



Health and Social Sector Support Programme, Namibia 1995–2004

The development objective of the Programme is to improve the health status and well being of the Namibian people. This is to be achieved through improved implementation of core health and social welfare services, better integration of health and social welfare activities, and improved management systems and capacity at central, regional and district levels.

International Development Collaboration at STAKES is an expert organisation specialising in health and social sector development projects. As a unit, we plan, implement, monitor and evaluate development projects in transitional economies and developing countries. Our operations comprise expert services, such as technical assistance, consulting and training services.

Project objectives and beneficiaries

The overall objective of the Health and Social Sector Support Programme (HSSSP) is to improve the health and well being of the Namibian people. The purpose of the Programme is to improve the efficiency and implementation of core health and social welfare services in the seven Programme regions. The Programme is implemented by the **Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS)**. The main beneficiaries are the health and social authorities, officials and service providers at different organisational levels. The ultimate beneficiaries are the clients using the health and social services.

Project components, phase I (1995–2000)

- Strengthening the Directorate of Planning and Human Resource Development
- Support to Human Resource Development
- Strengthening the Directorate of Social Services
- Strengthening District and Regional Health Services
- Capital development (of primary care facilities in Nankudu District)
- Support to the Blood Transfusion Services
- Finalisation of Engela Area Integrated Health Project (from 1997)

Project components, phase II (2000–2004)

- Strengthening the Regional Management Teams
- Strengthening of the MoHSS training network
- Strengthening the Directorate Developmental Social Welfare Services
- Support to the Directorate Policy, Planning and Human Resource Development
- Strengthening the equipment management and general maintenance of physical facilities
- Support to the Mental Health Programme

Services provided by STAKES

In the first phase, STAKES provided a technical assistance team, which facilitated the achievement of the expected results of the project. STAKES also provided supporting services for the project, including project management, personnel and financial administration, information services, and the setting up and maintenance of institutional linkages in the health and social sectors between Namibia and Finland. In the second phase, STAKES continues to provide both long-term and short-term experts and ensures good quality project management, professional back-up and institutional linkages for the successful implementation of the project.

The Finnish-Namibian relations date back to 1870s when the Finnish missionaries arrived in the Northern Namibia. During the Namibian struggle for independence in 1970s and -80s, Finland supported the process and gave humanitarian aid to Namibian people. When Namibia gained independence in 1990, Finland and Namibia started cooperation which aimed at promoting stability and creating the preconditions for peaceful and sustainable development. Namibia has also been one of Finland's long-term partners in development cooperation. HSSSP is the largest Finnish bilateral health sector programme in general, and the largest Finnish programme in Namibia.

Contact information

National Research and Development Centre
for Welfare and Health STAKES
International Development Collaboration

Director Jutta Immanen-Pöyry

Postal address
P.O. Box 220, FIN-00531, Helsinki, Finland

Street address
Lintulahdenkuja 4, 00530 Helsinki, Finland

Tel: +358 9 3967 2028

Fax: +358 9 773 2922

E-mail: fdc@stakes.fi or
firstname.lastname@stakes.fi

www.fdc.stakes.fi

Health and social situation in Namibia

During its independence, Namibia has developed its health and social welfare sector rapidly. This has resulted some positive impacts: e.g. reduced child mortality, increased immunisation coverage and more equal access to the health and social services provided. Yet big challenges lie still ahead, the most serious one being the HIV/AIDS epidemic: Namibia is one of the five countries in Southern Africa most affected by HIV/AIDS.

Main achievements of the project

The Programme has been instrumental in reorientation of the **social welfare policy** of Namibia and in the integration of the Directorate of Developmental Social Welfare Services into the mainstream of the MoHSS. Key service provision programmes of the Directorate, such as care of the elderly, alcohol and substance abuse, orphans and other vulnerable children and HIV/AIDS have received both technical assistance and financial support from the Programme. The MoHSS has built and equipped a rehabilitation centre for alcohol and substance abusers with co-funding from the Programme.

The Programme has assisted the MoHSS in developing its **continuing training system** and facilitated the establishment of a functioning training network. Organisational development, capacity building of staff and improvements in physical infrastructure of the *National Health Training Centre* and its regional affiliates have been supported by the Programme. At central level the key achievement has also been the development of different areas of the **health management information system**, including training information system, social welfare information system, and dynamic medical equipment management system. During the first phase, national blood transfusion services were also supported.

The first phase of the Programme started the **capacity building** of the health and social services teams in five target regions, concentrating in developing the basic management and planning skills of the staff. During the second phase, more target regions were added into the Programme. The long-term experts facilitated further management training, leadership skills development and team-building of the regional staff. The **decentralisation of health and social sector services** has also been supported as well as the improving the physical facilities of the regional management teams in selected regions. Extensive postgraduate fellowship programme is ongoing and has already provided several diploma- and master-level degrees in public health and health management to regional and central level staff of MoHSS.

During the second phase an important new component was added which aimed to establish a functioning **medical equipment management system** within the MoHSS and improve the basic maintenance of the MoHSS physical facilities. This includes reviewing and reorientating the relevant policies, guidelines and management systems, building up staff capacity at national, regional and district levels, and setting up dynamic databases for equipment and facilities in order to provide information needed for decision making. The MoHSS has utilised national and international expertise in doing this, supported extensively by the Programme.

Budget for the project

EUR 16.2 million for 1995-2004 (phases I and II)

Financed by: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Government of Namibia