

## Demographic Characteristics and Constraints of Livestock Production in Northern Namibia

### Introduction

- Namibia has a thriving livestock sector both from the commercial farmers and small scale farmers.
- The livestock sector is key to the livelihoods of the households in the region
- Livestock rearing is one of the important livelihood enterprises for small scale farmers country-wide.
- The small scale farmers use livestock for consumption, income generation and store of value.
- Livestock production and productivity is still low among small scale farmers due to various factors

### Study area

- This survey was conducted in the Omusati region of northern Namibia (Fig. 1)
- Omusati is the 3rd most populated region of Namibia with a population skewed towards females.
- The average household size is 5.2 persons.
- It is a semi-arid area with temperatures of 25-37°C.
- A range of livestock are reared by small scale farmers in the region .

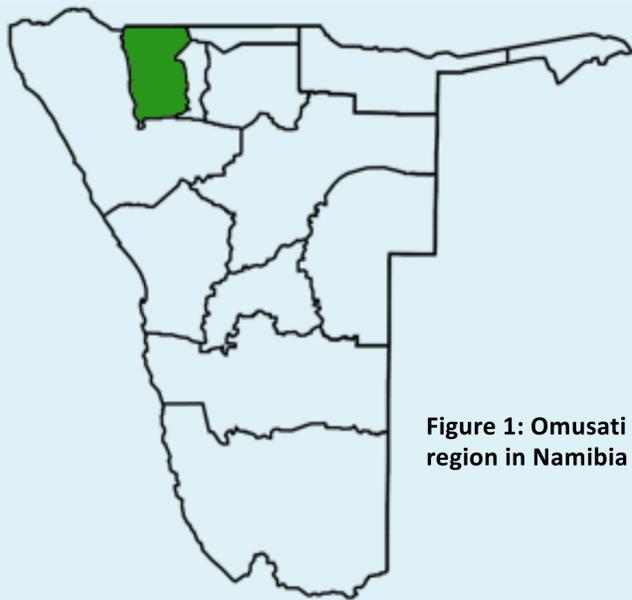


Figure 1: Omusati region in Namibia

### Objective

To identify constraints that affect livestock production in Omusati, in order to inform the development of remedial actions.

### Materials and Methods

- The study was conducted in twelve constituencies of Omusati .
- 81 structured questionnaires were administered to households identified through stratified random sampling.
- Data on socio-economic characteristics, livestock production, value and housing, livestock management and extension, population by category/breed, milk production .
- Quantitative data from the questionnaire was coded and captured into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Descriptive analysis were used as tools of evaluation in the data analysis.

### Results and Discussion

Constituency	Animal Species Frequencies (%)					
	Cattle	Sheep	Goat	Donkey	Pig	Chicken
Anamulunge	111 (6.8)	1 (0.4)	244 (7.8)	18 (7.5)	11 (5.9)	278 (15.0)
Eilim	63 (3.8)	27 (9.7)	116 (3.7)	31 (13.0)	14 (7.5)	97 (5.2)
Etayi	78 (4.8)	0 (0.0)	197 (6.3)	29 (12.1)	28 (15.0)	110 (5.9)
Ogongo	32 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	12 (5.0)	13 (7.0)	98 (5.3)
Okahao	232 (14.2)	55 (19.8)	132 (4.2)	8 (3.3)	10 (5.3)	195 (10.5)
Okalongo	196 (12.0)	20 (7.2)	265 (8.4)	5 (2.1)	10 (5.3)	132 (7.1)
Onesi	54 (3.3)	4 (1.4)	157 (5.0)	37 (15.5)	17 (9.1)	101 (5.5)
Oshikuku	37 (2.3)	3 (1.1)	45 (1.4)	11 (4.6)	11 (5.9)	91 (4.9)
Otamanzi	168 (10.3)	122 (43.9)	412 (13.1)	35 (14.6)	18 (9.6)	119 (6.4)
Outapi	70 (4.3)	25 (9.0)	361 (11.5)	10 (4.2)	32 (17.1)	312 (16.8)
Ruacana	455 (27.8)	16 (5.8)	526 (16.7)	10 (4.2)	9 (4.8)	141 (7.6)
Tsandi	141 (8.6)	5 (1.8)	687 (21.9)	33 (13.8)	14 (7.5)	178 (9.6)
<b>Total Freq (%)</b>	<b>1637 (22.3)</b>	<b>278 (3.8)</b>	<b>3142 (42.8)</b>	<b>239 (3.3)</b>	<b>187 (2.5)</b>	<b>1852 (25.2)</b>

Table 1. Animals species reared in northern part of Namibia.

Table 1 shows that goats are the most common species of livestock reared in the region (42.8%) followed by chicken (25.2%) and cattle at 22.3%. Under the dry conditions of Omusati, goats are best suited due to their hardy nature.

Both goats and chickens are relatively easy to raise since they attract limited feeding and disease control costs. Chickens have an advantage of being small in size and quick to dispose in times of need.

	Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	48	60
	Female	32	40
<b>Age (years)</b>	0-40	2	2.4
	40-50	7	8.8
	50-60	21	26.2
	60+	50	62.5
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	14	17.9
	Married	38	48.7
	Widowed	26	33.3

Table 2: Gender and demographic descriptive data of the survey

- Table 2 shows that the majority (40%) rear livestock for consumption within the family and meeting their traditional obligations (35%). Income generation is a bonus rather than an objective. Perhaps this explains the lack of commercial approach to livestock rearing in the area. Even the management is predominantly extensive method (92%).
- The area has a number of pensioners whose main source of income is the pension (39%). Formal employment is the second most common source of income. Only 20% depend on agricultural activities as the main source of income. This shows that there is potential for growth of livestock production.
- Livestock rearing was more common among men (60%) than women (40%). Those who own livestock in the area are above the age of 60. Only 2.4% of youth keep livestock.
- Livestock may not be attractive to the youth for various reasons, such as slow turn over and availability of other options that are more appealing to the youth.

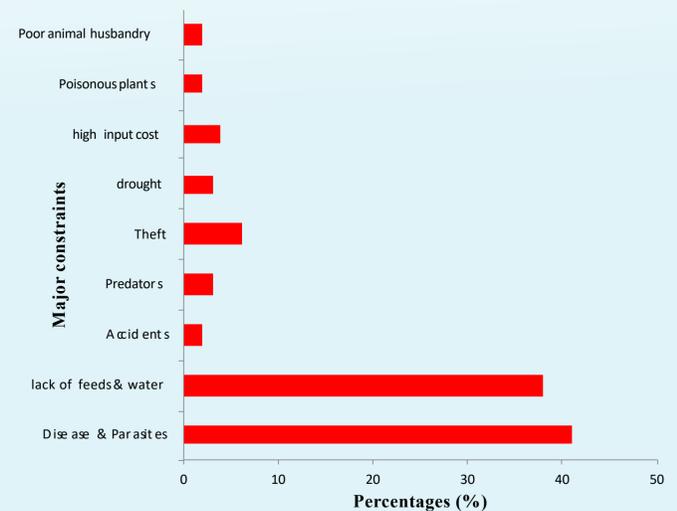


Figure 2: Constraints of Livestock production in Omusati .

- Figure 2 shows the relative significance of various constraints in livestock production in Omusati. Diseases and pests (41%) and lack of feeds and water (39%) were considered to be the most significant constraints. Fortunately, the two constraints can be addressed through specific public and private sector actions.
- The other seven constraints were considered minor and of limited impact to livestock production. However, close to 10% cited livestock theft as a constraint. If not attended to promptly, this could get out of control.
- Drought, which is likely to increase in intensity and frequency due to climate change, did not receive a high rating

### Conclusion

- A wide range of Livestock species are reared mainly for consumption in the Omusati region, using predominantly extensive methods.
- The youth have minimal participation in livestock production.
- Diseases and pests as well as lack of feeds and water are the dominant constraints
- The identified constraints and the lack of interest in livestock production can be addressed through development of specific policies and actions

### Acknowledgements

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