

**LAND MANAGEMENT CAPACITY BUILDING  
FOR LAND REDISTRIBUTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

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## ABSTRACT

Historically, Southern Africa was the last continental region to gain its political independence. Namibia and South Africa for instance are the newest independent states on the continent. By the type (apartheid) and nature (internal colonial states) of the protracted colonial rules, the region had the most extensive white settlements. This is still the case in at least three countries - Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, where most of the fertile productive land is held as white commercial farms

A common colonial trend, which still persists in the region has been the dualistic tenure system, where freehold was carved out for the settlers, and communal a reserve for the indigenous population. Despite a general perception of generous land/population ratios, the region nevertheless has areas experiencing acute shortage of productive land, and ostensibly an expanding proportion of landless population.

It is no wonder therefore, that at independence, new governments in the region had to formulate policies and programmes aimed at reforming the colonial land dispensation. Various acts, policies and programmes are now in place, with the singular goal of land redistribution. In Namibia for instance, the government has embarked on an ambitious land reform process, involving the acquisition of land (through willing seller willing buyer) for the resettlement of the landless. This undertaking is inherently complex and cumbersome social process, requiring not only financial resources to purchase the land on to which to resettle, but also a highly trained personnel and an extensive government bureaucracy to manage the process.

The purpose of this paper is first to present an outline of the land management training programme, embarked upon by the Land Management Department of the Polytechnic of Namibia, and two to elucidate how this training is a prerequisite to any successful process of land reform and redistribution, to a region where land distribution (to say the list) remains extremely skewed.

The paper starts with some historical backgrounds, and later dwells on some specifics of the various training programmes on offer at the Polytechnic of Namibia. The paper further underlines the basic stages and ingredients of any land reform process, for the purpose of exploring the roles requiring requisitely trained personnel. Finally a mention is made on the regional coverage of the programmes.

# 1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## 1.1 General Need for Training

At independence, most African colonies never inherited what may be called an elite workforce. In most emerging independent states therefore, the most urgent requirement was the training of the requisite workforce and this to some meant starting from scratch. In countries like Namibia and South Africa, the apartheid system had a severe impact on training.

It is under this background that Namibia had to make a start, and as we all know, capacity building is not an overnight issue. Educational and training infrastructure has to be built, teaching staff have to be solicited, funds be set aside for bursaries and even secondary school graduates with admission requirements have to be available.

## 1.2 Land Management Training Chronology

The need for training in land management originated from Namibia's Ministry of Lands Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR). Under its land reform programme, entailing acquisition of land, resettlement of the landless and rehabilitation of conditions of the resettled people, several specific trained cadres became an absolute necessity. Chronologically this can be summarised as follows:

- § In 1994, the Ministry (MLRR) concluded an agreement with a Danish NGO - the IBIS under which the first National Certificate (NC) course in Land Use Planning (LUP) was commissioned (for development and implementation) to a Dutch Institute – the ITC. This course was initially meant for MLRR employees only
- § By 1997 a tripartite partnership between the Ministry, Polytechnic of Namibia and the ITC resulted in the formation of a special training facility called INSHURD Project. Under this project, the NC course in LUP was further improved, and accredited by the Polytechnic. Additionally the project developed and incepted a second NC course in Land Measuring. The courses were open for other Ministries.
- § By 1999, a new training facility - TELMSA Project under the same tripartite partnership was formed to develop the courses into international programmes. Under the new TELMSA facility, provision was made to form a Land Management Department at the Polytechnic, and a South-to-South fellowship facility was instituted to cater for SADC students wishing to follow the programmes. Courses were conducted from the Polytechnic of Namibia.
- § By 2000, two new National Certificates in Urban Land Use Management (ULUM) and Land Valuation (LV), and a National Diploma in Land Management were added and all courses were open for the SDAC region.
- § By 2001, a new facility - IT-2 Project under the same partnership became operational to strengthen and expand the programmes, add a fifth NC in Land Registration (LR) and develop a Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech) degree programme. The LR Certificate will be offered by 2003, while B. Tech, which is in its final development stage is programmed for offering in 2004.

## 2.THEMES OF LAND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Land Management is a broad term, encompassing the various operations that are necessary before land is put into productive use. It caters for the legal and administrative obligations over land, bestowed to any State.

Land Management as a branch of study, has three major objectives to achieve:

**Productivity:** Under productivity, the aim here is to ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that among the competing uses over a given piece of land, the best and highest rewarding use stands the chance.

**Equity:** Under equity, land is viewed as a finite natural resource, which is basic for most human development. Accessibility to this resource should be rationalised in order to afford a piece of land to every citizen who needs one.

**Conservation:** Besides the issues of productivity and equity, land needs to be used in a sustainable manner, so that those who use it today do not compromise the right of future users to do the same.

### 2.1 The Context of Land Management Training

The training in land management redresses a number of fundamental problems, currently faced by the region some of which are summarised as follows:

i) Colonial dispensation:

Colonisation was accompanied with a tremendous effect on accessibility to land and landed resources. Land grabbing led to alienation of major ancestral lands, disruption of the existing social fabric and the collapse of traditional land management systems. Yet the dual tenure system meant that land under communal systems never came under government management. After independence, this has been the prevailing situation in most countries. Botswana for instance has instituted Land Boards to manage these lands but trained personnel remains a major problem. Namibia is on the process of forming Land Boards as well.

ii) Population growth:

The region experiences high population growth rate (see table 1) with some countries' population doubling within 20 years. Coupled with the confines of communal reserves i.e. no free land for expansion, the pressure for land in certain areas is unprecedented. The issue of access to land remains sensitive in the region, and in some countries it is already explosive. To tackle this complex and socio-economically sensitive issue, a critical mass of trained land managers and administrators must be available to institutions responsible for land affairs in the region.

Table 1: National population of SADC Countries 1955 - 2000 (in thousands)

											Annual Growth (%)	Annual Growth (%)	Population Doubling Data (at Current Growth Rate)
Country	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	1960-94	1994-2000	1994
Angola	4,437	4,816	5,180	5,588	6,110	6,993	7,975	9,194	10,500	12,800	2,3	3,4	2014
Botswana	433	481	549	623	755	903	1,068	1,238	1,400	1,600	3,2	2,3	2025
DRC	13,604	15,333	17,558	20,270	23,251	27,009	31,667	37,391	43,900	51,700	3,1	2,8	2019
Lesotho	794	870	963	1,064	1,187	1,339	1,539	1,747	2,000	2,300	2,4	2,5	2021
Malawi	1,369	3,529	3,975	4,518	5,244	6,183	7,335	9,582	9,600	11,000	3,0	2,3	2024
Mauritius	571	660	753	826	892	966	1,020	1,075	1,100	1,200	1,5	1,1	2057
Mozambique	6,744	7,461	8,338	9,395	10,498	12,095	13,547	14,200	16,600	19,600	2,4	2,7	2019
Namibia	566	633	713	810	926	1,066	1,235	1,439	1,500	1,700	2,6	2,5	2022
Seychelles	38	42	47	53	59	62	67	71	100	100	1,6	0,9	2071
South Africa	15,385	17,396	19,832	22,458	25,842	29,529	33,597	37,959	40,600	46,300	2,5	2,2	2025
Swaziland	291	326	370	419	482	565	659	751	800	1,000	2,8	2,8	2018
Tanzania	8,915	10,205	11,781	13,694	15,900	18,581	21,895	25,993	29,200	33,700	3,1	2,4	2022
Zambia	2,753	3,141	3,614	4,189	4,841	5,738	6,864	8,138	7,900	9,100	2,8	2,5	2022
Zimbabwe	3,257	3,812	4,466	5,260	6,143	7,126	8,370	9,947	10,900	12,400	3,2	2,2	2026
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,957</b>	<b>68,705</b>	<b>78,139</b>	<b>89,167</b>	<b>102,130</b>	<b>118,154</b>	<b>136,839</b>	<b>158,725</b>	<b>176,100</b>	<b>204,500</b>			

Source: Klein Goldewijk, C.G.M. and J.J. Battjes, 1997. A Hundred Year (1890-1990) Database for Integrated Environmental Assessments (HYDE, Version 1.1), National Institute of Public Health and Environment, Bilthoven.

UNDP.1997. Human Development Report 1997, Oxford University Press, New York.

iii) Environmental concerns:

Population pressure on land is a red flag indicator for conservation and environmental well being. Land degradation is a major concern in the region, and logically the pressure spots are the communal lands. Common to both arable and pastoral communities, degradation has manifested mainly as soil erosion, overgrazing and deforestation. The economic impact of soil degradation to rural communities can be very devastating. On the national scale effects such as climate change, desertification and phenomenon like bush encroachment can lead to drastic loss of production, income and state revenue.

Another equally critical issue of concern is the shrinking of protected areas. Table 2 shows the situation in the SADC region in the 1990s, where half of the 14 countries had less than 10% of their area under protection. With a total of over 5.6 million square kilometres, these countries had less than 300 000 sq. km. under protection, or about 5%

*Table 2: Protected areas system in the SDC region*

Country	Areas (sq km)	Total Area Designated	Percentage
Angola	1,246,700	62,610	5.0
Botswana	575,000	27,241	24.2
DRC	2,345,410	136,248	5.8
Lesotho	30,345	68	0.2
Malawi	94,080	17,624	18.7
Mauritius	1,865	***111	6
Mozambique	784,755	17,431	2.2
Namibia	824,295	111,548	13.5
Seychelles	404	409	*101.3
South Africa	1,184,825	74,895	6.3
Swaziland	17,200	460	2.7
Tanzania	939,760	365,115	38.9
Zambia	752,615	295,802	39.3
Zimbabwe	390,310	117,093	**30
TOTAL	9,187,564	122,655	13.4

\* *Includes marine components.*

\*\* *Includes private conservancies and some district councils.*

\*\*\* *Includes privately owned mountain reserves.*

*SOURCE: Adapted from McNeely, J.A., Harrison, J and Dingwall, P., Protecting Nature Regional Reviews of Protected Areas, IUCN/EU, Gland/Brussels, 1993, IUCN, Mauritius: Environmental Synopsis 1993, IUCN/EU, Gland/Brussels, 1993*

### **3. TRAINING PROFILES AND LAND REFORM REQUIREMENTS**

Land management training takes the form of tertiary education hence admission requires matriculation (grade 12) with requisite science subjects, particularly passes in Geography, Mathematics and English. Training was geared towards the land reform process in general and specifically the implementation of the Flexible Land Tenure Bill.

#### **3.1 Certificate Training Profiles**

- i) A one-year national certificate in rural land use planning intended to produce a technical assistant cadre, conversant with the basic skills of generating alternative land use planning scenarios. Equipped with GIS as analytical tool, they should be able to comprehend typical issues such as resettlement and farm planning, natural resources conservation plans, land use zoning guides, action plans for rural centres and general rehabilitation management. Graduates of this programme work in land use offices at central ministerial, provincial, and regional levels, town councils and land boards. Private planning firms also deploy these graduates in a number of preliminary planning works.
- ii) A national certificate in land measuring produces assistant technician surveyors, capable of doing rudimentary survey and land measurements, adequate for the implementation of the flexible land tenure bill. Graduates of this one-year course should be able to measure out plot boundaries, assist in resolving plot boundary disputes, transfer plot descriptions to local property offices and assist in cadastral updates. Graduates are employable as assistant survey technicians in surveyor general's offices, provincial/regional land restitution offices and in local property offices. They are also deployable in private survey firms.
- iii) A land valuation certificate holder works as an assistant valuation technician, where duties performed include the compilation of attributes for valuation rolls, assisting in undertaking valuation duties such as valuation of agricultural, residential and commercial land and buildings, needed for various purposes. Graduates of this one-year certificate are employed in several ministerial, provincial, regional and local property offices, where asset valuations are needed for purposes such as sale/purchase, mortgage, rental assessment, insurance, rating and taxation. They are also handy in private businesses particularly in the fields of property marketing, financing organisations and estate management.
- iv) A certificate in urban land use management aims at producing assistant land use technician, armed with the techniques of implementing urban land use zoning plans. They are intended to strengthen the capacity of urban land managing institutions, including responsible ministries, local authorities private organisations. Urban authorities are the main employers of these graduates, where they assist planners in the enforcement of statutory plans, and monitoring of councils' byelaws.

- v) A new certificate in land registration shall be offered for the first time in January 2003. The aim of this programme is to augment the services of land administration within state organisations such as deed registration offices. Besides the conventional (generic) registration however this course includes the unconventional technique of flexible tenure registration. The course aims at extending land rights to communities who hold land outside the formal freehold system. Graduates of this programme will find employment in deed registration offices, local property offices and private organisations such as building societies.

### 3.2 Diploma Training Profile

The Department offers a National Diploma in land management, a two-year programme built on the one-year certificate. This three-year diploma is currently undergoing restructuring to give way to three separate diplomas in Land Use Planning, Land Surveying and Land Valuation. These three new diplomas will be offered from 2004.

The profiles of the three-year diplomas are strengthened to a level where such graduates are vested with the contemporary skills and knowledge in their fields of specialisation. Their employment areas are the same as those of their similar certificates, but hold more substantive positions. Although still at sub professional level, graduates will hold positions such as survey assistants, planning assistants and valuation assistants.

### 3.3 Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech) Profiles

The Department has developed an additional one-year B. Tech programme, built on the three-year diplomas, stretching them into bachelor level. The B. Tech is scheduled for 2005.

The profile of the B. Tech is perceived at professional level, offering an ultimate cumulative skills and knowledge at a first-degree level. Graduates of this degree programme shall be accomplished professionals employable originally as assistant land managers or administrators in institutions dealing with land affairs in the region.

### 3.4 Requisite Skills for Land Reform

Complex and sensitive as it is, the process of land reform has one singular objective in mind, that is redistribution of land, currently plentiful in the hands of a minority and scarce among the majority. For better comprehension of this cumbersome endeavour, it may be useful to break it into three distinct processes:

- i) Acquisition of land for resettlement purposes:

This process is by no means simple or straightforward. It requires legal considerations, policy framework, political will and financial resources to purchase land. Under Namibia's 'willing buyer willing seller' policy the first consideration is



the criteria for the selection of a farm conducive to resettlement. The second tricky issue is the value of land offered for sale and hence the price. The issue of suitability and value hinges entirely on land management skills, which enables intrinsic evaluation of the qualities of land, its locational suitability and most importantly its value based on market conditions and economic return potentials. Without specialised training in land management and valuation, determining value of land would be at best a pure guesswork.

ii) Selection of resettlement beneficiaries:

In a country where the majority are deprived of land, including some whose land dispossession came within the existing generation, this process is surely a big gamble. Whatever criteria used, it bluntly amounts to 'free money to some and none to others' endowed from public fund. Moreover, those deemed most desperate may not be the best beneficiaries given factors such as social status, ethnicity, farm location, historical facts and so on. To preserve the integrity of any land reform programme and its proponents, a truly plausible and transparent selection criterion is imperative. The ingredients of such criterion must draw heavily on both social and technical functionalities of the very process. Land management skills give the basis to any such criterion.

iii) Successful management of resettlement projects:

Once beneficiaries are selected and resettled with a lot of government support, the pressure from the rest of society to see this resettlement being successful is enormous. A further sustained government support draws criticism from those who have none. This is a very delicate operation, as in most cases an entire rehabilitation process is an absolute necessity. In Namibia, three approaches to resettlement are in practice - individual, group and co-operative resettlements. To either of these, there are sets of reasons, all requiring careful and informed consideration.

Successful resettlement calls for thorough preparation and programming. This in return requires very specialised skills not only in the institutionalised management of the process but also in the actual rehabilitation process on the ground.

The delivery of any successful land redistribution programme therefore requires the building of a critical mass of appropriately trained personnel, in order to build the requisite government bureaucracy, which manages this complex process.

#### 4. PROGRAMME REGIONALIZATION

Originally these programmes were incepted for the Lands Resettlement and Rehabilitation Ministry in Namibia. However intakes were quickly expanded to national level between 1997 and 1999. By 2000, the programmes were regionalized when they attracted intakes from other SADC countries.

The regionalization of the programmes was originally made possible by a Dutch sponsored fellowship programme, built into the IT-2 project facility. As the popularity of the programme increases, intakes from private and regional government sponsorships have been on the rise.

Table 3 shows a summary of graduates by country at the end of 2001. Current enrolment indicates a gradual stabilisation of regional students, mainly from Botswana and South Africa but new countries joining. Original South African students came from one province - Eastern Cape, but from 2001 Mpumalanga has become a second province to take advantage of the programmes.

*Table 3: Total graduates by country from land management programs by December 2001*

<b>PROGRAMME</b>	<b>NAM</b>	<b>R.S.A</b>	<b>BOTS</b>	<b>ZIM</b>	<b>ZAM</b>	<b>TANZ</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Certificate Land Measuring	35	1	2				38
Certificate Land Use Planning	38	4	4			1	47
Certificate Urban Land Use Management	5		1				6
Certificate Land Valuation	13	4	2	1	2	1	23
<b>SUB TOTAL: CERTIFICATES</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>113</b>
Diploma Land Management	11						11
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>125</b>

*Note: Numbers include graduates of April 13, 2002 Graduation.*

The newest countries to join the programmes are Mozambique and Nigeria. Overall, out of 113 currently enrolled students 20 are foreigners, constituting seven Batswana, six South Africans, two each from Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia and one Nigerian.