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Development Workshop Namibia

Submitted By: Geoffrey Payne and Associates



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Development Workshop Namibia

Organization Type: Civil society

Website: https://dw-namibia.org/

Practice Details

Country(ies): Namibia

City(ies): Windhoek, Okahao, Oshakati, Rehoboth, Karibib, Oniipa, etc.

Start Year: 2018 **Ongoing:** Yes **End Year:** N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:

- Housing Affordability & Financing
- Housing & Informality
- Housing, Land & Spatial Planning
- Housing Policy, Legislation & Governance

Relevant SDGs:



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Problem & Context

Namibia is a rapidly urbanising country with high levels of economic inequality. This makes it extremely difficult for newly arrived urban households to access affordable, secure and adequate housing, resulting in a mass expansion of informal settments. The current regulatory environment imposes standards that are not easily affordable to lower income groups, forcing them into illegally developed settlements.

Solution Developed

The DWN programme addresses this problem by linking with local governments and specialist consultancies to prepare a range of sites and services projects in 15 different towns and cities and these include links with adjacent informal settlements and include health, educational, social and environmental aspects, creating the basis for socially responsive and economically equitable development. Although the programme has not yet been able to persuade the government to amend the regulatory constraints, much has been done to achive progress within it. A review of the project has encouraged the government to reconsider the current standards.

Implementation

1) The programme aims to proovide 9,00 serviced sites for low-income households in 15 different towns. Many sites have been developed, and households have been provided with plots which they can develop according to their needs and resources. A range of child development centres have been created, health programmes launched with the active involvement of locally trained volunteers, and waste management systems launched. 2) Formal relations have been established with central and local governments as well as NGOs operating in the country and specialist consultancies. 3) The project is well advanced, but weather conditions, such as flooding, have delayed some projects. It is hoped to expand the present programme and include provision for different income groups in order to maximise options for internal cross-subsidies. 4) The German development bank KfW has helped in funding the programme and is happy with progress.

Enablers & Obstacles

1) DWN has established excellent relationships with all key public agencies, development agencies and local communities. All expressed strong support during a mid-term appraisal. 2) The major barrier to implementing the current programme and expanding it is the minimum residential pot size of 300m2 which imposes high costs of providing essential infrastructure. Efforts to encocurage a more appropriate minimum officiall area (eg 150m2) are ongoing.

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Results & Impact

1) A large proportion of the sites have been provided, and occupations are underway, though floods have delayed occupation of plots in some northern towns. Interviews with local governments and plot beneficiaries revealed a high level of satisfaction with the programme. 2) Impacts on low-incme households have bene very positive, though some are waiting to pay off their plots before taking occupation and others are waiting for the provision of essential infrastructure. 3) The potential for the programme is massive as demand for affordable housing is substantial and unmet. DWN plans to expand and diversify the programme and hopes that the ministry will relax the official residential plot size, which is two or three times larger than found in many informal settlements and is therefore a barrier to progress.

Replication & Scale Up

Sites and services programmes have been implemented in many countries. Development Workshop is also undertaking a national sites and services programme in Angola with support from the World Bank.

One simple change to the official residential plot size from 300m2 to about 150m2 would halve the costs of provising infrastructure and also create more convivial environments in which economic activity could be viable. Changing the mondest of officials is key to achiiving progress and evidence from the current programme could be helpful in achieving this.

Policy Uptake

This housing practice has informed or been partially integrated into policy discussions, strategies, or pilot-level policy instruments.

DWN is well integrated with local governments in each of the towns where it operates and has bene allocated offices to improve collaboration. It also has good relations with development agenices and other NGOs.

Lessons & Takeaways

The programme is seeking to contribute to a natioanl housing sector that reflects the needs and resources of the rapidly expanding urban population, a high proportion of which are seeking economic opportunities and need to access housing, land and services on affordable levels. The programme maximises their participation in seeking to achieve this, There is more to do and the prospects are enormous.