joint Presidency Committee: Windhoek.

- Establishment and strengthening of ECF Organizations
- Strengthening of ECFSP Management
- Enhancement of Knowledge and skills of ECFs

Below is a consideration of these results and their various activities and we acknowledge that the material below is much to the courtesy of Mr Bertus Kruger as contained in the said Final Narrative Report.

3.1 Establishment and Strengthening of NECF Organizations

3.1.1 Facilitation of the strengthening of farmers' focus groups and link up with existing farmer groups

In order to achieve this vision, the following objectives were elaborated:

- The NECF is organized and functional at all levels.
- The competence of emerging commercial farmers is enhanced.
- External support to NECF is maximized.
- Access of emerging commercial farmers to markets is improved.
- Natural resources (e.g. grazing and water) are sustainably managed
- Proper monitoring and evaluation systems are in place and functional
- Confidence and trust between NECF, NNFU and NAU are enhanced

The first Annual General Meeting of NECF took place, again at Harmony Centre, from 29-30 July 2008. This occasion was used to reflect on achievements and challenges of the past year and to agree on the way forward.



A group of participants at the first NECFF annual general meeting at Harmony Centre

At that meeting it was agreed that NECFF should remain a forum and seek recognition by registering with the government, having an own constitution, and having own affiliates. A special NECFF was held on 27th March 2009 at Arebbusch Lodge to discuss the constitution and to look into the future of NECFF as a body in particular and within organized agriculture in general. At the special AGM, the following resolutions were taken:

- NECCF re-affirmed their position to be part of a process working towards one common overarching structure for agriculture in the country.
- In order to achieve this, NECFF had to be formalized and legalized into an autonomous Union to be at par with the existing two Unions.
- The AGM decided that NECFF should be a Union and suggested that it should be a section 21 Company of the Company Act, which is a non profit making organization. NECFF can appoint lawyers/notaries to register it with the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The purpose of the Union will be to organize all emerging commercial farmers in the country; and to serve as a strong voice for the farmers and assist them to build capacity.
- NECFF realized that it will take considerable financial and other resources to make it operational and sustainable.
- NECFF declared themselves willing to explore and utilize all possible means and channels to become financially secured over the long term.

- NECCF confirmed their commitment to work with the Joint Presidency Committee (JPC), to strengthen it, in order to move to one common overarching structure for agriculture that represents the needs of communal, emerging and established farmers.

The AGM approved all the resolutions and decided that these resolutions will serve as guideline for NECCF's future. In the mean time, the constitution was finalised and accepted and the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union (NECFU) was registered in October 2009.

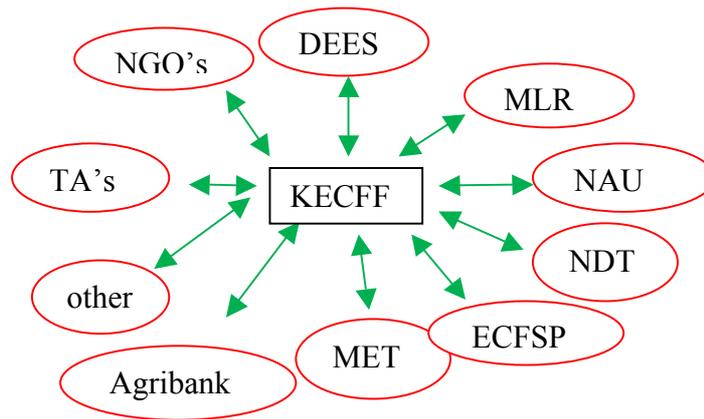


The logo of the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union (NECFU).

At the same time nine Regional Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forums were established in Karas, Hardap, Khomas, Erongo, Omaheke, Otjozondjupa south, Otjozondjupa north, Kunene and Oshikoto regions. These regional forums were supported to develop own strategic plans and received organisational training. With the formation of NECFU, all regional forums became regional unions and affiliated to the national body.

3.1.2 Facilitation of the development of integrated work plans at farmers' focus group level

The Forum for Integrated Resource Management (Firm) is an approach that supports the involvement of service providers with farmers in the identification of specific farming constraints and finding joint solutions to address these constraints.



An example of different service providers working together with the Karas Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forum (KECFF) to find common solutions to problems. Note that the farmers are in the centre of the diagram, indicating their leading role in the process.

In each of the regions the FIRM approach was introduced and accepted and major farming constraints identified. At the same time, farmers identified several support organisations that they thought should be involved in helping them to address the challenges.

This is an

No	Challenges	Support Organisations
1	Inadequate marketing	Meat Board, MTI, MAWF.
2	Poor maintenance of infrastructure	MLR.
3	Poor access to credit	Ministry of Finance, MLR, Agribank, FNB.
4	Inadequate drought relief	Office of the Prime Minister.
5	High levels of farm debt	Agribank, Ministry of Finance, Commercial banks.
6	High livestock mortalities	DEES, DVS.
7	Labour related problems	Ministry of Labour, NAFWU.
8	High incidence of animal theft	NAMPOL
9	Land tax	MLR
10	Poor development assistance to farmers	MAWF, MRLGHRD

example of the challenges and possible support organisations identified by the Karas Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union

Based on the identified challenges, farmers then invited a number of service organisations to discuss the challenges and to identify possible solutions. The end result of these meetings were the development of an integrated work plan, indicating the action to be taken, the person or institution to take responsibility for the execution of the action, the person or institution that could provide support and a time frame for the completion of the action.

No	Action	Responsible	Supported by	Time
1.	Organise mobilization meetings at Betanien and Keetmanshoop	A Boys	Mentors, ECFSP, L van Wyk, MLR	21,22 Jan 2009
2.	Provide feedback on status of NECFF/NAU meeting	A Boys		Feb 2009
3.	Provide training schedule of Agrifutura and Boscia	B Kruger	Agrifutura, Boscia	31 Nov 2008
4.	Provide feedback on status of mentoring	P Stafford	All mentors	Feb 2009
5.	Provide feedback on status of infra-structure repair and handover.	C Kwala		Feb 2009
6.	Provide feedback on status of Agribank/MLR financial packages	K Nandova	MLR	Feb 2009
7.	Invite Nampol Commissioner to next forum meeting	A Boys		Feb 2009
8.	Invite Blitz to FA meetings and distribute contact details	A Boys F Moller	Blitz	Feb 2009
9.	Invite DVS to next meeting	A Boys	DVS	Feb 2009
10.	Invite Agribank to FA meetings	FAs	Agribank	Feb 2009
11.	Provide feedback on status of AALS review	K Nandova		Feb 2009
12.	Re-invite FNB, RC and others	A Boys		Feb 2009
13.	Conduct joint planning to address training needs of AALS, resettled farmers	J Hartung	MLR, DEES, KEFFF	Feb 2009

An example of an integrated work plan developed by the Karas Emerging Commercial Farmers' Forum

(Union?) together with a number of service organisations.

3.1.3 Facilitation of regular M&E&A meetings between farmers' focus groups and service providers

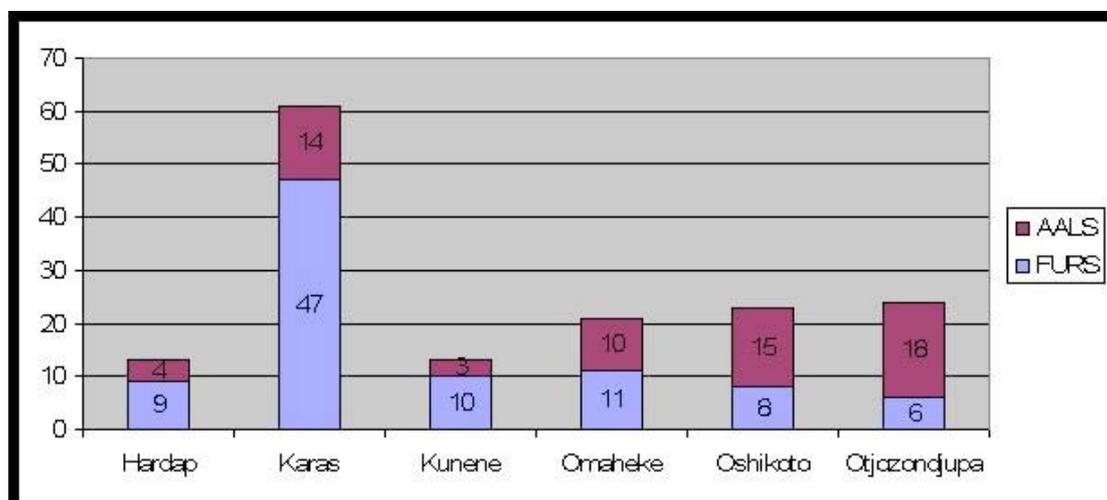
After the Firms were established and initial strategic plans developed, the next step was to facilitate interactive multi-stakeholder planning sessions to develop integrated work plans and budgets to address these constraints. This was done in six of the existing regional FIRMS and followed up with regular monitoring, evaluation and adjustment (M&E&A) meetings to facilitate the implementation of these integrated work plans and budgets. This activity forms the core of the whole approach and is a pre-requisite for the eventual success of this approach.

3.1.4 Promotion of the benefits and advantages of organized agriculture to farmers' associations

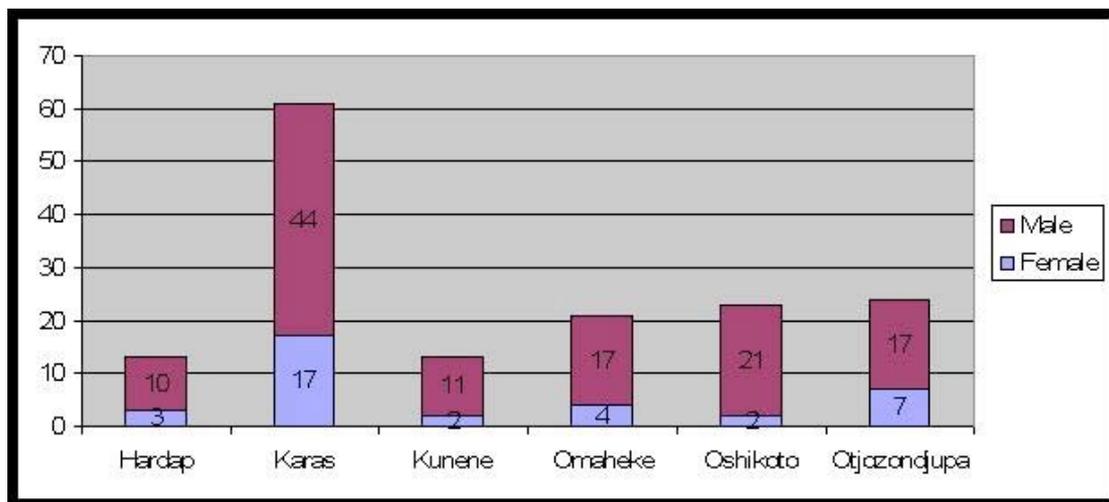
The fact that emerging commercial farmers are already organised at both national and regional levels and that they are already actively participating in national forums like JPC and LPF (see activity 1.1), is adequate evidence that they understand the importance of organised agriculture. The challenge for NECFU at regional level is to take this awareness down to grassroots level amongst farmers associations.

3.1.5 Supporting farmers' associations in organizational capacity building

Three local training organisations namely Bridge Consulting Services, Agrifutura and Boscia Training were contracted in April 2008 to provide training courses to each of the nine regional emerging farmers' unions and their associated farmers associations.



This figure provides the number of Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farmers and Farm Unit Resettlement (FURS) beneficiaries that attended farmer association management training over the last 2 years. In total 64 AALS and 91 FURS farmers attended these events. This also represents the current distribution of these two groups (AALS & FURS farmers) within the management committees of NECFU at different levels.



In this figure, the number of male and female farmers that attended farmers' association management training over the last 2 years is presented. In total 109 males and 46 females attended these events. This also represents the current gender balance within farmers' organizations within NECFU.

3.2 Enhancement of Knowledge and Skills of ECFs

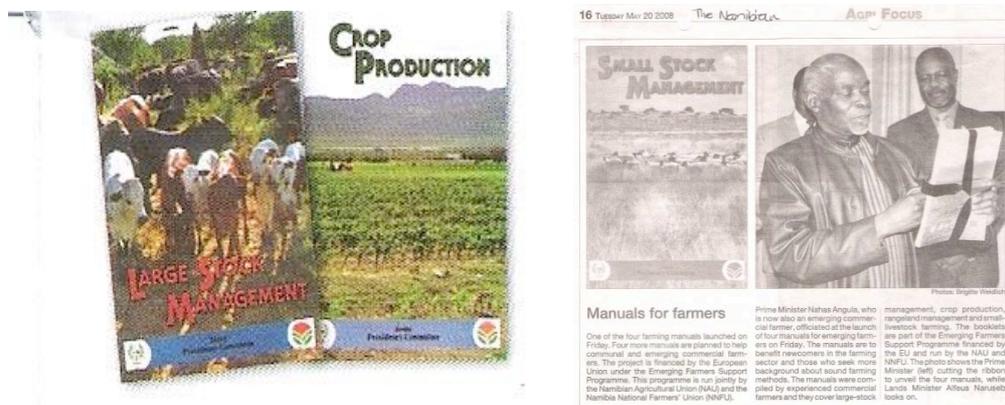
3.2.1 Raising awareness amongst information generators (research, extension, radio, private institutions) about the information needs of emerging commercial farmers

Twelve radio features were developed, covering the most important farming topics. A contract has been signed with the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) to broadcast these features on 6 NBC radio stations that broadcast in local languages. This project also supported two live interactive broadcasting sessions over Otjiherero and Nama-Damara radio stations. Positive feedback is received from farmers and listeners regarding the usefulness of this activity.

The Directorate of Extension and Engineering Services is part of the project steering committee and at regional level very much involved with emerging farmers. In some areas like Outjo, Omaruru, Otjiwarongo, Tsumeb, Grootfontein and Gobabis they are also involved in the regional forums.

3.2.2 Re-packaging existing information amongst farmers for the needs of emerging and established commercial farmers

The development of 8 training manuals for emerging commercial farmers was commissioned before the start of this project. Funds for editing, layout and printing were provided by this project, together with financial support from the GTZ, Agribank, First National Bank, and the Namibia Nature Foundation through USAID. Eight manuals that focussed on Large Stock Production, Small Stock Production, Rangeland Management, Crop Production, Animal Health, Labour Management, Farm Finances and Farm Mechanics were completed, 3000 copies of each printed and distributed to farmers and other stakeholders. With additional financial support from the EU, three of these manuals (Large Stock Management, Small Stock Management and Rangeland Management) were translated into Afrikaans and distributed.



3.2.3 Supporting participation of emerging commercial farmers in farmers' days and information days

A principle decision was taken at the Steering Committee meeting of 20 September 2007 to not directly support emerging farmers to attend farmers' and information days, but that they should rather attend at own cost as an own contribution. Instead, this budget line was being

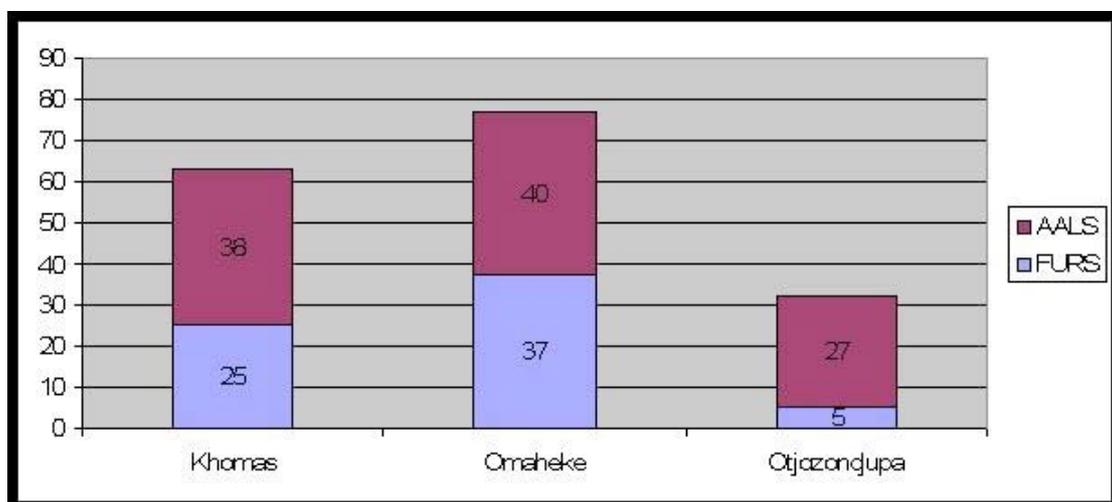
used to support farmer representatives to attend important meetings and events at national and regional level.

3.2.4 Identifying specific competency gaps

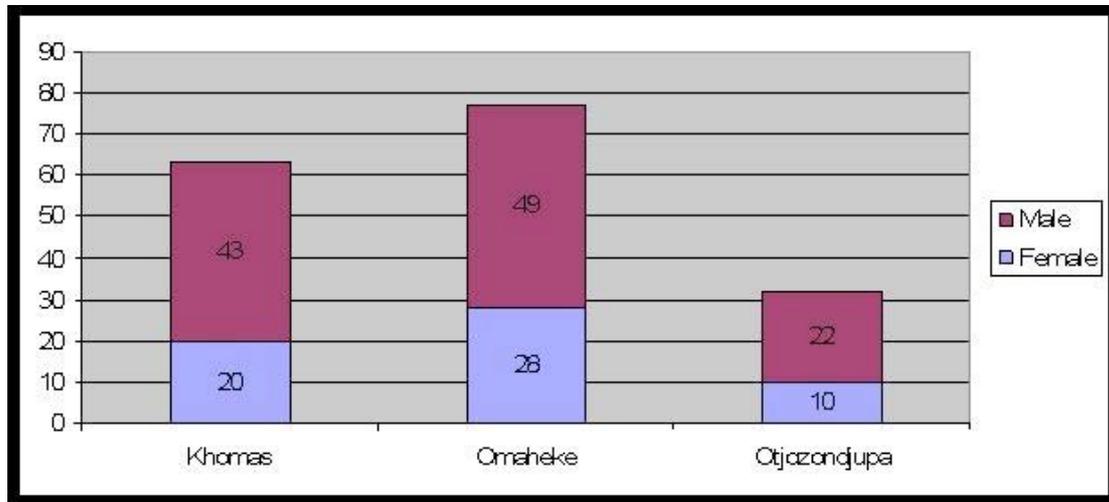
In preparation for this project a detailed study was commissioned in 2005 (Annexure 1) by the JPC to identify the competency needs of both AALS and resettled farmers. Based on this consultancy, the current project was designed. With the start of this project, visits were conducted to each of the regions and the competency needs were confirmed and verified. Training courses and information days were being planned with these competency needs in mind.

3.2.5 Implementating pre-settlement orientation courses

The purpose of these courses was to support potential farmers that want to buy own land or that are to be resettled on government land, to prepare themselves better for the new farming environment. EarthWise Enterprise was contracted to deliver these courses. Despite agreements reached with Ministry of Lands and Resettlement(MLR) and the Agribank to provide name lists of potential beneficiaries, no names were received and, in fear of running out of time, the consultant worked through the newly established structures of the emerging farmers and advertised in newspapers to announce the courses. As a result of this, mostly already resettled farmers participated in the courses. Both Agribank and the MLR, together with those farmers that attended the training, are of the opinion that these courses are extremely suitable for potential and already resettled beneficiaries and should be continued with in future



A total of 105 AALS and 67 FURS farmers attended the pre-settlement orientation courses over the two years of the project duration. Courses were presented in Windhoek, Gobabis and Grootfontein and farmers from all eight regions participated.



Pre-settlement orientation courses were very popular and in total 114 males and 58 females attended these then over the past 2 year. Again, courses were only presented in specific venues, like Windhoek, Gobabis and Grootfontein.

3.2.6 Organising regular information sharing excursions

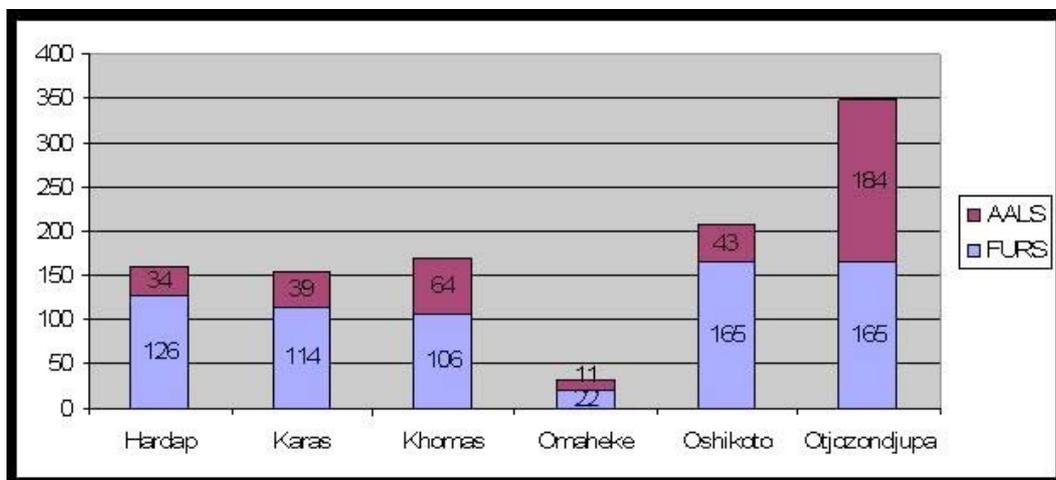
A total of 16 information sharing excursions were planned. Only two of the sixteen planned excursions took place. An amount of N\$15 376.54 was spent on this activity. The rest of the money was re-allocated to other project activities. Some other excursions/study trips took place in some of the regions, organised by the mentors together with the regional extension office. None of these excursions took place and it was decided in the Steering Committee meeting of 28 July 2008 to rather utilise these funds (N\$ 400,000) for the expansion of the mentorship programme.

3.2.7 Facilitating reward systems for excellence amongst emerging farmers

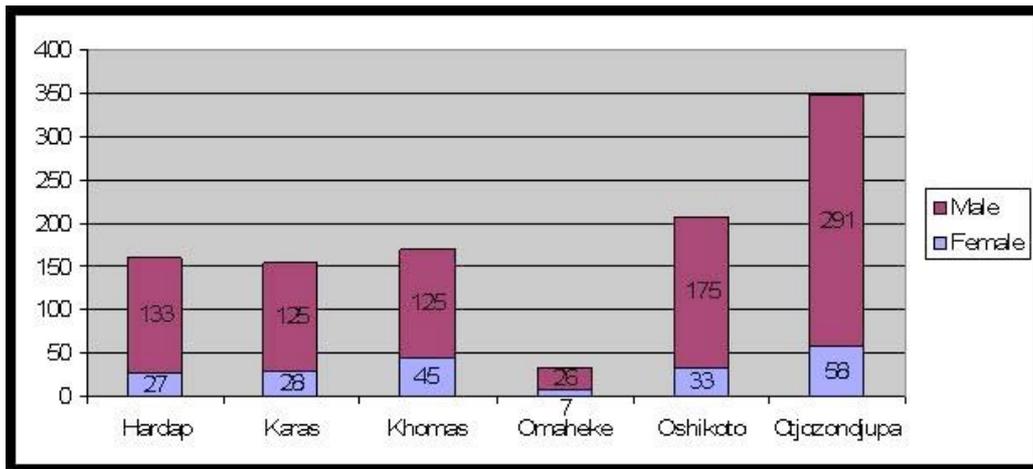
The project linked up with the existing emerging farmer of the year competition currently being held by the JPC. Awareness was created amongst most of the emerging farmers and entry documents were distributed. Two entries have been received. The selection of the emerging farmer of the year of 2008 took place, but the awarding of the price never happened. Participation in this initiative was very limited and farmers are hesitant to participate. It was decided in the Steering Committee meeting not to make the award for 2009.

3.2.8 Organising topic-related short courses

The project contracted five Namibian-based training institutions in November 2007 to conduct the training courses. The topics of these training courses include large stock management, small stock management, crop production, rangeland management, farm mechanics, karakul production and financial and labour management. These are resident courses and were presented on a decentralised manner to reduce costs to farmers. The Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) largely contributed towards the success of this activity by supporting the transportation of government land resettled farmers to and from these training venues.



The graph above shows the number of Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farmers and Farm Unit Resettlement (FURS) beneficiaries that attended topic-related short courses over the last 2 years. In total 375 AALS and 698 FURS farmers attended these events.



The graph above shows the number of male and female farmers that attended topic-related short courses over the last 2 years. In total 875 males and 198 females attended these events.



A number of farmers that successfully completed a training course at the Cheetah Conservation Fund facilities outside Otjiwarongo.

3.2.9 Facilitation of ongoing on-site training/mentoring/coaching

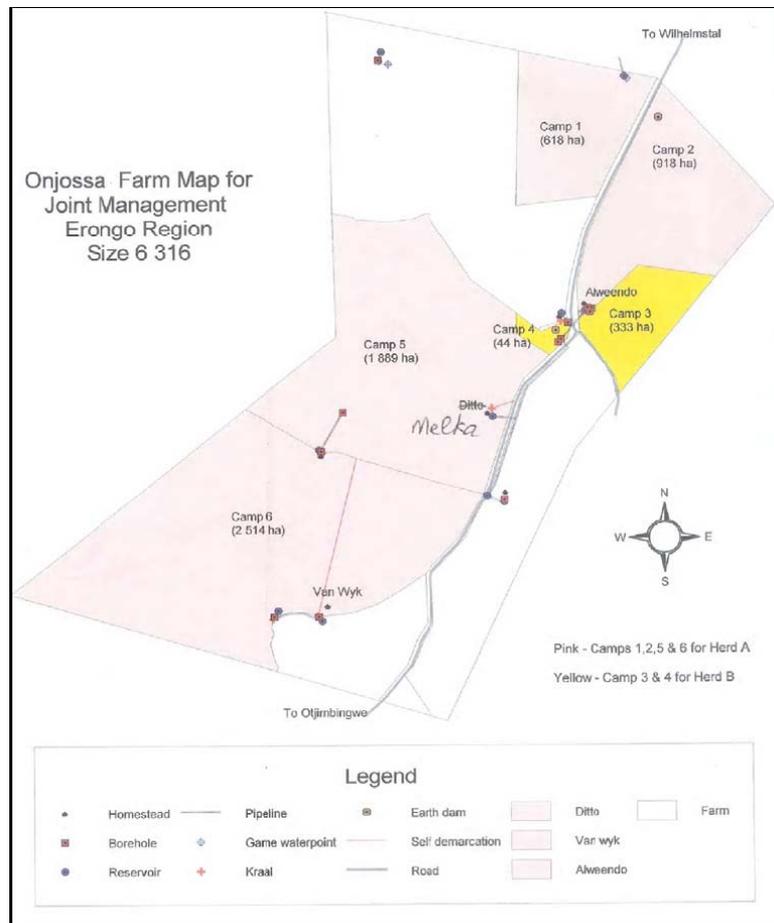
From November 2007 nine mentors were contracted to provide mentoring services to emerging commercial farmers in all eight of the regions where the Action is being implemented.

Two of these mentors were contracted by the German Gesellschaft Für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) from December 2007 to November 2008. In November 2008 an additional 13 mentors were contracted, bringing the total number of mentors to 22.

To start with, different approaches were followed by the different mentor groups. In the central/northern part of the area, groups were addressed in mini farmers' days and a series of technical topics were addressed. This group approach was used to introduce themselves to the farmers and establish good relationships. This was then followed up with an individual approach where detailed and specific constraints at farm level were addressed. In the rest of the country individual approaches were used from the start and significant progress was made in establishing links to individual farmers and small groups on resettlement farms. This activity reached the point where an individual approach was used for mainly the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farmers and a small-group approach for farmers resettled on government bought land. Seven quarterly workshops were held with all mentors to reflect on implementation and to identify best practices and lessons learned from the field. Based on the sharing of this information, a more common and standardised approach was designed.

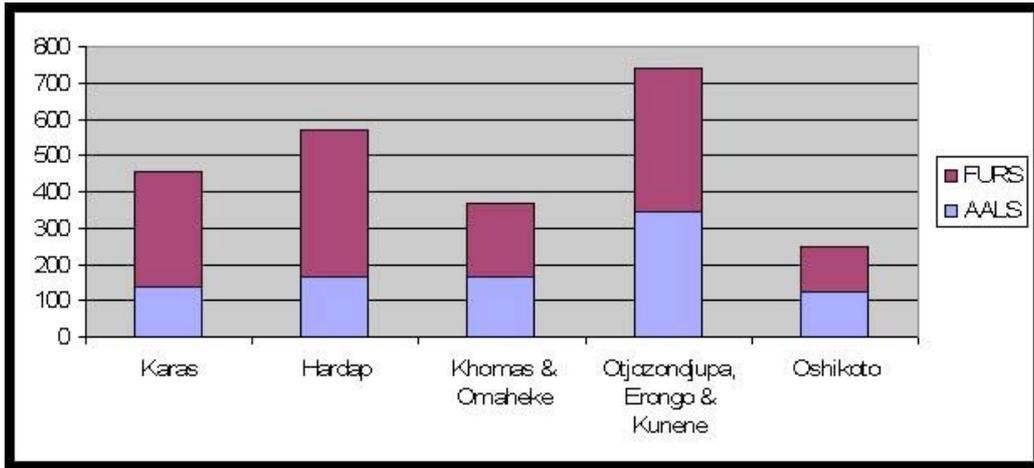
Another initiative introduced under the mentorship programme was the Joint Management Approach on resettlement farms. Under the current government land resettlement model, multiple families are resettled on a farm formerly owned by a single farmer. These farmers find it very difficult to apply proper rangeland and livestock management practices due to limited number of camps and other infrastructure. Conflicts very often arise regarding the pumping of water and the use and maintenance of infrastructure on the farm. These farms were initially planned and developed for central decision-making by a single person. Currently, various units are allocated to different farmers and central decision-making is not possible any more, resulting into inadequate flexibility of farming practices (e.g. mating and weaning seasons, rotational grazing, etc.) to be applied. This leads towards increased rangeland degradation, inadequate improvement of farm productivity and subsequent increased vulnerability to droughts. On a number of farms up to now, farmers agreed to merge smaller herds into bigger ones and use all their camps together. This allows for more camps per herd and shorter grazing and longer resting periods. Once farmers sign a memorandum of agreement, livestock of all the farmers are evaluated and sorted, with the support of the mentors. Mating seasons are introduced and high quality bulls are made available from stud breeders in the country for the duration of the breeding season.

Important husbandry practices like vaccination, branding, dosing, castration, etc. are performed on all the animals. So far four farms are testing this approach.

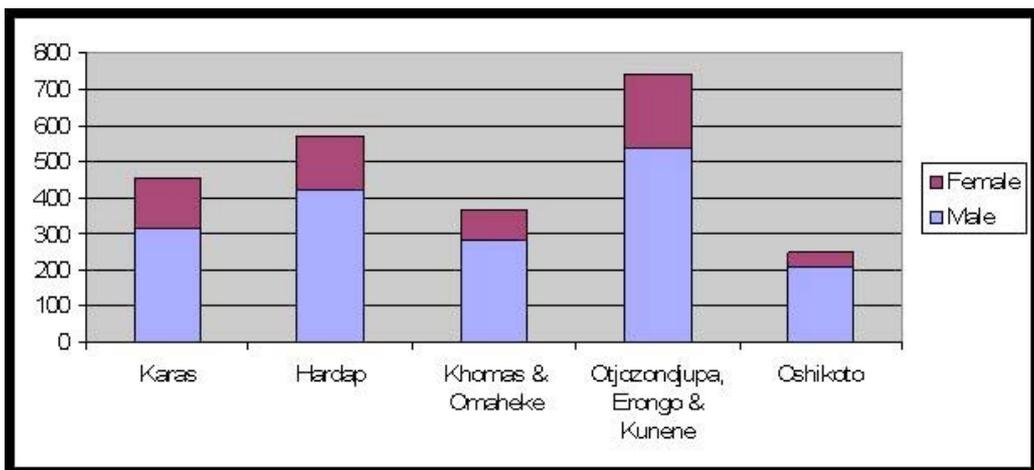


First pilot area: Farm Onjossa. Different farmers at Onjossa are making their camps collectively available for joint management

This approach has never been tested in Namibia. Should it be successful, these farms can then serve as demonstration for other farmers and might provide a useful alternative to government for resettlement of farmers.



The graph above shows the number of Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farmers and Farm Unit Resettlement (FURS) beneficiaries that were reached by mentors on one or more occasions over the last 2 years. In total 935 AALS and 1,444 FURS farmers benefited. Please note that farmers attended mentor events regularly and that these figures do not represent the total number of farmers reached.



The graph above shows the number of male and female farmers that were reached by mentors on one or more occasions over the last 2 years. In total 1,762 males and 617 females benefited. Again, these figures reflect the total number of farmers that participated, but some farmers definitely attended more than one occasion.



A group of mentors at the Mentor Orientation Workshop in Windhoek.



Wolfie von Wielligh “mentoring” some farmers on livestock production.



A mentor and farmers discussing rangeland management on the farm of Mr. Kiep Lepen.

3.2.10 Organising correspondence training and summer schools

A total of N\$ 480,000 has been budgeted for this activity. Due to the difficulty of farmers to attend these rather extended activities, it was decided on the SC meeting of 28 July 2008 to use these funds for the expansion of the mentorship programme.

3.2.11 Supporting certificate/diploma education of farmers

A total of N\$ 150,000 was allocated for this activity. Nothing was done, due to the difficulty of farmers to attend such long-term courses. This was replaced with the 3-6 days in-depth topic specific training courses held. The money was re-allocated to the other project activities.

3.2.12 Develop and distribute on-farm record-keeping booklet

The amount of N\$ 270,000 had been earmarked for internal evaluation of project impact. Due to the short nature of the project (24 months) it was considered highly unlikely that a definite project impact will be recorded. Instead of doing a mid-term and end-of-project evaluation, it was agreed upon in the Steering Committee meeting of 31 January 2008 to use these funds to develop and introduce the System for Analyzing Farming Efficiency (SAFE). Through this system a baseline survey was done to reflect the current status of emerging farmers regarding production and financial parameters. With regular assessment of these parameters, based on regular data provided by volunteer farmers, regular feedback reports were produced to inform farmers on their status of performance and what the possible reasons or causes for sub-optimal performance might be.

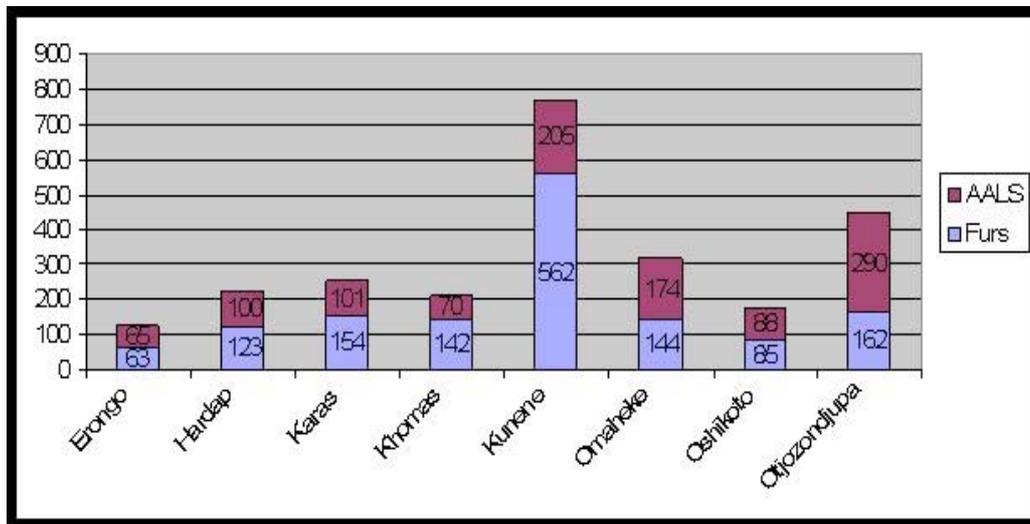
A third component of this system was to recommend certain remedial actions in terms of training and capacity building that is specific to that farmer's situation. A total of 39 volunteer farmers participated in the process. FlexPro Consultants designed a computer-based model to analyse the data and to write reports. The major challenge was to sort out data collection constraints and to get more volunteer farmers involved. The mentors used the SAFE as mechanism and basis for the one-to-one mentoring. Both Agribank and MLR expressed interest in expanding this system to include more farmers, both AALS and resettled farmers.

3.2.13 Creating links between emerging commercial farmers and service providers (e.g. UNAM and Polytech, internships, private institutions)

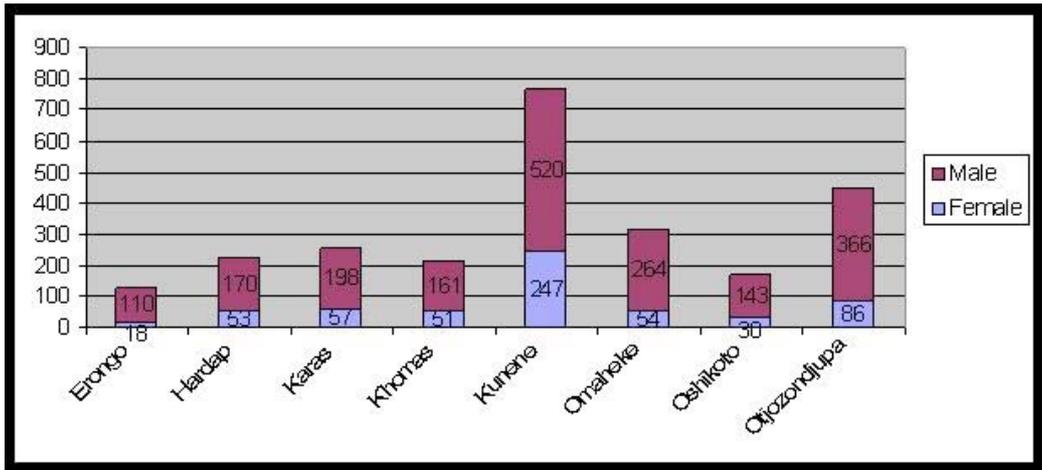
The project employed two interns from March 2008 onwards. One intern was allocated to the Namibia National Farmers' Union and one to the Namibia Agricultural Union. Both of them were supporting the unions in creating and strengthening links with other stakeholders and partners. The NAU intern was seconded to the project as a project assistant.

3.2.14 Organising farmers' and information days

With this activity close cooperation between emerging and established farmers was encouraged. In most of the regions this cooperation was excellent and farmers' and information days were jointly organised and attended by both groups. AGRA Co-op and the project have partnered to present series of public lectures. The project co-funded six of the nine practical lectures for farmers at the following centres in 2009: Outjo, Tsumeb, Grootfontein, Gobabis, Otjiwarongo and Omaruru. It was decided in the SC meeting of 28 July 2008 to use N\$ 500,000 from this budget line to expand the mentorship programme.



The graph above shows the number of Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) farmers and Farm Unit Resettlement (FURS) beneficiaries that attended farmers' and information days over the last 2 years. In total 1,093 AALS and 1,435 FURS farmers attended these events.



The number of male and female farmers that attended farmers' and information days over the last 2 years. In total 1,932 males and 596 females attended these events.



A group of established and emerging farmers attending a farmer's day at Namatubis.

3.3 Strengthening ECFSP Management

3.3.1 Establishing project implementation unit

A project implementation unit was established with the Project Coordinator employed from 18 June 2007 and the Project Administrator from 6 September 2007.

3.3.2 Securing appropriate transport

Two vehicles were procured before the start of this project and made available to the project.

3.3.3 Supporting the functioning of the project's national institutional structure

Seventeen quarterly steering committee meetings were held during the reporting periods. All major stakeholders involved in post-settlement support were represented, that include the Namibia Agricultural Union, the Namibia National Farmers' Union, the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union, Agribank, the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme in the National Planning Commission, and the European Commission Delegation. This Steering Committee served as advisory and control mechanism to ensure that activities are implemented in line with agreed upon work plans and budgets. Please see attached the project's steering committee terms of reference.

3.3.4 Supporting the functioning of the project's regional institutional structures

Regular regional coordination committee meetings took place in all eight of the regions.

3.3.5 Securing office space and equipment offices

An office was secured and equipped at the NAU.

3.3.6 Monitoring project operations

Twenty seven monthly financial reports and eight quarterly narrative reports were submitted.

3.3.7 Conducting auditing services

Three external audits by SGA chartered Accountants and Auditors were conducted during the course of the project period as well as two internal expenditure verification checks by the Rural Poverty Reduction Programme Team.

3.3.8 Training staff

The Project Coordinator attended an orientation training presented by RPRP/NPCS in July 2007. The Project Coordinator and Project Administrator attended a web-based monitoring evaluation and reporting system training course presented by RPRP/NPCS in October 2007.

The Project Administrator attended a training course on supply procedures for grant beneficiaries presented by RPRP/NPCS in February 2008.

4. Support through the Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Programme (ECFSP)

The Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) and the Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU) recognized that making the transition from farming in Namibia's communal-tenure areas to managing a freehold farm involves an abrupt change in terms of the farm business environment and farm management practices. Further, new farming practices, including the adoption of new grazing management, breeding and herd management practices for example, must be adopted. Perhaps, above all, farmers must operate their farms as profitable businesses in order to pay off their often substantial Agribank loans. This means optimizing outputs and maximizing incomes in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the two Unions saw that farmers must do this in a market environment in which profit margins are tight at the best of times. Considering constraints such as lack of start-up capital and breeding stock, lack of access to operating credit, lack of equipment, poorly maintained farm infrastructure, and lack of access to information and advice, as well as natural risks such as drought and disease, the challenge is indeed enormous.

It was further acknowledged that structures like the NAU and NNFU did not seem to meet the special needs of emerging farmers in the country. The NNFU mainly seems to cater for the needs of communal farmers while the NAU mainly represents established commercial farmers. Special needs include issues like government guarantees for procurement of farmland, length and conditions of the grace period before the first payment is required, entry criteria to qualify for Agribank support, subsidies, land tax and agricultural related interest rates.

It is against this background that the two agricultural Unions in Namibia, the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU) and the Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU) initiated the Emerging Commercial Farmers' Programme (ECFSP) and solicited € 53 million from the European Commission, through the ninth European Development Fund (EDF 9) to run the programme for a two year period (June 2007 until May 2009).

The Joint Presidency Committee (JPC) as overarching body of the agricultural unions in Namibia was instrumental in the design, raising of funds and implementation of the Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program (ECFSP) which aims to achieve the following overall goal: improved livelihoods for Emerging Commercial Farmers (ECFs) that contribute to the attainment of Namibia's poverty reduction objectives as set out in Vision 2030. The direct objective of the project intervention is to increase and diversify ECF's on-farm income in 8 regions of Namibia due to improved agricultural practice. The ECFSP has the following main objectives:

- To support emerging commercial farmers to organize themselves at national, regional and local level
- To support emerging commercial farmers to enhance their access to appropriate information needed for farming purposes
- To enhance the competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) of emerging commercial farmers
- To improve support services to emerging commercial farmers

ECFSP is supportive of and compliments the land reform process. The program comprises primarily the sharing of skills, experience and knowledge of commercial agricultural practices to enhance the entrance of the emerging farmers to commercial agriculture. However, a second leg of the program was also to assist these farmers to organise themselves at all levels and link up with existing farmers groups. The main reason for this is to strengthen the voice of the farming community.

The issue of uniting all farmers into one overarching body has been discussed by the JPC on several occasions. The objective of such an overarching body would be to act as mouthpiece for all producers in Namibia. However, the objective of such an overarching body would still justify two separate institutions to address the different needs of the communal farming sector as well as the commercial farming sector. At present the NNFU and the NAU fulfill these services. The Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum, as part of its institutional capacity building was allowed as a full member to the JPC.

On the concept of the two different production systems, namely commercial and communal, the NAU made an offer to the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum to merge their newly established structures in the commercial sector with those of the existing structures of the NAU. The offer of the NAU to the emerging farmers has been discussed and accepted by the NNFU as part of the process to unite all farmers into one overarching structure. Three options in this regard were proposed to the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum for discussion. The NAU does not see the need for a parallel agricultural union in the commercial agricultural sector where the needs of all farmers are the same. Unfortunately the NAU did not receive feedback on the offers and was surprised by the announcement that yet another farmers union was established in the commercial farming sector.

Against the above background the NAU took notice of the concerns of the emerging farmers and their decision to establish a separate union within the commercial agricultural sector. Per definition an emerging farmer is supposed to be a transitional period for a farmer to become a fully fledged commercial farmer.

5. Government Support in Wildlife Management

The government of Namibia in 2007 came up with a plan to introduce a scheme involving the breeding of wild animals for eligible affirmative action farmers and on resettlement farms. The aim is to provide an income-generating measure for historically disadvantaged Namibians. The government made loans available for this purpose. The scheme will be administered by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and it has three categories of Namibian farmers who qualify for this being:

- Historically disadvantaged people who have acquired land under the resettlement programme, Affirmative Action Loan Scheme or through leaseholds on communal land suitable for the programme will qualify under the high priority category.
- Disadvantaged people who acquired suitable land by other means will qualify under the second priority category.
- The third priority category will include corporate or joint owners of land where the proven ownership of people who fall in the historically disadvantaged category amount to at least two-thirds of the equity.

Applicants who do not meet the above criteria will be considered as lowest priority. The criteria requires that a land unit must be able to sustain a viable population of the selected species; must not be smaller than 1 000 hectares and must be properly fenced. Other considerations include how compatible the wildlife production will be in relation to other uses of the land, stocking rates for livestock and other development objectives, the current status of wildlife on the land and the potential of the land unit to enhance rare species management.

Applications for participation in the programme will be followed by a technical evaluation of the land unit and participants must be willing to enter into a contract with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, which supplies the game species. In 2004, Cabinet authorised the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to map out the wildlife loan scheme. Historically disadvantaged people who have acquired land under the resettlement programme, Affirmative Action Loan Scheme or through leaseholds on communal land suitable for the programme will qualify under the high priority category.

Having given the gist of support to emerging commercial farmers in this chapter, the chapters below will zoom into the various aspects regarding support to emerging farmers, which were specifically undertaken for the purpose of this book. Important to note here is that although initiatives like the ones described above have been ongoing during the period of research done for the purposes of this book, it is evident from the public reactions below that the impact of such initiatives is not readily assessable as it seems that a lot still needs to be addressed when one raises the issue of support to emerging commercial farmers.

Chapter 3

Land Matters Film: Field Screenings and the Reactions to the Film



1. Introduction and Background to the Field Screenings

Land Matters explores and documents attempts by Namibian farmers and authorities to find equitable solutions for everyone regarding land reform in Namibia. The film toured extensively in the regions during the period of October 2008 to December 2008 in an attempt to inform and educate, but also to promote dialogue amongst Namibia's diverse farming community. Furthermore the screenings of the film was meant as an innovative method to uncover and document the diverse ideas about land reform in Namibia especially in the area of support given to emerging farmers. During the screening process the anonymity of all respondents or participants was guaranteed.

The film was screened at places and at times convenient for the farmers and other members of the public who were interested, e.g. at Farmers' Associations meetings. Additionally, institutions of tertiary education like the University of Namibia and the Polytechnic of Namibia were visited with a view of sensitising the students and staff members and provoking discussions. In all the screenings, a variety of people were reached, from different language groups and different cultural backgrounds, commercial farmers, resettlement farmers, emerging farmers, as well as students.

The World Premier Screening launch took place at the Government Office Park Auditorium on 22nd September 2008. The rest of the screenings took place in two phases. The first phase covered a period of about one month from 2 October 2008 to 4 November 2008. The film was broadcasted to the following audiences: Drimiopsis Resettlement Scheme; UNAM Economics Department; Summerdown Farmers Association; Kunene Emerging Farmers Association; Land Management students of the Polytechnic of Namibia; Otavi Farmers Association; and Osire Farmers Association.

The Second Phase was done over a period of about one month from 5 November – 6 December 2008. The film was screened at the following places/events: Matlahohe Hotel/commercial farmers; Dorsland Farmers Association; Omaheke San Trust; Grootfontein farmers; Khorixas; Omatjete Farmers Association; Epukiro Farmers Association and the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Some screenings were however cancelled due to various reasons including unavailability of the farmers to view the movie.

2. First Phase

As noted under the subheading of the screening process above, during the first phase which started on 2 October 2008 and lasted up to 4 November 2008 screenings were done in Drimiopsis Resettlement Scheme; UNAM Economics Department; Summerdown Farmers Association; Kunene Emerging Farmers Association; Land Management students, Polytechnic of Namibia; Otavi Farmers Association; and Osire Farmers Association. Below are the summaries and comments for each area where the screenings were done.

2.1 Drimiopsis Resettlement Scheme

The screening in Drimiopsis was done at a school. More than 100 people were in attendance, the majority of them were learners at the school. The people who responded to the film showed their appreciation of what was captured in that film. When it came to comments on the land reform programme itself, the people commented mainly on the size of land which they were given when they were resettled citing that the land is not big enough to allow them to do more productive farming. This means that the land size could not support the population size at the farm.

If the government perhaps looked at this aspect then it could have given them larger pieces of land according to the land size. Furthermore they complained that they will never get loans for their land.

Another important issue that arose from the comments of the residents is that the resettled farmers are perceived by the surrounding commercial farmers as harbouring criminals – in particular thieves who are stealing stock from the commercial farms. The people in Drimiopsis admitted that there are too many people settling at Drimiopsis, mainly young people, who do not engage in any productive agricultural activity at the resettlement scheme. Those young people resort sometimes to stealing from neighbouring commercial farms. However, they stress that it is a minority who is engaged in stock thefts but that this creates the prejudice amongst the commercial farmers that resettlement farmers are stock thefts.

Ironically however, the commercial farmers benefit from the resettled population in Drimiopsis as the resettled people and their dependants provide a labour pool for the surrounding farms.

It was obvious in the discussion that there was a strong identification with the farm labourers in the film. The people felt these labourers deserved a better deal from the landowners, and should be allowed to keep their own livestock on the farm. The residents of Drimiopsis feel that the farm labourers from Drimiopsis are not treated justly by the neighbouring commercial farm owners because they are not paid enough for the hard work they have to do. Having seen the film with black Namibians who managed to acquire their own farms they have a hope that one day they will also own commercial farms or work for the new black farmers who may treat them better.

When people were resettled at Drimiopsis, the government did not consider the ethnic composition of the people it was resettling. At the end the population at the resettlement farm includes people from Caprivi and Oshiwambo speaking people. The people at Drimiopsis are not too happy about the presence of these people because these people from Caprivi and those from Oshiwambo speaking communities do not know the local customs of the majority of the people around them. This, they fear, may create some culture conflicts.

Additionally the concern was expressed that the people from Caprivi and Oshiwambo speaking communities do not know how to use the land productively due to differences in climate and land use systems in Drimiopsis and their areas of origin.

2.2 The University of Namibia (UNAM)

At UNAM, the screening was done mainly to students in the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences. About thirty students attended the screening. The students raised a number of critical issues about the land reform, their issues focussed mainly on the economics and politics of the land reform programme in Namibia. One noted that the film provokes some thought about the core objective of the land reform programme itself. In his words:

I think the message that is being portrayed here it is questioning the core objective of the land reform as a national objective and I think that there are a lot of challenges that one can also extract from the film¹²⁰

There was a rather critical comment about the scope and nature of the film. This comment came from a lecturer who said that movie was not very good and that it had been carefully choreographed. His main critic was that the film presented only very few voices of dissent about how the government has handled the land reform programme. There are so many voices of dissent on the ground and the fact that the film leaves this out means that the film created an unrealistic impression about people's views about the land reform programme.

The lecturer said:

For me I think it will take time for us to adjust what we have seen here, to me the movie is not that good it is carefully choreographed to the extent that it is dense. The descending voices aren't heard for instance the poor man without land but I think his problem is more about his pay and extreme poverty I think but none the less a couple of things came up the movie shows the attitude of the white farmer; for example the farmer that said he was raised under the apartheid era, the black man is the white man's burden and they are trying to carry those white farmers on their shoulders. Whether it is AALS or R.F and a couple of things came up as we can see on the farms there is still extreme poverty, harsh conditions and one of them even said to make this a success as it was during the Apartheid regime it took them even thirteen years to make a living out of that now if we look at our resettled farmers with no support from government you wonder how long it will take it becomes successful?..¹²¹

Connected to the above, another student questioned the effectiveness of land reform. He felt there were not proper criteria in place when allocating land. He cited examples of a farm that had taken maybe 35 years to develop and when it was handed over to a black farmer, the land was not well managed or well maintained and as a result it became degraded and

¹²⁰ See 5th man – The University of Namibia – Appendix 1

¹²¹ See 11th man – The University of Namibia – Appendix 1.

unproductive. The lack of proper land management was mainly caused by the lack of land management knowledge on the part of the black farmer.

Some students emphasised the lack of production at the resettled farms as a major factor why the land reform is not contributing so much to agricultural production. Having noted that there is no appreciable production at the resettled farms some suggested that the government provides training to the farmers on land management related issues. For example one student said:

Contrary to that statement we need training if we are to succeed, we need to reverse the system, its quite a good system we lost land and we need it back but the important part is the process we use to acquire land should be as accountable and transparent as possible.¹²²

The other problem which was highlighted as contributing to the low productivity of resettled farms is the fact that some resettled farmers want to get land and use it for subsistence purposes. This means that once resettled, the farmer will never care about using the land in a commercial way hence he makes no contribution to national economy. As a recommendation it was aired that the government should have benchmarks and ways of assessing the productivity of the resettled farmers with the aim of bringing these farmers to engage in productive agriculture and of moving away from subsistence farming. The government was urged to create some incentives and provide assistance to resettled farmers so as to increase production at the resettled farms.

Furthermore, it was aired that the problem also lies in the national policies. The policies are often not sufficient. In order to review a policy a good deal of knowledge and expertise is required. The student highlighted that proper linkages between the institutions of tertiary education like UNAM or Polytechnic of Namibia and line departments in the government are lacking. The government is not creating such links through which institutions of higher learning may be involved in the formulation of policies and to allow agriculture students to go for attachment or internships at the farms or any relevant place.

The cooperation between black and white farmers, sharing ideas and building capacity among them was unknown to some students and was remarkable for them. Given the history of apartheid in Namibia the collaboration between and among farmers was seen as positive move towards sustainable farming in the country thus students urged the Ministry for Land

¹²² See 14th man – The University of Namibia – Appendix 1.

and Resettlement to look into this kind of cooperation and assist the farmers wherever possible.

The film indicated that there was a rise in the crime rate at one farm. Students argued that the crime rate might be caused by the high level of poverty among the workers. The workers are given very low wages hence they have to look for alternatives to support their extended families at the farm. This means that a minimum wage for farm workers should be considered so that all employers or the commercial farmers are bound to pay a decent wage to their farm workers. This according to the students at UNAM can be done through the enactment of a law which prescribes the minimum wage for all farm workers in the country [note by the author: there is a minimum wage agreement in place].

The willing-buyer-willing-seller approach to land reform was well understood by the students but questions arose regarding why Government does not allocate 'virgin' land, such as the land near the Botswana border, to emerging farmers as was done with the Odendaal plan in the 1960s and 70s.

Some other comments concerned the lack of transparency in selecting the beneficiaries for resettlement.

Generally the discussion with the students was somewhat different and interesting. Interesting in the sense that, to some students land reform was an unfamiliar area and many saw this as an opportunity to get their questions answered by the facilitators. Although a few students had a sense of what was going on and gave very good input. The students were generally concerned about the lack of tenure security of farm labourers.

2.3 Summerdown Farmers Association

The screening at Summerdown Farmers Association was done at one of their regular meetings. About forty members of the association attended the meeting. The members are predominantly white commercial farmers.



Figure 1. Farmers viewing the film in Summerdown

Most of the Farmers in attendance accepted the film as a clear depiction of what is happening in other areas where there has been resettlement. They specifically said that the film was very objective in that it reflects the real situation how the emerging farmers are struggling to farm economically and the plight of farm labourers. However regarding their own situation they did not find any similarities with the Nina situation as there was no formal relationship with emerging farmers in their area. At an attempt the emerging farmers wanted to know whether they would be compensated for participating in cooperation with white farmers.

The association voiced that they had heard about the film and had expected it to be critical or negative about the situation of resettled farmers, but to their surprise this was not the case since the film was very positive according to their assessment. One farmer however pointed out that the film was too narrow or naïve in its representation of what is happening at resettlement farms, in fact to him the film does not reflect the reality on the ground: He said:

I think the people who made the film are showing other people how it actually should be. But for us who know how it really is, you would actually have to be a baboon to remain positive..¹²³

¹²³ See Speaker 1 – Summerdown – Appendix 1.

He said the film was covering only the 'best' farmer's association, namely, the Nina area. He was of the opinion that the fact that Clara Bohitile was part of the association had a lot to do with this. He said that resettlement of farmers had worked nowhere else in the world, and would certainly not work in Namibia either. Farm labourers in the film did not understand productive farming. Also, he only saw two farmers in the film who are active in the community, and they are tired. With all the work done thus far, nothing is moving ahead. He complained that when they had reached out to resettlement farmers and invited them to the association for training, the resettlement farmers wanted to know how much money they were going to receive to come to the meeting.

It was stressed that the government is simply resettling farmers without training them. This has led to low or no productivity at the resettlement farms. It seemed to some commentators that the government is acquiring land for social or political reasons as opposed to economic reasons.

It was also remarked that the new farmers who just got resettled do not have much will to do productive farming and do not see the importance of being trained. One farmer said:

The Ministry has to step in and give these people skills training. It doesn't help if the commercial farmer does it. I just want to tell you that we also tried it here. Then the affirmative action farmers asked us what we are going to pay them if they come to us. I am sure that every person sitting here today feels that it is not worth it. So many farms have been taken over by black farmers in the Outjo, Grootfontein and Tsumeb area. Things are just deteriorating there. You even saw it there, fences are not being fixed. Just the other day a whole farm burned down.¹²⁴

This shows that the new farmers who have been resettled do not even understand what training entails – it is ironic that they expect to be paid in order for them to accept training. The commercial farmers urged the government to implement a nationwide training programme for the farmers it is resettling otherwise the land which has been acquired will go to waste.

Some members of the association stressed that without the will to farm, new farmers would never succeed. Some also said that the Government should concentrate more on education and family planning which will help in the land reform process in the sense that education will help equip the new farmers with the knowledge on how to engage in productive farming.

¹²⁴ See Speaker 1 – Summerdown – Appendix 1.

Family planning will help in birth control and resource utilisation. Connected to this is the problem of lack of enough capital to start productive farming and laziness to do the farming.

About lack of capital one commercial farmer said:

Resettlement meaning Ministry of Land and Resettlement] just comes here with a lorry and offloads people and leaves. There is not even proper infrastructure like a dam or a wind pump on that farm. How will those people who don't have any money fix those things? The one family has 15 sheep, the other has 30 and the other has 2, how will they make a living out of that? So I tell those people not to move in because they will go bankrupt immediately.¹²⁵

And about laziness he had these words to offer:

Resettled people don't even feel that they have to work on the farms. You see them around in the towns like Otjiwarongo and Outjo yes but you don't see them on the farm where they are supposed to be.¹²⁶

Another area of concern was that the government is resettling people from outside the locality and such people have different customs and cultural traits. This diversity of people at one resettlement farm is seen as problematic because there is no social cohesion and divisions are always manifest especially when it comes to issues of cooperating together in farming and land management. Pointing this context it was mentioned that some resettlement farms have just become like squatter camps with people just lying idle thus crime levels in some resettlement farms are likely to skyrocket affecting neighbouring commercial farmers.

2.4 Outjo: Kunene Emerging Farmers Association

The screening took place at the local veterinarian clinic. The majority of the about 35 people who attended the screening were black farmers (Affirmative Action, Resettlement and Commercial farmers). Four commercial farmers also attended the screening in Outjo and shared their experiences.

This screening received some of the most emotive comments as most people who attended participated in commenting on the film itself and the land reform process in general. The participants were impressed by what was happening in Nina. They pointed out that the Emerging Farmers Supporting Programme was also being implemented in Outjo.

¹²⁵ See Speaker 4 – Summerdown – Appendix 1.

¹²⁶ See *ibid.*

The resettlement scheme came under critic being said that the scheme had no plan. Resettled farmers cannot undertake productive farming activities on 1 000 ha or less. It was recommended that farm workers should be given priority when offering land for resettlement.

One white farmer wanted to know if the purpose of the film was to get responses or comments from people or it was done in order to produce a report for the government to assess. Having been informed that this was not a government sponsored project, he humbly requested that a report please reach the government because the land issue is a very important programme of the government and their views have to be heard so that the government intervenes wherever possible because in their area just like in many areas where commercial farms are and where new and old farmers are owning farms there are a lot of problems hence a proper plan should be drawn up to deal with these problems.

It was clear that there were good relationships between emerging farmers and commercial farmers in Outjo as well, and those AA farmers stood to gain a great deal from the commercial farmers. They commented that what the film shows – the cooperation between new and old farmers – is a replica of what is happening also in their area. There was an expression of happiness about how cooperation can help improve skills in farming, not only in their area but also other areas. In the light of the helpfulness of cooperation, emerging farmers should not be seen as a threat to commercial farmers in order for a good working relationship to be cultivated.

To most of the people present it seemed that they were not happy about how the government is handling the land reform process. They said that the government should not just resettle farmers and expect them to be productive. Resettled farmers need farm implements, they need education on how to be productive and they have to be trained. In this light the majority emphasised that education and training are the only way forward towards productive farming in resettlement areas including AA commercial farmers. One emerging farmer appreciated the money received from the EU for training and felt it would go a long way to alleviating the problems of resettlement farmers. He however complained that the amount of land allocated to say six farmers (2,500 ha) was not fair as they could not be expected to make a commercial success from it.

It was the general expression of all the people in attendance that a closer scrutiny of land applicants should be conducted by Government. Not all people are farmers, and those applying for land must have the will to farm, without this will there cannot be productive farming. Virtually all of the members said that Government, through resettlement, were only creating squatter camps ; Queen Sophia resettlement scheme, a resettlement scheme in the Outjo District comprising four or five previously commercial farms, was cited as a typical example for this.

One white commercial farmer thought the film was very good and was an accurate reflection of what was happening in Namibia. He said he understood the plight of the resettlement farmers and the problems of the AA farmers. He said the problem was everyone's problem. As a commercial farmer it was important that his neighbour who may be an emerging farmer who has just acquired a farm under the AA scheme was also successful. It was his expression that there is indeed a need for cooperation because the land is one; if there is land degradation on the neighbouring farm it may also have long term effects on his own farm. In this light, he helps all AA farmers who are neighbouring him but the problem is that of capital, they do not have enough capital to engage in large scale farming and some have resorted to subsistence farming.

A white farmer explained that some AA farmers have the misconception that they will get successful quickly without putting enough energy into the farming processes. One AA farmer, he knew, had 150 head of cattle and got a loan with that number and thought he would be successful with that herd only. The white farmer stressed that there was no way to make a commercial success with only 150 heads of cattle. On this note, there seemed to be a misunderstanding or misconception among AA farmers that once one gets a loan to buy the farm then you are heading for success in farming. This white farmer said that he is very worried about what he has experienced from the AA farmers but blamed it on the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, which he says create the wrong expectations among AA farmers. This means that farming is not so easy and success therein cannot easily come. One man said:

“I farm next door to the President of Namibia, and he told me that if he had known that farming was so difficult, he would not have bought a farm.”

The other problem mentioned by white farmers was that some of the AA farmers themselves do not have the will or the capacity to farm.

There must be some incentives for these farmers, therefore the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement as the custodian of all land must not just give land and expect the new farmer to be productive. Therefore there must also be a will on the part of the government to empower new or emerging AA farmers. At the moment there is no system in place for motivation to create human drive for success. The Government should also set up a monitoring and evaluation system, so when problems arise there can be a rectification process.

One farmer emphasised this monitoring and evaluation. He said that in the former times if a farmer did not become productive such farmer would lose his land, the government would take it back and give it to somebody to be productive. This means that the government should allocate land with conditions especially on productivity as a requirement for continued occupation and utilisation of such land that has been allocated. All farmers should be inspected every six months to ensure the conditions of their loans are met. This would ensure progress. An AA farmer supported this and added that if you cannot fulfil the terms of the contract you signed, you shouldn't be on the land.

Part of this monitoring and evaluation process must be that an individual farmer must be expected to keep up a certain standard and if he cannot keep up with that standard, then he must be replaced. Because what happens is that, if the end product is desertification and total deterioration, who does that disadvantage? It seems to me that at the moment, there is no system in place which places a duty on farmers to keep up a specific standard. I cannot think that such a system should be continued. The question now is, what must happen? It is always easy to be a critic.¹²⁷

In the past, field workers visited every farm to gauge performance through a monitoring and evaluation process. If these assessors discover a problem they would give advice so that the farmer rectifies such problem. What used to happen in the past was narrated by Speaker 6 in Outjo who said:

During the time of the white administration, there was a team of field workers. Those field workers would pay a visit to every single farm for 6 months. They would then write up a report on the problems faced and what is expected of you as a farmer. Then six months later they would come and assess what you have done with your problem. Then there was a...what do you call that thing? There was a land law or I don't know what you call it but there were certain provisions laid down. It was the Land Safety Law. According to this law if you did not do what was expected of you, then measures would be taken against you. So the Ministry must know that they are the father of this thing and they cannot do away with responsibility. They must know that they are the father of this thing. It is thus a matter of putting appropriate law in place.¹²⁸

This is a government responsibility which seems to be neglected or nonexistent these days.

¹²⁷ See Speaker 6- Outjo – Appendix 1

¹²⁸ *ibid*

The issue of the government just settling people without assessing its potential for agricultural production was aired as well. One black farmer who has been in the business for the past 17 years said when the Ministry came to inspect a farm; they only saw it as a good place to resettle people without considering its commercial viability. He added that these officials are under pressure to satisfy certain groups. He had seen many a previously productive farm collapse under the current dispensation because it seems that these days land redistribution is done for political or social reasons not for economic reasons. He feels that if people are on the land, and have been for many years, as old man Basson in the film, they should be accommodated by the new farmer and be allowed to have basic livestock. Removing people who have been on the land for decades, creates a whole lot of new problems which the government should seek to avoid.

2.5 The Polytechnic of Namibia

The screening at the polytechnic of Namibia was done to a small group of about twelve students who belong mainly to the Land Management Department. Generally the film was well accepted. One woman however wanted to know whether this film tells a story of hope for Namibians in as far as the land reform programme is being handled and how emerging farmers – AA farmers – are working together with the other commercial farmers who have been there before. The woman said:

I was just wondering since now you have watched the film does it inspire either one of you to become an Affirmative action farmer or Resettlement farmer, do you find the story inspiring and is this a story of hope? Where people will actually make it?¹²⁹

This question seems to have emanated from the racial tension which is reflected in the film. Some thought that the problem was not mainly about black and white because nowadays it is the black AA farmers who are abusing their black workers. They feel that white farmers treat their workers better than black farmers.

Some also commented on the issue of productivity of farms. They felt that some farmers simply do not have the will to farm productively. They get farms in order to settle themselves and their families and engage in subsistence farming. This is caused by the general culture among Africans that as long as one can use his or her land to keep his family satisfied then

¹²⁹ See 6th woman – Polytechnic of Namibia- Appendix 1.

everything else is irrelevant or unimportant. Therefore according to the students, it would be better if the government trains these new farmers and gives them better incentives so that they engage themselves in productive farming. Training was emphasised on as a tool to productive farming.

The other issue which the students raised is that of giving land to the farm workers. The film showed that there were some workers who were complaining that they were not allowed by their employers who are the farm owners to own a piece of that land and to be able to keep a few heads of cattle or goats. They felt that this was not right because it is the government policy that farm owners should allow their workers to own a small piece of land where they can reside and do some economic activity for their subsistence. One student cited the Labour Act as the law which says that the farm owner is supposed to give land to his workers.¹³⁰ This student was obviously misinformed.

Among the students present were two students from neighbouring Botswana, where there is not a land reform policy. They felt that people who knew how to farm properly should be left to do just that. One of them said:

We are from Botswana but I would say for the young Namibians it is a good opportunity for them this is crucial time for them to grab a piece of land so I would advise them to go for it, then they should utilise it accordingly..¹³¹

They emphasised the raised concerns that the national economy would suffer if the land was given to people that did not know how to farm, or did not have the will to farm. Connected to this is the problem of racial tensions which seems to characterise the relationship between the emerging black AA farmers and the white commercial farmers. One student commented that he did not think the film is realistic, it seemed to him that because of the camera and in order to paint a picture that there was good cooperation, people were not speaking from their hearts thus they hid the tensions which exist among the races and between farm workers and employers.

¹³⁰ See 4th man – Polytechnic of Namibia- Appendix 1.

¹³¹ See 10th man – Polytechnic of Namibia- Appendix 1.

2.6 Otavi Farmers Association

The screening in Otavi was done at one of the regular meetings of the Association which was held at the Otavi Farmers Association hall. This Association has between thirty-five and forty members of which 29 attended.



Figure 2. Farmers watching the film in Otavi. The Army official who scared some of the farmers can be seen in the background.

The majority of the farmers accepted the film but a few of them were suspicious of the motive for the screening and left without participating. Others refrained from openly participating in the debate because of the presence of two high ranking military officers. One detected an element of intimidation. One of the officers said he did not see the point of the film and viewed it as a propaganda tool. He felt it was not representative of the actual situation in Namibia. One farmer of German origin said the film dealt too much with the whites and not enough on farm labourers. For him, he knows how white farmers live; he wanted to see more of what the labourers said and did.

Regarding the land reform process itself, it seemed to some that the land reform has not been done systematically and without adequate planning or strategic thinking.

One farmer questioned why land in Kaokaveld, Damaraland and Kavango were not being utilised for resettlement where people can farm. He was wondering why people were resettled on unproductive land. This has contributed to the lack of will on the part of those who are resettled because the land itself is not so favourable for agriculture.

Connected to the above, it was also mentioned that some beneficiaries get good land for agriculture but because of mismanagement the land gets degraded and unproductive. One member of the association used Queen Sophia resettlement camp as an example of where people were given everything, including training, but had mismanaged it to the point of collapse. This member had taught there for 4 months and witnessed a situation which needs government intervention if that land is to be productive again. Thus one farmer used the term *Watte und flegung* *Wartung und Pflege?* a German word which means ‘keep the place in the condition you found it.’

The size of land was also mentioned as a problem. The members complained that the plots of land for resettlement were not big enough.

We should increase the size of land allotments, we should expand resettlement beyond traditional ranching areas you know what I mean, we should restore acquired land ecologically before resettlement as was said here maybe before you, that land is idling for quite some time before the people are resettled after it was bought by government so I think that land should be ecologically restored, that would even serve as a way of giving work to people..¹³²

One member stressed that one cannot expect people to make a success of such a small piece of land. Resettlement land must be bigger for productive farming. This would also allow the farm owner to allocate a few pieces to his or her labourers.

Some suggested that resettled farmers should be trained first before they engage in farming. They should not learn in the process; instead they should start after they have gained the knowledge. They suggested that the government should select people with the will to learn and train them for between 12 and 18 months. This training should not only be about how to use land productively but also issues regarding finance and administration of the farm. The government should also prohibit part-time farming, they said that in former times farms were more productive because the government put it as a condition for getting a loan to be full-

¹³² See 6th man – Otavi- Appendix 1

time on the farm.. The chairman of the association encouraged co-operation amongst all those on the land and said he was very willing to train and educate emerging farmers, and had done a considerable amount already. He gave training to farmers in the neighbouring Outjo area as well.

2.7 Osire Farmers Association

This screening was done at the Osire Farmers Association's Hall as part of the Association's regular meeting. The association has 50 members of which 35 were in attendance. As Figure 3 shows, the members who watched were predominantly black.



Figure 3. Members of the Osire Farmers Association watching the film

The members were not comfortable with the recording equipment used to capture the comments after the screening and they unanimously refused to sign the attendance register. Confidence was however restored leading to informative comments being solicited from the members.

The majority of the members accepted the film and commented that it is a true representation of the situation in the country and it accurately represented all parties in the film. However

some few members felt they didn't understand the purpose of the film, and said they would have expected something more controversial. They said the film was naïve, and that land reform is a lot more complicated than depicted in the film.

The problems associated with emerging farmers were also aired. Some members expressed their frustration at getting things organised with emerging farmers, but believe that an effort must be made to assist these emerging farmers wherever possible. They said they would like to see the emerging farmers make a success of farming, and added that some of the emerging farmers were actually very good at what they did.

The government was also blamed for not looking into the competences of the farmers whenever they allocate acquired land to them. This has led to the fact that land is given to people who do not have the will to farm productively. As mentioned in many other discussions, members commented that not everyone is a farmer and therefore land should not be simply given to anybody. The land must be productive so that it can contribute to the national economy. They felt they –as established farmers - must not be solely responsible for training, and that Government should do a great deal more in this area. They said farming is a learning process which emerging farmers must go through in order to fully understand what it takes to be a good farmer. To this end they recommended that the curriculum at the Agricultural College include more practical learning than theory. This would help the country in the future where these young people who graduate there from will be able to train others or manage their own farms well to the advantage of the economy.

Again the issue of land size arose. The members complained that the sizes of farms allocated to resettlement farmers were hopelessly inadequate for resettlement farmers to make these farms work. They recommended that the government should look into this matter otherwise there will be no meaningful production at the small plots of land which they get allocated to them.

The process of land redistribution and the motivations behind it did not please some of the members. They felt that the land reform process and farming itself have become too political, and that government must avoid politics from influencing the process of farm allocation for the process to become successful and sustainable. One farmer mentioned that the criteria for farm allocation should be clear, and that farming is a business and is intended to contribute to

economic growth. Some farmers felt that there was no growth for their business as Government applied far too much pressure on them. This in turn hampers the economy and creates further unemployment.

The issue of absentee farmers was also raised. Members pointed out that part-time farming reduces productivity, therefore, part-time or weekend farmers should stay on their farms as it is a full-time job. Many complained that AA farmers were paying their labourers below the minimum wage and that this often led to poaching and theft. Therefore the government should crack down on farmers and assess who is breaking the law regarding wages because these farmers who did not adequately pay their employees were causing indirect problems for their neighbours.

Another issue of concern was the pace at which people are being resettled. Members said that the government was waiting for a farm to be offered and after it acquired the farm it resettled the people. They wondered why the government had to wait until it acquired a farm to resettle the people while the country has large tracts of productive land lying idle like in Kavango and Caprivi region. They said that it was better and cheaper if the government could resettle people in those open and virgin lands rather than waiting to purchase a farm which may not even be as productive. Some said that the way the government is handling the land reform programme is not satisfactory at all and some warning lights are beginning to flash.

3. Second Phase

The Second Phase was done over a period of about one month from 5 November – 6 December 2008. The areas where the screenings happened during this phase are: Maltahöhe farmers; Dorsland Farmers Association; Omaheke San Trust; Grootfontein farmers; Khorixas; Omatjete Farmers Association; Epukiro Farmers Association; Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3.1 Maltahöhe Farmers

In Maltahöhe, the screening was done at Maltahöhe hotel to nine farmers most of whom are of German Origin.



Figure 4. The scene outside Maltahöhe Hotel

The small turnout was caused by the long distances which the farmers had to travel. These long distances between farms are actually making it difficult for farmers to always meet and discuss their problems.

Generally the film was viewed as depicting the reality on the ground. From their comments, it was clear that they also view the issue of training as one of the most important aspects of the

land reform programme. The people who are resettled need education on how to use the land productively and they should have the will to farm not just to stay at the farm and use it for subsistence purposes. On this point, one farmer said:

I think it is the absolute duty of the ministry of lands and resettlement to educate the resettled people. Normally when we speak about resettlement we speak about the landless which are about 200 to 250 thousand people who are looking for land. We cannot all be farmers. Helmut Stehn pointed it out very nicely: do these people just want a place to sit on or do they want to be productive? The country cannot afford to give productive farms to unproductive people. This thing sums that up very nicely.

As a solution to the problem of productivity, one farmer suggested that there should be a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. He suggested that the Ministry must for example go to the farms every year to see if there is any progress on the farm, then one can easily determine whether the farmer is just occupying the farm or whether the person is planning to use the land productively. This will ensure that the land that has already been handed over via resettlement has become productive before we hand it over more land which is already productive.

The farmer also suggested that the government should look at the land in the north that is unused which may have a lot more potential to be used than the commercial land that is currently being reallocated, that way the government can promote the land in the productivity of land in the whole country without concentrating only on taking commercial land. He also suggested that the pieces of land allocated to new farmers should be made bigger so that the farmer has more space to do more productive farming.

Regarding cooperation with new farmers, generally the farmers in Maltahöhe showed that they have no problems with their neighbours whether they are AA or resettled farmers. They said there was a willingness to co-operate with each other, and that they were quite willing to assist newer farmers and resettlement farmers with training. Once again, distances between farms are great making it difficult to get people together. It would appear from their comments that they have far fewer problems than in other areas. Most of the farmers wanted to know if a final report would be drawn up and presented to Government. They felt this would be extremely useful.

3.2 Dorsland Farmers Association

The film was screened at one of the Dorsland Farmers Association meetings to about 40 people. The Dorsland Farmers Association appears to be performing well though there are a few problems that were pointed out by the farmers who watched the film. About the film itself, there appeared to be a general feeling of suspicion and hostility towards the film. After a few minutes into the film, five farmers walked out. The motives for showing the film were regularly questioned by the farmers who appeared uncomfortable with its content and what message it was intended to convey to them. This made the screeners to spend some time explaining why the film was made so that the people would feel more comfortable with it.

One of the farmers, who walked out in the beginning, said he did not see much of the film, but to him it appeared to be an attempt at political justification of the land reform programme itself. He said:

I did not see much but why do I get a feeling that there was some kind of political motivation amongst the people who were addressed. It was not so much about the need ...for example if I only have one camp. At some point I attended a workshop with Bertus Kruger and one of the gentlemen there was also a farmer in the Nina area and he explained to us that one person has about 230 hectares and the other has this much and so on and so on but at the end of the day not one of them is able to make a profit from the land.

In his view, the farm workers in the film quite clearly had no idea how to farm. He added that Government have no clear plan on how to handle the land reform programme at all. Another farmer said he understood the desire of people in the film wanting their own piece of land to farm, and pointed out that their sons also have this desire, but not everyone can get a farm since even if Namibia is bog in terms of territory, productive land is limited.

One farmer commented that the film did not cover some of the important aspects of the land reform programme. For example, he said that he is in an area that was declared a drought area in the old days. Various licences were required before the land could be purchased and the purchasers have the proof of that. He said that this is an important aspect of the land reform which was not included in the film and it should be included stating that people were not chased off the land. If a farmer wanted to take a chance on the land and bore for water, it was up to him.

On the other side however one farmer felt the film was objective and well balanced. One farmer identified the problem of transparency in the way land is being distributed. He

highlighted that the problem with the land redistribution is that it is benefiting mainly top government officials who occupy this land but without using it productively. This makes the ordinary Namibian to suffer because an ordinary citizen will never have money to occupy an AA farm because he does not have enough assets to put forward as security for a loan to start farming.

On this note some wanted to know if the film was also going to be shown to these government officials especially the Prime Minister so that the Prime Minister can make a plan to rectify the problems which are shown in the film and the views which viewers have on what they saw in the film. This to them is important because in their view in the long run Government's policy is only going to hurt the country's economy even further because of the inequities which it perpetuates.

There is also a problem of part time farming which is hindering productive farming at some of the farms. It was mentioned that there are people available from Landbou who are ready to go and help resettlement farmers and AA farmers with whatever problems they may have, but the problem lay in the fact that when these people go to the farms, nobody is ever there. They are always in Windhoek and they come once in a while or during weekends.

Asked whether they have people in the Ministry of lands whom they work with, one of the farmers commented on the unappreciable way the Previous Minister of Lands Mr. Jerry Ekandjo handled land reform. The man depicted the Minister as a man who did not care much about what was going on in the reform of both commercial and communal land. The man said:

The previous Minister Jerry Ekandjo was not concerned at all even regarding the communal areas. I don't know if you know about the Kessl case that the government lost earlier this year. If you go through the case you will realise that some of the work that we were doing is highlighted in the case. That is about things that the government should have addressed but did not address. The Kessl case is a very important case in sense that it takes the government hands to address certain issues when they expropriate land. There are certain procedures that have been laid out and which the government must comply with before expropriating land. It is for example said that the minister is not a dictator but an agent of the state who has to follow certain procedures. In this specific case he acted outside of the scope of his power. The judge told him that land reform is part of Namibia and expropriation is provided for by the constitution but can only proceed to do so in compliance with certain procedures. So that gives me hope that an individual who feels aggrieved can go to court and hopefully the ministry will feel obliged to do things in accordance with the law. Of course not everyone has the money to go to court but it shows that there is a process of change taking place.¹³³

¹³³ See Speaker 11 – Dorslam – Appendix 1.

3.3 Omaheke San Trust

This was a specially arranged screening for people associated with the Omaheke San Trust in Gobabis. The film was shown to thirteen people, all of whom had previously been farm labourers who mainly comprised San and Damara speaking people of all ages.



Figure 5: Members of the Omaheke San Trust watching the film

The majority of the people were resettlement farmers, who generally accepted the content of the film and showed that they experienced difficult situations at their farm similar to the problems shown in the film.

Having watched the film, one viewer had to distinguish the situation in Nina and in Vergenoeg. He outlined the differences and pointed out that the Ministry of Lands is doing very little to help the resettled farmers, the Ministry just resettles the farmers and never comes back to promote productive use of land or to address some of the problems they are experiencing. There are neighbouring commercial farmers who at times help but the Ministry remains weak in its approach to the process of helping resettled farmers. In detail the commentator said:

What I want to say is that the situation in Vergenoeg is different from the situation in Nina. I noticed that at Nina there are affirmative Action Farmers, Commercial Farmers and resettled farmers. In

Vergenoeg there are only resettled farmers. The government bought a piece of land and said: Ok now we want to resettle people here. There are no commercial farmers in this area. In the past there was a farmer there from Farm Sonnekom, but these people from Vergenoeg were so jealous and they had so many in fights that the farmer couldn't get a chance to try here and there even if he wanted to. At one point the Omaheke San trust was also there at farm Sonnekom. They had a carpentry project. There the white farmer offered his tractor and other tools for the people to work with on the project. But from the side of the ministry it is very weak. We don't know where the pressure is. Whether it is from the people of the ministry who have to do the work for the ministry? The ministry resettled us here but we don't know what to do. We don't know where the problem lies. That is how I see it.¹³⁴

Another one attacked how the government speaks and acts on the ground. He explained that although the government says that the San people should get first preference in getting plots at resettlement farms, in real practice this is not the case. The Ministry once more is found in bad light. In the words of the man:

The minister and many say the San will get first preference but that is only talking. When it comes to putting it to practice, then it is a different story that is how we see it here. We can go around here with you and show you how many places the San people were given, but the other people forcefully take it away from them. The ministry cannot even tell the people to move out because the land is allocated to the San. Those are the attitudes that we get here.¹³⁵

According to the man the problem is that even if the San people go to the police, they will be told something different. There will probably be one police officer that will be willing to help but another one will advise him not to help. He said that the police say to each other that "don't listen to those people, those are San people what are they going to do with the land?"¹³⁶ According to the man the Otjiherero, Tswana and Oshiwambo speaking people are the people who get first preference not the San. One man gave a testimony on this in the following words:

There was an incident that we can attest to. The farm Sonnekom behind Skoonheid was bought by the government to resettle the San people who were overcrowded on farm Vergenoeg. What happened after that? The people in the offices informed their peers that there was a farm up for resettlement and they must apply. When the applications come to the Land Board the people who have family or friends within the board are handpicked and resettled. The other day we went to Sonnekom to go and see whether the whole farm has been occupied and we saw that half of the land is unoccupied. But the minister says nobody has been resettled there. There are people from the Caprivi or Karas Region who have been resettled on that farm. We then went to the director and asked him why other people are being resettled here when they also have resettlement programmes in their regions. We here are also applying for land. Just like I heard Elizabeth say that she is from the Erongo and she applied for land numerous times. The she went to go negotiate with the people and she asked for help to be resettled and that is how she was eventually resettled in the Nina area. During the white administration getting land was very restricted. You only got land if you could manage it. Otherwise you had to leave it. But on the other side, some people in the olden days gave land away because they did not know the importance thereof. It is important because having land is like having a diamond farm. They did not know that it is important but nowadays they realize that it is important.

One man however noted that it is not the Minister per se who should be blamed but it is those who work under them including especially the land boards who do the allocations. This

¹³⁴ See Speaker nine – Omaheke Sun Trust – Appendix 1.

¹³⁵ See Speaker eleven – Omaheke Sun Trust – Appendix 1.

¹³⁶ *ibid*

resettled farmer noted that there are incidences when the land board allocated land only to those with family connections with them. This is further sidelining people like the San who are in most cases not represented on the board or if they are sitting on the board; do not have their voice heard.

The problem of theft at the resettlement farms was also aired. The viewers talked about children who agree to go and steal livestock from other people's stock. It appeared from the discussion on this matter that the problem is mainly caused by idlers, people who do not work on their plots and they are subjected to poverty. Some of them do not even have one head of cattle or even a sheep or goat. Such people are the ones who go around stealing and robbing others. The problem also is that they do not have the right to fence off their plots so they farm together in one big open farm. They however have some gardens where they can grow vegetables and other crops and can survive from that.



Figure 6: The Logo of the Omaheke San Trust

Having heard about all these problems and having been subjected to them at the resettlement farm, one resettled farmer said that the previous apartheid government was even better in

terms of how it handled farms and management of land and livestock or farming in general.

According to him the black government has failed. In his words:

When the government buys the land and a new owner takes over, that new owner decides that he does not want farm workers on the land. He comes with his own people and throws us out. Us who come and built our corrugated iron house here are the ones who have been chase away from the farms. We come and look for work here but there is no work here as well and that is why we suffer. Us San people or us Damara people, we suffer here in this Omaheke. We don't have a place. When I look back at the olden times I can say it was better than because now it's worse. Back then we had our own livestock and no one stole from the other, but today everything that we had is gone. We don't have anything anymore. When we used to work for the white people we used to get a sheep here or a goat there and you farm with that on the side. All the animals that we got from the white people, where are they today? Gone! Why? It is because we do not respect each other here. Your child and my child get together and go take someone's sheep. When the sheep is missing there is nothing you can do because it disappears without footprints. That is how it went on until today where we have nothing. Everything that we got from the whites is gone. What can we do? The black government came. The black government came and bought farms but only certain people have benefits on the farms. ¹³⁷

One other resettled farmer also compared the previous government and the current government and notes that although they were beaten up by a white man on the farms, they were beaten into shape. When they went into shape they could live because the white man could pay them a substantial amount of money as their wages and at times the white man could allow them to keep a small flock of sheep at the farm and the farm workers could have a living on that. Now that there is a new government run by blacks, what is happening is that they just ask the ordinary person to vote for them promising them cars and land, but after they are voted into office they do not do anything. The people continue to live in the desert, they continue to live without water, they continue to suffer and the situation is becoming worse.

It is clear from the discussions that the beneficiaries were frustrated with the lack of support from government and the small land allocated to them for cultivation. What strongly came out of the discussion was that people really are against other people from other regions being resettled in a region that they don't know. The speaker said people from the region in this case Omaheke are best suited to be resettled in the Omaheke because they know the region's vegetation, the season and are best suited to be resettled. Further, although the film was supposed to be the major focus the discussion mainly went around the people's own situation and very little reference to the film was made.

¹³⁷ See Speaker 23 – Omaheke Sun Trust – Appendix 1.

3.4 Grootfontein Farmers

This screening of the film in Grootfontein happened after one of the regular meetings of the farmers in the area. There were about eighteen people in attendance at the screening most of whom were white commercial farmers. They generally accepted the film and saw its contents as a clear depiction of what is transpiring on the ground. One farmer however noted that the film paints a picture that black farmers are not successful in farming but he knows many black farmers who have succeeded in farming just like white farmers. So therefore on that note the film fails to clearly show that black farmers can succeed in farming independently.

Some farmers felt that the film shows clearly that farm workers do not know their rights hence it is often that they are exploited and do not know how to remedy that. It was recommended that farm workers need to be properly informed about their rights as farm workers. At the same time it was commented that farmers must also be aware of the rights, desires and aspirations of labourers, because if farmers do not know they, through ignorance, violate the rights of their farm workers. Comments were also made about burial rights in direct reference to the film.

It was also pointed out that the land reform programme in Namibia has been highly politicised that is why its progress is always met with problems. Some went to the extent of saying that the way they see how the government is handling the land reform programme will see it degenerating into the Zimbabwe situation. Attached to this was the point that the government seems to be transparent in terms of how it screens people for the allocation of farms. It was recommended that the government should have a proper screening mechanism in place so that they can select people who really want to use the land productively as opposed to those who just want to have a place to stay without productively using the land.

There were also some complaints about the rise in the crime rate at some of the resettlement farms. The rise in crime is mainly attributed to the lifestyle of some of the resettled farmers who do not want to engage in productive farming at those farms or because their plots simply do not enable them to earn a decent life. It was recommended that the government revises its land policy to cater for these kinds of problems and see to it that the plots which resettled farmers get are made bigger so that it can sustain livelihoods of the people to whom it is allocated. Resettlement farmers however expressed willingness to learn from experienced farmers, and a few said they had already learned a great deal from the commercial farmers.

3.5 Epukiro Farmers Association

The screening of the film in Epukiro was done to the members of the Epukiro Farmers Association at their last meeting of the year as part of the meeting itself. About sixteen members were in attendance at the screening most of whom were happy about the orientation and content of the film. They generally commented that the film was well balanced and it painted a good picture of the happenings on the ground.

It was commented by some of the members that indeed the problems which are shown in the film were the same or similar to their own plight. They said that the problem is that the Ministry of Land does not seem to be concerned with solving problems that are troubling farmers especially problems at resettlement farms and problems of unproductive AA farmers. They noted that they regularly tried to contact with the Ministry in various ways, and after repeated attempts, they received no response at all. This is very disturbing to most members who show loss of confidence in the Ministry of Lands.

It was also noted that the size of land which farmers received was not big enough to promote productive farming. They reiterated that any farm less than 7000 ha cannot yield so much given the climatic and other environmental factors to which farmers are subjected. Many felt that AA farms were not being well utilised and feared that soon these farms will look like communal land because the way the land is degrading is fast and the government has to do something about that. Also these AA farms are harbouring a lot of unemployed people who engage themselves in theft of stock from neighbouring farms. This is one of the major problems of AA farms.

The absence of training, especially among the youth, is regarded as a serious failing on the part of the Ministry. Also, it was said by the members that there is need for training and more education for AA farmers. One farmer commented on Elizabeth's closing piece in the film, saying that she dreams of green pastures with abundant livestock, but doesn't even bother to clear the bushes fifteen metres away from where she's sitting. He once again stressed that farming is hard work. Many objected to AA farmers who engage in part time farming.

These AA farmers stay in urban areas like Windhoek and do not regularly visit their farms. Another farmer mentioned a student at UNAM who has done his thesis on AA farmers in the Khomas region. He suggested finding this person and speaking to him.

In an interview with the chairman of the Association, he mentioned that he was on the Resettlement Selection Committee and pointed out how difficult it was to select prospective farmers. He pointed to the example of a San farmer with six head of cattle and N\$ 3,000 in his bank account, a middle income person with fifty cattle and N\$ 30,000 in his account, and the person with one hundred head of cattle earning N\$ 200,000 per annum. Which person should be chosen? Invariably, it would be the latter because it is felt that this person would better utilize the land.

3.6 Khorixas

The screening in Khorixas was done before forty-two among whom was the Mayor of Khorixas, traditional leaders, women's groups and youth groups. The people participated freely and commented on various issues covered by the film. Commenting on the film one viewer said that the film was well done and he desired that the whole nation be shown such a film on national broadcasters. In the words of the viewer:

When one has to speak about the film, then it is to be said that it was correct to shoot such a film. This film shows us how land is allocated and the problems that are faced on such allocated land. My desires are that this film be shown nationwide, for example on television. So that the people who live in the country and who have land can make their own judgement and decide whether they want this type of thing in their areas..¹³⁸

One farmer also noted that the historical disparities in land ownership are still very visible. He added that if the problem of poverty and unemployment coupled with the rise in crime rate is to be addressed then the government should help emerging farmers with training and implements. He noted that the problem of crime comes in especially with the young generation who just reside at farms without doing any productive work. This is also mainly caused by some resettled farmers who move the whole extended family onto the farm. On the issue of training one farmer suggested the following:

Then the person must first be resettled and progress in the communal area and then move on to the commercial area. This will be very good as he will move from one level to another level, just like the white farmers used to do it. Then the government and the commercial farmers must give training to these people. Then they can move on to the commercial areas with the knowledge that they have gained. Then only can we implement all these things that were mentioned here like productivity. Otherwise we are just being killed..¹³⁹

The issue of lack of productive farming was also raised. One farmer however did not attribute it to the lack of will on the part of the farmers. He noted that the farmers have the will but the environment does not allow them to productively engage in farming. Specifically there is

¹³⁸ See Speaker 1 – Khorixas/Omajete – Appendix 1.

¹³⁹ See Third Speaker – Khorixas/Omajete – Appendix 1.

lack of enough water in the area and that hampers productive farming. The farmer aired his view in the following words:

The water problem that is here is that, all the boreholes that are being dug up here are all dry. And the government has to pay. Are the guys doing correct measurements for the water or do they just dig for the sake of digging because they get paid for it by the government? All these are our problems. Thus if you want to make progress in your farming, you cannot do so because there is no water. ...We can see that there is grazing areas, but there are no people at the farms. Why? There is no water. The land is dry. You don't even see a cow, where will it drink water?..¹⁴⁰

He continued to say that when the water is finished on the one farm one has to let the animals go drink on another farm. He suggested that the government should make some geological surveys so that may be they get a place where there is a lot of water underground for them to water their animals, then may be farming will be more productive.

The problem of theft was also identified as one of the biggest hurdles for farmers. One farmer said that sometimes thieves sell the stolen cow at very cheap prices like N\$1000. Also at times when a person has stolen the cow, he kills it and sells the meat, people buy the meat without even asking where the person got the meat from. This practice has destroyed other people's farming activities. Some have even lost all their cattle to thieves and now they are just residing on the farm without stock.

From discussions with the Mayor and other dignitaries who were present it was generally felt that Government should consider sub dividing communal land for farming purposes. If people proved themselves capable of farming successfully on communal land, then they deserved the right to be given their own land within communal land. They added that if a person was a land owner, they would be more productive and thus contributing more to the national economy. It was agreed by all that Government's efforts were not succeeding and that resettlement farms was not the answer.

Some lauded the fact that there is collaboration among farmers. One farmer said that it is important that booth old and new farmers help each other. This will help in sharing knowledge about farming and solving problems related to farming. The farmer said:

It is important to work together with these people, because only then will you be able to work better on your land. We come from communal land and we are settled on commercial land and those people know best on how to work on commercial land. There is therefore a need to work in close contact with them. I am also a resettled farmer and I know what I am talking about..¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ See Speaker 5 – Khorixas/Omajete – Appendix 1.

¹⁴¹ See Speaker one (track 3) – Khorixas/Omajete – Appendix 1.

One farmer also notes that the Film was good; it raises issues which touch on the core objectives of the land reform programme in the country. He said questions such as the purpose of resettlement are foundational –is the government buying commercial land in order to resettle people who will use such commercial land on a subsistence basis. This confusion seems to be the one which informs the lack of will for resettled farmers to do productive agriculture. Another farmer gave advice that the government should monitor and evaluate all the farmers so that they see who is productively using the land and who is not. After such evaluation the government can decide whether to take that land back or not and give it to a more productive farmer or help that unproductive farmer to overcome what is causing him/her to be unproductive.

Chapter 4

National Broadcasting, Panel Discussion and Interviews

1. Introduction

One of the aims of the *Land Matters* documentary was to stimulate an extensive debate on issues surrounding land reform in the country. This chapter contains the analysis and the full transcription of the outcome of these debates as hosted on the national television Talk of the Nation Show and from the panel discussion which took place under the theme “*Land Reform-Politics or Economics*”. The last part of this chapter delves into the interviews that were conducted two years after the initial screening of the documentary with *inter alia* the protagonists from the Nina area who feature in the documentary.

2. Talk of the Nation Show

On the Talk of the Nation Show extracts of the film were aired, where after panellists commented thereon under the Topic “Support to Emerging Commercial Farmers.” The panellists gave their comments and thereafter members of the public could call to the national broadcaster their voices being heard on television and they could openly comment on the film. The group of panellists comprised of:

- Mr. Ferdinand Molale (host and moderator of the show)
- Mr. Thorsten Schütte (Director of *Land Matters* film)
- Mr. Hannu Shipena (Under Secretary to the Ministry of Lands & Resettlement)
- Mr. Solomon Tjipura (Acting President of the Namibian Emerging Commercial Farmers Union)
- Mr. Bertus Kruger (Project Coordinator, Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program)

The show host started off the Debate by stating the following:

“The fact is; a vast track of productive farmland is still in the hands of the minority with their counter parts increasingly showing potential in the productive use of farmland, the question however is, can the white commercial farmers assist their emerging counter parts to successfully use their farmlands productively to the benefit of the country’s economy?”

In support of this question the director of the film stated at the onset that his motivation to shoot the documentary emanated from the fact that he was perturbed by the negative feedback that was being reported abroad regarding the developments made under the land reform process. This prompted his idea to make his own in-depth study on what was really happening. Having in mind the existing hitches regarding the land reform process, his focus was thus on investigating whether there is the existence of any cooperation between established and upcoming farmers in aim of supporting each other for the collective objective of productive farming. The idea was thus to research on an aspect which can be perceived as positive feedback in the land reform process.

His research entailed going into the farms where he identified a few areas where this kind of cooperation could be evidenced. His finding was that there were not that many farms where such cooperation existed. There was however only an exceptional few like the Nina area in the Omaheke region. Nina was then chosen as one such area that he identified and which he then decided to concentrate on to bring his message across in Namibia. To follow are the views of each of the panellists as it came out in the show as they were deliberating on the abovementioned topic namely “ Support To Emerging Commercial Farmers”.

3. Views of the Acting President of the Emerging Commercial Farmers Union

The Acting President’s standpoint was that judging from the comments made by the film director and having seen extracts of the film, he appreciated what the director was trying to do and in his opinion land reform was in for trouble from the moment that it was initiated due to the fact that “after all the struggle was for land”. To him land is a very thorny and sensitive issue thus from the side of the Namibian Emerging Commercial farmers Union, they could care less about governments policy on land reform.

When asked whether there was indeed cooperation between established and emerging farmers he replied that whether cooperation existed or not was subject to the angle from which one looked at cooperation. At farm level there was cooperation but at the farmers union level cooperation was non-existent.

Question was then posted as to what challenges were faced and what could be done to enable Emerging Commercial Farmers to find their feet and be successful as Established Farmers. In answering this; the Acting President wanted to make it clear to everyone that he was not in support of the contention that every established white farmer was successful. His take on the issue was rather that farmers need each other and should learn from each other. He however pointed out that the experience held by the established farmers could not be overlooked but that he had he been given the opportunity would rephrase the evening's topic to "How can the Emerging Commercial Farmers be helped to be Established Farmers of the future" and not necessarily how the white Established Farmers can help them to become Established Farmers.

In aim of giving a solution as to how emerging commercial farmers could be helped to become future established farmers the President stressed that as much as training from established farmers was vital, government had a responsibility to assist farmers with the repayment of their Agribank Loans. "I have been stretching my imagination to the maximum and I cannot see how Emerging Commercial Farmers can get over this barrier without government intervention"¹⁴².

Lastly the president reiterated the fact that he appreciated the work done by the director but that in his view it seemed as though people were handpicked to speak in the film and this troubled his mind. "The road to hell was also prepped with good intentions, so I don't really think this film really reflects the true situation on the ground".

4. Views of the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Lands & Resettlement

The under secretary pointed out that as a person from the ministry which is responsible for the land reform process he was thankful about the fact that the director of the film who hails from Germany decided to take on such an initiative. It reflected an objective analysis of the situation thus in his mind the initiative was worthwhile. As regards the support granted by established farmers to emerging farmers which was the subject matter of the discussion, he pointed out that it was evident from watching the documentary that such cooperation did exist

“for those who have had the opportunity to watch the film, they actually saw firsthand the cooperation between the old farmers and the new upcoming farmers, so it is quite evident in the film for those who have watched it.”¹⁴³

When asked what the government does to compliment the support given to emerging farmers by other institutions, the undersecretary commented that there were various programmes which were taken on by government in aim of supporting farmers. Such are inclusive of the Affirmative Action Loan scheme which is subsidised by government to enable farmers to buy farms from Agribank at a subsidised interest rate. As regards resettlement the government has come up with what is called a Post Settlement Scheme as well as the Emerging Commercial Farmers Training initiative. Under the latter there is the infrastructural Support Programme which helps resettled people improve infrastructure on the farms where they are resettled. The Under Secretary pointed out that these are just some of the initiatives taken on by government to support the land reform process.

During the discussion it was commented by the Acting president of the Union that not all farmers are benefitting from these government initiatives. In response the Undersecretary stated that the programmes were initiated to cater for all upcoming farmers and thus did not target any specific areas or individuals. Later on in the show he added on that previously disadvantaged farmers who are land owners received 85% tax exemption while the rest paid 100% tax.

Regarding the difficulties faced by emerging farmers in relation to repayment of loans which include a large amount of money, the undersecretary is of the opinion that such obligations arise out of an agreement of sale with the seller rendering it a totally different subject matter which cannot be solved by means of a support programme. It solely has to do with the buyer entering into an agreement and acquiring obligations that are difficult to meet.

When asked whether government was satisfied with the levels of productivity on farms occupied by the emerging sector, the response was that the government was indeed not satisfied with the productivity levels. This prompted the ministry to start the various initiatives. “Resettlement is just half of the picture; the other part of the picture is to ensure that the people that got resettled on the farms work on those farms and that they produce.”As

¹⁴³ Mr. Shipena – Appendix 2

a final comment the undersecretary expressed his wish for one structure that represents all farmers in the country. This he declared would represent Organised Agriculture.

5. Views of Project Coordinator- Emerging Farmers Support Programme

As support group to the Emerging Commercial Farmers the project coordinator felt privileged to have watched the film several times and indeed highlighted the fact that what was happening within the Nina farmers Association was quite commendable. His view was mostly prompted by the fact that at the time the documentary was made there was no project like the Emerging Farmer's Support Programme, thus nobody was getting paid to give any support. Only after the initiation of the project an initiative was started in which people were selected and remunerated for giving support to upcoming farmers.

“We in the project are now trying to pay people to remunerate them a little bit for the time and the effort of what they were doing and there they have done it free of charge and I think we should really commend it and we can just learn from what is happening there and try to do it in other areas as well”.¹⁴⁴

During the show the Acting President of the Emerging Commercial Farmers Union pointed out that the support given to upcoming commercial farmers was rather not sufficient. When asked whether this was the case the project Coordinator responded that the Emerging Farmers Support programme which was functioning since two years at the time of the show targeted a specific group of resettlement and affirmative Action Loan Scheme farmers and provided them training. The aim of this training was to enhance the farmers' knowledge and skills about farming and also to influence them with a positive mindset towards commercial farming. This he pointed out was the focus of the project but he did not lose sight of the fact that emerging farmers had other needs but that such were however not part of the project. He thus opinionated, that the objective of the project from that viewpoint was met satisfactorily.

Even after this explanation, the Acting President of the Union cried out his dissatisfaction regarding the support granted. This led to a more in-depth explanation of what exactly the training entails. The project coordinator laid this out as follows:

“When we talk about training, you know actually the word “training”, I hate it because they say you train a dog and you educate a human being. We are actually busy with a long term capacity building education process, and there are 3 major ways in which we do. The 1st one is information and farmers’

¹⁴⁴ Mr. Kruger – Appendix 2

days -where people are exposed on a one day event to a new idea or new practices, and I think here over the last 2 years our Established White Farmers Association played a major role together with our Emerging Farmers Associations but you know, one day just to be exposed to new ideas is not enough for you to go and do it, so we followed it up with what we call topic-related short courses, there's 3-5 days in detail about technical issues of farming, large stock, small stock, animal health, range management, what, and after 3, 5 days you people being developed are excused and what I am most excited about and hopefully we will have a chance to talk about that later as well and I think it links up with the film, is the 3rd component of the capacity building and that is mentorship, we really make use of Established Farmers and for the record, white and black farmers we have currently 22 mentors, 11 of them are white established farmers and 11 of them are black established farmers that we use as mentors, and the mentor is there to take this process further and try to create at the farm level an environment that the new farmer can say, let me apply, let me implement the knowledge that I gained during the other occasions.

The issue of Namibia's rating in comparison to other countries who also have emerging farmers came out during the show. The Project Coordinator's assessment of this was that, one of the biggest challenges faced in Namibia was Land Reform. According to the said, ensuring that land reform works and that people are productive is the biggest obstacle. Should the land reform process fail such failure must be attributed to Government, Established farmers, the Emerging farmers, whether black or white. "It's not only government, yes government has the most important role in this to play but I think government together with private sector- like this project, like other initiatives, we will all have to work together to make sure that Land Reform works, otherwise, we will be in trouble in the future."¹⁴⁵

Reverting back to the documentary the Project Coordinator's last comments were that, the latter should not be seen as that which portrays the general situation on the ground but should rather be seen as something towards which we should all strive. " We all know that what we've seen in the film the way the people work together is a vision that we are all striving towards achieving, I think we must look at the film and see what the people are doing, some things are perhaps not done properly and others are done very well but let us see that rather as an example of what can be done, and what other Farmers Associations, both Emerging as well as Established should strive towards achieving rather than trying to see this as the ultimate situation". He however believes that reaching that "vision" will not happen anywhere in the near future.

¹⁴⁵ ibid

6. Comments from the Public

After giving the panellists sufficient time to deliberate on the topic, public input was catered for by giving the listeners an opportunity to call in and comment on the issue of support given to emerging commercial farmers. Some viewers mapped the film as one that is not very representative. One farmer commented that he did not understand why he was not made part of the documentary even though he was indeed farming successfully in the Nina area. Several other viewers were in unison with the comments of the Acting President of the Emerging Commercial Farmers Union in that they felt that the documentary depicted the old colonial system in which black people were regarded as a burden to white people. “You are trying to put something again to promote this thing of white superiority when you are saying for example that the black people must not be given farms because they don’t know how to run it.”

Other viewers however felt that the message that the film is trying to bring across was not to be seen in a negative light but rather as something that could be shown throughout the whole country to serve as an example of how things could be done. Another caller interpreted the documentary by saying that all that it was trying to do was to convey the message that we have to learn from the experienced people. That therefore the issue was about who is experienced and can share such know-how and not about whether you are black or white. “if we look in the history, most of the time we say that we have to learn from the experience and I think that is what the film is saying, it’s not about black or white”.¹⁴⁶

A comment made by another viewer was that in terms of the relevant legislation a resettled person is supposed to receive support before being resettled rather than thereafter. This in the viewer’s opinion was a major shortcoming in the resettlement process thus he did not know whether the resettled individuals should be called “emerging farmers” or “disrupted or standard farmers”

The Under Secretary made a general comment in light of this issue to the effect that whether a farmer be termed Emerging Farmer or New Farmer or any other term, it is a fact that there are farmers in the country who are crying for help and who need support.

¹⁴⁶ See Mr. Araseb – public caller – Appendix 2

Other concerns raised by viewers were the existing inequalities between established farmers and emerging farmers in terms of the resources which are available to them. Viewers felt that there was a need from the side of the government to assist Affirmative Action loan Scheme farmers in such a way that will enable them to start farming like the existing commercial farmers. It is said that it is often the case that these farmers are unable to start farming efficiently due to the fact that they suffer financial constraints after purchasing the farm land. Another viewer attempted to give a solution to the above issue by suggesting that what could make land reform work is if farmers who are just starting off are exempted from tax as is the case when a new business is started up. In support of this the undersecretary also reiterated that currently previously disadvantaged Namibian farmers under the AALS are given an 85% tax exemption.

Lastly viewers were also arguing in favour of a one umbrella organisation that is to deal with farming matters rather than having different institutions tackling the same issue as is currently done by the different farming unions. In aim of clarifying the establishment of the existing different structures the acting president of the union imparted that before the Emerging Commercial Farmers Union was formed, the then Namibian Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum was established in aim of later merging it with the NNFU and the NAU, thereby creating not only one union but also avoiding the creation of a third union. This however did not work out because there was disagreement between those involved with the unions as to what name farmers should be given under this single organisation. The main question was whether it must be called emerging commercial farmers union or just commercial farmers union. Also the existing unions speak of two production systems while the Acting President felt that there should be one sector and that being the overall farming sector.

As a final contribution to the evening, the director of the documentary expressed his disappointment about the cause of non cooperation between the unions. He felt that, disagreements' arising from issues like what an overall union must be called was rather trivial. For him, the material issue that needed to be addressed was the establishment of cooperation between emerging and established commercial farmers. It can however be noted in a nutshell that the panellists were in agreement that there be one organised agricultural structure. The fact that emerging farmers did need support throughout their establishment was mentioned repeatedly by the panellists and the viewers. One can however conclude that

viewers were more comfortable with the idea that both the emerging and established farmers can learn from one another, rather than saying that the emerging commercial farmers need support from established commercial farmers.

7. Full Transcription of the Discussion

Thorsten, you are right here with us, let me start with you, What motivated you to come up with a documentary on this very issue in our country?

Well actually 3 years ago we started this project with a thorough research about Land Reform, me as an independent film maker I was quite frustrated about the reports especially in Europe, I am German, about quite distorting reports about how land reform is proceeding, horror scenarios being depicted etc. so I thought, well I would really like to dedicate myself to have an in-depth view to what is happening on the land and we wanted to stay away from the usual preconceptions and prejudices and we thought well let's have a look at, -are there actually cooperation taking place in the country side?, -is there anything to report about people joining hands and working together?-and we travelled for quite some time through-out the country visiting the different farming communities and well, I have to admit cooperation didn't take place that much to an extent that I in the beginning thought that would be, but we identified a couple of farming communities where things were starting off where people were getting together and we found that very interesting to report about because we wanted to set an example and show positive ways of cooperating with each other and then show it to a vast quantity and to show to a wide variety of people and make this film available here in Namibia to start a debate about it, and see what can people do to get together, where are their obstacles what can one do.

Mr. Tjipura, Mr. Thorsten Schütte is talking here about cooperation between Emerging Commercial Farmers and their Established counterparts as he went around interviewing them. What do you make of the interaction between the Emerging Commercial Farmers and their Established counterparts in the extract that we just played in and also his comments on that.

Thank you Ferdinand, and thank you viewers out there. I would like to start right from the outside that as much as I appreciate what he did and what the problem is to the Namibian society, I would like to say that Land Reform was in for trouble after all the struggle was about land, so, land reform was in for trouble, and I must say that, judging from the comments of Mr. Schütte and watching the extract of the program as such, I can only come to the conclusion that Land Reform being a very thorny issue, very sensitive, it is such that to some Land Reform might be slow, too slow or to some might be too fast so from our side as the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers Union, we very much don't care with governments policy of Land Reform

Mr. Tjipura, is there cooperation? Because Thorsten here says he did not quite stumble on that as he was going around, what do you make of that?

Yes, cooperation, what do you mean by cooperation? It depends from what angle you look at it, if you look at cooperation at farm level, I would say yes but I regret to say that at union level at farmers union level, that is, I am sorry to say that but that is non-existent.

Mr. Kruger, Emerging commercial farmer, in that extract in fact said or put it on record as to the support she enjoys from the Nina's farmers association, I hear Mr. Tjipura here, what's your finding on this, as support group to the Emerging Commercial Farmers?

Well thank you, I think if you look at that specific film, I was privileged as it's about the 3rd or 4th time that I see it, I think we have to commend of what is happening in the Nina farmers association and what is happening up to now, I think there is a lot of positive people both from the white Commercial Farmers in that association as well as the Resettled and the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme Farmers that has been resettled there, I think they have got an excellent way of working together they are learning from each other and remember when that film was made there was no project like the Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Project, so there was nobody paying them for what they were doing, we in the project are now trying to pay people to remunerate them a little bit for the time and the effort of what they were doing and there they have done it free of charge and I think we should really commend it and we can just learn from what is happening there and try to do it in other areas as well.

Mr. Shipena, you are the custodian of the land, the government, these two groups you are behind them as a matter of fact, how does this words, these opening word, how do you find them greeting you as someone in the very ministry that's trying to drive things, guard things on land.

First of all, I should really thank Mr. Schütte, for taking up this initiative, him coming from Germany as an outsider, he actually is an outsider and he is an objective observer at this situation, on the relationship between the two farm union members, so to us it's an initiative that is worthwhile, and for those who have had the opportunity to watch the film, they actually saw firsthand the cooperation between the old farmers and the new upcoming farmers, so it's quite evident in the film for those who have watched it.

Mr. Schütte, Mr. Tjipura here does not at all deny the fact that there's cooperation here and there, but why aren't you respecting his view on the differences that are there, that exist there, what did you come across as the challenges as you interacted with these two groups?

Well, first please let me comment on one of his comments of not seeing the Commercial Farmers Union and the Communal Farmers Union, NAU, NNFU and also your Farmers Union not being very cooperative, I have to say that in the time being when I was here, I actually saw very strong commitments of both of them trying to work things out and work together so I can't really fully agree on what you said and I see people in both unions and the ministry struggling to get along and find a way, you know that, we are facing everyday new obstacles, new problems but people are getting together on a regular basis trying to make things happen.

Mr. Tjipura, I hear what you said earlier on, you said land reform is inimitable as a matter of fact, you also touched here and there on some of the issues you regard as challenges, now, just to add on what Thorsten said earlier on, what would you, just so that we bring it across to the Established Farmers, what would you pinpoint as those challenges where you as a group would need support on?, -Mind you, we are trying to say for you as Emerging Commercial Farmers to find your feet and be successful as Established Farmers.

Let me put it in this way Ferdinand and viewers out there, I am not very much fond of the notion that every established white farmers so to say is a successful farmer, so I don't like the notion that Emerging Commercial Farmers have to learn from white Established Farmers, I think we need each other, we can learn from one another, and in fact we need one another, but coming to; some people might say you cannot replace experience, so this Established Commercial Farmers has that experience, and it's a matter of fact that if I had the right to rephrase the agenda for tonight's topic, I would say: How can the Emerging Commercial Farmers be helped to be Established Farmers of the future and not necessary how the white Established Farmers can help them to become Established Farmers.

Now, let's come in right there, how would you want to see that happening?

I think government has the sole responsibility here and I've been on many platforms and I said it many times that if you want the single and biggest of circle of Emerging Farmers today, is the repayment of their Agri-bank loans and I have been stretching my imagination to the maximum and I cannot see how Emerging Commercial Farmers can get over this barrier without the government intervention, so yes as much as training and learning from Established farmers, is very vital.

Let me draw-in Mr. Kruger here, -Mr. Tjipura, Mr. Kruger I hear what Mr. Tjipura is saying; you as the Emerging Commercial Farmers support program, are you not giving them enough support? He's crying can you hear it?

For sure, and I think he might have reason to cry because what our project is doing this Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program over the last 2 years, is working with a specific target group being the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme Farmers of which Mr. Tjipura is one, as well as the Resettled Farmers on the government land that's bought. And every project there's always support and every project has specific purpose, and the purpose of this project is to provide in training, improving the competence and when I talk about competence, I talk about the knowledge of the farmers, the skills of the farmers to implement this knowledge and also trying to influence the attitudes of farmers positive towards becoming Commercial Farmers. This is the focus of this project but that doesn't mean that, that is all what farmers need. I fully agree with him, they also need access to credit to be able to buy whatever is needed to become better farmers, they need access to credit to repair and maintain the infrastructure, they need access to good markets, they need favourable interest rates from Agribank or from whomever, so there is a lot of things they need, this project of mine that I was implementing is focusing on the competence part, there we did a lot of things, I think we achieved quite a lot but that we can talk about that later

Let me take you back to where you were talking about training, what sort of training really?

When we talk about training, you know actually the word "training", I hate it because they say you train a dog and you educate a human being. We are actually busy with a long term capacity building education process, and there are 3 major ways in which we do. The 1st one is information and farmers' days -where people are exposed on a one day event to a new idea or new practices, and I think here over the last 2 years our Established white Farmers Association played a major role together with our Emerging Farmers Associations but you know, one day just to be exposed to new ideas is not enough for you to go and do it, so we followed it up with what we call topic-related short courses, there's 3-5 days in detail about technical issues of farming, large stock, small stock, animal health, range management, what, and after 3, 5 days you people being developed are excused and what I am most excited about and hopefully we will have a chance to talk about that later as well and I think it links up with the film, is the 3rd component of the capacity building and that is mentorship, we really make use of Established Farmers and for the record, white and black farmers we have currently 22 mentors, 11 of them are white established farmers and 11 of them are black established farmers that we use as mentors, and the mentor is there to take this process further and try to create at the farm level an environment that the new farmer can say, let me apply, let me implement the knowledge that I gained during the other occasions.

Let me bring in briefly Mr. Shipena here, Mr. Kruger is talking about the complimentary measures to the emerging commercial farmers, what do you do as government Mr. Shipena to add to what this body is doing?

Yes, there are quite a number of government programs running that supports farmers for the private buyers, we all know the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme, it's a loan scheme that is subsidised by government to help the farmers acquire land and at subsidised interest rates to Agri-Bank, if I can bring in the picture to the resettlement farmers, we have got what we call a Post Settlement Support Program that has got various legs and the Emerging Commercial Farmers Training Initiative is just one of the initiatives that we are taking to support the farmers, one being the Infrastructural Support Program, that we support and this helps the newly or the people that we resettled on government farms to improve infrastructure on the farms on which they are resettled. That's just one of the initiative that we are taking.

Mr. Schütte, earlier on Mr. Kruger touched on the aspect of mentorship as a component. As an independent observer, what's your assessment on this?

Yes, I actually would like to bring up a thought that starts within the story much earlier, because I think we should also talk here about neighbourhood because first of all cooperation between Emerging and Established Farmers has to happen in the neighbourhood where people are living. What we are going through here in Namibia is a huge change in the country side, new farmers are coming in, old ones are pulling out, nobody is not really knowing the new farmer etc and what is very much important is that people get to know each other, people get together, people address their needs, people get together and mingling, and through this what you have seen in the film, the Nina farmers association activities started on a private initiative, it was 2 or 3 people within the Farmers Associating who knew their neighbours who got together, worked-out something and then they made it happen. I think this is something that is very crucial in this whole process, you can do and try any top-to-bottom information training, whatever thing if the community itself is not willing doesn't know each other, and doesn't make a step across the border of the doorstep of their neighbour things won't work-out, and what I have to say here also, when we travelled in the country when we showed the film, when we discussed it with the people, I perceived a big willingness of each and everybody be it emerging, be it established farmers be it from different neighbourhoods, that they were willing actually to help and get together but we have to encourage people and get joined hands and work together, maybe sometimes even people are shy to talk to each other, maybe because of history or whatever kinds of reasons, but I think there has to be a strong emphasis also to encourage people to get together, get to know each other and work out something.

Mr. Tjipura, do you actually avail yourself in the way Schütte is describing it here?

Yes, Ferdinand let me put it this way, as much as I appreciate the work done by Mr. Schütte with his film, and I know this was done on with good intentions, remember the road to hell was also prepped with good intentions, so I don't really think that, although what is bugging my mind is that if you look at this film, you will see that people were hand-picked so to speak, and this film does not really reflect the true situation on the ground.

Would you say the same Mr. Schütte, were the participants hand-picked?

No they were not hand-picked, we went through a large variety of Farmers Associations, we had to deal with what is there, we had to deal with those Farmers Associations where actually cooperation are taking place, and with everybody who was willing to contribute and willing to speak to us, was allowed to come in, there was nothing staged, you know it was all what we found there, of course you know documentary film makers have a certain subjective way of storytelling but there was nothing staged, nothing handpicked. No!

Mr. Kruger...

Please I think it is important that we realise that there is no way that we should see or this film idea was never to portray the general situation on the ground, we all know that what we've seen in the film the way the people work together is something it's a vision that we are all striving towards to achieve, I think what we must look at the film and see what the people are doing some things are perhaps not done properly and others are done very well but let us see that rather as an example of what can be done, and what other Farmers Associations, both Emerging as well as Established should strive towards achieving rather than trying to see this as the ultimate situation, I believe we are still far away from that but that is something that we should move towards.

Mr. Tjipura

Ferdinand if I may come in there, if you take an extract from that film, if you take, say the honourable member of parliament, Mrs. Clara Bohitile, who was on this film, she was even saying that members of the Nina association were coming to her and she even availed herself saying that if anyone wants to buy land in this area "come to me", so those white farmers there in the area knew exactly that Mrs. Bohitile by virtue of whom she associates herself with will come up along with those people they really wants there.

Hold it there for me, Mr. Shipena, Mr. Tjipura is actually trying to draw attention to the fact that well as much as Mr. Schütte here is saying there are those that are benefiting not all are benefiting what's your findings on the grounds on this?

I mean the programs that I talked about are for everyone, they are for all Resettlement Farmers and the Emerging Commercial Farmers Program, the one that Mr. Bertus Kruger co-managed, that one is for all, it is open for all new or upcoming farmers, I don't think the program selects areas or individuals that should benefit from it. I do not think so!

Mr. Tjipura

Let me come in, this very program, this Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program was initiated by the Namibia personnel union, the Namibian National farmers union, being the Emerging Commercial Farmers Union, you know what? Today they saying let's do away with the name and name Commercial Farmers

What are they saying Mr. Tjipura?

They are saying let's just talk about the commercial farmers

Mr. Kruger, are you being seen, are you being heard-of?

Well, we can talk for hours on this topic of, whether there should be Emerging Farmers or not, I said in the beginning; a project has a specific target group, the target group of this project for the last 2 years and also to a large extent for the next 3 years, because we are going to continue with this, the European union funding is ending but we continue with the Emerging Commercial Farmers and under the definition of the Emerging Commercial Farmers, we specifically define those people that are on Resettlement farms, brought by the Government and the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme farmers, or any other black farmers, -and that is important, any other black farmer that bought land with their own money or through commercial banks or whatever the case might be. That is the word emerging in the context of this project, I agree with you if we look wider at the word emerging you know emerging means you are coming from somewhere but sometimes you must arrive, so and I fully agree, and that is why the NAU from time to time when

we interact on this say “but what about the young white farmers” that are also emerging farmers, should they not be in future also be part and benefiting from this? So I think we can talk about these things for quite some time.

Let me take this minute to invite our callers if you want to come aboard and share your comments, your sentiments, the number is 291 3198 if you are calling from outside Windhoek, the area code is 061 the number again, 291 3198 and I must make it clear, the program tonight is not totally zooming into resettlement and land distribution, we are talking about support to emerging commercial farmers.

We appear to have a caller already, let me find-out who we have. Richard it appears, Evening, welcome to talk to the Nation, are you there Richard? While he is still on the line, we are trying to connect with him while figuring-out things.

Are you there Richard? Good evening, welcome to the talk of the Nation. I am there Good Evening! Be as brief as you can we want to accommodate as many callers as we can. Thank you very much I will be brief!

I am just a little bit disappointed with the way Mr. Tjipura is reacting because what I believe, this is just my view, is he trying to counter-act what the people are saying instead of coming up with clear things what they want see happening because really...

Don't attack Mr. Tjipura now. I am not attacking!. You come forth with your own ideas. I am very pleased with the film you got, I saw it and it was very clear that people are really profiting. Richard! Richard! Thank You! I appreciate you coming on board but not to attack Mr. Tjipura.

Let me find-out if we have Kapita on the line. He is calling from Windhoek, Good evening, are you there, Kapita, Kapita are you there? The number is 291 3198 if you want to come on board, the area code is 061. Kapita is there. -Good evening welcome to talk of the nation. Good evening. Good evening Ma'm, go ahead share with us your views and concerns, be as brief as you can please, we want to accommodate as many as we can.

Ok, Quickly, I just want to comment Mr. Tjipura, I think really he is the one directing the whole issue and with all due respect, what he said in the beginning, especially about this whole thing of saying, is almost like the old colonial mentality of saying that for example there are these white farmers and we black people have to learn from them, I think that is really unfair, because if you look in the past for example, and I am sorry I have not seen the film but I can already tell from those that have seen it, I mean from what you have just shown tonight that is another, you are trying to put something again to promote this thing of white superiority when you are saying for example for years that the black people must not be given farms because they don't know how to run it, now if you look, hundred years have past, Namibia is still importing a lot of food even though yourself have just been given the figures; 4000-odd farms belonging to whites how is it possible that these so-called people who are very good at farming have failed miserably in these few years, but when you take the few 300-something of our black people who are now being resettled and who are now taking over the farms, they are already being criticised for not doing so well, they need a white person...

Let me thank you for coming through, your concerns are quite clear, I think that is unfair! Before emotions heat up, can I ask you to share the line with Imaroe please, he is calling from the Nina area, -Thank you Kapita dead! We take this caller and then give the panellists a chance to

respond, are you there Imaroe, Imaroe is gone! Mr. Shipena, let me give it to you, can you conceptualize it for us, please!

Ja, words aside; whether we use the word Emerging Farmers, New Farmers, or whatever word we use, we must recognise it. It's a fact that there are farmers in this country out there who are crying for help, they need support.

Let me ask you to hold it right there, we've got Imaroe on the line holding from the Nina area, good evening are you still there? Yes I'm there...Let me thank you for your patience, be as brief as you can

Yes, good evening, no, I saw the film, Hallo? We are there; go ahead please be as brief as you can. Yes, I see the film yesterday night, I was only surprised that I am also farming in the area and I did not know about the film at all and I think I am also an Affirmative Action Loan Farmer who are doing very well, very good and was disappointed that these people didn't make a turn on my farm, so that they can see how I am farming and definitely I was a bit disappointed, so I believe that it was a hand-picked story as Mr. Tjipura said, so that only certain people must bring-out their views and so on.

Let me thank you Mr. Imaroe, let me ask you to share the line with Nangolo, who is on the line from Windhoek, thank you! Nangolo, are you there? Nangolo?, Nangolo is on the line from Windhoek, Nangolo are you there. I am here! Good evening, let me thank you for your patience, be as brief as you can please. Ok, I am here! We are all ears; the Nation is all ears, go ahead.

I watched the program, last night, ne. What I am saying is that, I think there is something special about it. Of course some might see it as through patronizing, maybe selecting a small area of people, but the whole idea for Namibia I think is worth commending, I think we could spread this practice or this approach to the different parts of the country, then we will be able to move somewhere, once again, I want to mention is that there is not much information available as to how a "would be" especially I'm referring to a black man on the street who want to be a farmer one day, what they should do, really. Let me thank you for your views, I think they are pretty clear, They are not exactly available, ok! Mr. Schütte, you did the documentary, well Mr. Tipura is actually pleading here that we contextualize things, now, you mingled around with the farmers, you interviewed them, went around with them, is there something –one particular thing you think the established farmers can learn from their counterparts?

I think they can learn a lot from each other, you know as long as they get together and talk about, their issues, their needs and their necessities. You'll have to get together, you have to continuously need, I mean we also can, maybe share a moment of where the Emerging Farmers Support Program is at the moment, you know what experiences you've made out of it you know, certain cooperation has come to a certain peak, then things stagnate again and then people are getting more independent, emerging farmers probably don't need that much support as they needed in the beginning or people get together in study circles in town you know, but we have to see it as a long-term process or where we have to come up with new ideas, maybe Bertus can also follow up on that.

Let me ask you to hold it right there, we have Alek on the line,

Yes, there was one issue which was referred to that did not get enough attention on this program, and I want to raise that, it's with regard to the inequality that are there between Commercial Farmers, Established commercial Farmers and Emerging Farmers, whether they are black farmers or not. Is the fact of the resources that are available for these farmers, I think Government should come in and provide additional assistance to Affirmative Action Loan Scheme Farmers or

farmers that are buying land because at the time of spending their resources, they start farming already bankrupt, because they have spent everything they had in buying the land and they can't start farming properly and equally with other farmers that are coming from commercial areas.

Mr Emvula, Evening and welcome to Talk of the Nation.

What I would like to see happening, is that the farmers unite as Namibians and under one umbrella and not these different types of unions, what is that sphere that black and white can go together in one line for a certain purpose to bring about development and better farming for the whole country. And Point number 2. I feel the Just briefly please, planning program; probably it should be expected but it should be run according to the regions probably the expert officers should be more in contact with the upcoming farmers.

Kakujaha, Evening, welcome to Talk of the Nation.

Thank you very much, first of all let me commend Mr. Tjipura for his contribution, I think it was outstanding and I think this little film or documentary was just nearly fiction of what we say "run a darkie situation" and I think that is not what is going to make land reform work, so I think the whole topic should not focus on this documentary of Mr. Thorsten Schütte, let me just share with you how Land Reform works: one point is through exemption in tax, like what we do when the, with the start-up of businesses that they say, "ok, when you start-up a business up to 200 000,00 you don't pay tax",

Mr. Shipena, can I start with you? Additional assistance in order to give the Emerging Farmers also a chance to really come forth as Mr. Tjipura once reflected.

As the last caller, the last person talked about tax and I am happy that he mentioned the subject of tax and I should inform the nation that the previously disadvantaged Namibians who are farm owners, they receive 85% tax exemption and with the rest of previously disadvantaged they pay 100% of their tax.

Thank you, let me ask you to hold it, we have another caller trying to come on, evening are you there?

First of all I just want to thank the topic you put forth but now, position 1 of what I want to say is the, you know the documentary itself, this country there is no way that the government has expropriated any farms in this country, and that is one short fall in the documentary, the other one is the support to the farmers, you know as far as the ministry is trying, government is trying, most of the act, the way the act is stipulating, there are some things which has been translated, you know before a person is resettled there were supposed to be a support package given but that is coming at the end of the tunnel, I don't know whether these people should be called emerging farmers or you know, disrupted and standard farmers.

Let us find-out from the panellists what they have to say, you were nodding earlier on Mr. Kruger.

I think it's a very interesting comments we are hearing, I think one thing, we have to make very clear, that mentoring doesn't mean advising, mentoring is not equal to advising, mentoring isn't it somebody that says "I know and I am going to tell you what to do, if you don't do it, you are stupid". So I think we have to get away from that. A good mentor, the thing that is distinguishes an actual mentor from a good mentor, is the one that can sit with him in deed (which is by the

way a volunteer, nobody forces you down on nobody), sit with him; create a conducive environment where this person can say instead of -why? Say -why not? Let us try something new.

Mr. Araseb, Evening, welcome to talk of the nation

Alright thank you, I actually just wanted to, you know ask a question, because as I have listened, it seems like, the comments which was made is like, the movie or the film or the documentary actually is making a wrong picture or giving the wrong picture but I mean, if we look in the history, most of the time we say that we have to learn from the experience and I think that is what the film is saying, its not about black or white, that's all I have to say.

Thank you Mr. Araseb, Mr. Kruger I wanted you to address the question of a single umbrella for the farmers and not different unions as dissected as we find it now. What are you up to saying to that caller?

Well I don't think I am the right person for this, because I am not representing any of the other two unions, nor the emerging farmers union but my personal opinion is yes, we need one umbrella organisation, we need one union where all the farmers are under and I think it is our job, all of us to strive and work towards that.

Ashitile on the line from Walvisbay, evening welcome to talk of the Nation,

Good evening Mr. Muhale, first of all, I just want to comment on the documentary that people seem to be very confused that is a already something that is happening with the farmers, but I think this was just an introduction or just a way to introduce people to the farming system, but I think they are still not yet some placement for the farmers to start farming, isn't it so?

Well, Mr. Tjipura, there are calls there; in fact coming in on where you left off, of a single union umbrella and not various unions, are you happy, that's what you are advocating for in fact?

In fact yes, you are arriving there and the caller was right, -in fact way back, -two years back, we formed, what was then called the Namibian Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum, because we didn't want to form a third union and after 2 years down the line, we realised that the two unions are not serious about forming one union, in fact we were going one step forward and two steps backward so that's where we, why we formed the Namibian Emerging National Farmers Union.

Thorsten, you did the Documentary, many people are commenting on it, the lines are still buzzing at the moment, as you interacted with these two groups that belonged to various farmers unions, how did you find the cooperation between the farmers unions when it comes to shaping the policy matters?

Well, I actually by that time was cooperating closely with the NNFU and the NAU and there were shared ideas of joint presidency committee and even by that time, I mean the idea of the Emerging Farmers Support Program was supported by them. I really cannot share this opinion of disagreement with them. In fact, you know in the time of 2006 to 2008, I saw them actually more flourishing and growing closer to each other than before.

Mr. Shipena, what would you have to answer to some of the queries, concerns raised this evening?

Yes, I had one caller, actually commented that the emerging farmers, they face difficult situations that the ground is not equal that they are faced with huge loans that has to be repaid but I feel that

that is totally different subject because the farmers entering into an agreement of sale with the seller and it's true that many of them are faced with a huge loans that they will have to repay and I don't really know how that can be solved through a support program because it's a question of entering into obligations which are difficult for you to meet.

While you are at that, earlier on, you were talking about the land tax, do you find Emerging Commercial Farmers to be in compliance with the land tax stipulations?

Yes they do pay, of course there is an exemption of the portion of the land tax, which is 85% but they do pay just like the established farmers or old farmers.

Mr. Tjipura, let me get to you, just as we try to basically put the net on this one, you were saying earlier on; "you wish to see commentators you know doing away with it, the term Emerging Commercial Farmers", once again, what do you want us to refer to this group and how do you want things to be driven from now on?

Yes, you might have quoted me wrong, my brother, I am not sure I am being quoted Emerging Commercial Farmers, because you know and I know people going around telling many commercial farmers that this is not the right type of term, because you know, I am just justifying logic that people who were then referring to black farmers if you like as the Emerging Farmers, nowadays are telling the same and the very same people that, no you are not Emerging Commercial Farmers we are just commercial farmers, but why? Why should people be sceptical about that? Why should people be fascinated about this? Yes, because I just wonder if you take that economies, countries like Russia, like Brussels, even big brother South Africa, India they are called emerging economies, Namibia is called an emerging democracy, so what is wrong with being called Emerging Commercial Sector, and that's why we differ fundamentally with the two other unions because they are talking about, they are talking of two production systems and we are talking about free sectors, so there's nothing, I would like to see organisational structure representing organised Agriculture sector in Namibia.

Mr. Kruger, Let me bring you in, Mr. Tjipura is talking about other countries where we also have emerging farmer sector, how does Namibia's compare?

Well, I obviously we have an emerging farming sector, you know, I think one of the biggest challenges we are facing in this country, is Land Reform and of that, the biggest challenge is to make sure that Land Reform works and people are productive, so really, I think if we are going to fail on this and when I say we, I mean Government, I mean the Established farmers, the Emerging farmers, black, white, whatever, if we fail in making sure that these people that are resettled, don't become or become productive, I think we would have failed and our children and their children would one day come back and say; what have you done wrong, I think it's the biggest challenge we are facing, therefore we are working together, Mr. Tjipura, it's not only government, yes government has the most important role in this to play but I think government together with private sector, like this project, like other initiatives, we will all have to work together to make sure that Land Reform works, otherwise, we will be in trouble in the future.

We are running-out of time, Mr. Shipena, are you satisfied as government with the levels of productivity when we are talking about, you know, using farm land productively from the emerging sector?

The Answer is no, hence these initiatives that we are talking about tonight, Resettlement is just half of the picture, the other part of the picture is to ensure that the people that got resettled on the farms that they work on those farms and that they produce.

With that little time left, let me start with you, your final word Thorsten, what do you see as the way forward with these two groups?

Well, first of all, let me say that I am a little disappointed that we are arguing about terms and which farmers unions is better than the others or something, I think we should really focus more on the core issue of cooperation between Emerging and Established farmers and even if this time frame here is a little too restricted, we only have one hour, I can only address it to the viewers to get in touch with the ministry, get in touch with the Emerging Farmers support program, get in touch with the unions, get in touch with the legal assistance centre and they will provide you with a lot of information to really help you if there is any questions that we couldn't answer tonight.

Mr. Tjipura, what do you see as the way forward as we charge the support as Emerging Commercial Farmers with their counter part?

As I have already said Mr. Ferdinand, we should be serious, be serious in one day because I am dreaming of one day, having one day of having one organisational structure in Namibia and what I can tell the many farmers of today is that there's nothing to be shy off, so let's go along, let's be proud of emerging farmers and one day we will be established farmers.

Mr. Kruger, an over-arching structure of organised agriculture,

I think this is important we have to strive towards that, this project that I am part of, you know really is part and parcel of the process trying to achieve that, we have to go there and very important also, well have to take hands, there's a saying that is "if we all do a little, we can achieve a lot" and I think that is what is important.

Mr. Shipena, your final words...

Yes, I am not talking on behalf of the Unions, but we would be happy if we have got one structure that represents all farmers in this country.

That represents organised agriculture, as Mr. Tjipura was saying?

Yes!

8. Panel Discussion: Land Reform: Politics or Economics?

As has been mentioned in the introductory remarks to this chapter, there was a panel discussion at Goethe Centre on the Land Matters Film under the theme “*Namibia’s Land Reform: Politics or Economics?*”

The panel was made up of:

- Lidwina Shapwa (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands & Resettlement)
- Ryno Van der Merwe (President of Namibian Agricultural Union)
- Thorsten Schuette (Director of *Land Matters* documentary)
- Erika Von Wietersheim (Author of book “*This Land Is My Land*”)
- Willem Odendaal (LAC: Project Coordinator & Chairman of discussion)

The people generally accepted the film and in particular Mrs Shapwa said:

I think the film is a reflection on what is currently happening, it gives the viewer a feel of the current problems being faced plus a view on the importance of land. Thus various role players in that field and what goes on in the minds of those that live on the farms with regards to land, I think it is a good film. I am glad I had an opportunity to view it.

Neighbouring commercial farmers expressed their concern in the fact that they had to do the maintenance on shared responsibilities e.g. broader faces as the part-time farmers were not always available. Commercial farmers were faced with the problem of theft and poaching. Farm workers advocated for their own place too, or alternatively, they should be allowed to farm on their employers’ farm for their own benefits as sometimes hunger drove them to steal. Another problem faced by the farm workers were that they were unable to keep their children on these farms. Hence, in answering the question whether land reform is politics or economics, the Land and Resettlement Permanent Secretary, Mrs Shapwa stated that the land issue is both economics and political. She further puts forward that;

“The land issue cannot be separated from politics as yet; perhaps only in a few years’ time. People have suffered a lot-they have lost their land”

Rhyno van der Merwe was of the opinion that the land issue is not only about transfer of land but also to ensure that land reform is sustainable. Miss Erika van Wietersheim, the author of ‘*This land is my land*’ pointed out that the reason why black Namibians want land is more emotional than productivity. She further states;

“It’s a cultural thing that land means life; a rational view of land does not hold any longer. Land does not automatically mean life.”

Mr. Thorsten Schütte, said that there is little co-operation between emerging farmers and old commercial farmers. However, he gave an example of the NINA farmers association in Omaheke Region as one of the few exceptions where farmers work together. In conclusion to the panel discussion, the people from the floor were allowed to give their opinions with regards to the subject matter. Among others, they stated that, the land value needs to be improved; that there was a lot of virgin land left unoccupied and that the structure of the pre-independence commercial farmers need to be continued post-independence.

9. Full scripted discussion

(Opening remarks)

Firstly I would like to thank the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for facilitating this and also thank you to the Goethe Centre for giving us the venue and One Africa T.V you can see them all around for putting all on to T.V for Thursday which will be screened on Thursday night at 10 o'clock and the public will have the opportunity to give their opinion on the topic, "Namibia's Land Reform Politics or Economics" You can send your sms's to 525 and One Africa will scroll it at the bottom of the T.V so that everyone can see what is your opinion about this so that you get to air your views on this topic that is quite a highly debated topic, as Wild Cinema we feel it is important to provide this film with a forum because film makers and debates are what is important to our community so with that I thank you and enjoy.

This is a complex situation there are political and economic necessities. The film introduces a balanced view and I would like to introduce Thorsten Schütte the director of the film, wonderful work!

I would like to ask Willem Odendaal to get the panel discussion on the go and to introduce our panelists thank you!

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Director of The Land Matters – Firstly I would like to thank the folks of the Wild Cinema Festival who made it possible for us to see this film, I am very happy I was invited here and we could bring all these people together. Well hi, there I have no idea what to do now but maybe I can ask Rhyno from the N.A.U to come forward? I suppose I am not following the right procedure because I was supposed to ask the P.S of Lands first, Mrs Shapwa where are you? Then Bertus Kruger, then finally Erika the author on the recently published book on Land Reform called "This is Our Land". Panel, it is the second time we are showing this film, we had the Premier last September but there has never been really a public viewing of it, I would also like to thank all the panelists for being here and discussing the film now, let me say one extra thing also to start with. The film as we will see was funded by many sources but since September 2008 toured the land as funded by the German foreign ministry and various farmers associations, Willem and his team, Dudley Leval and Shadreck Tjiramba held public views and discussions.

For later discussions, we have prepared a couple of public questions based on the findings. Now I think we should hand over the discussion to the audience.

Before handing the discussion over to the audience, I thought maybe we could have a quick feedback on the film, from the panel as I consider you experts on Land Reform. I start by asking what's your opinion on the film? Is it a true reflection of what is going on in Namibia at the moment? Mrs Shapwa maybe you can start on that?

(Mrs Lidwina Shapwa)

I think the film is a reflection on what is currently happening, it gives the viewer a feel of the current problems being faced plus a view on the importance of land. Thus various role players in that field and what goes on in the minds of those that live on the farms with regards to land, I think it is a good film. I am glad I had an opportunity to view it.

(Audience)

Willem thank you, sorry for my voice I would like to say I am proud to be part of the Nina's Farmers Association and I am proud to assist them, ladies and gentleman for me it is very clear land reform should be planned very carefully there are a lot of needs and challenges that should be carefully addressed. As mentioned in the film it is not only transferring land to the landless but to also ensure that it is sustainable what I mean when I say sustainable land reform is the creation of wealth for Namibians, if land reform is not economically sustainable every Namibian will suffer, so we have to make sure it is a successful story.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Maybe I can also ask Bertus and Erika since they travelled all over quite extensively and have dealt and interviewed resettlement farmers, is this a true reflection of what is out there?

(Ms Erika Von Wietersheim)

A lot of what I saw in the film is similar to what I experienced during my different visits to farms all over the country, what was obvious especially in the beginning of the film is the reasons that black Namibians want land because of independence are very emotional and not so much based on the will to be highly productive, to be agriculturally productive farmers. The main issue was to get a reward after the fight for independence also the wish to have land after somany years almost for a century people were dispossessed and taken away from them, it is also a cultural thing like Clara said in the beginning we were brought up with the idea that land means life, it is very traditional view of land that is not held any longer .If one was to visit any commercial farm in Namibia it would be clear that land is not life and it does not automatically mean wealth and this also came out in the film , so in so many ways it is also similar to what I found and we can talk about the other aspects later .

(Mr Bertus Kruger)

Yes from my side I think what we have just seen is a very realistic view of the complexities on the ground there are different types of farmers, farmers that have been there for many, many years, farmers that have been resettled together on government land and those farmers together face similar problems such as the social issues, I also think that there are specific needs such as needs for knowledge, needs for resources to increase productivity, so yes that part of the film is very representative if we go all over this is what is happening and to a certain extent you will get a similar response .

This film also shows the farmers association and the Nina's Association with a few dedicated and positive people trying to make a difference and I think this a very commendable effort, the project that I implement, The Small Farmers Support Programme is working very closely with the Nina's Farmers Association as a matter of fact with a lot of other farmers associations in the country trying to do the same and what is not representative is that we have people that are doing it but we need a lot more effort and a lot more people that are doing it , we need a lot more input from the government and private sector, from the unions, from established farmers, resettled farmers. We must do things together and move forward or we are not going to make it at the end of the day.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Let's ask one or two questions then we can open up the discussion. Mrs Shapwa, the film raised the question that land reform is a social act mainly addressing today's events is land reform a social event or a political or it is about economics?

(Mrs Lidwina Shapwa)

Thank you very much when I got the invitation to attend this event and topic, whether land reform is politics or economics, I think we have seen from the movie itself and those that follow the topic of land that it is a very complex issue and it can really not be restricted to economics or politics it actually takes both, why I say so it is because if the people if we restrict ourselves to Namibia, the people of this country lost their land and for years they suffered for example the farm worker was trying to give a message that as farm workers working for someone they also need to make a living , they are living now but they want a better living now how do they do it ? Because they also expect to have a piece of land so therefore land is not purely economics but it's about history where people are coming from. They need a piece of land to make a living and that alone is a political aspect. Land reform address both, you give people a piece of land not that they stay idle on it but so that they utilise it for food production. They need to use that piece of land to earn a living, we need to ensure that the ultimate resource we have which is land is afforded to all those that need it. Once they have access to land we should make sure that these people are assisted in whichever way possible so that they farm productively. They are human beings like us and so they also want a better way of living. I believe in Southern Africa, we can not separate land from politics. Maybe in a few years to come we can then separate the two when we will no longer look at history but look at the two that is land reform and management in a different way.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Mr Van der Merwe, we have gone through 19 years of independence and more or 19 years of land reform how do you see the NAU's role in the next five to ten years with concerns to land reform?

(Mr Rhyno Van der Merwe)

I think that is a very important question and it is related to the way forward and I think I am representing most of the commercial farmers with land. I think the first thing is to keep dialogue going, if there is dialogue between the different parties because it is very crucial, the second thing is NAU recommended a non – negotiated Land Reform Forum comprising of

farmers with land, government, private sector and landless people. So it is very important to get this forum going, we discussed it with the Minister a few weeks ago and he is very supportive.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Two more questions, what additional support is needed to make what is happening now a sustainable success?

(Mr Rhyno Van der Merwe)

I have been involved with the Emerging farmers for a few years, this support programme started two years ago under NFU and NAU they got financial support from the European Union which is coming to an end but does not mean an end to the support to be given to farmers and as long as we will have resettlement for the next 40 to 50 years, there will always be a need for support after resettlement to become productive farmers, I can see from the government, Ministry of Lands, Ministry of Agriculture and the efforts of the Farmers union those efforts have to be heavily up scaled in future. It is very important to give people access to land but once there is access there is a huge demand for knowledge, skills and to influence attitudes, to make people competent and for them to become productive farmers. We must think holistically. I cannot see land reform succeed without support from the private sector and government if this does not happen we will merely redistribute land with no productivity attached to it.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Erika, final question, both you and Thorsten have been involved in some media outreach project, and you have interviewed people to the extent that you know what is happening at grass roots level. Do you think the media should do more to expose land reform? Do you think land reform is somewhat a sacred process, a cow that should not be touched? How can it be made an open debate so that people know what is going on?

(Mrs Erika Von Wietersheim)

I don't think it is important that it is covered more in the media but it is covered in a lot of publications but people just do not read the academics in this field of course. There is need for the different farmers to sit down and talk like we saw with the Nina's farmers Association in the film, the film was important but what was more important is that Thorsten travelled all over Namibia and got the views of the people on the topic, which initiated discussion that was the most important thing: to talk with each other, there are so many misconceptions between black and white farmers.

The misconceptions of white and black farmers about their land, do they really avoid selling their land because they are greedy or because they think it is their right to keep it or do black people really have the desire to own land for farming. There's so little communication about black and white farmers and these feelings. For example how it came out in the film about the importance of being a full time farmer, Clara said there is no problem with being a part-time farmer but I think there are a lot of wrong things with being a part time farmer which is the reason why new and old farmers are not successful, land is not optimally used because the farmer does not stay on the farm. And that comes out when people talk to each other about

their problems maybe there is nothing wrong with part time farming but there is a problem with a part time farmer that does not take full control of the farm or the land that he/she owns and is responsible for, there need to be a means of communication.

(Mr Thorsten Schütte)

Let me add on, when we were doing research for this film we made sure that there was research on where there was actual communication between farmers and the truth there were not many farmers that are co-operating together, if you are wondering why we selected Nina it is because it was one of the few examples that we had, different areas have different problems and Nina just being a typical example was useful in loosening peoples tongues the emerging farmers, farm workers and commercial farmers where all given a voice by this film, they came together and opened their hearts which is really very interesting, so I am happy with what the film has achieved and we are going to hand it over to the different ministries for it to be accessible to the whole public and it can be screened over and over again for people to engage in discussion on the issue.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Let us open up the floor to the audience

(Rudolph-Audience)

Thank you very much for affording us the opportunity to raise our questions and views, I am Rudolf Kamburona and I have two questions to ask before my comment, firstly to the permanent secretary of The Ministry of Lands and resettlement and Rhyno if you can assist there, I only want to find out roughly how many commercial farms do we have in Namibia? After I get that answer then my comment will follow.

(Mr Rhyno Van der Merwe)

We have 6000 and 6500 commercial farms with more or less 3000 white commercial farmers in total we have 32 million hectares of land in total.

(Mrs Lidwina Shapwa)

My ministry has 12 500 farms on record and these are farms that are paying tax.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

The Ministry of Agriculture did a survey and discovered that there are about 6000 farms with an average size of 3000 hectares. This units can be used commercially then we have other plots of land which belong for example to churches, government, parks and the defence force also has a number of farms.

(Mrs Lidwina Shapwa)

The problem is the question is directed to commercial farms and our statistics show any piece of land registered as a commercial farm and it is not easy for us to distinguish between them. We can separate on the economic bases but even the small plots also have their economic value /

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

If you add all of those up there are about 12 000 in total including small plots such as those along the Omaruru river fall under this figure of 12 000 plus , do people pay tax on that does someone with a 20 hectare farm pay tax , that's the question.

(John -Audience)

We are now talking of about 12 000 farms liable for resettlement, now has the government done any research on how many people are really interested to be farmers? People that are passionate to rear cattle, has the Ministry of Lands carried out any such type of research? So that we know the need, demand and supply.

(Mr Willem Odendaal) – In other words do we have criteria for who wants to become a commercial farmer?

(John- Audience)

Or we just talk about people who want to become farmers just as a saying but with no real figure to support it. The cake is so small it is about 12 000 and the people that want to farm are about 2 million; I have to find out about that survey before I give my contribution?

(Mrs Lidwina Shapwa)

Yes the ministry is about to find out the demand versus supply. Currently we can gauge the demand with the number of applications that we have received. The problem will arise in determining who is a farmer and who isn't one, everyone wants land but who will be successful is difficult to determine, the ministry is already tabling a criteria that will enable an applicant to determine his true interest in farming .We have to look at the fact that it is a economic or social act, we do have social cases such as displaced people even after 19 years of independence what do you do with such people that have nowhere to go? The policy of land reform is to give these people a piece of land and assist them to become productive after all they are the real farmers that possess the knowledge to farm so if they are given an opportunity and assisted they will be able to farm. Government wants to make sure that once they give out land they afford these farmers all types of resources so that they become productive. I was happy to see the Nina example where other stakeholders are coming in because government cannot do it alone. If there is no co-operation like that we saw in the film these farmers will not rise off the ground, government cannot always be around to assist them so there is need for that co – operation. Again the cake is small so not everyone in Namibia will get land. The majority should at least get land we have regions such as Omaheke where we are looking at areas to develop into commercial farms but we also have to bear in mind that this country is partly a desert so the land is not enough.

(Rudolph-Audience)

I foresee one problem that our government made a wrong move by just dumping people on farms without carrying out an audit on that would be the best possible farmers lets all admit this fact. Secondly when we talk of commercial farms we should look at virgin underutilized land as well. Land that can also be turned into commercial units, its vast land close to five million in all regions .We must look into this to address the land situation.

(Gerson-Audience)

We need a second land conference to talk about these things and I am happy the white community is here but I always like to talk to them as Namibians we have to stick together. Our land and cattle were taken and the German government is sitting with our resources we have to fight as both black and white Namibians for reparation .The reparation must solve this problem, we need land to even build schools as you saw in the film the kids have nowhere to school, we could build a school in the Nina area or Witvlei, then we can lower crime because the children will now be productive.

(Audience)

I am a full time black Affirmative Action farmer and I drove 350km just to be here so I deserve this mic. I would like to ask, the white farmers we have now were settled with assistance and I am not sure whether this is documented? These people were given a lot of assistance after settlement on the land. A lot of capital was invested but we are giving our people about 2000 hectares and tell them to go farm but with what? The biggest problem observed is that those resettled on Affirmative Action Farms and Resettlement farms do not have a voice and so they are at the mercy of whoever is in charge of resettlement so these farmers need a strong voice.

In addition, I have enjoyed the film and it creates the impression that although land matters, it continues to reinforce that it is only land in certain areas that matters. But I think if we have to deal with the land reform question we have to broaden it because I am glad that some of the speakers mentioned that in the communal parts of this area we have to do something because there is virgin land, we have two land systems in this country and it seems only one part of the system matters. I am saying we have to look at the communal part of the land in terms of the size of hectares that we have heard here; it is almost an equal undervalued piece of land. Communal land has proven that little investment, tenure and security have been made in it. Communal land has proven to be feeding so many mouths and improving the livelihood of people there I have seen that. We need to look at how we can increase the value of that land and support the farmers in that part of the camping group. It creates the assumption that land only matters in certain parts, urban land question is a great problem here, the people in Windhoek the poorest of the poor all need access to land to put up shelter but we make it seem as if the farm land is the most important type of land, we need to broaden the land issue and also look at the problems that the urban dwellers face. The other land question in Namibia is about entitle versus productivity that is our biggest challenge here and the issue of productivity has to do right from the state house to the farm worker .We need to place an emphasis on productivity whether it is farm land, urban land etc.

(Mrs Erika Von Wietersheim)

I have been in Namibia for a number of years and I have taken a look at other SADC countries and here in Namibia you are in big trouble, South Africa for thirty years had to import basic goods which it only stopped recently. Here you are going to face a similar problem, yes discussion is needed but also progress at the same time. In Namibia we depend on imports for South Africa, which they also have to import as well. They could pay for these exports with gold and uranium but they cannot do it anymore and in Namibia we are facing a

similar situation and that should be kept in mind while discussing a 1000-hectare farm into production. Martin Luther King once said I have a dream and I also have a dream to see the farmers help each other to reach greater heights.

(Mr Thorsten Schütte)

I have been in his country for 11 years and I think land reform is more than a political and economical issue. We have to be aware of what it is that we want to achieve, do we want to take care of our people or do we want to make it in the market? The communal lands are feeding more or less 1.2 million people and the commercial farms feed 235 000 people, there are 4000 farmers of which 1000 are non – white with farm workers a families .Now with the land reform we are taking away farm workers and the families from the land and we put resettled people there. At the same time we are importing 160 million Namibian dollars worth of fruit and vegetables from South Africa. So the question is do we want to go in the direction of feeding people, then we go for the communal land. Communal land feeds more people per hectare. Do we want to make it in the market, then we can ensure that commercial farmers produce for a profit for them that is what the land is. Which means we should regulate the price of the produce, if it is cheaper to buy produce driven in from for a 1000 km from South Africa to Tsumeb, if it is cheaper to buy these ones than those produced in Otavi then there is something wrong with our system of how we allocate values to the different products.

(Omo-Audience)

I think it is a good movie and I congratulate the director on a job well done but there is one slight problem with it, it gives off that old impression that the black man is still the white man's burden and the white man is still carrying the black man, that is the impression that I get, we have these so called white farmers that are trying to mentor the black farmers that's the impression that I got. There is instance where you see a white person helping out a black person and I hate it for that after having watched it two times. We should not only look at the number of people commercial farms can feed but also at the multiply effect for instance the number of jobs created etc so it is larger than what we have seen.

(Riruako-Audience)

I am landless and still landless my name is Brian Riruako, the NAU president recently said the government must pay the market price, the government pumps in 100 million every year to buy farms. Then if I start grabbing land you will say I am going down the Zimbabwe route, my question to you is, if the 1991 land conference was to come back would you be serious as to these German guys come and shoot an Oryx on my farm. Will that be fair? I thank you?

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Sorry, Mr Van der Merwe do you want to respond to this question?

(Mr Rhyno Van der Merwe)

The question is about the market related prices isn't it? Currently there is no open market system in buying the commercial farms you know the system, the government can only buy

farms that have been willingly put on the market by the farmers. Once the government and the seller agree on a price for that particular piece of land the seller cannot withdraw the farm later on. In other words the farmer that is selling his farm has no negotiation power and in this type of mechanism there is no open market system to determine the actual value of the farm. Let us be honest if we compare the prices of residential property in town and food prices, prices of clothes and motor cars due to the inflation rate prices increase for year to year to year. The point is there is an open market system to determine the real prices of commercial farms, for me my farm is the single biggest thing in my estate so it is very important for me to get a market related price for it. I think it is only fair if one can get a market related price for their house in town it is only fair that the same is done for my farm. This is one of the hiccups, the farmer has no negotiation power beforehand, we have no idea what the government will offer for our farms.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Ms Shapwa wants to react to this!

(Ms Lidwina Shapwa)

Yes I need to react because there are a lot of misconceptions about this, the issue of prices I don't think it is acceptable to say that there is no open market system. One offers their farm to the state and as government we just don't sit down and cough up a price, the farm is evaluated by professionals who then tell us the true value of the land, they don't only look at Namibia they also look at other countries in the region. They look at the area where the land is situated, the productivity of the land amongst everything else. Then again to say the farmer has no bargaining power the procedures are clearly stated by the law, if a farmer is not satisfied with the price that they have been offered there is a tribunal set of that particular purpose, so the farmer can actually go to that tribunal. When a person is not satisfied with the price they can go and file a complaint with this tribunal, they assist with the whole transaction and so forth. So unless we are also saying that the tribunal is also not doing its job. Thank you!

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Mr Murangi has been waiting for a long time.

(Mr Murangi)

As it was pointed out my name is Joe Murangi, I actually don't have any direct questions but rather a few comments that I would like to make. The film was good but I noticed something that captured the essence of the comment that I am about to make and that was the comment made by the late Ombudsman, on the fact that his parents were buried on that piece of land, after listening to that I recall during the land conference that was held a few years back and I think it is still valid today, ancestral land claims are not being entertained which I think is a potential land mine, why am I saying this? One of the remarks that was made in history was when The Pope disowned Galilee and said it the earth was not the centre of the universe this gave the general term to democracy. The mere claim that ancestral land claims are not to be entertained was because the majority felt that way. I totally do not disclaim those that fought for the land, they fought for not any particular area but for the whole territory now called Namibia. I don't deny that but the fact of the matter is those people that have a claim on

ancestral land are the minority and the majority has no claim to ancestral land so this has been accepted maybe as soon as the minority become the majority then the problem will be solved. As long as we do nothing about this problem it is a potential land mine.

(Mr Willem Odendaal)

Thanks Joe.

(Chriszelda- Audience)

This is just to supplement his statement, I want to know from the permanent secretary, what measures have been taken by the government to assist the people that have been on the land since time immemorial and are actually an asset to the economic viability of that land, an example is the man we just saw in the film?

(Ms Lidwina Shapwa)

The question of farm workers is a very delicate issue in most cases you don't find one farm worker on a farm but you find many of them, it's very difficult to deal with them. Before the government takes over the farm we sit down with the farm owner in order to find out if he has made prior arrangements for his workers because these are workers like any other employees. For example if you are working for any other company and it closes down the company owner has to make arrangements for the workers before he departs. In most cases the farm workers take care of these people by paying them out with the expectation that they will have to go settle elsewhere with those packages that they are getting, of course it is difficult in practice and again we make sure that a farm is not totally given to strangers but we also make sure that some farm workers get land.

10. Individual Interviews

10.1 Introduction to the interviews

Two years after the Land Matters film was screened, the Nina area was revisited and interviews were conducted with the protagonists in August 2009. The purpose for the conducting of such interviews was to mainly inquire whether the strong support structure which existed between the emerging and established farmers in the previous years still existed in the Nina Area. In addition it was also necessary to assess the progress made by the resettled in their farming and also whether there was any improvement in the social problems which heavily came to the fore two years ago.

Several attempts to conduct an interview with Clara Bohitile proved unfruitful as she was unavailable due to other commitments. Jan Basson who just like Clara Bohitile was also part of the protagonists passed away even before the film was screened thus an interview with him is also not reflected here.

10.2 Interview with Sabine & Lothar Rüchel

We want to draw a conclusion and shortly sum up what happened during the last two years since the movie was published. How did you react to the movie?

As we are the protagonists ourselves, we paid attention first of all to the way we presented ourselves in the movie, of course. Furthermore I would say, to us the movie was balanced; it wasn't political, it didn't hurt anybody in this way or another. Actually it was a neutral movie. However, the premise to be able to watch this movie – to *understand* it – was to know about the background. To show this movie in Germany without attaching background information to it seems useless to me – assuming it would reach more people than only an interested party.

What reaction did you get? Did you meet people who talked to you about the movie?

Basically, all reactions were positive. Of course, there is also a lot of socializing: 'Hey, I saw you on television last week.' or 'I saw you in the Farmers' Association.' You know each other more or less, at least the German-speaking farmers. But on the whole, the movie provoked positive reactions on all occasions.

Does the movie show objectively what the situation really is like or does it gloss things over, or is it maybe just a snapshot?

It shows what it was like when the movie came into being. I can't deny that. The mainspring wasn't the Farmers' Association, but some few, the protagonists. Maybe not Elisabeth, but Clara, us and Helmut, if *we* hadn't done anything – there was no support by the Farmers' Association itself. The whole project had come into life before the 'Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program' started, and suddenly money started to flow. At that moment, all the other organizations became part of the play. I don't know if it was part of it, too, but ... and all the others said: 'Now we are doing it because the money flows.'

Doing what?

Doing what we had done all the time in Nina. Teaching – education and vocational training on the job – we had done fieldwork with nothing in hands, to speak the truth. We carried all things available together and taught everything, starting at the very bottom. In the following, other organizations took our place and got money for that, and we still didn't take money for it. And when we asked for money, we had some terms to fulfil: a detailed record of phone costs, and so on. Therefore, later we decided to stop it. Running after the money, giving proof of every penny we spent simply wasn't worth the effort, often we paid more than we profited from it. At some point you refuse. The authorities that decide on the money keep putting spokes in your wheel. On the other hand, there were Farmers' Days where \$20 000 were given away to engage professors from South Africa. But we see what is happening on the scene. We have our own good people here in the Farmers' Associations, who can do the job just as well - but we are told that we need professors from South Africa! And the people who were engaged in the business are frustrated now.

I've got two questions: When fundings are available, but are – in your opinion – invested in the wrong way, how could they be better used (because they are still available)? And the second question: The action was taken by you and not by the Farmers' Association; why couldn't the Association as a whole come to a decision?

I see the cause for that in the still persisting problems between black and white. The Farmers' Association consists – or consisted at that time – of 80 percent of Afrikaans-speaking people. They grew up during Apartheid. For them it is – or was – hard to imagine to give African people a chance of control. 'Discussing matters with them? Out of the question!' was the

motto. At that time, when the whole support program wasn't definite yet, one of the former chairmen said: 'We have to get used to the thought that one day black farmers will appear and want membership in the Farmers' Association. How will we react? They will never join the club, that's for sure.' And suddenly Clara appears and wants to join. Now we have a problem. At that moment, when Clara was part of the circle, our language was different. We didn't talk about 'black farmers' in the way we did before, but we used the word 'new farmers' instead. The problem watered down when we recognized Clara was cooperative, and the others were cooperative, too. But it was a huge obstacle to overcome our inhibitions. It was the beginning of living together as black and white farmers here in NINA, which has almost nothing to do with land reform. White farmers couldn't buy land anymore, so black farmers did. We tried to create a good relationship with the new farmers – the *black* new farmers.

But how did the others get along with them? You are two of how many?

All of those were now members of the Farmers' Association, but this fact wasn't always interpreted in the way that you had to deal with them. Sabine and I were part of the committee and we tried to involve somebody else – Helmut, who had already taught at the university in Neudam and we tried to give the whole thing a new impetus, because no matter where you looked, something was always going the wrong way. They didn't have the knowledge about farming, they wanted to practise the farming business, if possible without leaving Windhoek, and so on. Then VERLANG became part of it which thwarted the whole thing. We tried to involve ministries, which turned out to be a very difficult venture. We succeeded with Clara's help, but no action followed.

Were you reprimanded for taking action?

No, not by the Farmers' Association. Later they felt flattered when we got the reputation as the most dynamic farming organisation. Everybody liked to say: 'I belong to NINA, because we are the most dynamic farming organisation.' But they hadn't done anything for this reputation. They hadn't been hostile towards us, but we were told, 'Don't think that in this way you will manage to save your land. If they want to dispossess you of your land, you will have to give them the shirt off your back. That's a point I will never accept. If they want to dispossess us, then they will do so, it doesn't matter to me. But it has nothing to do with this project, with the neighbourhood, with the relationship with our neighbours. Of course, we are in a good position; we have authorities on our side: ministries, governmental officials who have a different point of view. I'm ready to talk to them – straight and honest. I'm not saying: 'Yes, Clara, you are right.' or 'No, Clara, you are wrong.' I'm saying: 'Clara, why does it have to be this way? There are other options.' And Libertine, our Vice Prime Minister, is doing it, too. I'm talking to them about everything I have in mind, but the Farmers' Association itself does not. Not that they are over-obedient, but they don't want to interfere. But I'm right in the centre of this group. The people in the Farmers' Association are further away from the centre, but I'm surrounded by them. Sabine and I must have a good relationship with them – not that we are forced, we really appreciate it.

To come back to my earlier question: With so many initiatives and funds sprouting, how could they be better used to cope effectively with the problems on the spot?

The initiatives launched in Windhoek are all positive, because the people *are* in Windhoek. During the week they are not on the farm, they are available in Windhoek. At the weekend,

when they are on the farm, no institution visits them, because they are just five or six people. The institution is situated in Windhoek and has a strict timetable when they are waiting for farmers to contact them, no matter how many. Our meetings just consist of five or six people, because there are no more. And just on the weekends. But I would also like to have some free time. The huge initiatives have no problems. There are events with about 180 people. Good for them, but they should have supported us who fought at the scene from the beginning. It didn't happen. Not that everything is about money, but when others get enough to engage professors from South Africa, why does nobody pay my \$20 telephone bill? Last year, as was requested by the new farmers, I initiated a water installation program. I organized everything three or four days before Christmas. We bought a lot of food and drink and everything, and we were waiting in NINA, but nobody came, although everybody had confirmed their coming. I had had a lot of costs, \$252, and when I asked the 'Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program' to balance my bills, I got the answer, 'As it didn't take place, we won't pay.' So first, there was a lack of interest by the people who asked for it, and second, there's a lot of money I won't get back. This was the point when I refused. It was discouraging.

Could you come back to what you said about the ups and downs of the initiatives? What's your position at the moment? How do you evaluate what you have attained?

The movie shows the peak of this development. It was a stroke of luck. Everything coincided: The activities were in full swing – they weren't faked, they were real – the dates were perfectly in time with the filming: the forum, the discussions with the ministries, and so on. It was at the height of the development. From then on, it fell slowly, but surely into decline. Now the former new farmers seem to know everything, they are not interested in learning new stuff or they are tired of passing on their knowledge and teach their farm workers. Because at the weekend farmers don't work on the farm. They look after some stuff, count the animals and then they are gone.

They don't know how Lecke is/are made because that day, they are not on the farm. They only give orders and instructions to their workers what to do.

How did you do it in the past, in the ideal case? You set a topic and spread the news, and people took part and at some point there was no urgent need anymore?

At the beginning, they only sent us the workers – the first two times, it went this way. But in the following time, I refused and I claimed that we were addressing the wrong target group, because we were talking about immunization and digestive systems of different animals. What does this race need and why – this is abstract mathematics, so to speak. And for unskilled workers, for illiterates, it's difficult to understand, because for them there is no difference between a donkey and a cow. But that's wrong, there are grave differences, which they will never understand. It's the farm owner who has to think about immunization and has to tell his workers what to do. Why do we have to teach the farm workers? We need the farm owners who need to pass on the information. The third time, the farm owners themselves came to us – but unfortunately, it watered down again.

If the movie could arouse thoughts or provoke initiatives in organizations where no cooperation has been established yet, would you warn about hidden traps or would you give advice on definitely moving forward and to ensure reliance of the people afterwards?

When Clara became 'New Farmer of the Year', she organized the Farmers' Day on the adjoining farm the following year. Since it was an official event, everybody was free to join. Also members of other farming organizations joined, and one German farmer told me that he

was totally surprised that what had been told about NINA was really happening. We knew our black farmers and we welcomed them warmly— not the members of the Farmers' Association themselves, but Sabine and I and others did so. The German farmer watched the scene and had to think about it, because in his Farmers' Association, black farmers were still denied membership. At that time, he didn't know in what way he would behave towards black farm owners. We opened his eyes for what is possible.

I don't know if the movie is shown in other places whether it might serve as an eye-opener. I think it depends on the fact who is your neighbour. We are lucky to have ministers and other outstanding persons here – I don't know what I would do if there were only Hereros here, for example, who only want to make a lot of money. I don't want to talk badly about Hereros – I'm sure there are also good ones – but you hear a lot of such bad things about them. Therefore, you have a bad mental image of them which the other one has to correct. He has to prove that he is a good guy.

The affirmative Action Farmers have less interest because they know a lot of things or they don't have the time to attend; does that also mean the community loses its integrity and there is less communication? In what way do they meet and interchange?

I don't think they have less interest. There are still a lot of opportunities in Windhoek, guaranteed by the other organizations, which are being used regularly. But I don't know if our members use them regularly, too. The community of farmers as a whole definitely suffers from that fact that they meet so seldom these days. In earlier times we had fixed dates for meetings where we talked about farming. Now that's over. But whenever Clara drives by, she stops over and we have a talk. And Bernhard from Dakota comes by, too, and I'm sure he would stop for a talk, too, if he didn't have to go to Windhoek and fly to Geneva or some other place. They simply have other priorities.

They do their farming, and they are quite successful, I suppose. But you don't have an insight into their business. They see that we have a new car, but we are not allowed to talk about their official cars. They see our new car without realising that we have to pay regular instalments.

Let's go back to the ministries. What actions did the ministries take in the community during the last two years?

The ministries take action only because we have something to do with VERLANG. That's the only place they are interested in, because it belongs to the government. The other farmers got the money to buy land from different sources. The government has nothing to do with it. We haven't taken any trouble lately to learn the latest news about it, because we thought it was getting on alright. Two ministries are involved, both agreed, now it should be in progress, but I suppose nothing happened. There was no news about it.

But you have abandoned your commitment regarding the 'Resettlement Farmers'?

Yes, it was inevitable for us to abandon it because we weren't affected by the whole business. Verlang tried to found a committee. Elisabeth was part of it, and we asked some people to join in order to give them more influence. But we as the white farmers are not affected, it's the Resettlement that has the problems, so they have to look after themselves.

But you decided to offer something for the Resettlement, too. Could you give an overview of what happened after your offer?

We *did* have people here in our meetings – anticipating the meal during the breaks. They didn't understand the topic of our conversation. To say the truth, the participants even weren't the 'resettled persons' – there was Elisabeth, Mr Swartbooi... In total, there were seven people who attended from the Resettlement group. They didn't appear regularly, because they have a job in ... They couldn't leave at the weekends, because there were family affairs to attend. They seldom appeared. So the meetings were abandoned. It wasn't attractive enough to hear something about immunization and the correct positioning of the ear markers with the cattle. And here's a good example of the frustration it meant to us: You tell them that the ear markers have to be on the animal's left ear. We wanted to demonstrate the whole process on some sheep. I asked a worker to show me his own left ear and he pointed at it. Then I asked him to show me the sheep's left ear and he pointed at its right ear, because he was standing in front of the sheep and didn't understand that he had to look at it from a different point of view. Should I help him to learn what is left and what is right? Or should I give it up? And then it's not only about left and right, but about different grains which have Latin names so that everyone knows what I am talking about. I'm sorry, but it's the wrong listener, I can't go on, I have to give it up.

But what does that mean? Everything that happened or didn't happen – how does it affect your work? 'We will go on and ... Better World', or has the situation changed for the better, has it deteriorated or is it still the same? I'm thinking of less engagement, of the necessary qualifications, and so on.

Our commitment is on a low level. We haven't withdrawn completely. As Brian has already stated: We are willing to help anyone if they come and ask for help.

The only thing is: He has to come up to us with his questions. I can't ask him what he wants to ask. In this case he won't have a question. Probably, he has to find a dead animal on his farm first. Then he will come and ask how he can prevent this. But then it's too late, the animal is dead. If he had come earlier and asked for advice, it would have been no problem. We would have looked after the sick animal. But they simply won't come.

But do you also see progress and success, regarding the 'Affirmative Action Farmers', for example?

No, because we don't have access to the farms. I go to see Clara, but we are at her house and we don't go out into the fields. There is never an opportunity to tell her that her pasture is inappropriate for such a huge number of cattle. We have already talked to them about it in the Farmers Association, but they are not able to put into practice what they were told, because they are not on the scene. They give instructions to their boy to resettle the herd, but the following three weeks they are not on the farm to see to it done. Therefore, the boy won't do it in the following three weeks, because he is not on the farm at the weekend, he doesn't feel like it. That's what Clara said: 'There is no problem with the weekend farmers.' But there *is* a problem, a huge problem. Because you are not there to do it yourself or to give orders and you leave all the work to your workers. Clara complains, too, but nevertheless she leaves everything to her workers. She just calls and asks what's going on with the cattle. When she learns that they are still in the same place, she gives again the instruction to resettle them. But

she's not on the farm and therefore nothing will happen. That week there are much more important family affairs to be attended by the workers.

The movie deals, among other things, with the problems of the peasant labourers, those without land. What astonished me was the reaction of the Ministry of Land and Resettlement. Their concise answer was: 'We don't have a solution to that problem, because it's none of our business. The peasant labourers are the farmers' problem.' Everyone who is homeless or unemployed is not in their space of interest. However, because of the resettlement it is the Ministry's cup of tea. I don't know if you have an answer or an idea about who these people should turn to.

I'm not sure whether you are talking about those people that are set free when a piece of land changes its owner – they simply have to find a new job, and if they don't find one – bad luck! Sometimes farm workers are really dissatisfied because they don't have a piece of land of their own. But the fact is that not everyone can have land of their own, although I can understand their dreams. It's about the same with Elisabeth; she, too, dreams of a piece of land of her own, but she wouldn't be able to manage it. This showed very clearly when we sold her the sheep – a fortnight later they were all dead. The N\$20 000 she had spent on the sheep virtually went down the drain. If she herself or rather her farm workers cannot look properly after the animals, the whole thing is bound to be a failure. Moreover, one of her workers, Manuel, complains about not being fed properly (which is not true, as far as I can tell); no wonder he wants his own piece of land. In order to do what? To make his own living there, or to go on working for Elisabeth, but have his own piece of land nonetheless? It simply doesn't work like this, just as it doesn't work in Germany, either. Some people can afford a garden, others can't; some people live in a large bungalow on ample ground, some live in a block of flats on the sixteenth floor. The fact that everyone in Africa wants to have his own piece of land is certainly due to African history and traditions, but how anyone uses the land is entirely up to them.

Have any of your workers ever approached you with a wish ...

We had some workers, for instance, who had done a good job at the farm; because it was a good year with a lot of lambs, we gave them two sheep each, and we told them that they could make use of our ram, and that the lambs their ewes might give birth to would be theirs. Then one day one of them came to me and said he wanted me to buy the two sheep back – I don't know what had happened, but he told me he was in debt. In the end we found ourselves looking after *his* sheep, we paid for the necessary vaccinations, and all the rest - it wasn't he who did the job, but *we* did. That's African mentality, it seems, and you can see it everywhere. Obviously a farm worker has no real interest in taking over the responsibility of a farmer. Instead of telling his employer about the problems he comes across on the farm he simply keeps everything to himself; he sees the dead animals, the jackals, and the vultures, but he will never say so much.

But what's the reason for this behaviour? Is it because the people have been kept subdued all their lives?

Not really. I suppose it's like this: if the 'Mister' doesn't see the vultures himself, why should they bother to tell him? And, to be honest, I wouldn't be able to converse with them, because they cannot understand what I'm saying, and I don't understand them, because I don't speak their language. So when I tell them to turn to the right, they will definitely turn to the left. Now whatever problems there might be, the farm workers seem to be the biggest problem at the moment.

They are in fact 'lost level', with no education at all. On the other hand – let me give you an example: as I said, no education, they don't really know a thing. One day my boy comes up to me, with a small black object in his hand, with eight little legs, and he tells me that his radio doesn't work anymore and when I go to Windhoek, would I get him the appropriate spare part. Now let's be very clear about that: the little object in his hand is an IC that has to be removed carefully from the board and, before that, has to be identified as the part that actually makes the radio work! When I go to Windhoek in the shop, I'm given the desired part, and two days later Cornelius comes to me, smiling proudly, with his radio blasting away happily. Now I'm asking myself: How does a person who never went to school, who has no notion of dealing with sheep, know how to deal with the electronic part in his radio so that in the end it will work again? No explanation!

If you tried to look into the future – would you venture on giving a picture of the situation in, say, twenty years?

Seeing the pace at which Africa is developing now, I would say that it will look exactly as it does today, perhaps even worse – because everything the black people and the government have taken over from the white people is simply going down the drain. This applies to buildings, vehicles, etc., as can easily be seen in Witvlei, where one of the worst state schools with hostel in Namibia was completely redecorated and refurnished by the white farmers, because they wanted to go their farm workers' children to a decent school. A committee was set up by the white farmers, and they saw to it that everything was fixed, from new cutlery and crockery to new bedsheets. Two years later this was the best hostel in Namibia. And when I was sitting with the Prime

Minister on my porch and I asked her why, again, the whites had to take the initiative to change things for the better, reminding her that it should be the government's task to do something for their people by maintaining the schools and supporting their children, she told me, in German, 'The school system is ruined ("kaputt").' This happened two years ago.

That's exactly what she said. At the same time I must say that education and science seem to be the two most prominent topics in Namibia, and the people are constantly reminded that they must learn, must study, must become doctors and university teachers. But in actual fact the most basic things are missing. And this is why I am very pessimistic about the future, not only in Namibia, but in the whole of Africa. There's no real will to build up new things properly; you will find an example of it in the new Palace or State House, which was made mainly from Chinese plastic materials. Huge sums of money are spent on useless things; it's a shame really. That reminds me of the police. The police here have three cars at last, but only one driver. What is a car good for if there's no driver? And this is what the police officer said, 'Thank God I have only one driver. So the other two cars will not be used and they will last much longer.'

Some time ago the putzgrabber came by every second month – now he comes every fourth month or so. Not enough money. As far as medicine for the animals is concerned – in the past four inspectors used to visit us once a year. Again, this was too expensive, so the service was suspended. Every farmer got a questionnaire instead, but it was so complicated that no one could possibly fill it in correctly. The latest news said that the four inspectors would resume their task, because new money had been provided. When I met one of the inspectors just the other day, he told me that the controls have been given up again due to lack of funds.

I've heard that the 'Emerging Farmers Support Program', of which the EU has been in charge till this day, has been committed to the GTZ. From now on, they will administer the money –

together with Bertus and his colleagues who will manage the initiatives. They are about to evaluate the whole situation: What has been achieved so far? Could one do better? – What would you advise them to do?

At the beginning, Bertus had definitely a great motivation; there was nothing he could rely on at the beginning, and he told us to go ahead, with the promise to support us. And then we took action and he didn't support us. This little fight between us has been going on for two years. Now we don't have the strength to go on any longer. I definitely see problems regarding Bertus' proceedings: He has to prove his spendings, and on what was the money spent? If he is so petty-minded and questions the whole program because of \$15 for the telephone bill, I totally refuse. We talked to ... and he suggested to provide a lump sum of \$500 which covers all costs of the organisation. I totally agree that this would be the better solution. But Bertus doesn't accept this suggestion, he still wants proofs. They disagree and I have to suffer from this fact. I said: Stop it. I don't know how to change the situation. If the sponsors gave us more scope for development without assuming cheating in everything, it would be easier. I realize the different circumstances of some other schools – earlier we talked about ARIS – money abounds, no problem. Every sponsor is glad to be able to claim: 'I have sponsored this school with a car.' You can read it in big letters: Sponsored by XY. But the following costs – tires, gasoline, repairs and so on – have to be paid by the school itself. But the school doesn't have the money. And it's the same again and again, no matter who is sponsoring. Everybody wants to show off, but nobody thinks about the additional costs. Who will pay them?

I can understand the sponsors' demand to be informed about how their money is spent. It's their right to know. But nevertheless, they have to give us some freedom to use it at our own discretion. Nobody should be so petty-minded.

10.3 Interview with Elizabeth Hoabeb

What did you think of the film Land matters?

I felt it was my private stuff, but I still laid it out. But it was a good film about farming and we learned a lot from it. I sat and I watched the film, and I thought wow, I can learn something from here. There are some things where I felt, it was unnecessary for me to say those things, there were a few disappointments but it was a good film which we can broaden and still learn more out of.

Have people actually seen the film and asked questions? Did people who know you react to it?

Yes. People have called me and they have said "oh I see you are on the film, I didn't realize that you are a serious farmer.

You were the only one in the film who was open about the fact that there were difficulties between you and the affirmative action farmers. Did people react to that or is it something that has now been accepted?

They never came back to me about it, I was never asked about it. Maybe, in a way they also realized that there were differences, so they didn't confront me about it. They just withdrew themselves a little bit. At the moment there is no more communication, we don't even have

any meetings. After the film we never even got together again to discuss how anyone felt about the film.

But why is it like that? What has become of the cooperation between the established and emerging farmers? Why has it changed?

The people tried to get us together every end of the month. They tried to help us but that has stopped. I don't know if it's because of the expressions that were made in the film or if it was just in the beginning stages that they were trying to help us because they don't even make any effort anymore to get us together. It's as if everything has reached a dead end and everyone is doing their own thing. When we try to communicate with the people we sense a bit of withdrawal so we just go on the way we did before. We were very excited because we thought there will be solid cooperation between the established and emerging farmers but all that came to a halt. Maybe it was just excitement from the beginning stages and later everyone felt that it wasn't worth it. There was also a mentor who was suppose come to us every month, he even requested us to establish a committee. But because we amongst ourselves have certain issues relating to land, water and those type of things we did not give our full cooperation and the mentor had difficulties in getting our input. We all felt like we have our own problems like, engine defects, water scarcity and animal mortality to deal with so we didn't actually work that well together.

But just to go back to the cooperation, where is the difficulty? I understood that the farmers association was offering training to affirmative action farmers and resettlement farmers. Did it just stop or did people not go there because they are weekend farmers or people are no longer interested? What has happened?

I think the commercial farmers just decided to stop that because they may be felt that it was difficult to work with us. A few of us were willing to attend every training session but the turnout was very weak. Maybe only four people would attend at a time. So they probably thought it was not worth it. Thus, things from the commercial farmers side just stopped, they never invited us to any training again. A mentor was send out to talk to us about farming together but all the other trainings just stopped because they may be felt it was a waste of time and money.

But what do you mean with us? Do you mean you the Verlang people? You and your family or all the Verlang farmers?

We are the resettled farmers. A few of us were willing to attend the training. Maybe the farmers association was also waiting for funds from the government to assist with conducting the training. Then they would have done it freely, but because they were not getting any assistance from the government they probably also didn't feel obliged to give us the training for free. So the training stopped from their side but I was still willing to attend. I even attended the training here in Windhoek but I no longer heard anything about it.

Does that mean that there is no training at the moment? Or what do you do about improving as a farmer?

I try to implement that which I have already learned from the previous training. For the past two years there has been no invitation from the farmers association. The emerging farmers have their own workshops which they conduct during weekdays so we are unable to attend

because of work commitments. Maybe if I had internet facilities they would have invited me. The Farmers association of Nina just stopped the training because they probably felt that we are not giving enough input from our side. That is the feeling that I got.

I have heard from Lothar and Sabine that, in a way it has come to a peak and it has also come to a stop because everybody is already happy or maybe they're going to get their training from Agra and or in Windhoek or so on...is that true or is that the wrong perception?

From my side I was willing to get the training on Saturday afternoons, because it was more convenient than the training that is being offered by the emerging farmers. This is because those trainings are during the week days and we have to work so we are unable to attend. I learned a lot from the trainings at Nina, most of what I know I learned from there. I also attended the training with Bertus then, but the invitations stopped and the people probably felt that we are not showing adequate interest. I also worked very closely with Sabine then. So I feel that if those trainings are still offered it will still help us a lot.

Do I hear that you are a little sad about what happened?

Yes.

What does the training mean to the community? Can you explain why you would like that to continue?

Because when the training is at Nina, then our farm workers can also attend the training. That way they also learn directly from the people who have the knowledge. Having the training at the farm is better because then you can immediately implement what you have learned together with the workers. Here in Windhoek you can only take notes and by the time you get to the farm you may already have forgotten some of what you were taught.

So I think it's more convenient to have the training at Nina together with the workers. And because we are taught by our neighboring farmers we can communicate directly with them and always reach them easily if we have any queries. We are more comfortable with that.

When I was in Outjo, it came to a point where everybody felt, well now everything is said and done people are independent and can go their own way, but what we see now is that people get stuck at a certain point. What can we do to overcome those obstacles?

That is really true because we came to a point where we were really excited. We learned a lot about what to do with our animals and so on. It is really a sad story because everything was at its peak and we were excited. I thought I would even work out a year plan and work on my grazing and so on. Then suddenly the people withdrew, and it felt like you are left at a point where you're not ready to stand on your own yet and you are now just falling apart. Maybe the ministry can give the commercial farmers some sort of funds or payment so that they can help us more freely and not feel like they are wasting their time. They only gave a little bit of training and after that they felt like they could do something better with their time. So they must feel like they are doing something for the nation. Maybe then they will be willing to give the training more freely. No one wants to offer something for free for a long period of time. So help must be given and the farmers must give more input. Some of us are limited to month end only because we have families and homes to attend to so we cannot always be available. Some other farmers are independent and can attend the trainings at any time. At

Nina training must continue and we must be helped and if they really see that we are not interested, then they can stop the training. Most of us feel that the training was very helpful.

Has your situation as a resettlement farmer improved with the knowledge and skills that you got?

I have gained a lot of knowledge since I got there that I didn't know beforehand. Some of it I gained personally and the other I learned through things like training sessions offered by the farmer's association. Some of the things like rotational grazing I cannot implement because I don't have enough land. I need more skills so I can progress. At the moment I feel like I'm stagnating a little bit, but from the time I started farming up till now, I feel like I have gained a lot of knowledge, I did learn something, but I still have to learn a lot more.

Yes, because I heard Lothar said that you bought 20 sheep from them and they all just died and they don't know what the situation is with you.

We bought 25 sheep from them...the problem was that the animals were in the field like the wild when they were owned by them, but with us they have to be kept in a kraal and because we are weekend farmers we don't keep an eye on the animals, so the people that are around here are the ones that stole my animals. I even called in the police. Sabine even explained to me how I must treat the animals. It is not the first time that we are dealing with sheep and goats, so we know how we are supposed to handle those types of animals. It is only with the cows and the bulls that we are farming for the first time. So the problem was that the animals were stolen and I am only left with six which are still there. I tell the workers to let the animals into the field around 7 in the morning, but when you get here you see that the animals are still in the kraal. You want to make progress. No one wants to lose animals just like that.

Now is it that all those animals were stolen or that they just died? What exactly happened?

They were all stolen. I called in the police and they made investigations. There are people here who have nothing to eat and who don't have jobs. A neighbour told me the other day that six of his sheep were stolen. They only found the skin next to a fire, so it is obviously hungry people who did that. The police are actually also very reluctant on the matter because they don't do much about it. Weekend farmers thus suffer a lot because we have to rely on other people to take care of our animals and it could be that they are the ones that are even slaughtering and eating the animals. So I suffered loss, not because I am too stupid to farm but because my animals were stolen and the people who are suppose to take care of them don't do it diligently.

Can you describe what has happened in the meantime? I mean Oom Basson has died, Immanuel does not work for you anymore...So has the situation at Verlang changed since two years ago?

Oom Basson was with us on one unit; unfortunately he died in May last year. He was really the one that was taking care of that place. He was the one who was making sure that not just anybody comes to his place. We at the time actually thought that he houses too many people, but when he died, it actually got worse because anyone stays there now. Then there is a water problem, and then there are unauthorized people who just decided to start farming there because it is Oom Basson's place. The government has not come in to address those issues in the last two years. They gave us the place without any reparation of the infrastructure even though they promised to fix the place for us. We are wondering whether the government

cannot include the unemployed children like those of Oom Basson into farming so that they can also farm with us because at the moment we are the ones that are carrying their burdens. They now even depend on us to have access to water and as a result our diesel which we budget for to last the whole month runs out in the middle of the month. The situation has deteriorated a lot.

Who is in charge of Verlang now? Is there a mentor who brings people together or is there someone else that has been put in charge? Some people say that you are in a steering committee. How did that come about?

We tried to establish that committee, but we just ended up fighting about Mr. Basson's land. No one was willing to listen to us. If for example we try to solve a problem by saying that we don't want anyone on the land except one of Oom Basson's children, then the whole conversation would revolve around how we have money, we want to take over and we have reported them to the government. There is talk about how the land must be paid for. We are supposed to lease the land from government and we don't pay anything yet, but the mentor feels that we should at least pay Oom Basson's family for the use of his land. And we feel that we own the land in undivided shares so why should we pay? It is government land that we were given to use. Those are the existing differences.

But are you allowed to graze on each other's land?

Look, us who have been settled on one unit, like camp A, are allowed to farm on the same unit, as if it were communal land, but because we have differences, everyone farms on their own land. This makes it impossible to carry out rotational grazing and because Oom Basson only has about fifty sheep they bring in other people to farm on the land. They even wanted to sublease the land and we said we are not going to allow that. The government must intervene. We even wrote various letters to the permanent secretary to just come out once and listen to our grievances but they are not coming. That is the problem that we have.

Is there good cooperation between you and the resettled farmers?

I can say that we try but the thought that we have to farm together on one farm makes us uneasy because we are different tribes, Herero, Oshiwambo, Damara and so on. One person may have too much pride while the other person feels that he or she may be the best farmer. It is minor issues like that which can become obstacles but we try to work together nevertheless. For example, the other time we rented a truck together to transport our animals to meatco. In that way we shared transport expenses. Recently we also had a cylinder problem and we put money together and we bought the cylinder. So in that sense we do have cooperation. We just have to solve the land issues.

What can be done at Verlang to improve the situation and to make you and everybody else happy?

First I want to start with the government. They must come in and address our problems. They have to come sort out the land issues. They write undivided shares, then the land has been allocated wrongly and we have to end up dividing the land ourselves. That must be sorted out. Then they must come and sort out the water situation, pipes must be fixed and boreholes must be drilled. The water must be fixed. The land and the water issue must be sorted out. Then we can continue struggling on our own like we did the last seven years.

10.4 Interview with Mr Bertus Kruger

What did you think of the film land matters?

I think this film was an honest effort to highlight the importance of good neighbor ship amongst resettled and established farmers. It also indicated that it is a spontaneous process between established and emerging farmers and although it is limited in the country, can serve as model for other areas and generations to follow.

What reactions if any did the people give towards the film?

The general reaction from viewers is positive and they believe that more should be done to create and stimulate similar actions in other parts of the country. A small group of people are however of the opinion that it does not represent the real situation on the ground and that the scenes in the film were specifically set up to look good.

What does support to emerging commercial farmers actually entail from a broader perspective?

Proper post-settlement support is about a holistic package that includes support in terms of training and education, access to credit, improved marketing, a conducive policy environment that support resettled farmers, strong agricultural institutions that can represent the needs of emerging farmers at all levels and the rehabilitation and maintenance of infra-structure on resettlement farms.

What kind of support does your programme focus on?

My programme focuses on providing training, information and mentoring to emerging farmers in order to help them implementing and testing improved farming practices for increased income.

What are the highlights?

Over the previous 3 years 2528 farmers attended farmers' and information days; 1073 attended short courses while 2379 farmers were reached through a mentorship programme. The project furthermore reached 172 farmers through pre-settlement orientation courses and helped the emerging farmers to organize them in the Emerging Commercial Farmers Forum that later on changed into an official Union. In the process organizational training was also provided to members of the national, regional and local associations and in total 155 farmers were trained. The project also introduced a System for Analyzing Farming Efficiency (SAFE) where volunteer farmers participate to provide regular information on production, reproduction and financial performance of their farming enterprises. There are currently 39 farmers participating in SAFE. The project also introduced joint rangeland management on a number of resettlement farms. This approach makes it possible for farmers to pool their livestock into only a few herds and to use the individual camps together to allow for more flexibility on rangeland management.

What are the short falls?

Although the project did reasonably well in delivering services (e.g. training, farmers days, etc.) very little information is available on the impact of these efforts. Farmers also have other needs like access to credit, maintenance of infra-structure and access to tools and equipment, but the project could not provide any support in addressing these needs. The involvement of government extension services is excellent in only a few places and bigger involvement is needed in all regions.

Do you agree with the system of part time or weekend farming or do you believe people should be full time farmers?

This is a very difficult topic to give one straight answer to. First it needs to be established if farmers are part time because they have well-paid jobs in town and that they only see the farming enterprise as a bonus or recreational activity. On the other side there are farmers that have to get an additional source of income because they don't have the resources to farm full time. Diversification is very important and in general I see a job in town as part of diversification. Absence from the farm does not really mean that farms are not properly managed. One aspect of part time farming that is negative is the difficulty to reach absentee farmers for training and farmers days.

What are the complaints that you mostly receive from the resettled people?

The most frequent complaints from resettled farmers are that their farm infra-structure is not well maintained, especially water infra-structure. Secondly they need access to affordable credit to buy inputs, additional breeding stock and other tools and equipment.

How well do affirmative action farmers progress in comparison to resettled?

I don't think there are any quantitative data available to make any comparison. Unless this is done it will be unfair to compare the two. The biggest challenge affirmative action farmers are facing is the ability to pay back the farms. Many of them had to sell breeding stock to repair dilapidated infra-structure and do not have enough animals now to service their Agribank loans. I also believe that they paid too much for the land, and unless they have additional sources of income, the farm alone will not be able to repay the loan. Resettlement farmers don't have this problem, but their constraints have already been mentioned under question 7.

Do you think people want land for security & shelter or because they are really passionate about farming?

I am not convinced that all people who are resettled want to farm or are passionate about farming. Having received land where they can build a house does provide a lot of security to

people, but whether that need could have been solved by providing them a house in town, is open for discussion. It will be a very interesting question if resettled people are asked whether they would prefer a piece of land for farming, or a piece of land in town for a house and a secure job. I am of the opinion that many people would prefer the second option.

What measures can be put in place to ensure that people who get land are aware of their responsibility to farm productively?

My project presented a number of pre-settlement orientation courses to people that are to be resettled. These courses helped people to orientate themselves towards commercial farming. The course furthermore made people aware of the potentials and limitations of the land they are about to receive, and what it will take to farm it productively. I think these courses should be a pre-requisite before providing people with land.

How has land reform impacted on sustainable social & economic land use?

Again, a good answer can only be provided once a scientific study is done in this regard. A number of resettled and AALS farmers are trying very hard and some are making a success, but my impression at this stage is that most of them are struggling to optimally and economically use the land. Many farms are understocked and, due to the breakdown of water infrastructure, can not be fully utilized.

Should people not be encouraged to stay on communal land, try to progress there and eventually buy their own farms or get loans, as this will force them to be productive because they do not get it for free?

Government puts also a lot of effort in promoting productive farming in communal areas. Being in communal areas does not mean that people can now just do as they wish. Principles and practices of land management are the same for communal and commercial areas, although it is much more difficult to implement under the latter circumstances. I think the settlement of multiple families on a single farm, without providing each family with enough land and infra-structure to be flexible to survive drought situations, is very risky. The tendency under climate change, especially in arid environments like Namibia, is to have access to bigger land that will allow you to do opportunistic management in a flexible manner. The current resettlement model does not make adequate provision for this. I do believe that individual ownership of land is a better model for sustainable land management and should be encouraged over resettlement on state land. At the same time, sustainable management of land resources under communal circumstances should continue to receive high priority.

Do you think it is practical to have more than one farmers union in the country? Elaborate

The ideal situation is that all farmers, communal, commercial, established or emerging, are represented by one single farmers union. Due to our history in this country, as well as the

specific needs of these different groups of farmers, I believe we are still far away from reaching that dream. Currently there are efforts to work towards such a single overarching structure, and the creation of the Joint Presidency Committee (JPC) is a landmark. All three unions are currently members of the JPC and this committee aims to put common issues on the national agenda with government and other stakeholders. Considerable success has been achieved in this regard. The formation of the third union for emerging farmers is unfortunate and seems like contributing towards a further segmentation of the farming fraternity. On the other hand, this newly established union is now an equal partner with the other two unions and can use the JPC as mechanism to create this single overarching structure. I believe they should be given a chance to participate in the process of unifying all farmers.

What is your personal view on the future of land reform?

I think land reform is taking place, albeit the pace of it is slow. I believe that more land should be obtained for resettlement purposes, but that those people that are resettled should receive tailor-made post-settlement support packages to make it successful. Land reform is not only about redistribution of land, but also empowering the people to farm productively. Currently the balance between the two components is skew and much more emphasis should be put on the latter.

What do you think is the government's responsibility towards land reform?

Government has a huge responsibility towards both components of land reform. First and foremost for the acquisition and allocation of land, but secondly also for the provision of post settlement support packages. The role of the government extension services and other stakeholders (e.g. Agribank, Private Sector) needs to be clearly defined and adequate resources should be made available to implement it. Where government does not have the staff or expertise to do it, these services could be outsourced to the private sector, where I believe adequate expertise does exist.

In your opinion what does it take to be a successful farmer?

A successful farmer must first of all have a passion and the correct aptitude for farming. Then he/she must have adequate resources (animals, credit for inputs, etc) to farm productively. He/she should have experience and skills to farm scientifically and should be willing to obtain further competence as needed. Learning is a live long process.

Anything else that you may want to add?

Land reform in Namibia is a reality and we, the current generation – whether we are farmers, government staff, politicians, etc., will be judged by future generations as to what extent we managed to make land reform work. It can work if we all work together and share our resources and expertise in this country. We can show the rest of the world how it should be done.

10.5 Interview with Immanuel Xoagub

What do you think about the film?

I am very happy with the way we started the film. I am happy with the way it was going but something is still not right yet because we still don't have a dwelling. All I am being told is to move away. I have also run out of money. I cannot work for myself anymore because I injured my finger and there is no one who will be willing to give me any work now. That is the problem that I am sitting with. My children have stopped going to school as well. So I still need a lot of help as I am sitting here.

But you made an application for land two years ago, what happened?

It is a little bit difficult. I am losing hope now because everything I try is not working out. Every office I go to just shows me away. I am just told to take my things and children and go stay on the main road. Now, where do I start?

When you work for a white person and you get injured like that, then the law says that, that person is not suppose to ask you to leave they have to cater for you. But I get injuries on government owned land and I am being told to go live on the main road. That is where I get confused. Does the government have double policies that I do not know about? Does it work differently with white people? That's what I want to know because I do not get any reception at the Gobabis offices of the ministry of lands.

People go and report me at the ministry that I am illegally occupying the land. Then a worker of the ministry came to me and told me that I should leave because I am here illegally.

Why did you stop working for Elizabeth?

A neighbouring resettled farmer wanted to replace the diesel machine used for the pumping of water. So I went to go and assist in taking off the old one and installing the new one. While we were doing that the guys who were holding the machine dropped it and the machine cut my fingers. When they (Elizabeth) heard about that they said it was out of my own stupidity that I went to go help and lost my fingers and because they already wanted me to go before I lost the fingers, they let me go without even a proper months notice. That is how it happened.

Were you given any pension or other form of assistance?

I went to social security a lot of times and I was told my money will be deposited into my bank account. Until now I have not even heard anything from the bank.

But have you been registered with Social Security?

She said she had not registered me before, but now she has. Then she gave me forms which I took to social security but there is still one document missing and I am unable to go down there because of lack of funds.

How are you making a living since you are not working anymore?

We are living off the money that I got when I was invited to Germany for the promotion of the film. I deposited the money into the bank and I have been going down to withdraw money every now and then but now my bank card has expired and they are saying that I must go to Windhoek to go and get another card. I don't have money to go there thus, I can't even buy food.

Moving on to a different subject. I want to know, about the people who are resettled here on Verlang, how do they relate to one another, do they help each other when there is need, is their level of communication well established?

There groups are divided into Group A and B. Tjihueroko, Elizabeth and Basson belong to the same group. The people from group B work well together. You can see that the teamwork is there. You can see that people are always ready to assist each other when there is a problem. But here only two people work together. Only Mr Tjihueroko and Elizabeth assist each other. The other people don't do anything.

You have many years of experience in farming, in your observation of the resettled farmers in the area, do you think they are making any good progress in terms of their farming or are they getting worse or staying the same?

I think they are getting better. From Tjihueroko's farm going into the other farms, I can say that there is a lot of development. There is no deterioration; it is only this part where we are that I see that there is no progress.

What kind of progress is on the other farms compared to this area?

The fencing has been improved, people assist each other. Everything is happening there. They don't even have water problems. Elizabeth them face water problems, so they also have to let their livestock drink water from dams belonging to other groups. That is how it's being done here.

In what condition are the animals? Are they increasing in number are they becoming less, is there any development?

Their farming is progressing very well. It is just that a lot of animals have been dying in this area lately. Even I lost one. The animals are getting lung disease, where the lungs are sticking together and that is what is causing their death but the farming is progressing. The biggest problem we have is lack of water.

What changes can be made to improve farming on Verlang?

As I said before, the water is what we have a problem with. Even we can buy more livestock when we get money but we face water problems. Another thing is that we don't have a place of our own, that is why we cannot increase the number of our animals. We can only do that if we know where we stand in terms of a place to live. The soil is very good. You see that when it rains but the water is scarce. Maybe if they put up wind pumps it will be better because the diesel that is needed to get the machine running is expensive. The resettled farmers complain about the cost of diesel as well. What happens is that everyone buys their own diesel and uses the machine to pump water for themselves only, so those of us who cannot afford diesel cannot get water. Wind pumps are better because as the wind blows, water gets pumped into the dam.

Two years ago there were a lot of complaints about alcohol abuse and theft in the area, what has happened since?

The theft has totally gotten worse now. It is happening all the time. People say that they know the offenders but there is no one that is reporting and no one that is doing any investigation. The animals disappear and are never found. If you do find the animals again you just find the head and skin and we know that it is not wild animals that are doing that because they would not skin the animal before eating the meat.

What is causing the theft to increase?

The problem is that we are too many people living here. Even people who don't have any family here are living here. Cars move around in the evening scouting for animals. Those are the cars that transport stolen animals. People go and make business deals with those operating the cars. That is how it is working now. Alcohol abuse is not so significant here since water became a problem. Nobody wants to stay in a place where there is no water. Besides, things are very expensive now so no one can afford to buy any alcohol. Even visitors just come for a day and go back. Only the owners of the farms sleep over.

In that light, what can the government still do to assist farmers on Verlang to improve their farming? Do people need to be given training to develop more skill and also to handle social problems or what can be done?

The government could at least organise monthly meetings between themselves and the farmers, then maybe the cooperation between the farmers will improve. This will also help us who are in a weaker position, to get a chance to give our stance in the presence of the ministry representatives and the resettled farmers. Those who have no land should also be given some place temporary to stay on until the government can allocate them land because the people who have been given land feel that only they belong on that land even if they do not have a lot of animals.

Can you not go to the farm workers union to go lay complaints about your living conditions or can you not organise yourselves here in a group and go to relevant offices to go lay complaints?

It is a little bit difficult. If the people with cars could have assisted us to go into the city and tell us where to lay those complaints then it would have been very possible. When there are meetings here, it is said that only the resettled farmers have a right to speak in those meetings. Therefore, only a few people attend those meetings because they say there is no need for the rest of us to attend.

Can you not go to the farm workers union for assistance?

We have not really discussed that. It can be done if we meet and discuss it, but if we don't meet then it will not be possible. We don't work together here.

What are your plans for the future?

My plans for the future will be clearer if I just get land to farm on. That way I can also be on the same level as others. I cannot do anything for myself if I don't have land. I am just moving back and forth.

What do you have planned in the case that you do not get any land?

If I had the money, then maybe I would have started a little shop where I sell food or if I could be put on pension then it would also have been better. I would use that money to perhaps buy more livestock and my sons would take care of them. Then we can auction some of the animals and bank the proceeds.

As can be deduced from the aforementioned, a number of obstacles as well as recommendations and ideas regarding cooperation between established and emerging farmers came to the fore during the interview process. Issues relating to support needed by emerging farmers and problems arising within the social setup of farmers were also pointed out and will thus be a point of critical analysis during the next and final chapter which evaluates the whole outcome and seeks to find possible suitable recommendations.

Chapter 5

Evaluation and Recommendations



1. Introduction

This chapter is the evaluation of the reactions of the viewers of the film. It also analyses the reasons behind some of the views which both the old and emerging farmers had. This evaluation is done in the light of the history of land dispossession and the current policies and political approach of the government. It further analyses whether the people are happy with what the government of Namibia is doing to assist especially the emerging farmers, and what can be done to otherwise improve the livelihoods of emerging farmers. The recommendations given are based on the evaluation itself or on the problems that were identified during the public screenings panel discussions and individual interviews.

2. Miscellaneous Critical Matters needing Attention

2.1 Critical Questions

It is notable that the Land matters film was screened across the country but some of the fundamental questions are whether there are clear messages to the either government in general or at least the relevant ministries? More so, whether the public debate provoked by the Land matters Film contribute to a better understanding of each other especially in the context of cooperation between emerging and old commercial farmers? The above questions will be tackled from a number of angles.

The first question addresses a multi-disciplinary topic which points to the diversity of views which were aired during the screenings, the National Chat Show and interviews with

protagonists. While conditions vary considerably from region to region in Namibia where the screenings were had or where the callers at the National Chat Show came from, a number of broad themes can be identified that provide a common context for the politics of land across Namibia. First is the shared history of colonialism and apartheid and with it, the dispossession and impoverishment of rural people, which shapes both patterns of landholding and discourses around the value of different types of land use in the country. Second is the growing impact of neoliberal globalisation, in terms of both direct influences on agriculture and rural economies generally and on the policies being promoted by national governments and international agencies.

The resettled farmers have communicated their concerns that they are being left alone, to take care of everything on the farms but the government is not doing its part, as will be discussed in more detail below. It seems the Namibian government is mixing approaches here – the socialistic or humanitarian orientation to land reform and the neo liberal approach. Between these two approaches, of particular importance become the deregulation of markets, the withdrawal of state support to agricultural producers and the reliance on the private sector as the principal agent of development, which is the neo-liberal developmental aspect which emerging farmers have. Equally to note is the ongoing impoverishment of the mass of the newly resettled farmers and the extreme precariousness of their livelihoods.

Furthermore the views of the commentators to the film show that high rates of unemployment at neighbouring farms and across the whole country in general, poor returns to small-scale or subsistence agriculture, lack of access to social services such as health and education, recurring drought and a rampant (and largely unaddressed) HIV/AIDS pandemic at the resettlement farms is serving to erode existing livelihood activities and perpetuate relative and absolute poverty in resettlement farms. The issue of HIV/AIDS seems to be one of the reasons why most of the contributors or commentators during the field screenings said that family planning should be introduced at resettlement farms. Most of the commentators never elaborated why they were making this point but reality depicts that this was the basis of these comments.

It also appears from the discussions after the screenings that most passionate debates took place in some parts of the country especially where the Damara and Herero speaking

communities are located while the white farmers in the southern areas were pretty cautious with what they said.

With the above one may ask further whether a public debate such as one stimulated by the screening of the land reform programme contributes to a better understanding of each other in the context of land reform in the country. In this light it can be highlighted in the context of the comments of people after the screenings that besides the slow pace of land reform and the problems on resettlement farms the land reform is also taken place on the backs of 1000s of farm labourers and landless who don't profit from the redistribution. The ministries have no clear answer on how to deal with this collateral damage and leave the problems to the farmers hence the new farmers are complaining that the government has not done enough to promote their productivity. Radical but depressed voices were heard about 'red lights' shining against the government, and this shows that immense social unrest, protest, might lead to continuous land grabbing and violence towards farmers and government.

2.2 The Legal and Policy Framework and its Dilemmas

The Namibian legislative and policy framework provides appreciable framework for land and environmental management. What befuddles one however is how governmental institutions have proved that the implementation of these policies and legislative tools is a mammoth if not even an impossible task. The lack of manpower or capacity, lack of resources and lack of cooperation or at least commitment among various stakeholders compounds the progress and success of the land redistribution process. This is further aggravated by the lack of resources and complicates the cooperation between new and emerging farmers.

The main legislation dealing with land issues in Namibia at the moment is the Communal Land Reform Act and the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act. A new law is being discussed, being the National Land Bill but the discussions are still at infant stage and have not even reached parliament. Nevertheless, both the above pieces of legislation are extremely loaded with norms and regulations, providing strict control to the land utilisation. They do not however address the relationship between new and old farmers this understandably being left to the farmers themselves.

In general, the laws address issues in Commercial farms and communal areas and are focused on the agricultural and administrative or political aspects, taking into considerations particularly the protection of the agricultural land. They also have a lot of provisions touching on a land and legal administrative norms about ownership and leasing of the land. These norms affect seriously the land market, making it difficult if not impossible a transparent transfer of property. This was echoed in a lot of areas where the screening of the film was done as indicated in Chapter 3 above.

When it comes to the resettlement programme and especially looking at how resettled farmers manage their land it can be said that the Communal Land Reform Act is very restrictive as it only deals with recognised traditional communities. The Communal land reform Act does not apply to most of the resettlement farms because the resettled farmers do not qualify to be called a traditional community. In terms of the Act, a traditional community means an indigenous homogeneous, endogamous social grouping of persons comprising of families deriving from exogamous clans which share a common ancestry, language, cultural heritage, customs and traditions, who recognises a common traditional authority and inhabit a common communal area, and may include the members of that traditional community residing outside the common communal area. Most resettlement areas are not communal area and the communities are heterogeneous.

2.3 Planning Resettlement Farms

The responses gotten from resettlement farms show that the planning of resettlement farms is not an easy task. Some of the resettled farmers feel let down by the government in that when they were resettled, the government never gave them implements to enhance productivity at the resettlement farms. It seems that twenty years after independence, the Government did not develop a shared methodology for the development of the resettled farms. Both the legislative and the human capacity aspects have not been given adequate attention in any of the strategies prepared so far.

Most of the existing plans and strategies are focused on the development of urban areas rather than paying attention to the development of resettlement farms. It is clear that there are concrete plans on how to resettle new farmers but there is no clear plan as to how the government wants to encourage the resettled farmers to be more productive than they are now. From most of the responses gotten after the screenings, it seems the government is

concerned about taking land and resettling farmers but what happens after resettlement seems to be left in the hands of those who are resettled.

Promoting development and more productivity in resettlement farms involves different aspects: data collection and processing (GIS and databases), creation of development plans and programs, implementation of projects and monitoring of the entire system. The issue of monitoring and evaluation is important especially when it comes to AA Farmers whom most old Commercial farms accuse of non-productive part-time farming, degrading the land and just occupying such farms. This begs a question whether land redistribution is a political or economic activity as indicated in one of the newspaper clippings.

2.4 The Design and Pace of the Process of Land Redistribution

It appeared from most of the areas where the screenings were done that people are not so happy about the design of the land reform programme and the pace at which the land has been acquired and redistributed. The approach of the government has landed it in some criticism that the land reform programme has been very slow and has not allowed poor peasants to acquire fertile or more productive land. Whereas the government blames the small scale farmers like the AA farmers and resettled farmers, the resettled farmers and AA farmers are blaming the government for its policies and laws.

It can be deduced from the comments gotten from the screenings that the government decided to follow some international policy strategies in its land reform programme which policies are not so compatible with the values and aspirations of the Namibian people. The initiative to follow the willing buyer willing seller, consists of accelerating, building upon, and 'featuring' World Bank designed and supported policies to title lands, facilitate land markets, and increasingly, promote 'land bank' credit for land purchases by the relatively poor or middle class AA farmers. This is so called 'market assisted' or 'negotiated' land reform.¹⁴⁷ This explains why the government of Namibia decided to follow the willing buyer willing seller strategy in redressing land ownership imbalances. Unfortunately, there is mounting evidence that these policies are unlikely to significantly improve access by the poor to land, or give them more secure tenure.¹⁴⁸ In fact there is good reason to believe they will actually worsen the situation in many places.

¹⁴⁷ FAO 2006. par 7.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*

Even if there is distribution of land according to principles or dictates of affirmative action, the expansion of agricultural production for export especially beef export, controlled by wealthier producers, who own the best lands, continually displaces the poor to ever more marginal areas for farming. They are forced to farm on poor soils, and to try to eke out a living on desert margins. This explains why the San in the Gobabis area are complaining that even if affirmative action says that they are the first preference when it comes to land allocation at resettlement farms the practice is different.¹⁴⁹

2.5 Compulsory Acquisition Necessary?

One form of state intervention in land access has been through legislation such as the compulsory acquisition of land for public interest. Under the Constitution and the Agricultural Commercial Land Reform Act, land may be acquired where the government considers it to be in the public interest. This, according to Campbell Black, is the State's right of eminent domain; the State has the right to reassert temporarily, or permanently, its allodial ownership rights over any part of its territory for the public good.¹⁵⁰ However the legal basis of this power, how it has been exercised, and whether compulsory acquisition has taken into consideration the interests of the owners of the land has been a matter of intense debate and the government of Namibia is reluctant to frequently exercise this power. Where it has done so it has flouted the procedures hence lost court cases where large commercial farmers reclaimed their rights to land.

However as highlighted above it appeared from the screenings of the film that people are not satisfied with the pace at which the government is acquiring land. Some came out clearly that the government should speed up the process by compulsorily acquiring land. The feelings of the people generally is that the Namibian land laws and policies have created difficult land access to the majority of poor black population, and there are grounds for concern that as land becomes scarcer, poorer and more vulnerable groups will see their claims weakened, leading to their increasing marginalisation and impoverishment.

¹⁴⁹ See Omaheke Sun Trust – Appendix 1.

¹⁵⁰ Campbell Black (1979)

2.6 Access to Land and Security of Tenure



The comments which were aired after the screenings of the documentary show that land is not being distributed equally among those who are in need of the land. The San for example complain that they are always sidelined even in areas where they are now permanently residing like in Omaheke region. The government instead allows Oshiwambo-speaking people to resettle in areas which are predominantly Herero, Damara and San for example, thus sidelining the people who were in the area before. This ethnic mixing also causes tensions among the ethnic groups because of the conflicts of cultural practices.

History has shown that in Namibia impacts of insecure access to land have particularly been very devastating for vulnerable groups such as the San. There are concerns that as these trends persist, these and other groups would find their land rights marginalised by their own government and this will deepen their poverty. This explains why some commentators in the areas where the film was screened said that the beneficiaries of state land allocations are mainly privileged people in society with resultant inequitable distribution of public land. This point connects well to the position of AA farmers who are viewed as politically connected and a rich few who manage to gather some resources to secure a loan from the Agricultural Bank of Namibia which the poor cannot access because of lack of security. Some of those who get the land say that the land is not big enough for productive agriculture not even enough for subsistence.

According to FAO, contemporary agrarian reform programs must guarantee to peasants, rural workers, indigenous peoples, and racially and socially excluded communities, access to and control over land, water, seeds, forests, and fisheries, as well as means of production (financing and training), distribution and marketing.¹⁵¹ It must also guarantee indigenous peoples rights to their territories, including the recuperation of their territories when these have been taken from them, and their autonomy and self determination in those territories.¹⁵²

According to Lastarria Cornhiel, secure tenure and/or access rights are critical to ensuring long term food security for families and communities. Without such security and/or rights it is also difficult for families and communities to invest in land improvement, means of production, and/or conservation measures.¹⁵³ Connected to this the government should make sure that when

new farmers receive land they must not be saddled with heavy debt burdens.¹⁵⁴ This can be accomplished by government expropriation of idle lands, with or without compensation for former owners.¹⁵⁵ In the light of this totally unacceptable and untenable situation, access to land and natural resources lies at the heart of the issues to be addressed with the utmost urgency. What is at stake with capacity building is the urgent need to find solutions. This will now be addressed below.

3. Productivity of the farmers

3.1 Capacity building and participatory development programmes

At the moment the creation of farmers associations and the cooperative relationships are at an ad hoc basis. The government should be involved in setting up well coordinated programmes in commercial farms especially where AA farmers have been allocated land or where there has been resettlement of new farmers. This should be done as a bottom-up approach with focus on planning at local level based on knowledge and consensus among the stakeholders. Its main goal should be to improve land resources management by local users, based on dialogue between all parties involved.

¹⁵¹ FAO 2006. par 22

¹⁵² *ibid*

¹⁵³ FAO 2006. par 77; Lastarria Cornhiel et al., 1998.

¹⁵⁴ FAO *supra*, see also Sobhan, 1993; Borras, 2003.

¹⁵⁵ Sobhan, 1993; Borras, 2003b



Involvement of different stakeholders in the process of planning, especially local farmers whether old or new is crucial for two main reasons: nobody knows a territory like the people that live and work there, and any change on the territory directly affects the people living there. Taking this into consideration, the government should adopt a programme based on a methodology that pays specific attention to the stakeholders' analysis. During the process stakeholders are organized into working groups. Economic-Ecologic Zoning can be used as a discussion tool during the process. Based on a consensus, actions to be taken for land use development should be identified. Building of local community and making a partnership between stakeholders are among the most important factors for the sustainability of the land reform programme especially the encouragement of cooperation which is shown in the Land Matters film. This holds water in so far as we understand that the participatory process is a useful tool for establishing better relationships and partnerships between new and old farmers.

The farmers who were at the screenings also commented that the government is doing very little to motivate resettled and AALS farmers. According to FAO, successful land reforms are distinguished from failed ones by a motivation and perception that the new small family farms which are created are to be the centrepiece of economic development, as was the case

in Japan, Taiwan, China, and Cuba.¹⁵⁶ When land reform is seen as 'welfare' or as a charitable policy for the indigent, failure has been the inevitable result.¹⁵⁷ To enhance capacity building the following points should be considered:

- Both the government and the civil society should be engaged in the facilitation of capacity building projects and in sensitising new farmers especially.
- Connected to the above systematic and well organised partnerships with both public and private sector actors should be created where actors engage each other at par.
- The government should have benchmarks or standards set down in order to do effective monitoring and evaluation of the performance of all farmers.
- National Fora for caucusing policy strategies and legislative implementations should be created and be made more functional with adequate funding and organisational capacity.

It also appeared from the discussions in areas where the film was screened that governmental institutions are not strong enough or do not have enough capacity to fully assist emerging farmers. This problem is not only experienced by Namibian emerging farmers but is also a stumbling block to countries like South Africa where Manenzhe reports:

The fundamental challenge for land reform is delivery of land at scale and ensuring improved livelihoods through creating and enabling environment for new land owners to succeed with land based economic activities. The delivery of effective services to meet this challenge is hampered by the current institutional arrangements governing the delivery of services by the state.

Therefore capacity building should start at the level of governmental institutions especially the capacity of the Ministry of Lands itself. If the ministry is not well capacitated to handle land reform issues how can it capacitate emerging farmers?

3.2 Collaboration among emerging and old farmers

Considering the discussions which were had in the regions as embodied in Annexure 1, it can be seen that the process of participation plays a crucial role in reconstruction and community strengthening in so far as farming is concerned. This process helps people to organize themselves within a community or a resettlement farm by increasing the awareness of the problems they deal with on a daily basis. By defining the common interest, the members of such communities begin to think out of their own and most of the strategies are directed

¹⁵⁶ FAO, 2006. par77.

¹⁵⁷ Sobhan, 1993; Sachs, 1987; Rosset, 2001

towards development of those specific areas and Nina is a specific example as shown in the Land Matters documentary.



The Film and the discussions which followed after the screenings showed that farm labourers and farm owners realised the importance of the role of community participation, the connection on the basis of interest, as well as the meaning of going forward together in a process whereby new farmers learn from old and seasoned farmers and at the same time the old farmers learn about the new problems encountered by new farmers especially AA Farmers.

The cooperation which was generally appreciated by most of the people in the areas where the film was screened creates partnerships, particularly between the new and old farmers and the stakeholders within a farm or resettlement farm. This must be taken as a positive indicator for the success of the Namibian land reform programme because cooperation rather than conflict is important for project funding, because investors and donors are more attracted by projects which result from the cooperation among different social actors.

The process of participation is also very important for post-conflict management, and it is particularly significant for the areas most stricken by conflict between old and new farmers, where racial tensions are still felt from the Apartheid period. In those areas where there are still vestiges of apartheid such as racial divisions, cooperation is particularly encouraged in the process of community reconstruction and for strengthening the relations among the local population, especially between new and old farmers.

A lot of commentators in the screenings of the film note that the land issue is highly politicised and anybody who speaks against the government policies become suspect. This seems to be one of the major reasons why some civil organisations are not directly involved in the process of land reform. It should be emphasised that the objectives of the land reform can be met if the government takes politics out of the process of redistributing land and in engaging the civil society, the government treats its partners with mutual respect and trust. This means transparency in collaborative activities where major decisions affecting other partners (or stakeholders) must be seen to be arrived at through dialogue and openness.¹⁵⁸ This is important to build trust among various stakeholders in order that commitment and unity of purpose prevails. This is also a necessary condition for stakeholder commitment and involvement in collective action. In the same vein, weaker groups should be supported to play roles that are equal and vital. The government should not leave the farmers to do the collaboration on an ad hoc basis as is happening now. Instead, it should assist in this process by initiating and facilitating processes of information exchange, networking, consultation, and above all coordination of all core competences. National and local fora mentioned above would provide both the space and audiences that matter in land and natural resource administration thus providing opportunities of exchange of ideas and reflect on progress in the light of expected outcomes.¹⁵⁹ It would bring together policy makers/implementers, traditional authorities, rural producers, women's associations, and development workers.¹⁶⁰ These groups will be in the position to appreciate each others' roles, and thus facilitate the building of a level playing field for allowing expression of views and concerns.¹⁶¹

In addition to and in support of the above, one should also take note of the pertinent issues that came out of the interviews conducted with the protagonists in the documentary two years after it was screened. In doing so it must be stressed that the reason why the Nina area was chosen as a focal area in promoting collaboration between emerging and established farmers was due to the fact that much of the desired or ideal cooperation between the two groups seemed to be reflected in this area.

At the time of the production of the documentary cooperation between emerging and established farmers was at the height of its development in the Nina area. As is evidenced in

¹⁵⁸ Alhassan, O. 2006. p13.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid*

¹⁶⁰ *ibid*

¹⁶¹ *ibid*

the interviews both groups involved in the process profess to the fact that study groups were developed for information sharing and capacity building and was taking place more or less to the satisfaction of all parties. At that point the said groups even managed to involve relevant stakeholders like officials of the ministry of lands and resettlement as well as the Namibian police in their meetings, as an effort to have joint cooperation between all the parties who are needed for sustainable and efficient collaboration towards successful land reform and farming.

This however, was a joint effort between only a selected few members of the Nina Farmers Association and a few of those who own farms under the affirmative action scheme and those who have a leasing right by virtue of resettlement on state land. The collapse of the cooperation soon after it reached its peak can be seen as a result of this minority involvement. From the side of the established farmers interviewed, the collapse is attributed to the low turnout by the emerging farmers to the training sessions. This for the emerging farmers involved in the training, was a waste of their time and effort. They also alluded to the fact that skills shared with the emerging farmers at the trainings were unfruitful in the implementation thereof as most of the emerging farmers were part time or weekend farmers who thus did not have the time to practice the skills on their farms. For them it was also difficult to pass on the skills to the farm labourers who at times were also brought to the trainings by their employers. This they blamed on the fact that communication between them and the farm labourers was made difficult by language barriers and the fact that the acquisition of skills is based on practical training on technical issues which in most cases is difficult for farm labourers to grasp. Further they also felt that it would be better for the part time farmers to attend the training initiatives in Windhoek where they spend most of their time. Another fact pointed out as a discouraging factor in hosting the trainings was that meetings held with relevant stakeholders like the Ministry of lands followed no action in terms of the resolutions or recommendations agreed upon at meetings. Attempts to provide established farmers with certain incentives such as money to aid in the training process was done through the emerging farmers support programme coordinated by Bertus Kruger. The established farmers however felt amongst others that the procedures required for obtaining such money and the method required for evidencing its use was rather unreasonable and therefore they did not want to be part of it.

According to a resettled farmer who was one of the frequent attendants of the training sessions, the training stopped soon after the screening of the film. She suspects that this was as a result of the low turnout by the emerging farmers. According to her she learned a lot from the training sessions and the training was stopped just at the point where she was really warming up to it.

As a weekend farmer she sees the need to involve the farm workers at the training as they are the only people who can implement the skills on their behalf. She also feels that it is more beneficial to attend the trainings at the farm because then she can go back to her farm and implement some of the methods immediately as opposed to when she attends trainings in Windhoek where she would only make notes and forget what she has learned by the time she goes back to the farm.

Regarding the progress made at her farm and those of her neighbours she is dissatisfied by the level of government input. The infrastructure which the government allegedly promised to repair or develop once people were resettled, clarity regarding the borders of each person's land piece allocated individually as well as the method of sharing the land amongst the resettled for grazing purposes still remains unattended. The latter creates social tension amongst the farmers thus hampering cooperation and team effort whereas the former hampers factors like progressive farming and productivity.

The issue of the plight of farm labourers in the resettlement process also comes to the fore. Often it is experienced that farm labourers are left without a job and a place to stay once government purchases a farm and resettles people. This is mostly due to the fact that the resettled, often bring their own workers along with them leaving no employment opportunity on that particular farm for the labourers of previous owners. The interviews also shed light on the fact that employers of farm workers must also be obligated to consider farm workers labour rights and ensure that they are registered with institutions like the social security to ensure that they are covered in the case of *inter alia* health risks or injuries which may occur provided the nature of their work.

When addressed on the issue of farm workers during the Panel discussion, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Lands & Resettlement had the following to say:

The question of farm workers is a very delicate issue... before the government takes over the farm we sit down with the farm owner in order to find out if he has made prior arrangements for his workers because these are workers like any other employees...

As Werner and Odendaal¹⁶² put it, the plight of the farm workers needs to be properly addressed at policy level. Allocation of land to farm workers should also be given priority where it's merited based on inter alia the vast experience that these people have acquired in farming over the years. An issue that raises concern in this regard is the fact that the new land bill does not make any provision for farm workers as is at least the case in the existing legislation. Section 20 (6) of the Agricultural Commercial Land Reform Act makes it duty bound for the Land Reform Advisory Commission to consider the interest of any persons employed and lawfully residing on the land and the families of such persons residing with them' during the expropriation process. This existing provision has been correctly interpreted by Harring and Odendaal (2008: 18-19) as having direct relevance to the fate of farm workers residing on farms to be expropriated. It would have been just, that the new land bill which aims to consolidate the Agricultural Commercial Land Reform Act¹⁶³ and Communal Land Reform Act¹⁶⁴ improves on this provision rather than doing away with it altogether.

Lastly it can be stated that some of the solutions to the aforementioned problems and complaints have been touched on in the interview conducted with the former Coordinator of the Emerging Commercial Farmers Support Program. He advocates for proper post-settlement support which pertains to a holistic package that includes support in terms of training and education, access to credit, improved marketing, a favourable policy environment that supports resettled farmers, strong agricultural institutions that can represent the needs of emerging farmers at all levels and the rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure on resettlement farms. When summing up the needs to enable anyone to be a successful farmer, in light of the interviews, the following may be extracted:

A successful farmer must first of all have the correct mind set and positive but realistic attitude towards farming. There is of course also a need for adequate resources to promote productive farming. This includes but is not limited to proper infrastructure, livestock and credit for inputs. Last but not least a farmer should be equipped with the necessary

¹⁶² Livelihoods after land reform, LAC 2010 at page 174

¹⁶³ of 1995

¹⁶⁴ No 5 of 2002

experience and skills to farm scientifically and should be willing to obtain further competence as needed. It is the latter that this book ranging back from the screening of the documentary has been advocating for, by drawing attention to the fact that there is a need for collaboration between established and emerging farmers to exchange ideas and skills in aim of much needed capacity building, to built proper communication channels between the various farmers regardless of what group they fall under and to aid in the overcoming of social tensions which may occur as a result of the land reform process itself.

3.3 Crime at the Farms

Most of the commentators pointed out the problem that the problem of poverty which is a result of so many socio-economic factors has indeed caused further problems to both emerging farmers and seasoned farmers. It appeared that most of the comments revealed that most of the crimes such as theft are directed at securing food for the household. This leads one to the conclusion that there is need for food security especially to resettled farmers. This holds water in so far as we understand that food sovereignty essentially defines the policy package that would be needed so that policies of agrarian reform and rural development might truly reduce poverty, protect the environment, and enhance broad-based, inclusive economic development.¹⁶⁵

The most fundamental pillars of food sovereignty include the recognition and enforcement of the right to food and the right to land; the right of each nation or people to define their own agricultural and food policies, respecting the right of indigenous peoples to their territories, etc.¹⁶⁶; a retreat from free trade policies, with a concurrent greater prioritization of production of food for local and national markets, and an end to dumping; genuine agrarian reform; and peasant-based sustainable, or agroecological, agricultural practices.¹⁶⁷

History shows that the re distribution of land to landless and land poor rural families can be a very effective way to improve rural welfare.¹⁶⁸ Sobhan examined the outcome of virtually every land reform program carried out in the Third World since World War II. He is careful to distinguish between what he calls ‘radical’ redistribution (called ‘genuine land reform’ by Lappé et al.), and ‘non egalitarian’ reforms (or ‘fake land reform’ in the Lappé et al.’s

¹⁶⁵ FAO 2006.

¹⁶⁶ *ibid*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁸ Ziegler, Jean. 2004.

terminology).¹⁶⁹ When quality land was really distributed to the poor, and the power of the rural oligarchy to distort and ‘capture’ policies broken, real, measurable poverty reduction and improvement in human welfare has invariably been the result. Japan, South Korean, Taiwan, Cuba and China are all good examples. In contrast, countries with reforms that gave only poor quality land to beneficiaries, and/or failed to alter the rural power structures that work against the poor, have failed to make a major dent in rural poverty.¹⁷⁰ The later is what is happening in Namibia where although the poor or previously disadvantaged groups get land such land is poor in its quality hence poverty will reign for longer.

In separate research projects on the potential of land redistribution to reduce poverty, Sobhan¹⁷¹ and Besley & Burgess¹⁷² found a strong relationship between land reform and the reduction of poverty. Leite et al¹⁷³ found that settlers in land reform settlements in Brazil earn more than they did before, and then do still landless families, they eat better, they have greater purchasing power, they have greater access to educational opportunities, and they are more likely to be able to unite their families in one place (rather than ‘lose’ family members to migration). In fact land reform holds promise as a means to stem the rural urban migration that is causing Third World cities to grow beyond the capacity of urban economies to provide enough jobs. Even in Zimbabwe, where land reform was ended prematurely and is very incomplete, the evidence shows that beneficiaries are quite substantially better off than others.¹⁷⁴ According to Ziegler:

Agrarian reform that is truly transformative and redistributive has proved to be fundamental in reducing poverty and hunger in many countries, and can be a key to generating economic growth that benefits the poorest.¹⁷⁵

It is clear that local and regional economic development can benefit from a small farm economy, as can the life and prosperity of the resettled farmers and areas that surround them.¹⁷⁶ However much depends on the government to provide the necessary implements for productive agriculture especially by AA Farmers. But what of national economic development? History has proved that a relatively equitable, small farmer based rural

¹⁶⁹ FAO, 2006. par 40.

¹⁷⁰ FAO, 2006; Sobhan, 1993; Lappé et al., 1998

¹⁷¹ Sobhan, 1993.

¹⁷² Besley, 2002. pp. 389 430.

¹⁷³ FAO, 2006; Leite et al, 2004.

¹⁷⁴ Deininger et al., 2000

¹⁷⁵ Ziegler, 2002

¹⁷⁶ FAO, 2006

economy provides the basis for strong national economic development. According to FAO this ‘farmer road to development’ is part of the reason why, for example, the United States early on in its history developed more rapidly and evenly than did Latin America, with its inequitable land distribution characterized by huge haciendas and plantations interspersed with poverty stricken subsistence farmers.¹⁷⁷

4. The Film has been screened – what then?

Before going deeper into what impact the screening of the *Land Matters* film had on the Namibian populace especially those who had the opportunity to watch it, it can be asked, what were the impacts of the screenings? Looking at the factual scenario it would be fair to say that two national broadcastings on two television stations being the national broadcaster i.e. NBC and one private national broadcaster i.e. One Africa and almost 20 public screenings at various specific strategic designations can be called a success if one looks at the outreach of the project with pretty small means.

Further, the screenings can be described as a success story because the comments which were had after the screenings revealed that land reform is a precarious balancing act in that the views of the Namibian people depict that land tenure in Africa is where the global north meets the global south in a miasma of incomprehension. The incomprehension arises especially when one considers the perceptions of the resettled farmers most of who believe that they have just been relocated and in terms of lifestyle or economic activity ‘business goes as usual’. This shows how a previous communal landholder will never have productive commercial farming on a resettlement farm. On the other end an AALS farmer will never be as productive as possible if they bring their relatives who have the same mentality as those just being resettled at a new resettlement farm. Therefore as the film depicts, land remains chronically under-utilised and inefficiently managed especially in resettlement farms; but also to a significant extent in a few of the AALS farmers.

There is special recognition that the *Land Matters* project managed to politicise already working processes of cooperation in the land reform programme and idea and or technological exchange by providing a platform for ideological rhetoric from either side of

¹⁷⁷ de Janvry, 1981

the conflict. This position however has to be retackled for more effective engagement of the participant or commentators and it links directly to the points under the sub-topics below.

It should be noted that after the end of this project 1000 DVDs have been distributed for free use all over the country to further stimulate a debate. This means that a connecting project should be had in order to stimulate more debate and formulate more policy and legal approaches to the land reform processes in Namibia. This finds rationality and connection to the sub topics below.

One should also consider the loopholes which the film did not depict and the loopholes which the film exposed. This means that in spite of the success of the film in terms of how it was accepted and how it managed to capture the critical challenges which farmers are having, the film also has to be viewed in the light of the fact that the screenings thereof also revealed the big need for further debate and discussion and one should clearly state that initiatives like this should continue on a permanent basis to keep the exchange of thoughts and ideas going. This can be done either with the tools available or with new but similar or connecting projects.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

1. The University of Namibia

TRACK ONE

0:01 (1st man) Would anyone want to inherit a gardener or a nanny and with them in your house this is really an issue we need to look at that is the ownership issue, land and properties, how do they differ and what are their dynamics, land is a complex issue when it comes to dealing with it, it is some ones property which becomes a little bit tricky.

(0:52) (2nd man) Personally I think that there are still a few loop holes in the land policy itself, like in Namibia and it still needs to be reconstructed in a way but then I think the most vital issue is education, it plays a role especially for the farm workers they need to be aware of their rights they do not know what is entitled to them.

It is a matter of identifying the parties involved, this plays a role, we saw in this case that the ministry of lands administered a committee so to say to be a liaison between the ministry and the farm workers but how do they monitor if this committee is doing the right work, so I think education plays a role also.

(Chairman) Yes most definitely

(3rd man) (1:51) – The other process that is the driver of the process is the political will, we do not have political will to drive the policy on the contrary the whole process is highly politicised the decisions are based on political affiliations even their beneficiaries description is not outlining as such for example we have people that really need land but in some cases there are instances of people in communal areas being resettled when we have people like the bushman suffering out there, I think our political leaders need to be accountable to us , I think they are also stealing the land from other people , from the electorate and such. We have the ability and capability that make this process go smoothly, it is just that we politicise our decisions.

(1st woman) (3; 17) I just want to know how successful has been the land reform?

(Chairman) – What a question! Let me give my personal opinion after having done some research on land reform, informally I am not sure whether I really want to do this.

TRACK 2

I never really knew what was going on in this land reform exercise, all I knew was there was land expropriation going on and what I have learnt today is that basically there is a collective collaboration between the farmers themselves to try and help each other to reach greater heights, I never knew there was something of this sort going on, the relationship between the farmers themselves, Especially the transition for apartheid has really brought great change and I think listening from the horses mouth . which are in farmers themselves in terms of the problems that they are facing within farms is quite sensitive. The Ministry of lands then has to make an effort to go deeper and find out about these problems, the employees are also contributing to the rise in criminal activities and I think an act has to be passed to, lets as for instance there should be a basic salary that every farm worker should get and after obtaining a certain amount of experience then it should amount to that etc that's what I think.

(Chairman) Ok thank you!

(4th man) The minimum wage for a farm worker is \$N450 so it has in fact become policy.

(5th man) I think the message that is being portrayed here it is questioning the core objective of the land reform as a national objective and I think that there are a lot of challenges that one can also extract from the film for example the other Damara guy that said that who said he is employed at a farm but his extended family has become a problem for the owner are there answers for such problems?

(Chairman) Thank you, anyone else?

(6th man) Maybe what the government can also do with these farmers is, especially the rare poor but still tend to have a lot of children.

(3:18) (7th man) so are you saying farm workers should not give birth?

(6th) They should just be educated on birth control.

(8th man) I think the last one which is also a challenge to the farmers in Namibia especially those in commercial areas is that they tend to acquire these farms for the purpose of subsistence farming. Now it also goes down to the core objectives of the land reform process, are we bent on commercialising the farming sector or not? Are we transforming commercial farms to subsistence farms?

(Chairman) Thank you, yes!

(2nd woman) I still do not understand something, so when the government reposses a farm and gives it to you is it yours or it still belongs to the government because that Elizabeth woman in the film said she wants a farm of her own so I don't know?

(5:09) That's right she is only sort of a co –owner they're an emerging farmer.

(Panel Member) To clarify this there are two parts in which the land reform programme runs through that is the affirmative action scheme that is the affirmative farmer then there is the second group where the government buys a farm and redistributes it to the people those are

called resettled farmers. Elizabeth is one of those people that qualified to get a farm through the emerging farmer scheme and got a loan from Agri - bank.

(3rd Woman) Mine is just advice to the government, that it actually monitor and evaluate how those farmers are performing, I think it is very important. It would them to build each other even as an association. It would help make things much better instead of leaving them like that.

(6:26) (Chairman in response to the question)

That's right because you get the feeling that the Ministry of Lands aren't spending enough time in the field.

(3rd woman) Bureaucracy is a problem—, because you see there is a problem of these field workers not being found in the office and the problem takes time to be solved quickly and it takes time.

(Chairman) absolutely thank you!

(9th man) – Now I think I have a special interest in the land reform but I just want to ask one question, I understand the objectives of the government, on the issue of land reform even if its rigid but look if we go back to the Botswana side there is vast virgin land in Namibia, the area that they recently resettled the Herero people, why is government not demarcating those virgin lands as it was done in the Odendaal plans. That is my question in general?

(Chairman) That is a good question! Anyone else with anything to say or a comment?

(10th man) This land reform issue of government buying all the these farms and giving them to subsistence farmers and turning them into communal areas that is the case at the end of the day young people like us that want to go into farming but the first preference for land on the market is given to the government, that's what is happening how we get into farming as the criteria for Affirmative framers is not easy to meet and first priority to buy land is given to government? Economic wise we are not working on a productive scale, how can we solve that issue, maybe you guys must ask the government, I don't know?

(Panellist) It's a policy issue and government must first get the farm and its ponies to the market for people to buy.

(11th man) For me I think it will take time for us to adjust what we have seen here, to me the movie is not that good, it is carefully choreographed to the extent that it is dense. The descending voices aren't heard for instance the poor man without land but I think his problem is more about his pay and extreme poverty I think but none the less a couple of things came up. The movie shows the attitude of the white farmer for example the farmer that said he was raised under the apartheid era, the black man is the white mans burden and they are trying to carry those white farmers on their shoulders. Whether it is AAF'S or R.F and a couple of things came up as we can see on the farms there is still extreme poverty, harsh conditions and one of them even said to make this a success as it was during the Apartheid regime it took them even thirteen years to make a living out of that now if we look at our resettled farmers with no support from government you wonder how long it will take it becomes successful? The other question that came out there is that of productivity. The productivity of these farms will go down as the new farmers are brought in without any serious government support, it is nice politically to give people land but as I said before land is not wealth, what matters is

your ingenuity to manage that land that is going to create wealth so I think government should do something about that, I guess I will stop there but if you come again after I have digested what I have seen then maybe I would have changed my mind but that is my first reaction to the movie .

(12th man) I think also if I can also add to what the gentleman has just said I think he is trying to place more emphasis on the policy government put in place three years back, which mentioned the issue of 20 hectares as distribution to individual citizens but given the Namibian landscape will it fit our farmers? How will that lead to sustainable economic farming? If we also go back to the movie there is also lack of co-ordination of farmers in government structures because if a parent is complaining within the farm that his kids are not going to school this is an economic problem which could be addressed by the ministry of agriculture, the Ministry of Education you educate the farmers and lets say construct gardens there where these people can be economically sustained because at the end of the day these guys receive nothing they get \$300 and have to eat and send the kids to school on that. I think we should play a role in decentralising government functions to those farms, for example they have to construct kindergartens and all those things I think the government has to be asked all those questions.

(Chairman) Absolutely do you want to say something?

(14; 15) (11th man) Lastly from my side most of us in here are basically students of economics, politics and the movie stimulated us to ask more questions and as students why you are here is to ask questions and find the answers to those questions or to seek opportunities for research when you go out there and business opportunities in this industry that looks like that. This is our land, our country, hope can you go into that and make things better make things happen. Not only contribute to national development but also make money for yourselves. Thank you!

(13th man) I am worried about the dude with extended family was he forced by the new owner?

(Chairman) Not as far as I know. He didn't have to vacate it.

(13th man) It's like he was allowed to stay on the land neh! But not with the rest of his family, the boys that steal or something, it's like the owner of the farm wants them out but they have nowhere to go?

(Chairman) That's right. She said she wanted a few immediate people that is the immediate family she didn't seem to be happy with the extended family.

(13th man) Now where will the rest of the family go now?

(Chairman) That I cannot answer! But I am with you I can see what you are saying he want to even own his own animals.

(13th man) But where will the animals come from looking at him now he is poor?

(Chairman) Well I agree his going to have to start small and save but the issue is he is not even allowed to own animals on that piece of land that's his major problem.

(13th man) And you sir are you also involved in this film production?

(17; 14) (Chairman) That's a fair question, I have nothing to do with this film at all. I am simply working as a consultant for the LAC. The film was made by a chap from Germany, he got money from overseas group. We simply want to show this film to people and try and gauge their reaction. Outside later when we are not in here I will tell you what I think.

(4th woman) On this point the farm worker suggested a small piece of land be given to him by the farm owner so that he can cultivate his own animals according to the Land Reform act. Is that illegal for the farm owner to demarcate that farm to other small farmers?

(Chairman) Ah Shadrack?

(Shadrack) There is no law that prohibits one from doing that but then the concern of the farmers is that they themselves do not have enough land that's the issue but there is no law that prevents that from happening. In fact I think that it should be supported.

(18; 52) (14th man) One of the issues was about the effectiveness of the land reform, how is it effective and what are the necessary criteria to be followed when giving land to the blacks or to previously disadvantage? Why am I saying that? We have obviously seen that these people do not have sufficient know how. A farm that was properly established 35 years ago once handed over to the resettled farmers goes down the drain, you find that the black farmer does not know how to run the farm because of lack of knowledge. In that regard I believe that they strongly need assistance so what is the criteria used to determine that? Secondly we talk of good management, with good management you can have better productivity. Now coming back to the question of the lady there and the gentleman on the other side of land division that depends on the owner. Of course land will never be enough to my understanding however should the owner give land to the employee what is the work of the employee? He compromises his own job that he is supposed to do on the farm in the first place. So what I think is maybe the hectares that sub-divide the farms are way too much for instance you get a farm of 5000 hectares or 7000 hectares, if we want to redistribute this equally why don't we set a standard of let's say 2500 hectares per person then only that can we have a large number of people owning the land. The last point is administration on the part of the Ministry there is basically no administration in that regard because at the end of the day it's like moving nowhere very slowly, how is it possible that we have a ministry that takes care of the land issue then at the end of the day there are so many committees the communication link in the Ministry is way too large that it takes time to solve certain problems that may occur from the farmers themselves. I think if it is shortened we can have a very effective administrative system. That was my last point thank you!

(22; 12) I think just to allude to what doctor said we are all students here and when you critically analyse the policy here, it sustainable relies on the knowledge and we all know how expensive is knowledge now given the status of Unam and Polytechnic. The courses that they offer off course I think that they can compliment the policy but I can not see any linkage between the these institutions and the government or vice versa or perhaps the government does not create that platform, maybe the lecturer can answer me on this one. Because I know the government supposed the appraisal of their systems by students allowing agriculture students to go for attachment. Contrary to that statement we need training if we are to

succeed, we need to reverse the system, its quite a good system. We lost land and we need it back but the important part is the process we use to acquire land should be as accountable and transparent as possible .So there will just rest my case.

(5th woman) – (24:00)

My last point is just to encourage women to go for farming, I am sure we can do it we have been disadvantaged for years so I am sure we can go for it and make it.

(Chairman) Ok, good luck! Anybody else?

(15th man) I personally feel the government is one sided on this issue, it is mainly giving the land to the white people, I am sorry to use this phrase. It is somehow corset since the blacks are considered not to have knowledge because they receive money from the capitalists so I blame the government for trading in people's lives for money.

(Chairman) Ok thank you, anyone else with something to say?

(15th man) 25:34 I have a feeling that the black man that has been living on a piece of land for several years and has a new owner now we saw even some of them visit the graves of their fore fathers but know they have lost it to the new owners and the new owners want to take over and have everything to themselves without considering those that have nowhere to go .The issue of tenure is important.

AUDIO 6

UNAM

SPEAKER ONE

For me really I never really knew what was really going on in the land reform issue. What I learned today is that there is a definitive collaboration between farmers. It has really brought big change. And I think listening from the horse's mouth about the problems encountered on the farms...its quite sensitive(...)

An Act should be passed stating the standard payment that a worker is supposed to get based on experience and so on.

SPEAKER THREE

If you take an ordinary Namibian citizen, we have a tendency of buying a farm for subsistence farming. On the other side we are also saying what is the core of land reform? Do we want to commercialise the agricultural sector or do want to make it substantial? Is there a transformation of commercial farming to communal farming? I think from there it was also clear on how we can commercialise to capitalize.

SPEAKER FIVEMine is actually an advise, that we should actually evaluate and monitor how these farmers are performing. As an association it will help them to build them up much better instead of just leaving the people like that. And bureaucracy, you go from one office to the other and sometimes the people are not in their offices. It takes time to solve the problem.



2. Summerdown Farmers Association

What do you want to hear? Our comments or what? What do you want to hear?

Your comments on the film, if you have any? What problems are you facing in the area? How is the Cooperation between you and the emerging farmers?

Speaker one:

But look the problem now is, you took the best in the country and that's it. Clara is a minister and to a certain extent she can contribute from her side but if you are very objective and realistic, then you see big problems. We will never be able to feed our country under those circumstances. You can see there that the requests that are being made by the farm workers are relatively far from productive farming. So, what I found significant was that there were only two white farmers who were assisting actively, but they are also tired now, they do not want to do it anymore. They are only carrying on with the affirmative action farmers who are reasonably positive. There is however nothing that we can do about this. We can probably sit here the whole day and discuss the problems but with all the work that has been done, the problems are just getting bigger and bigger by the day. If you think you can solve a problem then you are an imaginative thinker. You see the conditions at the farms. There are people and children who are doing nothing. I speak under correction, but I think we have over one thousand farms that have gone through this process. I think the people who made the film are showing other people how it actually should be. But for us who know how it really is, you would actually have to be a baboon to remain positive. My problem is that you cannot make a living from a farm like that, now you sell one farm after the other and just spread poverty. The people living in the cities and who are educated don't really have time to sit on a farm attend to it is difficulties. That is why Mr Stehn was asking whether it is a social thing that they are doing or whether it is about productivity? I was very angry two three years ago when Rhyno Van der Merwe said every farmer must decide whether they want to farm in this country or not. Because if you look at this film and you are realistic, then our chances are getting even worse. It doesn't help to be positive, while you are putting the future of your family and the next generation in jeopardy. Those farms in the Nina area were very good farms. It comes to a point where we all have to stand in front of our friend and family and decide what we are going to do, because the way it's going on now, we do not even stand a chance. The ministry has to step in and give these people skills training. It doesn't help if the commercial farmer does it. I just want to tell you that we also tried it here. GThen the affirmative action farmers asked us what we are going to pay them if they come to us. I am sure that every person sitting here today feels that it is not worth it. So many farms have been taken over by black farmers in the Outjo, Grootfontein and Tsumeb area. Things are just deteriorating there. You even saw it there, fences are not being fixed. Just the other day a whole farm burned down. With us it is not that bad yet but I really don't know what can be done. They say you must lobby and get the vip's on your side. Now, of the very important people who are sitting in that government know anything about farming. Which one of them know anything about farming? I think the movie was very realistic. I take my head off for Clara Bohitile. She is trying very hard but also the circumstances under which she is farming...about a quarter of the farmers in Namibia are affirmative action or black farmers, who just farm on a weekend basis. To me that is a red light going off. I think we should have a day set apart to discuss these things because I cannot speak on behalf of the others. But I can tell you that if we go on with this trend then in 20 years we will be condemned! If you still have Clara and that black girl who was saying that someone with four farms must give away three...and that she wants fat oxen, and running water and plantations, then she clearly

doesn't know that fertilizer costs you 700 per bag. So that is where we are blocking each other. I think we must tell the government that this is the reality and what are you going to do about that. You said they don't come to meetings, they do not really care because they earn fat pay cheques in the city. That is what is happening everywhere in the country. With us we also have squatters. There close to Pienaar's farm there are about 100 squatters on one farm. Down the on the San Farm there are about 300 squatters. So I do not know who we want to fool if we say that this thing is going to work. They are always pointing fingers at the white commercial farmers but the affirmative action farmers, the resettlement farmers and the government must know that four fingers are pointing back at them. They are not doing anything. They just buy the farms and they hand it over to the people and nothing happens afterwards. We know that Clara Bohitile is doing well. We also have Erkana here who may even be doing better than Clara. Those are special cases because they are very few. If you look at it, those people owe about 3 million for those farms, then they only have about 15 sheep and lean cattle and they expect to make profit and pay back those loans. That does not make sense. Much more than that, you can actually not say because it is all nonsense.

Speaker two

It has been 18 years since we gained independence. A lot of resettlement projects have been going on. When we saw the meeting where there were complaints about what is happening at the resettlement farms we heard that there is a committee who hars the complaints and takes it to another committee and so on and so on. How long does it take? What are all the committee's for? What is their practical purpose? In my opinion there is no proper law or directive guiding this land reform process.

Speaker three

The social aspect of us commercial white farmers is decreasing. There are too much hindrances in bringing our new generation back. So our sense of being and our culture is dying out. And also like it was said in the film, if there is no economical existence, what are the people living from? So if there are 60 to 300 people on a farm, what are they living from?

Speaker four

Resettlement just comes here with a lorry and offloads people and leaves. There is not even proper infrastructure like a dam or a wind pump on that farm. How will those people who don't have any money fix those things? The one family has 15 sheep, the other has 30 and the other has 2, how will they make a living out of that? So I tell those people not to move in because they will go bankrupt immediately. Resettled people don't even feel that they have to work on the farms. You see them around in the towns like Otjiwarongo and Outjo yes but you don't see them on the farm where they are suppose to be. Look what happened within a year on the resettled farm. Nobody has money. Who pays those workers who sit there for a day and a half? We do.

So the ability and the willingness to farm is the problem.



3. Kunene Emerging Farmers Association (Outjo)

Speaker one:

Someone asked what procedures the ministry uses to allocate land. That is a big question. There are over 600 people farming in Kunene area. The people are being brought from all over, including Wamboland. But my people do not have land. The workers have nothing. We cannot deny people land just because they have nothing. It is unacceptable because the people vote.

Speaker two:

I just want to add something. The resettlement programme like I understand it is not sort after. The management as in how the things must be done. Procedures must be put in place so that everyone can get a piece of land. Like the affirmative action farmers that are complaining about loans and how they are making losses from the farms. If they lose those farms what is going to happen to them? They would probably also have to go into the resettlement process. So they must also not see the resettled farmer as a threat. Fine, there are things like theft and so on but those things can be sorted out. Another question that I have is about this JPS programme. I have attended a few of these workshops in Kamanjab, and the message I got from there is that this programme has the purpose of educating us. It is to educate us so we know what it means to farm and to one day make a success out of our farming. We also came here for training on Wednesday. We are from the emerging farmers association called EFA. We also decided that our members must be registered. So let's run the whole process and see how it works out. Let's see what direction it is going to take. For those who don't know, we have EFA here and we are given training on how we must teach emerging farmers certain farming techniques. So this money that the European Union gave and all the programmes that are running...we must just see how it works out. So there is nothing wrong with resettled farmers. We need the land. Here in the Kunene the first resettlement farms just served as trial and error farms. That's why you will see that at least 6 people are farming on 2500 hectares of land. Then the government also realized that it is wrong. So the people who came in at a later stage are the ones that are getting sufficient hectares. So that is my opinion.

Speaker 3:

Ok, Mr Cronje

Speaker 4:

I think it is a very good film. I reckon the LAC has a lot to do with the making of the film because I mean you are the ones coming to screen it. It reflects clearly what is happening in reality. I myself attended guidance trainings in Outjo for 17 years. So I think understand the plight of the resettled farmer and I understand the plight of the AA farmer. So this problem is everybody's problem. It is also my problem as a commercial farmer because if my neighbouring farm is a resettled farm and the situation is the same as what we know is happening at other resettlement farms, then it doesn't only affect the resettlement farm. It disadvantages the whole neighbourhood. The negative effect is thus very very very wide. So that is what I wanted to say. I also want to say with specific reference to the AA farmers, that they experience a lot of disappointment. They had this idea of I'm going to get land and I'm going to progress...My neighbour who is a communal farmer said to me, when he was a communal farmer he was more successful then, than now that he is a commercial farmer and that he would rather go back to communal farming. He moved in here, he had livestock and

his perception was that if he has 150 livestock and he qualifies to be a commercial farmer, then he ought to be able to make a living there from. And that he will be able to pay off his farm with 150 cattle. Any person who farms with cattle will tell you that there is no way that you will be able to pay off a farm with a 150 cattle. And I think the lawmakers of this process have a lot to do with this misconception. You cannot farm with a 150 cattle. There is just no way. Also want to mention that I am very worried about the AA farmers. Those that are progressing with the farming and those that are phasing out of farming. If this law which governs this, is not implemented in such a way that those who qualify to be AA farmers, are ones that can make a success out of their farming, then there is a very big problem in many areas. Either there is a problem with the farmer himself and his perception or there is a problem with the law itself. I'm not even talking about the resettled farmer here. I'm talking about the affirmative action farmer. I think to be able to farm the farmer must be able to make a success out of his farming at the end by becoming a full time farmer. If he cannot make a success out of his farming, then there is a problem with the guidance process. Then also, when we talk about the Ministry of land and resettlement one must say that they are primarily responsible for resettlement. Affirmative action farmers are also linked to that and the Ministry must accept the responsibility of being the father of what is happening. The ministry cannot say that it has resettled the farmers, done its job and now it can walk away. It cannot make its problem other peoples problem. I was at Queen Sofia where the Spaniards were handing it over. And the feeling that I got afterwards is that they want all the people to take over the responsibility afterwards and it does not work like that. The ministry of Land and resettlement stays the father. If the resettlement is a success then it is the ministry's success. If it is a failure then it is the Ministry's failure. There must be a will from their side and their law must be of such a nature that they empower, guide, monitor, evaluate and also put in rectification measures. That is important. And when I talk about farmers, I also talk about us commercial farmers. We also have a responsibility and I accept that responsibility. But the resettled person also has a duty. A duty to keep his fencing in place and to do whatever needs to be done. Part of this monitoring and evaluation process must be that an individual farmer must be expected to keep up a certain standard and if he cannot keep up with that standard, then he must be replaced. Because what happens is that, if the end product is desertification and total deterioration, who does that disadvantage? It seems to me that at the moment, there is no system in place which places a duty on farmers to keep up a specific standard. I cannot think that such a system should be continued. The question now is, what must happen? It is always easy to be a critic. So I would maybe just say what use to happen in the past. During the time of the white administration, there was a team of field workers. Those field workers would pay a visit to every single farm for 6 months. They would then write up a report on the problems faced and what is expected of you as a farmer. Then six months later they would come and assess what you have done with your problem. Then there was a... what do you call that thing? There was a land law or I don't know what you call it but there were certain provisions laid down. It was the Land Safety Law. According to this law if you did not do what was expected of you, then measures would be taken against you. So the Ministry must know that they are the father of this thing and they cannot do away with responsibility. They must know that they are the father of this thing. It is thus a matter of putting appropriate law in place. We are thankful of what is happening in Nina. We are also trying here in Outjo. The whole emerging farmers support programme was established in Outjo. There are farmers who are involved, good or bad. I think we as white commercial farmers, do know that we also have a responsibility. And we know that if, farm Wind deteriorates, then the whole neighbourhood deteriorates. And it is important that we make a success out of what is happening and be at peace with it. Ministry cannot say people have been resettled and my duty has been fulfilled. It will not work like that.

Speaker 5

Thank you for the opportunity. Maybe someone will translate for me. I just want to make a few comments regarding the availability of the land on the market. After this whole expropriation process started, it is very difficult to get certainty on how the farms are placed on the market. The law that the government has in place is that, when a farmer puts his farm on the market, they have to make an offer to the state first and if the state offers a price that the seller is not happy with then the state can expropriate. This is actually disadvantage because the land is not open on the market for everyone. Regarding the affirmative action farms and the resettlement farms it is a difficult situation. Sometimes someone with millions can go through the resettlement or AA process because farms have to go through the government first. It so happens that the government sends their inspectors to the farms and if they are happy they resettle people on that farm and this results in the deterioration of the productivity of commercial land because more and more people are being resettled on such land. So now you just see farms being bought for resettlement purposes left right and centre and the affirmative action process is stagnating. So that is one aspect that needs a lot of attention regarding this resettlement process. Then there is also another issue where the government is placed under pressure to satisfy certain groups of people like the San who claim not to have land. If you presently own a farm in the Etosha area, then you can forget about it because those farms are eyed for a specific group of people by the government. What does this mean at the end of the day? A farm that was productive is put under new management and then these people turn around and seek help from the Ministry which is not the intention of the ministry. This also results in the loss of productivity. I also want to comment on the farmworker issue. I have been farming in a commercial setup for 2 years now and I have observed a few things. When you are resettled by government on a piece of land for which you have the legal documents you may find farm workers that are sitting there and are not willing to go anywhere. I have a suggestion there even if it has its disadvantages. I think the government must make provision for those people like Oom Basson who have been living there for many years and who do not have anywhere to go and will thus also be buried there. Government must therefore make provision within the resettlement farm to accommodate a specific group of people. Maybe to give them some type of a camp where they can continue living on that farm. Then they must demarcate certain land that is subject to productive farming for the resettled people. This is because there is no way that you will be able to take someone like Mr Basson away from that land. That is what is happening at the moment. There is no way that we can get farm workers to move away from that land. It will only cause conflict and the conflict still continues as we are speaking here today. Thank you

SPEAKER 6:

I would like to know something, the purpose of this exercise is not clear to me. Is it just so that we can vent or is this story headed somewhere? Are you going to write a report that will be presented to the government?

SPEAKER 7:

There are a lot of things that have been mentioned here that are wrong and there are those that have not been mentioned yet. The resettlement scheme is running at different levels. There are people in communal areas and there are people on resettlement farms. There are people who got affirmative action farms and there are those who are established farmers like me. Some are on small farms like me and others are on bigger farms. What I want to say is that there are different structures that we as different people can accommodate. What I don't see is a system according to which people are identified. Why can we not look at communal areas where some people are striving to make a success out of their farming even though the

land does not belong to them. Those are the people that must be given a chance to venture out. Why are those people not identified? Put those people on the resettlement farms and do not give them 20 hectares. Give them larger portions according to the ideas that they have, what they can accommodate and what they can manage. And if they make a success on the resettlement farm, then give them affirmative action loans and put them on their own piece of land. The structures are there. They must just be implemented in a correct manner. This is my request to the government. That which is there must just be utilized in the correct manner.

Speaker 8

We link that comment with the previous speaker. There are people who have been resettled ten years ago but they have not even pitched up at their resettled farms. The camps are deserted.

Speaker 9

Now who is there that carries out an inspection on these people? Mr Cronje said, many years ago inspections would be done every 6 months. I was with the land bank 9 years ago before it became Agribank. Every year all the clients of the land bank would be inspected. You had to work through a long list of questions with those guys. Didn't matter what your colour or religion was. Everyone had to adhere to the terms under which that loan was granted. If there was no development on a farm, the loan would be withdrawn and you would be told to sell your animals and go reside in Henties Bay. So there are manners through which this thing can be done.

Speaker 10

What I want to say is that the issue has two sides and must be looked at from both sides. My colleague here said that a productive commercial farm is purchased and someone is resettled there. I agree with him 50%. The farm may be productive but the question is after the farm is bought how long does it stay unattended before people are resettled there? That is the question. When people are resettled after two years, the infrastructure at the farm has already deteriorated. That is the one thing that is overlooked. The other thing is, we blame the government. Do we go back and see what the government is doing in this process? The disease is already there and the government cannot cure it, it's too late. But the government does its part. There are courses being offered go and attend them...

Speaker 11

It is not the government who offers those courses...

Speaker 10

Then it should be the Ambassador doing it. That is why I am saying that the issue has two sides. We must also be positive. The time when bread fell from the heavens is over. So we must also be thankful for the piece of land that we get and start being productive. There are some of our colleagues here who just want to criticize and that is where I want to give some direction.

Speaker 12

To whom? To the government

Speaker 10

If we also get up and become productive, then the government would also see that we are trying and might get more involved. I'm not here to defend the government but the story should not be one sided.

Speaker 13

You got land for free that's why you are talking like that. You did not buy it.

Speaker 10

Yes I did get land for free but when I got there, there was no water. Today there is water. Who do you think helped me? The government?

Speaker 14

I wonder if you listened to everything that was said here?

Speaker 10

I did listen. All I'm trying to say is we must also be positive. That is why we are here. We must look at it from both sides. That is all I am saying.

Speaker 15

My problem is just this, we should have given a resettled farm a specific period of time to prove itself. Whether it is going to be productive or not. The objective of the resettlement process is not clear. Why are people resettled? Are they resettled to farm or are they resettled to have a dwelling place? If we can differentiate between those two things, then we know what we can do with the land that we are getting.

Speaker 16

To add to that: The capacity of the government to control this seems non-existent. All that happens is that you get a letter and you are told that you have been resettled but you are not told why. What are you suppose to go and do on the land? Nobody comes to advise you on what you are suppose to do. You are resettled, you occupy the land and the rest is your own story.

Speaker 17

I just want to go back a little bit to the film that was screened here. We are currently in the Kunene region and the film was shot in another region. When I saw the film I saw that the womens' participation was a lot in terms of work and so on. Is it to please the government, the EU or whoever it may be by showing that there are women who are working? Here in Kunene it is mostly men that are working. Secondly, the man there said that he also wants to farm on the land where he is working. Do you want to tell me that if I get 150 hectares to farm on, I must also allow someone else to go and farm there? That I will not be able to allow. That will not work. Another thing is: The government must enter into agreement with resettled farmers in which the farmers' will be given a grace period of two to three years in which to prove whether they can make a success out of their farming. If no progress is made, then the land must be given to someone else who wants to produce. We know that farming also contributes to the economy of our country and we cannot allow agricultural land to deteriorate. That was just my contribution.

Speaker 18

Most of what I wanted to say was covered by that gentleman. People apply for land up to six times but they get no answer. The ministry must tell us the criteria they use to resettle people. We also heard about the issue of part time farming on the film. I'm the regional labour inspector of the Kunene region so I drive out a lot to inspect. Then I stop by resettlement farms to enquire about the owners. Then you are probably told the owner owns a company in Walvis Bay. Then you wonder what criterion is used because there are a lot of people who are suffering and are looking for land. These people do not even show up at the farms.

Speaker 19

Then you must even see how much money these people earn.

Speaker 18

Yes exactly. This is really a national issue that needs to be addressed. This issue must be discussed on TV and people must get answers. They must be allowed to call in and ask questions. Representatives of the resettlement process must be given an opportunity to answer questions. It must be screened live. Thank you

Speaker 19

The farms that I am going to mention now are a big problem. The farms Erenspit, Namatanga and Kleinhuis and others remain a problem in the Kunene. You cannot resettle four people on 350 hectares. How will those people farm. When you resettle someone you want the person to progress, but they will not be able to do it like that. In addition they still bring other people on the land. After two or three months you will see that the land has deteriorated. We can take pictures of Kleinhuis for you so that you can see what it looks like.

Speaker 20

Thank you for the opportunity. I just want to know the following. When a person applies to be resettled and in the process indicates the number of animals that he/she owns on the farm, does someone physically go to assess whether such is the case before someone is resettled? Another thing is, before it was the case that people from the Kunene would be resettled in the Kunene region, but now you see that there are other people being resettled in the Kunene region and not the people from Kunene themselves. And you don't even see the people from the Kunene being resettled somewhere else like in the Karas for example.

Speaker 21

I just want to add something to the remarks made by Mr Ouseb. The problem of the people that are born on these farms and cannot go anywhere else. Those people must be accommodated on those farms. There is nowhere they can go. Besides, they have experience in farming which they gained from their previous bosses. The problem just is that these people will probably not have livestock to farm with, that could be solved by providing such for these people, then to let them farm and monitor their progress for maybe five years. So those people must be given financial support and if there is no progress then those benefits must be forfeited. Secondly, there is a Chinese saying that goes: You should not give someone a fish but you should give him a fishing rod...the people who are resettled need a lot from the government. They need training because they are resettled without any idea. They don't even know how long it takes for a sheep to give birth from the time of fertilization. So what is needed is training and evaluation for the resettled farmers. This also goes for the affirmative action farmers. Some people buy farms because they can afford it or

because their peers have farms, but they have no idea what to do with the farm. This is why I am saying that training and knowledge is required.

Speaker 22

I just have an idea. I think this meeting will not come to an end but what I think is that we should call in the relevant people, like the Governor, the regional councillor and representatives from the Ministry of lands and resettlement. Then we can study the issues. Here we are sitting without the Minister of lands, but maybe they can send as even the PS, so that we can direct the necessary questions to them. This is because I don't think we will find any answers today.

Speaker 23

As a member of KEFA for the last six years I would like to say that we should also make a joint effort to make KEFA a forum where we can discuss our issues. KEFA stands for Kunene Emerging Farmers Association. There will be a meeting tomorrow also so I will suggest that there. Thank you.

Speaker 24

I want to highlight a little bit. The idea is very good but so must be the implementation. If one qualifies to go and farm it must not mean that one qualifies to go and farm with one chicken. That is where we really made the mistake. So we must strive to do a good thing. When you take 5000 hectares and resettle 10 people there, what have you done? You have just put a rope around their necks. You are killing them. That is the honest truth. I was also farming on communal land and I can tell you that those people farm better then resettled farmers who are condensed. Let's change things. Let's be economic.

Speaker 25

Willem I want to know: When a farm is bought and there are people on that farm, what must be done? Even in the case where the government buys the farms, what must be done?

Speaker 26

The government must take care of these people. We are in the Kunene Region, why don't we have a committee comprising of the councillors in the area, who will supervise the resettlement process in the Kunene and also allocate land for resettlement? Because those people are nearer, they are familiar with the area and they know the people so they will be in a better position to know how to go about the resettlement process. Why is it not done like that?

Speaker 27

There is a committee. Every Region has a committee. Out of every 1000 application forms for resettlement, the committee can only take out two forms for resettlement. The farm itself can only accommodate 2 to 3 people. Those application forms will then go to Windhoek and be put together with all the other 12 applications that have come in from the other regions. Then those people will be resettled.

Speaker 28

But that is gambling. This is why I am saying this system is not effective. This why I am saying let's get the relevant people together. We have the regional council and we have the union. Let's get them together and ask the questions. Lets tell them directly that they are busy implementing an ineffective system. That is all that needs to be done.

Speaker 29

It is good that there is committee which allocates the farmland, but is that all that the committee does? Allocate farmland and that's it? The government must put people in place who can supervise these resettled people.

Speaker 30

I did not want to say much in the beginning of the meeting because I first wanted to listen to what is being said here. About the film, I would say that it is a very ideal film regarding the reality. It reflects that which is happening at ground level. It comes forth very clearly. I just want to comment on the person in the film who is working on one of the farms. My summary is that, this person does not want to be part of the national working force of our country. He has a personality problem so who goes and hides out there where he is required to do very little. He just wants to sit there and go through life. He does not have that inspiration to be productive. If I have to classify the agricultural sector of Namibia, then I would say that the lowest class of people that you find there are the farm labourers. That person is subject to the rules and regulations out in place by his employer and his salary comes from the profit that must come out of the productivity of that land. Next you have the resettled farmers who are sort of independent. I'm not going to go into the criteria and those types of things. These people are resettled according to the number of animals they are required to have and from which they must make a living. Then if I understand it correctly, resettlement creates a platform for people who are poor but who want to make a living and progress through successful farming. These people then get land where they develop their farming and then they get financing to buy their own piece of land, for example the AA farmers. Then they become established commercial farmers. The history of the white farmers is just the same. The first generation came and there was nothing going on. There was not even water. Then you get a resettlement farm which at least has a borehole in place. But the old farmers from the past came and started under a tree. Maybe even dug a little bit, for the hope of finding water. So the first generation normally has it tough and this is what I am trying to tell the AA farmers as well. You must accept that you are going to have financial constraints because you are the first one to start farming on that land from your family tree. Then you teach your children to work with you on the farm, together with the workers that you brought from the communal land. Then you learn from the farmers in your area who are offering these training courses and you teach your children. Then everything ought to work out well. If your child then inherits the farm, notwithstanding all these traditions and things that are in place, then that child is the second generation on the farm and is suppose to progress better than you. That child is the one who must then even be able to afford a second farm. So that is how the thing snowballs. What is thus needed is understanding, patience and hard work. I classified it that way, now I want to come back and make a request to the government. I do not want to be a critic but I just want to reflect on past mistakes. The government is using the resettlement process as a mechanism to redress past injustices, like giving land to people who fought for the independence of the country. I am not criticizing this but I feel that it is economically incorrect. Politically it may be correct and I accept that, it is fine. Now I want to give the government a message by saying that, if it is to be a respected government then you will get everybody's votes. When you are respected you get votes. How do you gain respect? A child respects its father if disciplined and tells the truth. If the child is told there is no bread in the fridge and we will go somewhere tomorrow and get bread, then that child will respect his father. If Jan Basson who has nothing to show for his existence in this life, takes his children for a walk and tells them the history even though he has nothing to offer, then they have respect for him. The same principles must apply to our politics as well. So the government ought to tell our people that not everybody can get land because there isn't so much land

available. We stay in a desert, we don't have a big population but there is insufficient land for the existing population. So realize that. If you are a farm labourer and you want to do your own farming, then the perception is normally that ...next to my farm there is also a resettlement farm and the people who live there also don't do anything on the farm but they live well. They can sell their animals to make money and that's fine. My worker must work according to the time schedule given to him by me. If he doesn't awake on time, then he must be woken up. Then he gets paid his X amount of money to support his family. Then he checks over the fence at the resettlement farm and starts collecting his twelve sheep. That is what my worker has been doing now, he has been giving me problems this whole week because he was taking care of his own animals rather than mine. What is happening now? He also wants to qualify for resettlement. He also wants to go and retire at the resettlement farm. It is a wrong perception. So I feel this has to be addressed. People must be given insight on what is the purpose of this process. The resettlement process can also not be used as a model to become an AA farmer because to be a commercial farmer you need about 300 to 400 cattle and not a 150. So if you resettle someone and put them on 1000 hectares, they can only farm with 70 livestock. That does not prepare them to become AA farmers. So I actually don't have a solution for this problem. All I want to say is that when I started off as a farmer, I at some point lost everything due to drought. I had to sell all my animals pay off my debts because I had too many and I had to start over again with the money that I had left. Then I started with coal burning, and because of that I have over a 1500 livestock, 300 workers in the coal burning business and 30 fulltime farm workers. Living conditions of my workers are far better than the living conditions of the people from the Sofia project right next to me. They rather come and steal from me. What I am saying is that you must be hard working and have endurance. There is no fast tracking in thing. So we must be realistic. The government could take all these millions that they are using to buy all these resettlement farms and invest it in another way. They can take all the farms they have put and make them commercial farms again, by for example giving them to AA farmers who are still sitting and waiting to buy land which is not available. In this area there are dominantly Herero farmers who have bought land here and I can guarantee you that on each of those farms there is at least two posts that can be put up for lease. Then the state can use the budget that it has to buy farm land to pay the lease for these people if there are unable to do so and all this commercial land that is being communalized can revert back to commercial status. Then that land can be given to these so called AA candidates who are struggling to get land. Thank you very much.

Outjo

Who made this film and for which farmer was it made? What was the purpose of this film? Did the Namibian government give permission for this film to be made? How did it get to us?

The film was made by Thorsten Schütte. He is German. According to what I know he got permission to make the film.

4. The Polytechnic of Namibia

TRACK ONE

(0:00) – (1st man) The programme for tonight is uhm !

TRACK TWO

(0:00 1:26) – (first man) – I believe it is a good way of airing the peoples feelings but I think the people in the film are not speaking from their hearts, I mean there is a lot of compromisation.

(Chairman) – So you mean because of the camera on them they are not saying exactly how they feel?

(First man) Definitely! Especially on the white peoples side I don't think they are satisfied as the land is being taken from them because as I see it we could be headed towards the Zimbabwe situation, let's look a Zimbabwe now land was taken from the whites and given directly to the blacks so what happened afterwards? The question that arises is that what are they going to do on that particular piece of land will they continue farming like the whites or do they have enough skills and equipment to do the farming so those are the questions that one can ask?

(1:27 – 3:50)

(Chairman) I agree, what are your thoughts on land reform?

(1st man) – I might be a good move to give everybody land but, I think there is a lot to be considered as I was saying will they utilise the land as before and contribute to livestock production?

(Chairman) – That sort of neighbourhood thing you saw happening there which meant for people to help and teach each other, do you think that can work/

(1st man) - It can work as long as the government is giving support but in this case it seems these people are not being given knowledge on how to utilise the land because the government is just giving out land to people without skills which means maybe one corner will be utilised. This makes it underutilized.

(Chairman) – Exactly, what do you guys think?

(1st woman) Basically it is good in the sense that blacks that had no land now have land to make a living from but it is just sad to see the farm workers situation, they not have land to sustain themselves and their families they should also be given a piece to farm on so that they can also become productive since they have extended families. The neighbourhood is good because they help each other so it is a great process.

(Chairman)–So what is your general view on land reform you think it is a good thing or?

(3; 50 – 8; 43)

(1st woman) – Generally I think it is a good idea as I helps those that previously did not have land, they are actually getting land now to become productive.

(2nd man) In my view we can see the current situation happening now, I can see the way other people view land reform they view it as a home where you can sleep and not do anything, while others use it for production so there are a lot of inputs that need to be considered you have to willing to be a full time farmer and have the capital.

(Chairman)- The gentleman at the back felt the people he saw in the film went really talking from the heart as the camera was on them, how do you feel about that?

(2nd man) – I don't see it that way because what we saw is just a sample, it's not only Nina area with resettled farmers but there are also other farms so it maybe that they all have different problems.

(Chairman) – Right absolutely anyone else to say something?

(2nd woman) - I think it has pro's and con's I think it is a good programme but as he said people that are being resettled know nothing about farming they do not know how to sustain these farms and how to run them.

(Chairman) – So do you think they should be more education for people applying for farms?

(2nd woman) I think the government should initiate training programmes that will help these farmers to become more productive and manage their farms etc.

(Woman Panellist) Wouldn't it be wise to give the farms to the farmers? For example giving the children to their mother? Affirmative action is in place to give people land to work from, now to be trained as farmers, so why not give land to those white farmers?

(2nd woman) – That would not be good because then the landless would still remain the same.

(Woman panellist) But now we ask the government to train them, now we are talking about the Zimbabwe situation where the blacks were given land and all hell broke loose, so why not give the whites the farms since they know how to do it.

(3rd man) - For you to be a productive farmer it's not something that just pops up, the government should meet them half way and that must be willing, even if you don't have finance the Agric –bank is there to assist that is another way of helping, resettlement must take place in Namibia for all landless blacks and whites off course but the government must put more effort.

(Chairman) – The government should get involved once they had over land to the people and sign papers you think they should be doing much more than that?

(Woman Panellist) - That guy there has got something to say?

(4th man) - I don't have much to say the labour act says if you have employed your farm workers, you should at least give them land to farm on, the other man was saying he has been on that piece of land for many years and he also needs a piece of land to work on and earn money to survive, now I don't know whether the farm owners understand the labour act or not.

(Chairman) O k I am not too sure about that but we do have lawyer with us that can soak on behalf of the labour act but I am not too sure about what it says on giving a piece of land to farm workers but anyway lets carry on with that.

(10:05- 13; 05)

(5th man)

I think when we talk about someone well equipped with knowledge or let's say management we talk about someone that builds the workers and is aware of their needs, now if we take someone without these skills and give them land, this person cannot deal with their needs such as law and these human resource things they will not give the workers what they require.

(Chairman) Ok thank you?

(6th man) - I was just wondering since now you have watched the film does it inspire either one of you to become an Affirmative action farmer or Resettlement farmer, do you find the story inspiring and is this a story of hope? Where people will actually make it?

(7th man) - I think that is a good question but it would e more exciting if this farmers association was comprised of young farmers and experts rather than just black farmers .If it only comprises of new farmers that lack skills where will it go? I t will result in low economic growth and under production of farms.

(Chairman) - Ok thank you, were you inspired to become a farmer?

(3rd Woman) - Yes I think it did.

(Chairman) - You don't think it is too tough to follow, you heard that guy who said you have to wait for at least ten years to rip the benefits?

(3rd woman) – Yes ok it does have benefits but think it's nice, it's ok.

(4th woman) – I believe hard work comes with benefits, it think it was not inspiring, it focused more on the problems they are experiencing, it didn't focus on the outcomes or benefits so for me it was not inspiring at all.

(13:05 - 15:10)

(8th man)- In my view I don't think it matters whether you are an Affirmative Action Framer or a weekend farmer as mentioned by the lady in the film as long as something is taking place even in your absence, it's all about

(Chairman) What are you studying aqt the Polytechnic?

(8th man) - Land management

(Chairman) – And you don't feel inspired to become a farmer?

(8th man) – Of course.

(Chairman) – How about yourself?

(9th man) – Well me I would like to be a farmer one day.

(Chairman) – Did the film inspire you?

(9th man) – Yes I was inspired but it is something you have to work for and it needs patience.

(Chairman) – Any guys feeling inspired to become farmers?

(10th man) – We are from Botswana but I would say for the young Namibians it is a good opportunity for them this is crucial time for them to grab a piece of land so I would advise them to go for it, then they should utilise it accordingly.

(Male Panellist) - So how does this compare with the Botswana situation, when you see this film do you think there is tension, is this situation different from Botswana?

(15:10 -18:32) (10th man) – It is very different from Botswana, in Botswana we did not have Land Reform but as I see in the film even if the people aren't saying it out loud there is a lot of tension. They only take so much and it will reach a point where by they will become fed up, the government should make an effort to help these farmers because commercial farming is not easy, traditionally us black people cannot even plough ten hectares, even livestock farming us blacks we do not keep a lot of cattle we only keep for subsistence.

(Male Panellist) – Maybe just one last question so that I can get some answers from you, do you feel that the situation between black and white is worse than the situation between black and black because the film shows that there is some tension between black and black .How do you see the seriousness of the racial issue in the land reform process.

(11th man) – What I have experienced is that workers on black farms experience a tougher life unlike those on white farms black farmers tend to become selfish when they get land for them their attitude is this is my land and I do not have to share but a white man always takes good care of his workers, But as soon as Affirmative action farmers come into play then problems arise because before the land reform process farm workers didn't really complain about being mistreated, so that is what I can conclude. Black to black pose a serious problem and the government should look into that relationship so that tier salaries are increased or those they are given land to plough on.

(18:32 – 20:00)

(Chairman) – Anyone else with comments on that?

(12th man) - About the race issue he is mentioning the whole land reform process is racial as he mentioned in the film it does not dominate on any side, it should not exist and we should carry on farming.

(Chairman) – Did you feel there was any tension? Like let's say between the black farmer and his labourers?

(12th man) – Not that much.

(Chairman) – Anyone else with comments on that?

(13th man) – Yes me, I think land should be given to those that are willing to farm.

(Chairman) – So there must be a will? So it doesn't matter whom they are but as long as they have the will to farm?

(13th man) – Yes

(Chairman) – Ok fair enough, is there anyone else with any other sort of question?

(14th man) – I think that I am just happy that you showed up, hopefully the film will also inspire you to talk to other people or fellow students because I think that it is only fair that we talk about it and not see it as a rude subject, it's too sensitive and it is important to everyone in Southern Africa for example what is happening in Zimbabwe is impacting Botswana and we need to find solutions thank you for coming here.

(Chairman) I thank you from my side as well.

5. Otavi Farmers Association

0.33 () just a general comment I think we should be more sensitised that with farm resettlement we displace a lot of farm worker families and replace them by other landless families so I think, we have highly skilled people which are called farm workers which are in the system and in this whole resettlement process, I think in this whole process it came out clearly as well I think their needs should be considered a little bit more, I think this is a sensitive issue ,I think we sometimes forget about that one.

(Meeting Chairman) Yes thank you I agree Joshua I think you have something to say

(Joshua) I think that there should be a clear determination for the rights, desires and the desires as of the farm workers, we need to define exactly and the perimeters, exactly what the rights are on the farm, how far they can live as free people on that farm or are they restrictions in fact the farm workers need to be informed exactly uh why they are there, what they can do, what they cannot do. All these things I think should be sorted together with the farm workers so that one can hear what their desires are, what are their hopes for their children that are on those farms, the issue of the graves for instance is a very sensitive issue many of them who have been living on the farms that are now, whose ownership has switched from the former owners to the new farmers, have graves on those farms, the presence of graves are very very sensitive, we have heard of Mr Basson was one that was complaining huh you know he said that his children his children's children his relatives all of them are buried there. How do you want to divorce you know that sentiment of these people from their property which does not belong to them anymore or which they have no right, I think I have heard from this film that we need to know exactly, we need to define those cries very clearly so that so that the people whom the farm owners found on that farm or either who came they need to be considered you know what their rights and what their roles should be in the future depersion.

3:26(Chairman) Anything else you want to say generally about land reform? (Fourth man)
Hmmm not at this moment

(Chairman) Ok anyone else?

(5th man) I would like to comment on the productivity or the success of farmers that are resettled and huh if it's possible that the resettled farmers are willing to learn from the other farmers and if they are also willing to spend time of their busy schedule on the farm and if the commercial farmers or established farmers are also willing to share their knowledge and experience with the resettled farmers and I think it was proven that it will better the productivity or quality of the products

(Chairman) Most definitely thank you

4.28 Anyone else have any comments

(4:30) I have got a few notes here.

(Chairman) Thank you yes.

(6th man) I would like to start by saying ok resettlement of formally disadvantaged Namibians on commercial farms bought or expropriated by the government is one of the mechanisms to achieve a fairer distribution of land but I think none of these farm resettlement schemes were found to be sustainable after five years or so but I think to improve the success rate as he was just saying I suggest the following one, the resettlement schemes should include farm workers and graduates of tertiary institutions and colleges such as Neudam and the other one over here. We should increase the size of land allotments, we should expand resettlement beyond traditional ranching areas you know what I mean, we should restore acquired land ecologically before resettlement as was said here maybe before you that land is idling for quite some time before the people are resettled after it was bought by government so I think that land should be ecologically restored, that would even serve as a way of giving work to people, I think we should also formally train beneficiaries prior to resettlement ok it has started and I think it is going on now but it should be promoted, I think we should follow up with informal training and targeted support and then secure titled land allotment to serve as collateral for loans, I think that's all for now.

(Chairman) Thank you that's very interesting, huh there is someone over here you have something to say? Just hold on to the thing like that.

6.44

(7th man) I think land issues are very sensitive, I mean there are a lot of emotions involved, I mean it's a reason why many wars have been fought and so on by looking at the fellow mutual's just shown now it quite reflects what's going on I mean you can see on one side there is a greater need for land redistribution, if you can see the farm workers, labours they also want their piece, imagine from maybe 1000 hectares someone was allocated and he employs an employee who also wants from that little piece I mean just imagine. In general I think the film reflects what is going on and you can see that there are still some farmers holding larger portions of land, it is a matter of economic viability so what needs to be done is just maybe policy reformulation just to see the viable system which can be implemented and also see which was stated by other people commented that I mean see the interest

because it is an asset that can generate passive income and I mean one can see the backgrounds, the experiences and so forth, the screening process prior to allocation also one can see I mean it is a good setup. One can see from the film I mean, you there are people the local neighbours, the farmers associations are lending their hands I mean in the advisory form but the real challenges are the physical inputs, I mean the resources which people need those are the areas which need attention on a policy level by the people that are implementing those programmes I think that is it.

(Chairman) While you are still there do you think that the governments land reform process the policy do you think it is working?

(7th man) I mean there are, one can say yes and one can also say no ,I mean there are two groups I mean the one who has been resettled and there are farmers that are progressing well those are the good examples I mean on the other side there are those ones that are not quite so productive so one needs to be bit cautious, I mean there are areas which can still be worked on, so I mean there is room for improvement still!

(Chairman) Ok thank you very much.

9:15 Anyone else have a comment?

(8th man) Off the record yes.

(Chairman) Don't worry no one will know who you are or anything.

(8th man) Actually I think it is not off the record ,there is the issue of theft on these farms especially on these resettlement farms you find yourself in a situation that the group of people are resettled but I mean extended families and friends are staying on this resettled farm and the neighbour farmers are having the problem of that I mean these people have to survive ,in order to survive it means that they should get something from the neighbour. Dduring the film the issue was addressed but I mean one could not hear the solution, how to prevent these crimes that is the one issue. The other issue is that land resettlement from politics,politicians do not care I mean whether it is sustainable or not the issue is that we fought for the land, the land should be distributed I mean to blacks and they don't care about that once it comes to sustainability of the land its where the issue is, mean the units are very small, you cannot survive. It should only be that a jumping point or start of to acquire commercial land through land reform as this young lady she had a very big dream that she wants to own a commercial farm but this is a departure point to own commercial land

(Chairman) Absolutely this is a good comment thank you, anyone else yes!

11.06

(9th man) I have two things, three things actually, I have a feeling that if resettlement policy or land resettlement policy if we are not careful how we are doing it, we may go the same route as the Odendaal plan ,Odendaal resettlement plans have gone. Huh the Odendaal resettlement is a total failure as we can see in the so called Damaraland and Namaland very few people resettled there have actually made it, in fact it is a total destruction and I think that the Land Resettlement Policy should be very careful that we do not head in the same direction the Odendaal resettlement has gone. Secondly we have to be careful to provide

guidelines, government should provide guidelines as to the precise volume of people to be placed on each allotment and the volume of people that farm can accommodate, the challenge is how does one motivate the children that are becoming of age to leave the farm and go elsewhere otherwise these farms will become glorified settlement reserves as we have witnessed. This is more of a warning and the government needs to look at it carefully if we want to become a success story.

(Chairman) Thank you very much anybody else with something to say?

13.46

(10th man) Resettlement farmers are living in poverty in terms of housing as are compared to the commercial farmers and if they intend on staying on those farms for the rest of their lives they will die in poverty.

(Chairman) That is so true

(11th woman) So in other words resettlement is not addressing poverty can we say that? Everyone has a dream to succeed but the allotments are rather too small for one to succeed, like the lady in the film who dreams of one day having a large herd of cattle, by the time she acquires these cattle there won't be enough land on the market for her to expand her activities. Because everyone in Namibia is hungry for land and there is not enough land.

(12th man) We have to understand that governments primary goal in embarking on land resettlement was not poverty reduction but rather to address the imbalances of the past .

Track 2 (Chairman) Ok we are back on record.

(1st man) I know a number of resettlement farmers which I regard as well managed, very well productive and I think what this documentary tries to portray is that the land resettlement is a total failure and I feel that this film lacks any success stories even if they only account for 20% or so.

(Chairman) Do you actually know of any resettlement farms that have been successful?

(1st man) In actual fact yes I do there are one or two people I believe are doing very well.

(Chairman) You see the thing is that we are not only talking about Namibia but all over the world land reform seems not to have worked that the perception that then builds up.

(1st man) You can farm very productively on a well managed 2000 acre farm and I think that is missed out we have got AA farmers that buy 3000 hectares which are of different categories but 2000 hectares which is easily manageable.

(Chairman) Well this is very good to hear.

(1st man) I feel the focus here is that land resettlement is bad but the only issue is if land is well managed it can become productive no matter what size it is that is my own opinion.

(2nd man) I do not think that there have been enough preparations made by the government to ensure that the beneficiaries of the land reform exercise benefit fully. The people have not been empowered to manage these new assets, this has to be looked into carefully and secondly Land reform is not new to Africa, especially Namibia, because even when the nationalist party took over in 1948 the issue of addressing poverty affecting the white people was at the fore front. In Namibia the Angola Boers as we know them were taken from Angola and resettled in Grootfontein, Otavi and Khorixas area and they were assisted mercifully by the government some of them were even resettled along the Orange River and today they are wealthy people because extension services were provided to them, most of the big names that we recognise today in farming can be traced back to that resettled group from Angola all because they had sufficient extension services provided by the government. So it just goes to show that resettlement is not new, we need to learn from these farmers and find out how they made a success of themselves. Government should not shy away from their responsibilities and go and learn from these commercial white farmers who are now multimillionaires, if they did it and so can we.

4.29 (3rd man) I think what we should learn from then is that during those days the Afrikaner government did not say we are going to give land to all the Afrikaner people but they gave land to those that were farmers already or those that were genuinely interested in farming not just anyone else so that is the big difference to what is going on now compared to what the colonial government did then. Job were also enough back then, we also have the history of the English man that kept the good jobs for themselves and the Afrikaners had to fight for these jobs and in that why work their way up the ladder so there was also a lot of discrimination between the Englishman and the Boers. So the point I want to stress here is that only the Afrikaners that were interested in farming got farms not just everybody else.

(Chairman) Since it worked then it should also work now so the government needs to find it how it worked.

(4th man) In this case it is not done randomly but the people are selected by application, they must express a desire then they can be fully assisted after being carefully analysed.

(5th man) It was mentioned in the film that some actually just want a place to live most people applied for these farms so as to secure accommodation as well as employment but if the government could create more jobs these people would be willing to move to the towns. They do not realise that farming is very hard work, if one does not have the right attitude you will not succeed but I think if these people are given alternative employment they will move off these farms.

(4th man) He is correct this issue will sort itself out for example after the first world war the Nationalist government implemented a scheme that catered for returning soldiers they were given farms but many of them left within months because they found life on these plots very difficult such that even their girlfriends and wives refused to settle with them as they preferred to stay in are such as South Africa's Bloemfontein. This what is also going to occur in our present case those that are not meant to be farmers or those that are not strong enough will eventually drift back to the cities.

(6th man) The government should address the issue of farmers that own three to four farms each while there are people without a single plot of land such imbalances are going to affect

even future generations and lead to further conflict so it would be best to address these issues now to secure the future of our grandchildren as well.

Track 3

() 10:00 I am confused what is this film all about.

(Chair woman) This film was made by an independent German film director in order to discuss the land matters in Namibia he went to the Nina area so as to carry out his investigation on the land reform issue. He visited an affirmative action farmer, resettlement farmer and a communal farmer after doing this he then tried to find out the views and feelings of these farmers with regards to the whole land reform issue now we are employed by the legal assistance centre to take these film around Namibia and make sure the people engage in discussions on this land issue. So now tell us what your view on the film is

(First man) It does not represent me as a farmer at all because it only focuses on about six people plus I really did not get the whole essence of the film really. I want to understand what you people aim to achieve with this whole film?

(Chair lady) Well we want to debate on the land issue?

(First man) Productivity is a process for instance have friends that are commercial farmers and they even have other income generating projects that they carry out indoor to subsidize their income in order to survive, how can you expect one to survive on 1000 hectares the economical scale just does not add up that's all that I have to say.(13:39)() Where are the resettled farmers?

(Chairlady) She has one right next to her farm

(First man) So why are they not here?

(Chair lady) They were all invited so I do not know! Because the state is responsible for bringing those people here for training since they do not transport.

(First man) Then this whole issue is one sided so the film serves no purpose!

(Chairman) Well this film does serve a purpose because what we want to do create a dialogue on this land issue because we have been independent for 20years now and we have not even come close to solving this land issue, we need a debate between Affirmative Action farmers, Resettled farmers and commercial farmers. So we need to engage all farming groups and today we are focusing on the commercial farmers.

(First man) I feel the farmers residing in this vicinity should be here otherwise this forum will be one sided

(Chair lady) Well at least they should have made an effort to come here because if we are to succeed we have to be responsible.

(2nd man) I was at the screening of this film a little while ago and we were training about 20 farmers of which only 3 were commercial farmers the rest were affirmative action and

resettlement farmers so we had a very good debate where they all aired their views. Some of them are even here today you can ask my wife over here.

(Chairlady) These are the people that pitch up time after time, I invited extension officers from Grootfontein, AA farmers, Commercial farmers and they are all here.

(Chairman) Anyone else with comments, since the film of any use etc? You also have to understand that we had nothing to do with the making of this film and neither did the film maker try to influence anyone in any way.

(Firstman) Do not try to twist my view I still feel the film was not balanced.

(Lady) I feel no one is at all concerned about the ecology of the land because the fact that these people have small pieces of land means they have to over burden the land with a lot of livestock in order to make a profit and we cannot allow this at all the land in Namibia is Semi arid which makes it very delicate so we need well trained farmers to take over this land and they need to have the passion as well as the drive to farm this land, the passion to farm is of paramount importance which is why the commercial famers seated around here have been successful for so long they owe it all to passion.

23:22 () 25:50

In my opinion we need to use the right criteria to select people that are going to make the land produce to its maximum potential because Namibia at the moment is in recession like the rest of the world so we cannot afford to sink our economy because of inexperienced farmers who lack knowledge and the right attitude to become successful farmers I want us to go forward and not work in a reverse gear.

(Woman) We also need to acknowledge that our commercial farmers contribute greatly to Namibia's turnover, these farmers need to be educated that they can not only farm for subsistence because as custodians of this land they need to be aware that they need to contribute as well to the success of Namibia's economy.

6. Maltahöhe Farmers

Anything you want to comment please feel free

Speaker 1:

I have no problem with the film. Everything is clear.

Now what do you think of the whole country's Land reform?

Sound recording poor.

Speaker two:

I think the film touches very clearly on the resettlement issues. The problem with the government and the ministry of lands and resettlement come out very clearly from there. I

think it is the absolute duty of the ministry of lands and resettlement to educate the resettled people. Normally when we speak about resettlement we speak about the landless which are about 200 to 250 thousand people who are looking for land. We cannot all be farmers. Helmut Stehn pointed it out very nicely: do these people just want a place to sit on or do they want to be productive? The country cannot afford to give productive farms to unproductive people. This thing sums that up very nicely.

Speaker three:

I think they must put something in place where they monitor the progress made by the resettled individual from the time he/she is resettled on the farm. The ministry must for example go to the farms every year to see if there is any progress on the farm. Then you can easily determine whether the person is just sitting on the farm or whether the person is planning on being productive. Then we must make sure that the land that has already been handed over via resettlement has become productive before we hand it over more land which is already productive, then cause it to become unproductive. I think they should also look at the land in the north that is unused and has a lot more potential to be used than the commercial land that is currently being reallocated. The potential of that land needs to be looked into. Then we can promote the productivity of the whole country and produce more food than what the commercial farms are currently producing. So we don't even produce enough to feed our own people, now we still have to reallocate productive land to people who have to start right from the bottom. Then we are even dividing the land into smaller pieces while we are already struggling to farm with the bigger pieces. Those people cannot make a living from that piece of land. It is senseless what they are doing there.

Speaker 4:

I don't want to say a lot but I just want to say...farming is not about just having fun it involves a lot of work and I did not see that there. I heard that they are relaxing; I heard that most of them are part time farmers. It does not work like that. Farming needs dedication. You must work every day and you must work seven days. You must have control over the place as an owner. That thing will not work if there is no control. The resettled farmer needs to be on the farm.

Speaker 5:

I can testify to that because I was also farming from Windhoek and only when I started staying on the farm did I have a different insight. You only learn to love your work and your animals once you are on the farm. You cannot do that from Windhoek. You don't have any pressure to work hard when you are farming from Windhoek. When you are dependent on the farm only you are forced to do it right that's the only way you will make a success from your farming. In Windhoek you still have your salary to fall back on so if your farming does not do well you still don't really suffer. So I feel the people who want to farm have to be on the farm physically.

Any problems with the resettled farmers?

The problem is mainly about the fencing. I have a neighbour who is cutting off my fences illegally to trespass on my land and they set traps to hunt down my game. Maybe it's his workers and not him I don't know. Those are the type of problems... the bordering fences are also not fixed regularly. At some places there are about 5 to 6 droppers that are just rotting and they are not being replaced. There is no money to replace the droppers; even I struggle to do it.

Approximately how many of the resettled farms are here in the area?

There are a lot in this area. I don't have exact figures but about a year ago there were already about 12 to 15 resettlement farms. Those are just the resettlement farms and then there are also affirmative action farms. So there are quite a number of farms in this area that have gone through the process.

Now, these affirmative action farmers and the resettlement farmers, are they skilled?

No, not at all. There are a few of the affirmative action farmer's that are doing well but they are only weekend farmers because the work. Then there are those who have been here for a while but they have nothing to do with us, they are just on their own. Then there are the resettlement farms. There is just chaos there, there is no water, fences are being cut off and it's just chaotic over there. There are a lot of conflicts amongst the people. The ministry of lands and resettlement tried to monitor the situation but they are there in Mariental so it's difficult. And those are farms that are not easy to farm on. Even back in the days, white farmers stopped farming there because it was difficult. However, it's been better in the past few years so they are actually suppose to make progress.

Do you maybe also have a problem on those farms relating to too many people being housed on the farms?

We here are in a fortunate position because we don't have too many people here, if you for example compare it to Nina. Even so, there is a huge gathering of people on resettlement farms.

And do you think the government does enough to help these people after they have gotten the farms?

They don't do anything. It is only NGO's, the Agricultural Union and other private persons... we also try from the farmer's association side to give training and so on but that is a very difficult task. The people live far apart from one another, they are poor and so they don't have money to travel anywhere. Those are the limitations. However, problems like that which is happening on Verlang we don't have here. Of course we have misfortunes and those types of things but they are not as problematic as in the Verlang area.

I wanted to know why there are only women there. There are no men at all?

Maybe it is just on those few farms.

But even in this area, the resettlement farmer's that are doing well are actually the women. They try to get training. When we offer training here about 10 women and only 2 men will show up. So it is the tradition here. It was significant because the two who were speaking the most were women. That is tradition.

Anyone else?

Speaker one: I just wanted to say that the film is a good film. I actually didn't know what to expect. The spectrum was set out very well. From the guy who was asking where he will get land, to the women that are trying to do something, the people who came from Germany and had to start from scratch as well as the South-West farmer. It was a good spectrum.

Speaker two: The only thing that I felt which lacked in the film is the government. they should have featured more and they should have said what they are doing, why there are doing it and why they are slackening in doing some things. At some point someone from the government said “We know of the problems that they have” but he actually didn’t say anything. But that is also how it is in reality. The government is actually not doing anything.

TRACK FOUR

(0:00 – 1: 06)

(First farmer) How can we work together with the government but I think our biggest problem is the school system which is completely anti – agriculture till grade twelve, there is no compulsory agriculture subject except in the few agriculture schools which is after school in the colleges like here at Neudamn and Tsumeb .We need to start at school to teach the children how to grow crops and work with animals then we will get a generation that is much more adapted to agriculture because at the moment the young generation cannot farm because they are uneducated on farming.

(Chairman) - This is something we have heard from other people as well a lot of the white farmers are saying that their farmers are no longer interested in farming anymore and taking over the farm like in the past but are rather interested in going to Jo – burg and Cape town to find a job there they feel they feel there is not much of a future.

(2nd Farmer) Also they feel that farming is not easy money!

(Chairman) – One of the guys near Octave there his neighbour is Pohamba. And Pohamba came to him and said, if he had know how difficult farming was he would have never bought his farm which is quite interesting people have the notion that it is easy money but anyway thank you for that once again I really appreciate it. (2:05)

7. Dorsland Farmers Association

Speaker 1?

Nina farmer’s association is trying very hard to get people involved with their farming.

Speaker 2?

I would really like to know what your purpose for asking these questions is?

The purpose is to show this film country wide and thereafter to hear what people have to say. So the purpose film is to start dialogue amongst people on the issue of land reform. I work for the legal assistance centre and in the past ten years I have worked a lot on land reform issues, laws and also consequences of improper laws. The impact that it has on the agricultural

sector as such. The idea is...when Thorsten Schütte came to us and asked what the land reform issues in Namibia are, we told him: if you are going to make a film, don't make a stereotype film about whites trying to extend their help. Deal with the wider issues. Whether he nagged to do that is an open question. Another thing also is that people look at the issue of land reform as if it is a holy cow. Everyone says it is a sensitive issue but no one is doing anything about it. People write about land reform, political parties talk about but no forum has been created where people can bring forth their views. So it is important for us to know what people think. Are we getting it right or are we not? Is the government getting it right or are they just focussing on stereotypes? For me it is not about whether the film is good or bad, it is to get a discussion going on land reform.

Speaker 1:

I would say it is a very good and objective film.

Speaker 2:

I did not see much but why do I get a feeling that there was some kind of political motivation amongst the people who were addressed. It was not so much about the need ...for example if I only have one camp..at some point I attended a workshop with Bertus Kruger and one of the gentlemen there was also a farmer in the Nina area and he explained to us that one person has about 230 hectares and the other has this much and so on and so on but at the end of the day not one of them is able to make a profit from the land. The one woman actually wanted a piece of land on which she could build a house and she got one camp. She has 15 sheep and she is destined to starve. There was this specific Herero man who said that him and his mother have about 1500 hectares on the farm. Now if he had the land that this woman has, he would have had 2000 hectares. All this woman wanted was a piece of land to built a house on and she gets farming land to built a house on. Is it not better if she gets land in Katutura to built a house on?

Speaker 3:

I think we must look at the dilemma that the government is faced with. When you listen to the expressions of the people, one: Elizabeth says she wants the ideal piece of land at the end of the day. Everyone of us wants the ideal piece of land and that's fine. In own words she also said she must get a farm from those who have four farms, then it will make everything alright. I don't think that is really what it is suppose to go about. The ideal is fine because she says the one has four farms and only occupies one and still owns three more, and that's fine. But Clara Bohitile said weekend farming is acceptable because you farm and you pay for your farm. So then you are also not sitting on your farm. You cannot get things together like that. So I see it as everyone has the ideal to farm but we cannot all farm. So we are all in the same boat and we must accommodate each other at the end of the day.

Speaker 4:

That which really unsettles me in this whole set up is that in our area the people who get land are the highly recognised prominent officials. Not the people on the ground. Let me put it like this. The ex employees of the farmers are not given any land. It is teachers and officials in Windhoek that are sitting with the land. Everyone of them earn a hefty salary and the land becomes an ornament and is not taken care of.

Speaker 5:

I just want to say that on Saturday, I asked the minister what are the advantages and disadvantages of land reform. He said there were a lot of disadvantages. I just want to know if you are going show him how to make it work with these studies and films?

Speaker 6:

That is the plan. I must say that I have always been sceptical about the efforts made by the ministry of lands. But I must say that with the new Minister there is a new way of thinking taking shape. We must look at the efforts made by the ministry. If you can remember the man who came there from the ministry did not actually have much to say. He said he was just there to take note. So hopefully a new process will be implemented and a bigger selection criteria will be added to the currently enabling law. The law as it is now is very open and subject to interpretation. For example: there is no provision in the law which says that if you earn more than 250 000 per annum you are not allowed to be resettled. So that is a lacuna in the law. You cannot blame the teacher or the official for making use of the law as it stands. So those are the things that have to be addressed with the ministry. The more the ordinary people realise that land reform is not the government's responsibility alone, the more pressure can be placed on the government. Through the right channels, changes can be made. Specifically the white farmers. I think the white farmers have an important role to play. They can say that they also belong to this land and they also have interests to protect. They are also willing to accommodate others but then the thing must be done in the right manner.

Speaker 7:

If we have to go back...this confirms the suspicion that I had about this whole thing of land reform. At the end of the day it will make our country poorer if we don't put the teacher there but the worker of the farmer. If that man who cannot even work for someone gets a piece of land, he is not going to work on that land he is going to destroy it. Why is there no one that can tell the government or the people of this land that land is not everything? If he can get a 100,000 dollar loan for two hectares, why can he not go and invest in property? Why is land such a big satisfaction? Is there not anything else? Can anyone not make them see that?

Speaker 8:

The whole land reform issue is politically driven. We must accept that because it is not going to go away quickly. It can only change if the government is made aware of what is happening on the land. It is busy eating away at a once productive sector. This is the type of things that people must start talking about and be realistic about. What is the ministry of lands and resettlement doing to help these people? That woman Elizabeth roughly gets about 7000 dollars in a month. What must she pay with that? She must maintain the farm, she can only get there once a month and she must pay the workers. She does not get any subsidy and petrol costs are high. That is not realistic. These are the things that the ministry must understand. You cannot resettle people who must start from the beginning and don't have the means.

Speaker 9:

If we can make more of these films and show it to the ministry so they can see what is really happening then I think, hopefully it will get better. But as long as they escape the duties, the

situation will only deteriorate. And we saw very clearly that the guy from the ministry did not say anything

Speaker 10:

Clara said they are struggling a lot to pay back the loans but I think 90 percent of the farmers here struggle just the same and they must also repay loans. Secondly Clara herself said that the owners of these resettlement farms are not on the farms, there are a lot of idlers. Now, three weeks ago I spoke to a guy who works for agriculture in Gobabis and we were talking about the farms in Chaka. I asked this man why they don't pay farmers or other people to give these resettled farmers some kind of skills training. Then the man said that the people who are on the farms are not the owners they are idlers.

Do you have people in the ministry that you can work with?

Like I said before there is a slow process that is starting to get off the ground. The previous Minister Jerry Ekandjo was not concerned at all even regarding the communal areas. I don't know if you know about the Kessl case that the government lost earlier this year. If you go through the case you will realise that some of the work that we were doing is highlighted in the case. That is about things that the government should have addressed but did not address. The Kessl case is a very important case in sense that it takes the government hands to address certain issues when they expropriate land. There are certain procedures that have been laid out and which the government must comply with before expropriating land. It is for example said that the minister is not a dictator but an agent of the state who has to follow certain procedures. In this specific case he acted outside of the scope of his power. The judge told him that land reform is part of Namibia and expropriation is provided for by the constitution but can only proceed to do so in compliance with certain procedures. So that gives me hope that an individual who feels aggrieved can go to court and hopefully the ministry will feel obliged to do things in accordance with the law. Of course not everyone has the money to go to court but it shows that there is a process of change taking place.

8. Omaheke San Trust

Speaker 1

What was the message from the film? Anyone?

Speaker 2

What I saw from the film is that Land is a very important asset. In addition I saw that every Farm labourer in Namibia must have a piece of land from which to make a living. That is how I saw it. To have your own place is very good. Then you know how you can sort yourself out in a manner you see fit.

Speaker 3

Then you built your own place. When you have finished building you must see to it that your land is taken care of and that you're fencing is in place. When your things are done then you also live happily on your land.

Speaker 4

I agree, it is true. When people have their own place to settle on, they will not steal.

Speaker 5

When you look at the film, do you think the people need land to be productive and to contribute towards the economy or do you think people need land to just make a living for themselves and just to feel a sense of security. Which is more important?

Speaker 6

No no no, you must farm in such a way that you develop the country. I am sitting in Vergenoeg with 12 other people on four camps. We cannot farm like that. So when you have your own land, then you can farm.

Speaker 5

Is Vergenoeg also a resettlement farm?

Speaker 6

Yes it is.

Speaker 5

Yes it is I was there the other day. So when you compare Verlang in the film with Vergenoeg would you say it is the same or is it different?

Speaker 6

It's almost the same at like at Verlang but I would say that Verlang is in a better condition.

Speaker 7

I would say that in Vergenoeg there is really much more poverty. There are about five people in one post and it does not work out.

Speaker 5

Why do you say that? Can you maybe elaborate on why you are saying that?

Speaker seven

There are about four camps at Post five and the people are too close to one another. When someone wants to buy more livestock, it becomes impossible because he only has one camp.

Speaker 5

So you are saying one camp is not enough. Now when you say people are too close to one another, what does that mean?

Speaker 8

There are people with about 20 cattle and another has only two cattle, then the animals also just die.

Speaker 7

You cannot build up the economy of the country like that. Because one person has too many animals and the other has too few, then two issues arise from there: the person who has too many animals suppresses the other person who has less animals but they both want to work hard to built the economy of the country. That is how I understand it.

Speaker 5

So if you say that the land portion is too small, what will the solution be?

Speaker 8

A solution would've been to give everyone a portion of land comprising of four camps. Then your animals can graze freely

Speaker 5

But how much land is enough land?

Speaker 8

I want a post with four camps

Speaker 5

How many cattle would you put on the land?

Speaker 8

I want a place where I can have about 500 sheep or goats

Speaker 5

Do you think you will be able to make a good living from that?

Speaker 8

I think so.

Speaker 5

Ok. Let's go back to the film again. They talk about the AA farmers and the resettled farmers. Then there are also the white farmers who are helping the black farmers. Do you think it is a good thing or do you think it is nothing serious?

Speaker 8

I think it is a very very good thing. I am sitting in Vergenoeg and we are about 20 people on one camp. Part of the land is flat land and the other part has mountains. The flatland is not so good because no grass is growing there. But we all have to farm there all our animals have to graze there. So if you get your own land and get assistance from the whites, then you can make progress. It is a very good thing.

Speaker 5

What we saw just now was Nina, is there something similar here in Vergenoeg where white farmers or established farmers are helping?

Speaker 8

Never!! There is no help here.

Speaker Five

What about the government? We saw the government was also there in the film, does the government also come here and offer help or how does it work?

Speaker 8

I have never seen anyone that comes to ask whether to help or not. Have you guys seen anyone?

Speaker 9

What I want to say is that the situation in Vergenoeg is different from the situation in Nina. I noticed that at Nina there are affirmative Action Farmers, Commercial Farmers and resettled farmers. In Vergenoeg there are only resettled farmers. The government bought a piece of land and said: Ok now we want to resettle people here. There are no commercial farmers in this area. In the past there was a farmer there from Farm Sonnekom, but these people from Vergenoeg were so jealous and they had so many in fights that the farmer couldn't get a chance to try here and there even if he wanted to. At one point the Omaheke San trust was also there at farm Sonnekom. They had a carpentry project. There the white farmer offered his tractor and other tools for the people to work with on the project. But from the side of the ministry it is very weak. We don't know where the pressure is. Whether it is from the people of the ministry who have to do the work for the ministry? The ministry resettled us here but we don't know what to do. We don't know where the problem lies. That is how I see it.

Speaker 5

In the film there is a man in a blue overall speaking, I think he is dressed in blue overalls and he is talking about the San people getting first preference, do you agree with that?

Speaker 10

No we do not agree.

Speaker 11

The first preference given to the San is something different. The minister and many say the San will get first preference but that is only talking. When it comes to putting it to practice, then it is a different story that is how we see it here. We can go around here with you and show you how many places the San people were given, but the other people forcefully take it away from them. The ministry cannot even tell the people to move out because the land is allocated to the San. Those are the attitudes that we get here.

Speaker 12

What type of people?

Speaker 11

Hereros, Tswanas, they just took it, there is a place here called Boswet...

Speaker 12

Can the San people not go to the police or something?

Speaker 11

The problem is that even if the San people go to the police, they will be told something different. There will probably be one that will be willing to help you but another one will advise him not to help. They say don't listen to those people; those are San people what are they going to do with the Land? The Otjiherero, Tswana and Oshiwambo people are the people who get first preference. They are the ones getting land here.

Speaker 5

You have been resettled in Vergenoeg, did you receive any papers?

Speaker 13

Yes we did get papers. Our resettlement is such that we must sit on Vergenoeg and still make an application for land.

Speaker 5

When the ministry resettled you there, did they allocate land to you individually?

Speaker 13

They said this is your land here. About 12 people are sitting in one place and they said we must apply for land as we are sitting there. When you get lucky you will get land. Applied about 8 times. I go to the offices and I fill out the papers but I don't get any answer.

Speaker five

So you want to move to another place from Vergenoeg or how does it work?

Speaker 13

Yes I want to move so that I can farm.

Speaker 5

So at the moment you cannot farm?

Speaker 13

No you cannot farm. We are too many. The sheep that I use to have, where are they now? They have all been stolen.

Speaker five

So who is stealing?

Speaker 13

There are so many people, you don't even find footprints.

Speaker five

So how many sheep do you have now?

Speaker 13

As I am sitting here, I only have two sheep.

Speaker 5

When you saw the film, you saw the man in the blue overall; he works for a resettlement farmer, the woman. He feels that the government must also cater for people who are working for resettlement farmers. Do you think he is telling the truth or do you think they must also work there just like they were working for the white farmers?

Speaker 14

He is talking the truth. He must also get a place where he can farm. That is what he is saying.

Speaker 15

What I will say is that...If you are working for a resettled farmer, you cannot also farm with your two or three goats or sheep because you are only there as an employee. What he said is the truth, the government must also look to those people. Say for example I work there for a year, and she gives me a cow and that cow gets offspring, then I must also get my own place because my animals are multiplying. So what that man is saying is true, he must be resettled

while he is working there because as long as he is working there he cannot farm. If he can keep his two or three animals there it will depend on the owner.

Speaker five

Ok. In the film they are talking about idlers... You are coming from Vergenoeg, what do they mean by idlers?

Speaker 16

Idlers are people who don't work, they just move from place to place. They go around stealing and robbing.

Speaker 5

Why do you think there are so many people? Do you think it is the governments fault? Do you think these things would not happen if everybody was resettled? Where do you think is the problem? How must it be addressed?

Speaker 17

Things work like this; if your child goes around taking other peoples things, stop him. Stop him. He must rather steal the game that belongs to the government and eat it rather than eating animals that belong to the farm people. That is where we break each other down.

Speaker 5

So the parents must mind the children?

Speaker 18

The parents must mind the children. I have said this to the people of Vergenoeg so many times. I didn't even choose children individually when I spoke to them. I addressed all the children and I told them, what they are doing is wrong and I will call the police if I see them stealing people's things.

Speaker 5

But why do you think it's happening? Is it poverty? Is it because people don't have money? Is it because they don't have food or is it just them being naughty?

Speaker 19

In a resettlement farm, we have cattle and sheep but we don't have camps. We just farm together. That farm is big, it is about 7000 hectares but it is not divided, we just farm together. We have no right to have our own camps.

Speaker 5

If you don't have the right what happens then? What do you do if you want to fill your stomach?

Speaker 20

There is a place where they do gardening. At least they get food from there.

Speaker 5

Does everybody work in the garden?

Speaker 20

Yes a lot of people work there.

Speaker 5

Which camp are you from?

Speaker 20

I am from Skoonheid resettlement farm.

Speaker 5

Ok. Which one of you have ever been farm workers?

ALL OF US

Speaker 5

So if you have to think many years back, why are you not on these farms anymore?

Speaker 21

When the government buys the land and a new owner takes over, that new owner decides that he does not want farm workers on the land. He comes with his own people and throws us out. Us who come and built our corrugated iron house here are the ones who have been chased away from the farms. We come and look for work here but there is no work here as well and that is why we suffer. Us San people or us Damara people, we suffer here in this Omaheke. We don't have a place. When I look back at the olden times I can say it was better than because now it's worse. Back then we had our own livestock and no one stole from the other, but today everything that we had is gone. We don't have anything anymore. When we used to work for the white people we used to get a sheep here or a goat there and you farm with that on the side. All the animals that we got from the white people, where are they today? Gone! Why? It is because we do not respect each other here. Your child and my child get together and go take someone's sheep. When the sheep is missing there is nothing you can do because it disappears without footprints. That is how it went on until today where we have nothing. Everything that we got from the whites is gone. What can we do? The black government came. The black government came and bought farms but only certain people have benefits on the farms.

Speaker 5

Who are those people that are benefitting?

Speaker 22

The people sitting in the offices are the Oshiwambo people, the Tswana people and the Otjiherero people. The San, Damaras, Kalahari and Kavangos don't get anything. We are lying flat on the ground. They come from Owamboland and they get big farms while apply for land year in year out.

Speaker 23

There was an incident that we can attest to. The farm Sonnerkom behind Skoonheid was bought by the government to resettle the San people who were overcrowded on farm Vergenoeg. What happened after that? The people in the offices informed their peers that there was a farm up for resettlement and they must apply. When the applications come to the Land Board the people who have family or friends within the board are handpicked and

resettled. The other day we went to Sonnerkom to go and see whether the whole farm has been occupied and we saw that half of the land is unoccupied. But the minister says nobody has been resettled there. There are people from the Caprivi or Karas Region who have been resettled on that farm. We then went to the director and asked him why other people are being resettled here when they also have resettlement programmes in their regions. We here are also applying for land. Just like I heard Elizabeth say that she is from the Erongo and she applied for land numerous times. The she went to go negotiate with the people and she asked for help to be resettled and that is how she was eventually resettled in the Nina area. During the white administration getting land was very restricted. You only got land if you could manage it. Otherwise you had to leave it. But on the other side, some people in the olden days gave land away because they did not know the importance thereof. It is important because having land is like having a diamond farm. They did not know that it is important but now days they realize that it is important.

Speaker 5

So who must get land? Who would you say must get land first? The poor people, the rich people or the people who can employ people, to empower them? How must it be done?

Speaker 24

The poor people must get land first so that they can progress. Because when you are employed by a rich person, you work there for a while and when you disagree you go work somewhere else. Then later on you realize you have no land. So the way I see it the poor people must get land first. Us who worked before know how to garden and how to farm with animals. We know how to do all that.

Speaker 25

The government must help a little bit. Maybe with a few sheep, a few goats and some cattle.

Speaker 5

So the government must help?

YES

Speaker 5

But the way you see it, do you think the government is doing well?

Speaker 26

The way we see it things are not going well.

Speaker 27

What I think is that things may be different for the Minister or the President in comparison to the people who are working for them. When we watch TV or listen to the radio we hear that the president or the minister speaks well of the land but the problem comes in where it has to be implemented by the people beneath them. That is why we can say that the government means well but there is a problem with its servants.

Speaker 28

Yes. We will really not give the government any fault. It is the people working for them who are suppressing us. Like the elders said, the poor people can get the land but the government must always assist. The government must for example agree to assist for 5 years and thereafter assess the progress. If there is no progress, then the government can replace the person so as to give someone else a chance. If the government takes us and just throws us in the squatters, then we just die. Later on there will be no more black people. You must be able to plant and if the rain comes you must be able to plough. Then they must help you with a tractor until you are able to sell your produce and buy your own tractor.

Speaker 5

I have one more question. You say that when the president talks on the radio he says that it is going well with the Land but the people living on the land do not agree. So somewhere in between there is miscommunication. Now how can alert the people up there that things are not going well? What can you do to explain to the people up there that things are not working out the way they are supposed to?

Speaker 5

What do you do with democracy? I mean you vote for the people who can serve the people best. Is that how it works or am I talking nonsense?

Speaker 29 Those people we vote for come up with good ideas. Then you vote for them and then later on when they win, things are not done according to what has been said. That is where the losing starts.

Speaker 30

Damara people are the most stupid people. I do not know what is going on in our heads. They say vote for me, then I will give you a farm and a car. Then you gather all your people and you go vote. After voting you sit in a desert, under the sun without even water to drink. That is how we are suffering in this Namibia. There are people who are living very well and there are people who are suffering. During the time of the whites, we were beaten into shape. We were beaten and we did get into shape. We were beaten but we could live. But now in the new era, we are experiencing grave suffering. As I see it we will probably also die out and other people will progress. I don't know if it is the governments fault but it is not going well with us. When someone is hungry, he does not have ears. I can tell you know that that is going to develop into war here in Gobabis.

Speaker 5

We do not want war so how can we stop it?

Speaker 31

Sorry but I just wanted to comment on the issue of democracy and choosing the right people. San people and Damara people are easily influenced. We easily turn to other people and push each other away. Only when a problem arises do we run back to each other. As we are speaking now we are busy mobilizing our people. We want to choose someone who will go and represent us in parliament or at the minister. Currently, when the regional councillor comes and we speak to him they just see us as just San people who can be ignored. If we have our own people they will not do that to us. They will help us. That is the problem that we the San people and Damara people have. We do not understand this democracy very well.

Speaker 5

Allright. We probably still have to learn a lot but that is a discussion for another day. Thank you very much for coming.

