Decentralisation in Namibia 2010

Empowering the Regions

WHAT IS DECENTRALISATION?

"Decentralisation" means giving the power and responsibilities to make decisions about urban areas (villages, towns and municipalities) and rural areas (settlements) to Regional Councils and Local Councils respectively. Regional Councils and Local Authorities are Government bodies directly elected by the people who live within their jurisdiction.

Decentralisation is implemented in two phases, namely the Delegation Phase and the Devolution Phase. Under the Delegation Phase (also known as the Preparatory Phase) the Regional Councils and Local Authorities perform the functions as an agent on behalf of the line Ministry responsble for them. Under the Devolution Phase, which is the ultimate phase, the functions, staff and resources are transferred to the various Regional Councils and Local Authorities to perform the functions for their own account.

Services which will be provided by the Regional Councils:

- Community development and early childhood development
- Administration of settlements
- Management and control of communal lands
- Primary health care
- Pre-primary, primary and secondary education
- Rural electricity distribution
- Resettlement, rehabilitation and housing
- Physical and economic planning (including capital development projects)
- Agency services to towns, villages and settlements
- Emergency services

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DECENTRALISATION?

- It brings services such as education, health care, water and electricity closer to the people
- It promotes participatory democracy and sustainable development for the benefit of all Namibia's citizens
- It ensures that all interests at a regional level are taken care of a the national level because the Regional and Local Authorities are closer to the communities and, thus, are better positioned to know what the ground needs of the communities are

ROLE PLAYERS

- The **Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development** is responsible for coordinating the decentralisation process
- The **Minister of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development** has been given special powers in terms of the Decentralisation Enabling Act, 2000 (No.33 of 2000) with regard to the implementation of decentralisation
- **Cabinet** approves the decentralisation of functions to Regional Councils and Local Authorities
- The **decentralisating line ministries,** decentralise functions to regional Councils and Local Authorities
- **Regional councils** and **local authorities,** receive and execute the decentralised functions
- **Communities** are the beneficiaries of decentralised services

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR DECENTRALISATION IN NAMIBIA

- The **Namibian Constitution** provides for the establishment of a system of regional and local government
- Article 102(1) of the **Constitution** specifically provides for the structures of regional and local government
- Chapter 12 of the **Constitution** provides for the establishment, powers and functions of the Regional Councils and Local Authorities
- The **Regional Councils Act**, 1992 (No 22 of 1992) as amended provides stipulations relating to Regional Councils elections
- The **Local Authorities Act**, 1992 (No 23 of 1992) as amended provides stipulations relating to Local Authorities elections, including that elections shall be held at intervals not exceeding five years. In 2009, the Act was amended in order to extend the term of office of the current councillors to not later than 30 November 2010, when their term ends
- The **Decentralisation Policy** adopted in 1997 by the National Assembly
- The **Trust Fund for Regional Development and Equity Provisions Act**, 2000 (No 22 of 2000)
- The **Decentralisation Enabling Act**, 2000 (No 33 of 2000)
- Relevant sector laws and policies governing functions being decentralised

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TERMS 2010

1st Term: 13 January - 23 April
2nd Term: 26 May - 25 August
3rd Term: 07 September - 07 December

JANUARY

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DECEMBER

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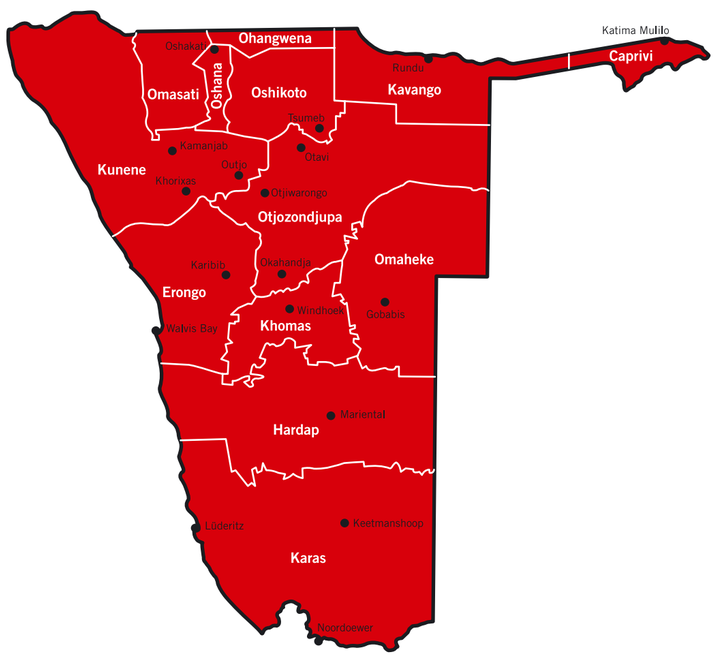
NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Central Government
President & Cabinet of Ministers
↓
Regional Government
Regional Councils
↓
Local Government
Municipality councils *Town councils* *Village councils*

• Namibia has 13 regions and therefore has 13 regional councils
• Namibia has 16 Municipalities, 17 Towns and 18 Villages in total



The Regions in the Republic of Namibia

HOW CAN I EMPOWER MY REGION AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DECENTRALISATION PROCESS?

- **Take part in the Regional Councils and Local Authorities Elections in 2010.**
  Remember
  - In order to vote in these elections, you need to be a Namibian citizen, 18 years of age and a registered voter
  - In respect of the **Regional Councils Elections,** each constituency elects one member to the Regional Council for the Region in which it is situated. The candidate receiving the most votes in any constituency serves as the elected member of the Regional Council for that constituency
  - In respect of the **Local Authorities Elections,** each voter must be registered, and has vote in the constituency in which he/she has been living for at least a year immediately before the elections. Every political party or organisation/association that takes part in the Local Authority Elections has to provide a list of candidates equal to the number of seats in that particular Local Authority Council in question. The number of votes cast for that party or organisation/association will determine how many seats it gets in the Local Authority Council
- **Make sure that you elect leaders** who are accountable to you and who will take care of your interests
- **Hold your leaders accountable.** In this way you can make sure that services are delivered to your community in a fair, equitable and transparent way
- **Inform your councillors** about the needs of your community and ideas you have for development
- **Get firsthand information** about regional development and observe how your councillor represents the interest of his/her constituency
- **Keep the Development Committees informed** of your communities development needs and priorities
- **Be active in civil society groups** that work towards developing your community

FACTS TO REMEMBER WHEN VOTING

- Every person who
  - is a Namibian citizen
  - over the age of 18
  - is a registered voter
  - is ordinarily resident in the constituency for which he/she is elected and
  - is not a member of a Local Authority

  may stand as a candidate in the Regional Councils elections
- Any person has a right to form and join a political party or association, that can run for office in the Local Authority elections
- Your vote is your right and secret. It is against the law for any person to intimidate you into voting in a specific way
- The voting process has to be conducted in a free and transparent way
- It is your right to approach the police or other authorities if you encounter or suspect any irregularities during the election process

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (Directorate Decentralisation Coordination)
  Tel.: 264 - 61 – 2975241
  Fax: 264 - 61 – 2975279
  www.decentralisation.gov.na
- Association of Regional Councils in Namibia (ARC)
  Tel.: 264 – 61 – 229537
  Fax: 264 – 61 – 246628
  www.arc.org.na
- Association for Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN)
  Tel.: 264 – 61 – 240914
  Fax: 264 – 61 – 240929
  www.alan.org.na

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In partnership with:

Association of Regional Councils in Namibia (ARC)

Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2010

01 JANUARY	NEW YEAR'S DAY
21 MARCH	INDEPENDENCE DAY
22 MARCH	PUBLIC HOLIDAY
02 APRIL	GOOD FRIDAY
04 APRIL	EASTER SUNDAY
05 APRIL	PUBLIC HOLIDAY
01 MAY	WORKERS' DAY
04 MAY	CASSINGA DAY
13 MAY	ASCENSION DAY
25 MAY	AFRICA DAY
26 AUGUST	HEROES' DAY
10 DECEMBER	HUMAN RIGHT'S DAY
25 DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS DAY
26 DECEMBER	FAMILY DAY
27 DECEMBER	PUBLIC HOLIDAY