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Country Report**

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	3
ISSUES AND LESSONS	4
SUMMARY	7
1. INTRODUCTION	12
2. NATIONAL CONTEXTS	15
3. DFID POLICY AND STRATEGY	19
4. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO	29
5. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT	36
6. PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS	39
7. IMPACT AND INFLUENCE	50
8. CONCLUSIONS	59

List of Tables

Table 1 Description of projects reviewed	13
Table 2 Namibia – TC expenditure by Sector, 91/92-98/99	21
Table 3 Botswana – TC expenditure by Sector, 91/92-98/99	25
Table 4 Namibia – SA and non-SA NR projects	32
Table 5 Botswana –SA and non-SA NR projects	35
Table 6 Actual or likely project achievements	39
Table 7 Likely poverty impact	52

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATP	Agriculture Technology Project
BDDCA	British Development Division Central Africa
BDDSA	British Development Division Southern Africa
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis
BRIMP	Botswana Range Inventory Management Project
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DAH	Department of Animal Health
DAHP	Department for Animal Health and Production
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
DRM	Department of Rural Management
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
FIAS	Fisheries Information Advisory Services
FIMS	Fisheries management information system
FM	Field Manager
FSU	Field Support Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GoB	Government of Botswana
GoN	Government of Namibia
HDI	Human Development Index
KFSRE	Kavango Farming Systems Research and Extension
MFDP	Ministry of Finance & Development Planning
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NCCED	North Central Community Based Natural Resource Management and Enterprise Development Project
NNEP	Northern Namibia Environmental Project
NR	Natural Resources
NRI	Natural Resources Institute
PIMS	Project Information Management Systems
RLED	Rural Livelihoods and Environment Department
RLSP	Rural Livelihoods Support Project
RNR	Renewable Natural Resources
SA	Sustainable Agriculture
SAS	Sustainable Agriculture Strategy
SL	Sustainable Livelihoods
SRL	Sustainable Rural Livelihoods
TA	Technical Assistance
TC	Technical Co-operation
TCO	Technical Co-operation Officer
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VEES	Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics Section
WILD	Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification Project

ISSUES AND LESSONS

1. This evaluation concentrates on projects and strategies designed prior to 1997. Many of the lessons which follow have already been learned by the DFID programmes in Namibia and Botswana, but not necessarily elsewhere in DFID.

Assistance for agriculture

2. The economic and environmental context for rural households in middle-income countries such as Namibia and Botswana means that agriculture is of diminishing, and now often minor, importance. For many poor households agriculture provides more of a safety net than a major source of livelihood. In Botswana, for example, own produce makes up less than 30% of the incomes of poor and very poor rural households. Cash income and transfers makes up over 70%. Most importantly, even where RNR are significant in livelihood terms, there is limited potential to increase the productivity of agricultural activities. In Botswana, and to a lesser extent Namibia, it is not clear that agriculture-based enterprises have significant potential to reduce poverty. The SL approach now being actively promoted by the SL advisers in Botswana and Namibia, and by RLED more widely, is an appropriate response to this analysis.

Lessons:

- i. *Assistance for agriculture is not equally justified in all countries. DFID programmes need to be based on a sound understanding of the socio-economic trends affecting rural livelihoods, and an objective assessment of the potential of agricultural activities to contribute to a reduction in rural poverty.*
- ii. *The potential benefits of a holistic understanding of poor people's livelihoods, as promoted by the Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) approach, are clear. However, the SL approach needs to be an office-wide approach, not renewable natural resources (RNR) by another name; needs to be grounded on a reliable understanding of livelihoods; and requires much longer than a three-year time frame if the potential of interventions within or outside the RNR sector are to be identified and developed.*

Sector strategies

3. Considerable time and resources were expended on developing RNR strategies for Namibia and Botswana during the early and mid-1990s. These strategies have not, however, been as influential or effective as hoped. This is explained by a combination of sectoral inertia within DFID (e.g. support for fisheries in Namibia and animal health in Botswana), poor management of the strategy process (Namibia 1996), and a focus on natural resources rather than on people and their livelihoods (Botswana). In both countries the RNR strategies have been constrained by existing commitments and limited additional funds. Monitoring strategy

performance, and the extent to which projects contribute or not, has been difficult in the absence of clear objectives and indicators.

Lessons:

- iii. For small programmes with limited additional funds, and little leeway for change, lengthy and elaborate strategy processes may not be justified. The shift by DFID to SL approaches which feed into the Country Strategy Paper is an appropriate response.*
- iv. Strategies need to be designed and monitored using the logical framework approach if they are to be effective. A clear hierarchy of objectives, and monitorable indicators, are required.*
- v. Strategies which aim to address rural poverty need to be based on a sound understanding of rural poverty.*
- vi. Sector strategies need to be owned by the DFID regional office as a whole, as well as by partners and the sectoral advisers immediately involved, if they are to direct the programme.*

Small programmes and small projects

- 4. Advisory and management overheads increased for all DFID projects and programmes over the 1990s. Extensive participation, and the need for inputs from a wide range of disciplines, has increased the cost of project design and implementation. Small projects are not necessarily simpler. In Namibia and Botswana, NR Field Managers account for up to 10% of the cost of the programme. On the other hand, most of the projects reviewed would have benefited from a wider range of inputs from, for example, institutional advisers. DFID advisory resources are already fully stretched.

Lessons:

- vii. Single-programme rather than multiple-project approaches, like the SL programme being developed in Botswana, are strongly indicated. These are more likely to receive, and justify, the advisory and management inputs they require.*
- viii. Where the DFID funds are limited, bilateral DFID RNR/SL programmes may not be justified if multi-lateral poverty reduction initiatives, to which DFID can contribute, are in process or planned.*

Capacity building within government

- 5. All of the projects reviewed have aimed to build capacity and/or systems within government departments. In all cases this has taken longer, and been less successful and sustainable, than envisaged. The appointment and retention of

counterparts has been a common problem. This is neither a novel approach, nor a novel finding.

Lessons:

- ix. Capacity building within government departments requires careful, and realistic, institutional appraisal if it is to be effective and sustainable.*
- x. If DFID is to support capacity building within government departments using TCOs or consultants, best practice guidelines need to be developed and disseminated. These might, for example, indicate the need for longer projects, and longer entry/exit phases.*

SUMMARY

1. This study is part of an evaluation of DFID's support for sustainable agriculture (SA) since the early 1990s. Five projects were reviewed, representing around 75% by value of DFID project commitments to SA during the 1990s:

Namibia

- Kavango Farming Systems Research and Extension (KFSRE)
- Northern Namibia Environmental Project (NNEP)
- Fisheries Information Advisory Services (FIAS)

Botswana

- Botswana Range Inventory Management Project (BRIMP)
- Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics Section (VEES)

National contexts

2. Namibia and Botswana share a number of common characteristics:

- They are both middle-income countries, but with a high degree of income inequality, serious HIV/AIDS epidemics, and persistent rural poverty.
- They have relatively small human populations (1.7m and 1.5m respectively) and a limited number of trained, experienced people to work on projects.
- They are not dependent on donor resources (particularly Botswana).
- They have agricultural sectors which contribute less than 10% of GDP.
- They are predominantly arid/semi-arid with limited agricultural potential.
- They have rural populations which are increasingly reliant on income from non-agricultural sectors (Botswana and parts of Namibia), while still dependent on agriculture as a safety net.

3. The last two features in particular make these countries a particularly challenging environment for agricultural interventions, whether crop or livestock based.

4. Since Independence in 1991, the total DFID programme in Namibia has risen from £2m to £4m per year, 14% of which was support for SA. Total DFID assistance to Botswana has declined from £6m to £3m per year over the decade. Support for SA has accounted for an average of 25% (and other NR for a further 19%). DFID-SA has recently decided to regionalise the smaller bilateral programmes in southern Africa.

Sustainable agriculture programmes

5. DFID supported sustainable agriculture activities in Namibia and Botswana were consistent with the 1994 Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (SAS). However, the evaluators found no evidence that the activities were directly guided by the SAS.

6. RNR sector strategies appear to have had limited influence in both countries. The Namibia programme has operated without an effective RNR strategy since 1991, although a draft strategy was prepared in 1996 (but rejected by DFID-SA) and revised in 1998. These strategies have not influenced the programme in Namibia.

7. Botswana has had a RNR strategy since 1993, but the proposed strategic focus on rural poverty and environment, and away from animal health, has only partly been realised. The evaluators conclude that the Botswana strategy was flawed in two key respects. First, the main focus on range management was unlikely to be effective for technical, social and political reasons. Second, most of the initiatives focused on natural resources rather than the reality of poverty in rural areas. Potential benefits in terms of rural poverty reduction were assumed rather understood (4.10).

8. In principle, well-focused RNR strategies, based on a proper understanding of rural livelihoods and poverty, would have been beneficial given the small size of both programmes. The strategies produced were not of this type. The rapid turnover of advisers and policy further reduces the prospect of any strategy or project remaining relevant to DFID for more than two or three years.

9. Since 1998 the major DFID influence on the Namibia programme has been the SL approach, and the new NR Field Manager. Three new projects which better fit new

DFID priorities have been approved. Indications that the SL approach is not fully owned by the Namibians are a concern.

10. In Botswana the development of the new SL programme has involved a much more participatory strategy process than previously. As recognised by DFID advisers, there is limited potential for agricultural or rural-based enterprises as an effective route out of poverty for rural Botswana (4.12).

Programme management

11. The benefits of an in-country NR Field Manager are evident in both countries (5.4-5). General support from DFID-SA in Pretoria has been good. However, the separate location, and the demands on other DFID-SA advisers, has meant a multidisciplinary team approach has been difficult to realise (5.6).

12. Neither programme has been managed as a 'programme', in the sense of a linked set of activities contributing to a common objective. Interaction and learning across projects has tended to be limited, as has review and monitoring of the RNR strategies. The independent review of the Botswana strategy in 1998 was the exception. Project monitoring has been of mixed quality (5.7-10).

Project effectiveness

13. Most of the projects reviewed were effective. Revised Purposes and Outputs were largely achieved, but at a higher cost and over a longer time-scale than originally envisaged.

14. Credit for this achievement largely rests with the project team, especially the technical cooperation staff, and with the country Field Managers. However, achievement at Goal level is less promising, and sustainability is not assured. The Namibian projects have also been rather more successful in delivering the revised, rather than original, outputs (6.1.-3).

Impact and influence

15. All the projects should have some positive impacts. For example, all the projects reviewed have, to a greater or lesser extent, increased skills and capacity within the government departments involved, albeit with some doubts over sustainability. Most have had some influence on policy. KFSRE was particularly influential in this respect.

16. However, when judged against the likelihood of significant impact, the performance of the DFID agricultural projects reviewed in Namibia and Botswana is more disappointing. In the opinion of the evaluators, the likely impact of the projects reviewed on poverty, food security, or environmental sustainability will be limited. While all the projects reviewed can be seen as contributing in some way to the policies and context for poverty reduction, only one project (KFSRE) is judged likely to make a positive contribution to increased opportunities for poor people (7.6-7).

17. Four main factors have contributed to this outcome:

- The economic and physical environment of Botswana and much of Namibia is not conducive to agricultural interventions. It may be questioned whether agricultural enterprises have significant potential to reduce poverty in this context.
- Working within government to improve the enabling framework means that any impact on people and resources is bound to be indirect, diffuse and long term.
- Four of the five projects had design flaws which made it less likely that they would contribute to higher order objectives, either at the project or country strategy level.
- The extent of the institutional challenge – and the time required to build capacity, skills and information systems – was underestimated in all cases.

18. The findings of this study support the need for a holistic understanding of poor people's livelihoods, as now promoted by the SL approach. In Botswana and much of Namibia this may indicate the need for interventions outside the RNR sector – rather than RNR by a different name – if the SL approach is to lead to programmes which

are more likely to contribute to the reduction of rural poverty than the projects reviewed. This is recognised by the DFID advisers concerned, as is the need for the SL approach to be tempered by the priorities and constraints of DFID's partners.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This study is part of an evaluation of DFID's support for sustainable agriculture¹ since the early 1990s. The objectives of the overall evaluation are:

- i. To review the extent to which DFID funded sustainable agriculture activities since 1994 have been guided by, consistent with, and supportive of, the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (SAS).
- ii. To assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of selected DFID sustainable agriculture projects under implementation since the early 1990s.
- iii. To assess the impact of these projects, and of the SAS overall, in contributing to reducing poverty, improved food security, and improvements in the productivity of land and aquatic resources.
- iv. To identify good practice in the design and implementation of sustainable agriculture projects, and the Sustainable Livelihoods approach.

1.2 The findings of the first stage of the evaluation have been reported in an Approach Paper, which concentrated on the design and dissemination of the SAS. The aim of this study, and of the other country studies in Kenya and Bangladesh, was to address the ToR with reference to particular SA projects. The original intention had been to limit this study to Namibia. Botswana was added at a later date in order to increase the number of projects reviewed, and to provide a contrasting experience with respect to strategy development.

1.3 This study draws on a review of the main project documents for five projects, discussions in May 2000 with project personnel involved with four of these, and interviews with some of the DFID and partner staff involved with the implementation of the SA programmes in Namibia and Botswana since 1992. Two brief visits were

¹ In the SAS, and in this report, 'agriculture' is defined as including crop, livestock and fish production, but not forestry.

made to each country. Summary details of the five projects are given in Table 1 below.

1.4 The limitations of this report are acknowledged. Similar resources were allocated to this study of two country programmes as were allocated to each of the other two country studies. The evaluation is largely based on a review of the available DFID documents for a sample of projects; on country visits of only one week; and on interviews with a limited number of project staff. The extent of in-country consultation was accordingly limited.

1.5 This report concentrates on strategies and projects designed and started in the period 1994 to 1998, when the SAS was in force. However, some comment on later phases of projects, and on the Sustainable Livelihoods approach now being implemented, are included.

Table 1 Description of projects reviewed

NAMIBIA
Kavango Farming Systems Research and Extension (KFSRE) Duration: 1994 -2000 Major Partner: Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development Purpose: Regional capacity for adaptive research, development and extension and training programmes developed through farming systems, research and training (1997). Total DFID cost: £1.2m
Northern Namibia Environmental Project (NNEP) Duration: 1997-2000 Major Partner: Ministry of Environment and Tourism Purpose: Information and participatory planning system for a sustainable environment in Northern Namibia developed. Total DFID cost: £1.44m
Fisheries Information Advisory Services (FIAS) (desk review only) Duration: 1994/95 -2000/01 Major Partner: Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Purpose: improved planning and management of fisheries industry on the basis of information generated by an integrated fisheries management information system. Total DFID cost: £0.9m

BOTSWANA**Botswana Range Inventory Management Project (BRIMP) Phase 1**

Duration: 1995-1999

Major Partner: Ministry of Agriculture

Purpose: To support and strengthen the Range Ecology, Remote Sensing and Cartography sections in the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) through the provisioning of training and technical assistance to increase their capacity to implement a sustainable pilot range inventory and monitoring programme.

Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics Section (VEES) Phase 1

Duration: 1996-1998

Major partner: Dept. of Animal Health, Ministry of Agriculture

Purpose: DAHP capacity strengthened to implement new animal health and production policies which are cost-effective, promote the integration of wildlife and livestock, and maximise the sustainable use of Botswana's rangelands, targeting areas of greatest poverty.

Total DFID cost: £1.6m

CHAPTER 2

NATIONAL CONTEXTS

2.1 Namibia and Botswana share a number of common characteristics. The most important of these in the context of this evaluation are as follows.

- Both are middle-income countries, but with a high degree of income inequality, serious HIV/AIDS epidemics, and persistent rural poverty.
- Both have relatively small human populations (1.7m and 1.5m respectively) and a limited number of trained, experienced people to work on projects.
- Both are not dependent on donor resources (particularly Botswana).
- Both have agricultural sectors which contribute less than 10% of GDP.
- Both are predominantly arid/semi-arid with limited agricultural potential.
- Both have rural populations which are increasingly reliant on income from other, non-RNR based, sectors (Botswana and parts of Namibia).

2.2 These features make Namibia and Botswana very different from Bangladesh and Kenya. The last two features in particular make the context in both countries particularly challenging for agricultural interventions.

Namibia

2.3 Namibia is a middle-income country with a per capita GNP of \$2,220 (1997) and one of the highest levels of inequality in the world. The economy is heavily dependent on mining (uranium and diamonds) and sea fisheries. Growth averaged 4% in the first half of the 1990s, but has since become negative in per capita terms due to a combination of drought, weak economic and financial management, and the limited government capacity inherited at Independence. Government expenditure is exceptionally high (over 40% of GDP in 1999/2000), with 1 in 5 workers employed in

the public sector (DFID draft CSP, 1999). Attempts to reduce public expenditure have met with limited success.

2.4 Nearly ten years after Independence, Namibia remains a country of extreme inequality and low human development for the majority of its people. While ranked 71 in the world in terms of GDP per head, Namibia ranks 115 in terms of its HDI index, a discrepancy that is partly a result of the country's apartheid past. Half the population survives on approximately 10% of the average income (UNDP, 1999). Between 35% and 40% live below the \$1/day poverty line. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is increasingly impacting on life expectancy and HDI statistics.

2.5 Agriculture has accounted for 6-9% of GDP over the past ten years, only 3% of which derived from the communal, 'subsistence' sub-sector. However, these figures understate the socioeconomic importance of subsistence agriculture, and particularly its importance for the poor, 70% of whom live in the northern regions. Despite a heavy reliance on purchased food, much of the rural population remains highly dependent on subsistence agriculture as a safety net. Around 60% of the economically active rural population is employed in agriculture, and subsistence farming contributes 51% of rural household incomes (UNDP 1998). These are average figures. Dependence on subsistence agriculture is much higher in some areas (e.g. Caprivi and Kavango) than in others (e.g. North Central). Access to land and other productive resources remains very unequal, and productivity is generally low.

2.6 Government published an Integrated Poverty Reduction Strategy in 1998. It has discussed the possibility of a comprehensive development framework with the World Bank, but there is as yet no Bank lending. The largest donors are the EC, Germany and other European countries.

Botswana

2.7 Botswana is a middle income country with a population of 1.53m (1997 estimate) – growing at 3% pa and increasingly urbanised – and a GDP per capita of

US\$3,217 (1995/96 estimate). At Independence in 1966, Botswana was the second poorest Sub-Saharan African country in per capita terms. It is now the second richest. This transformation is largely attributable to the rapid growth of the mining industry (mainly diamonds), and to sound economic management. At the end of 1997 official reserves were US\$6.3 billion, and external official debt was just 13.5% of GDP (draft CSP, DFID, 1999).

2.8 Despite Botswana's relative wealth, poverty and inequality persists. 47% of the population (623,000 people) were below the strictly defined Poverty Datum Line in 1993/94, down from 59% in 1985/86. Poverty rates are especially severe in western districts, and among the minority San people (the so-called Bushmen).

2.9 The Government of Botswana (GoB) has invested heavily in health, education, rural water provision, and social safety nets. An Old Age Pension was introduced in 1996, and an Orphans Allowance is due to be introduced. As a result, basic social indicators are more impressive than the income poverty figures might suggest. Botswana's Human Development Index rank was 97 out of 175 countries in 1995. Extremely high rates of HIV infection represent an increasing threat to health and life expectancy.

2.10 Performance of the agricultural sector has been poor, with little growth in either production or productivity. The sector's contribution to GDP has declined from 40% at Independence to only 4%, and now accounts for only 2% of formal sector employment. Employment in traditional agriculture fell by 75% from 1981 to 1991 (BIDPA,1997). This is despite government investment equivalent to 40% of agricultural GDP, or ten times as much as other comparable countries (Thirtle *et al.*, 2000). In some years the value of subsidies to the arable sub-sector exceeded the total value of crops produced (BIDPA,1997).

2.11 There are two main reasons for the declining importance, and poor performance, of the agricultural sector: poor soils and climate, and its unattractiveness relative to other forms of economic activity. Contrary to the situation in most other developing countries, the rural poor use subsistence farming to supplement other

incomes. Consumption of own produce accounted for only 25-30% of the disposable income of the poor and very poor in rural areas in 1994/95. Cash income and transfers account for the remainder (BIDPA, 1997). This contrasts with the analysis in the 1996 DFID RNR Strategy: 'the sector remains an important source of food, income and employment and forms the core of the rural economy where the majority (75%) of the population live'.

2.12 The agricultural sector is dominated by beef cattle ranching in which, unlike crop production, Botswana has a comparative advantage. However, the distribution of cattle is highly skewed. The proportion of farming households with no cattle increased from 32% in 1981 to 49% in 1995 (NDP8), and 40% of the traditional herd is owned by less than 5% of households. The expansion of the cattle industry has also had negative consequences for wildlife, and has led to the possible over-utilisation of range resources, particularly in the remaining communal areas. Although much debated, these issues have yet to be effectively addressed in practice rather than policy.

2.13 Poverty, the San, and the impact of the cattle industry on the environment have been sensitive and controversial issues. Donors have had to tread carefully. However, while discussion of poverty at least is now more open, there is still no coherent and unified poverty policy, and a continued focus on infrastructure and traditional rural activities as the main solutions. This may now be changing. The government is undertaking detailed reviews of rural development policy and of agricultural subsidies.

2.14 Aid to Botswana has been decreasing since 1990 as donors have taken into account the country's relative wealth. The majority of other donors have now terminated or significantly reduced their programmes, although the EU remains a major contributor. The reduction in foreign aid has made life difficult for the small but vocal NGO community, which has been heavily reliant on donor support. The new DFID supported SL programme may help, and may develop a more effective mechanism for channelling GoB funding to the NGO sector.

CHAPTER 3

DFID POLICY AND STRATEGY

3.1 DFID's² objectives and priorities have changed over the 1990s. In 1992, the aim of overseas aid was 'to promote sustainable economic and social development and good government, in order to improve the quality of life and reduce poverty, suffering and deprivation in developing countries'. The reduction of poverty was one of eight priority objectives. In 1995, following a Fundamental Expenditure Review, the aim was clarified as 'to improve the quality of life of people in poorer countries by contributing to sustainable development and reducing poverty and suffering'. In the 1997 White Paper, the aim of DFID became 'the elimination of poverty in poorer countries'.

3.2 The apparent similarity in these objective statements hides three key changes in DFID policies and approaches since 1992. First, although poverty reduction has long been *an* objective of the DFID aid programme, since 1997 poverty elimination has become *the* single, overriding objective. Second, the operational priority attached to environmental issues within the aid programme has declined, particularly since 1997. Third, in support of the new focus on poverty elimination, the Sustainable (Rural) Livelihoods (SL) approach has been vigorously developed and promoted by DFID's Natural Resources Division and NR advisers.

Namibia

3.3 Britain has supported development in Namibia since 1990. The main purpose of DFID support in the early to mid 1990s was to provide support to the Namibian Government in implementing its programmes to redress the social, political and economic inequalities that existed prior to Independence. The priority objective was to support the consolidation of non-racial democracy. TC was focused in four key sectors: Good Governance, Health, Education, and RNR.

² The Overseas Development Administration (ODA) up to 1997.

3.4 No country strategy paper (CSP) has been produced since the early 1990s. The draft 1999 CSP suggests that an attempt was made to focus the programme more directly at poverty elimination following the UK White Paper in 1997. Latterly, the programme has had two main objectives. First, to create an effective enabling environment for poverty elimination by working with Government on civil service reform and economic management. Second, to improve opportunities and services, particularly for the rural poor, by improving access to better quality health and education services, and by improving 'the environment for sustainable rural livelihoods' (draft 1999 CSP).

3.5 The total DFID programme rose from £2m in 1989/90 to £4m per year from 1996/97 onwards. Table 2 shows the sectoral distribution of Technical Co-operation expenditure (i.e. excl. ATP and Emergency Aid).

Table 2 Namibia – TC expenditure by Sector, 91/92-98/99

	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	TOTALS
SAG	0	63,601	45,621	340,479	569,529	536,108	794,424	697,962	3,047,724
Other NR/Ag	0	0	0	0	199,312	127,202	44,824	45,750	417,088
Education	950,809	953,113	877,311	1,649,909	1,446,578	1,373,552	1,636,172	1,190,445	10,077,889
Health & Population	144,505	234,356	463,910	283,389	176,139	642,489	648,781	85,323	2,678,892
Water and Sanitation	0	250,000	150,000	100,000	0	0	0	0	500,000
Public Admin	229,132	411,902	546,480	490,821	1,003,436	920,169	596,608	490,646	4,689,194
Business & Financial	0	0	99,467	12,188	263,293	0	62,788	104,047	541,783
Misc Community	0	0	0	0	0	47,281	89,100	96,600	232,981
TOTAL	1,324,446	1,912,972	2,182,789	2,876,786	3,658,287	3,646,801	3,872,697	2,710,773	22,185,551
	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	TOTALS
SAG	0%	3%	2%	12%	16%	15%	21%	26%	14%
Other NR/Ag	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Education	72%	50%	40%	57%	40%	38%	42%	44%	45%
Health & Population	11%	12%	21%	10%	5%	18%	17%	3%	12%
Water and Sanitation	0%	13%	7%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Public Admin	17%	22%	25%	17%	27%	25%	15%	18%	21%
Business & Financial	0%	0%	5%	0%	7%	0%	2%	4%	2%
Misc Community	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	4%	1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.6 The overall impact of DFID's assistance to public service reform has been limited. Partly as a result, in early 2000 DFID concluded that there was no case for an individual bilateral programme in Namibia (or Botswana), and that DFID should shift to a regional programme for the smaller countries in southern Africa.

SA strategies in Namibia

3.7 In the mid-1990s DFID recognised that its (and other donors) programme of assistance to the RNR sector 'tended to lack focus, responding to Namibian requests for assistance in areas which fitted well with DFID's Departmental Objectives and where the UK had a comparative advantage' (DFID, 1996). DFID contracted NRI to undertake a preparatory visit in late 1995, followed in 1996 by a DFID/GoN review of DFID's RNR programme. The first DFID RNR Strategy (1996) was the result.

3.8 The 1996 Strategy included a Logical Framework and proposed a four-pronged approach :

- i. Presenting policy options on drought-risk management.
- ii. Refocusing agricultural research towards the priorities of farmers in the communal areas.
- iii. Establishing an environmental information and monitoring system plus a resource management capacity in former Ovamboland.
- iv. Helping the government to implement the International Conventions on Combating Desertification and on Biological Diversity.

3.9 The 1996 strategy did not propose a major change of direction. It was partly a re-justification for existing projects (ii. and iii), and partly an identification of possible new areas (i. and iv.). The only significant change was the proposal to phase out support for forestry and fisheries.

3.10 The 1996 RNR strategy was consistent with the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (SAS), although it did not make explicit reference to it. This is understandable. The SAS was more of a general statement of current good practice

than a strategy in the formal sense, and was produced and promoted by the London office. Country programmes were encouraged to follow the SAS, but were not required to. In the case of Namibia, DFID advisers took the view that the RNR strategy should be determined locally, and had little reason to explicitly acknowledge a general DFID document, the contents of which were both general and uncontroversial.

3.11 Some very minor textual changes were made to the RNR strategy in 1998. A paragraph stating that the strategy was in line with the new White Paper was added, as was a new environmental section. It was also stated that the strategy would be further refined by the RNR Field Manager (FM). The Logical Framework was unchanged.

3.12 In 1999, the RNR FM prepared a revised draft of the RNR Strategy which gave greater emphasis to poverty alleviation. This draft was not accepted by DFID-SA. It was decided instead that the FM would work with the Government in the preparation of the Second National Development Plan (NDP2).

3.13 Following the decision to regionalise the programme in early 2000, the FM prepared an outline graduation strategy. The stated objective was to ‘maximise the impact of past investment and demonstrate DFID’s sustained commitment to IDTs ...’. It proposed that DFID assistance should be limited to completing those initiatives which support sound policies to which the Government had already shown commitment. In practice the document was a re-justification of four new projects already prepared.

Botswana

3.14 Britain has provided assistance to Botswana for more than 30 years. Because of Botswana’s relative wealth, all bilateral aid throughout the 1990s has been in the form of TC only.³ There has also been an effective cost sharing arrangement whereby

³ Plus £3m under ATP in 91/92-93/94.

the Government of Botswana (GoB) has reimbursed any expenditure in excess of the aid framework provision.

3.15 Total DFID aid has declined from £6m in 1989/90 to around £3m in 1999/2000. The sectoral distribution is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Botswana –TC expenditure by Sector, 91/92-98/99

	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	TOTALS
SAG	18,235	2,775	9,919	121,741	398,152	1,149,423	1,355,887	1,011,551	4,067,683
Other NR/Ag	440,886	760,374	601,036	439,129	265,170	350,750	257,492	73,171	3,188,008
Education	261,548	195,304	149,924	196,981	256,589	533,048	580,190	586,028	2,759,612
Health & Population	60,000	70,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	130,000
Public Admin	547,174	701,032	888,616	408,304	367,786	289,396	330,808	274,419	3,807,535
Business & Financial	128,682	47,045	107,575	0	27,233	22,579	97,236	0	430,350
Roads	169,423	313,136	464,629	401,818	240,088	160,861	165,568	214,050	2,129,573
TOTAL	1,625,948	2,089,666	2,221,699	1,567,973	1,555,018	2,506,057	2,787,181	2,159,219	16,512,761
	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	TOTALS
SAG	1%	0%	0%	8%	26%	46%	49%	47%	25%
Other NR/Ag	27%	36%	27%	28%	17%	14%	9%	3%	19%
Education	16%	9%	7%	13%	17%	21%	21%	27%	17%
Health & Population	4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Public Admin	34%	34%	40%	26%	24%	12%	12%	13%	23%
Business & Financial	8%	2%	5%	0%	2%	1%	3%	0%	3%
Roads	10%	15%	21%	26%	15%	6%	6%	10%	13%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.16 DFID's 1992 and 1993 Country Objectives Papers were notable for the stress on the need to address poverty more directly under the aid programme. Priority objectives included support for economic reform, good government, natural resources and the environment, education, poverty, and women in development. Mention was made of the new RNR Strategy (see below) which 'specifically sets out to address rural poverty'.

3.17 In the 1996 Country Strategy Paper the overall goal of DFID support was poverty alleviation. This goal was to be pursued by 'concentrating on direct poverty alleviation programmes in the RNR sector and education', complemented by support for improved public service management.

3.18 As with Namibia, DFID decided in early 2000 to phase out bilateral activities in favour of a more regional approach. A new CSP was never issued as a result. Draft versions mentioned a focus on rural poverty via a sustainable rural livelihoods (SRL) programme (see below). Support for the protection of the environment was also highlighted.

SA strategies in Botswana

3.19 At the start of the 1990s DFID aid was directed towards the promotion of beef exports, and on TC support to animal health in particular. In 1992 DFID commissioned NRI to undertake a comprehensive reappraisal of support for the RNR sector in Botswana. This reappraisal was prompted by an appreciation changes in the structure of the economy, and by increasing concern over the possible negative environmental impact of the expanding cattle industry.

3.20 The NRI team recommended that DFID should adopt a more proactive role in addressing the latter issue, 'with a consequent shift in its resources from the animal sector into other areas ... more appropriate to a poverty/environment focus' (NRI,1993). Specific recommendations included:

- a concentration upon the promotion of sustainable range management and utilisation (by livestock and wildlife) rather than crop production
- continuation of support for cattle production, but at a lower level and targeted more effectively at poor farmers, in particular women and remote area dwellers
- increased support for smallstock because of their greater importance for poorer households
- considerably increased support for the wildlife and tourism sub-sector
- the appointment of an in-country NR Aid Management Officer

3.21 The NRI report led directly to a paper produced in 1993 setting out DFID's proposed RNR strategy over the next 5-10 years. Support for RNR was seen as providing an opportunity to address two interlinked development issues and DFID policy objectives : rural poverty alleviation and addressing environmental degradation. The extent of range degradation, and the impact of livestock policies and programmes, were highlighted as key issues. Future DFID support to the RNR sector would focus on generating a better understanding of range degradation and on the impact of livestock policies and practices on poorer groups.

3.22 A review of the 1993 strategy was undertaken in 1996. This concluded that the focus of the strategy remained valid and that no major adjustment was required. The revised strategy highlighted poverty alleviation as an explicit objective, with sustainable exploitation of rangelands as the focus. A strategic Goal and Purpose were defined, but with no indicators and no logical framework.

3.23 An independent review of the 1996 strategy was carried out in February 1998. This concluded that the programme was strong on environmental issues and capacity building, but weaker on enhancing benefits to the rural poor. It recommended that a logical framework be developed for the strategy with indicators for monitoring progress.

3.24 The 1998 review started a process which has led, two years later, to a SRL Programme being agreed with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

(MFDP). Two consultative workshops involving a wide range of stakeholders have been held during this period. The Goal of the proposed SRL programme is to improve rural livelihoods while improving or maintaining the quality of the environment. This is almost a mirror image of the 1993 strategy Goal, which aimed to improve the sustainable management of RNR while enhancing the benefits to the rural poor.

CHAPTER 4

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO

4.1 Previous chapters have discussed the context and evolution of DFID country and SA strategies. This chapter describes the actual project portfolios that were implemented, and examines the degree to which these match the strategic intent.

4.2 For the purpose of this evaluation the sustainable agriculture (SA) portfolio is defined as those projects marked 2 (significant objective) or 4 (principal objective) against the PIMS Rio Marker for sustainable agriculture. Previously reported problems with PIMS were borne out in this study. For example, different PIMS markers were attached to the same projects at different times, and there is disagreement within DFID-SA about whether FIAS should or should not have been marked as a SA project.

Namibia

4.3 Table 4 lists the SA and non-SA NR projects in Namibia since 1991/92. The three projects reviewed comprise the bulk of the SA programme. It is not clear why the Forestry project was marked SA.

4.4 Incentives within DFID encourage three reactions to a new policy agenda : terminating projects designed under a previous policy environment; setting up new projects which fit the new policies; or retro-fitting existing projects to improve the fit with new policy priorities. Where the aid framework is limited, as it was in Namibia, new projects can only be started if existing projects are terminated. This has been the approach followed in Namibia since 1998.

4.5 Three new projects are in the advanced stage of preparation: the Rural Livelihoods Support Project (RLSP); Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification Project (WILD); and the North Central Community Based Natural Resource Management and Enterprise Development Project (NCCED). RLSP is

essentially a successor to KFSRE, but based in Caprivi rather than Kavango because of the security situation. WILD has been in preparation since 1997. NCCED takes forward the CBNRM work initiated under NNEP, but with NGOs rather than government. A fourth project – Research Planning – was turned down by DFID-SA.

4.6 Although the current and proposed SA programme is consistent with the SAS and the RNR Strategies, it is hard to see how the latter influenced the former. All the NR strategies from 1996 to date have essentially justified existing or planned projects. There was no significant progress made with the two new priorities identified in 1996, and the fisheries programme was not phased out as recommended by the draft strategy, and as agreed locally with the Government of Namibia.

4.7 The decision not to phase out support for fisheries was highly controversial within DFID-SA. One adviser minuted that this decision was inconsistent with BDDSA's aspirations to both strategic focus and team-working. Others saw the decision as justified by the continued importance of fisheries within the Namibian economy. Either way, the DFID-SA decision to reverse the recommendation of the draft strategy is reported to have damaged DFID's reputation as a credible partner within the Ministry of Agriculture. Little effort was made to implement the RNR strategy thereafter.

4.8 The decision to regionalise the programme in 2000 could not have been predicted but, in the opinion of the evaluators, there was in any event little prospect that the 1996 or 1998 RNR strategies would be influential. Since 1998 the SL approach, rather than an agreed RNR or Country Strategy, has been the major DFID influence on the programme. According to the FM, the nature and scope of all new initiatives have nevertheless been determined by DFID's Namibian partners.

4.9 The three new projects are relevant. Two of the three (WILD and NCCED) are complementary. However, the new programme does raise concerns of a strategic nature. In circumstances where resources are limited, there is a trade-off to be made between maximising the impact of existing projects, and starting new projects which better fit new DFID priorities. KFSRE could not have been extended because of the

security situation, but the evaluators believe that both KFSRE and NNEP warranted further support (see 6.5 and 6.14). The lack of DFID support for a research planning project – one of the original strategy priorities – leaves RLSP with the same uptake problem as KFSRE. This view is not shared by DFID.

Table 4 Namibia – SA and non-SA NR projects

Project title	SAG marker	Commitment	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99
Forestry Research and Development	4	548,000			13,136	144,747	142,820	134,254	10,685	
Fisheries Information Advisory Service	4	868,000				59,634	98,214	110,789	164,604	82,394
Kavango Farming Systems Research and Extension	4	1,205,000		15,505	17,421	136,098	224,815	149,722	258,859	251,474
Radios for Etosha National Park to improve park management		402,000					199,312	127,202	7,824	
Review of the National Agricultural Research System	4	186,000		48,096	15,064		72,976	21,621		
Environmental Management and Monitoring (NNEP)	4	1,568,000					30,704	119,722	360,276	364,094
Community based natural resource management in Kunene		284,000							37,000	45,750
RNR Field Manager	2	333,000								85,919

Botswana

4.10 Table 5 lists the SA and non-SA NR projects in Botswana. Two questions can be asked: to what extent has DFID pursued the right RNR strategies, and how successful have these strategies been?

4.11 The 1993 RNR Strategy was seen as a 5-10 year strategy to address rural poverty and environmental degradation. The majority of its recommendations were absolutely correct (see 3.21). However, the evaluators conclude that it was flawed in two key respects. First, the main focus on range management was unrealistic for technical, social and political reasons. Twenty years of range management experience in Botswana were acknowledged in the NRI report, but the implications of this experience for another donor-funded project were not fully absorbed (see para. 6.25 below). Second, most of the initiatives focused on natural resources rather than people. Potential benefits in terms of rural poverty reduction were assumed rather than understood. Because of this, the prospects of the strategy making a significant contribution to poverty alleviation were always weak.

4.12 Parts of the strategy have been achieved, and some of the resulting initiatives (such as the environmental work in Ngamiland) appear to have been very influential. These were not covered by this evaluation. Realisation of other parts of the strategy has been more patchy: the focus on poorer farmers was never achieved in the two largest projects (VEES and BRIMP); support for wildlife and tourism did not increase significantly; and a reduction in the support for animal health was not realised. Support for OSAS vets was replaced by VEES. The expectation that this was a strategy for the next 5-10 years was also unrealised. Frequent changes in DFID staff and policy mean that strategies rarely live beyond two years.

4.13 As mentioned above (para. 3.24), a new SRL programme has been in preparation since 1998. This has been a much more participatory strategy process than previously, and has secured ownership and support within MFDP. However, the real test of this long process – rural poverty reduced – is yet to come. The case for a separate DFID/GoB SL programme, rather than DFID participation in the UNDP

assisted Rural Poverty Strategy, can be questioned.

4.14 Most importantly, the DFID-supported SL programme needs to take on board the implications of the declining importance of agricultural activities for poor rural households, and the limited potential of those activities (paras 2.10-11). It is debatable whether agricultural or rural-based enterprises have significant potential to reduce poverty in Botswana. This is recognised by the DFID SL Field Manager in Botswana. However, it is his view that many of the poorest will be largely dependent on RNR for their livelihoods if government subsidies and drought relief are phased out, and if mineral revenues eventually decline as predicted.

Table 5 Botswana – SA and non-SA NR projects

Project/programme title	SAG Marker	Commitment	91/92	92/93	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99
Livestock		2,860,000	390,064	585,511	348,648	218,030	6,203	5,540	19,165	
SADCC Land & Water Research	2	316,450	18,235	2,775						
Wildlife & National Parks		695,000	48,492	170,885	149,344	125,049	110,262	27,083		
Bokaa Village Development Project		101,086	2,330	3,978	3,044	10,347				
Mokolodi Nature Reserve		150,000			100,000	50,000				
RNR Field Manager	4	430,660				102,031	91,067	80,679	66,313	91,181
BRIMP	4	1,085,550			862	1,156	144,281	311,323	272,736	254,174
Planning and Statistics	2	806,400				13,577	48,892	225,701	294,295	50,247
Support Tsetse Cntrl Div		565,000				35,703	99,714	82,406	132,071	63,959
VEES	4	2,880,000			9,057	4,977	113,912	414,419	595,318	566,019
Policy and Strategy for Dept of Wildlife and National Parks		445,000					48,991	235,721	106,256	9,212
Assistance to the Department of Meteorological Services	2	327,998						117,301	127,225	49,930

CHAPTER 5

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

5.1 This chapter discusses the management of the portfolio as approved by DFID-SA. Management of the direction and content of the programme has been covered in chapter 3.

5.2 Prior to the establishment of DFID-SA in Pretoria in 1993, the Namibia programme was managed from London, while the Botswana programme was managed from BDDSA/BDDCA in Lilongwe/Harare. In 1996 it was reported that the expanding RNR programme in post-apartheid South Africa had led to the programmes in Botswana and Namibia being neglected

5.3 NR Field Managers were appointed for Botswana and Namibia in 1994 and 1998 respectively. The Botswana FM was appointed following the 1993 RNR review. DFID-London had argued since 1996 that an RNR Field Manager based in Namibia was crucial to the implementation of the RNR strategy. DFID-SA did not agree to this until 1998. Both FMs report to the Senior NR Adviser in DFID-SA.

5.4 The benefits of an in-country presence are evident in both countries, notably in terms of closer relationships with partners. In the opinion of the Namibia FM, the assignment of an in-country FM has made it more likely that NNEP, KFSRE and FIAS would achieve their objectives. In Namibia, and to a lesser extent in Botswana, the Field Manager has also been able to bring the programme rapidly in line with the new DFID policy agenda: poverty elimination and sustainable livelihoods. A new SL programme has also been agreed for Botswana.

5.5 While there are considerable benefits, the financial costs of maintaining NR/SL Field Managers represent a significant additional overhead (approximately 5-

10%) for what are very small programmes.⁴ In Namibia, the primary justification for a Field Manager – implementation of the 1996 NR strategy – was overtaken by events.

5.6 Support from DFID-SA in Pretoria was reported to have been good, particularly for the Botswana programme. However, although the NR/SL Field Managers are encouraged to feel part of a larger DFID-SA multi-disciplinary team, in practice their geographical isolation, and the demands on other sectoral advisers, makes this difficult to realise. The result, for Namibia particularly, is a programme that is dominated and directed by a single NR/SL adviser, with fewer inputs from other cross-cutting disciplines, and less of a team approach, than is desirable.

5.7 Neither programme has been managed as a ‘programme’ by DFID-SA or by the FMs. Until recently, projects in both countries have tended to be implemented separately, with little interaction or inter-project learning. This has begun to change in Namibia where the first ‘lesson learning’ workshop for DFID projects was held in late 1999. This is a useful innovation.

5.8 Even with Field Managers in-country, and with common management from Pretoria, some opportunities for positive interaction between DFID-supported projects were missed. For example, between NNEP and KFSRE, and between NNEP and BRIMP. However, none of the projects suffered significantly from these missed opportunities, and opportunities for links with other donor-supported projects were exploited. For example, productive links were established between KFSRE and French, EC, German and IFAD supported projects. Links between similar projects, rather than between DFID supported projects, are arguably more important.

5.9 Review and monitoring of RNR strategies has generally been poor. The Namibia strategy had a logical framework, but this never appears to have been used. The Botswana strategy had no logical framework. The strategy reviews in Namibia in

⁴ Figures for the management and administrative overheads for DFID programmes are not available. In the case of Botswana and Namibia, these would need to include a portion of the DFID regional office in Pretoria, and of the UK offices in London and East Kilbride.

1998, and in Botswana in 1996, were internal and cursory. The only external review was of the Botswana strategy in 1998.

5.10 Timely ‘end of project’ reviews involving Namibian partners have been conducted for all projects. According to the Namibian FM, these reviews and subsequent discussions have improved the sustainability and accomplishments of the projects concerned. On the other hand, project monitoring has been of mixed quality. As evidenced by the draft or missing OPR tables for all three Namibian projects, less weight has been given to formal end of project reporting in Namibia than in Botswana. Once again, this may indicate a greater interest – in Namibia but not Botswana – in establishing new projects than in maximising the impact of older ones.

CHAPTER 6

PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

6.1 This chapter summarises the more detailed discussion of project effectiveness contained in the project working papers. Actual or likely achievements of project objectives are summarised in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Actual or likely project achievements

PROJECT	OUTPUTS - original	OUTPUTS - revised	PURPOSE - original	PURPOSE - revised	GOAL -original	GOAL -revised
KFSRE	3	2	3	2	4	3
NNEP	4	3	4	2	3	4
FIAS	2		2		2	
BRIMP	2		2		5	
VEES	2	X	4		5	
Key:			1 = likely to be completely achieved; 2 = likely to be largely achieved; 3 = likely to be partially achieved; 4 = only likely to be achieved to a very limited extent; 5 = unlikely to be realised; X = too early to judge			

6.2 Two general observations can be made. First, (the Namibian) projects have been rather more successful in delivering the revised, rather than original, outputs. This indicates that projects rarely lived up to the original expectations, but also reveals a temptation to move the goal-posts to fit the outputs that are likely to be achieved.

6.3 Secondly, the summary table reveals a familiar pattern of Outputs which are ‘likely to be largely achieved’; Purposes which are ‘likely to be partially achieved’; and Goals which are ‘only likely to be achieved to a very limited extent’. FIAS is the exception.

Namibia

Kavango Farming Systems Research and Extension (KFSRE)

6.4 Overall, the project is rated as *successful*. KFSRE has had a significant influence on the development of national policy; has created a regional FSR capacity which bridges and informs research and extension; and has developed a good, well documented, understanding of Kavango farming systems with attention given to poverty, gender and equity issues. The majority of the (revised) outputs have been largely or completely achieved, as has the Purpose. These are very positive achievements.

6.5 The sustainability of the achievements has been affected by the poor security situation in the Caprivi since late 1999. While the new DFID-supported Rural Livelihoods Support Project (RLSP) includes provision for some continued support to the Kavango FSU, this is unlikely to be significant until security improves. DFID had, for reasons unrelated to security, decided that it did not want to continue with KFSRE, but wanted a new project. The justification for this decision is not clear to the evaluators.

6.6 The evaluation raises a number of other concerns:

- i. The original, albeit ambitious, aims of the project had been to improve household food security and livelihood systems through the development of viable and sustainable technologies. KFSRE has made little progress in this area. Practical work was limited and hence any impact on food security, livelihood strategies etc. is probably limited.
- ii. KFSRE underestimated the difficulty of obtaining counterpart staff, particularly social science expertise, and the time required to *implement* farming systems approaches (and bring practical benefits to communities) in a transitional policy phase.
- iii. KFSRE's influence on the research agenda appears slight. A weakness of KFSRE, and of farming systems work more generally, is lack of a responsive and effective research planning process in Namibia. KFSRE lacked a way of translating its knowledge into research.

- iv. The balance of specialist technical areas within the project team (because of delays at the start) impeded investigations across the broad base of livelihood systems. Most progress has been made with agronomy issues. Capacity with respect to livestock, social science, marketing, enterprise development etc. remains limited or as yet undeveloped.
- v. KFSRE has been very resource intensive and has concentrated on a small number of communities. It is not a replicable model, particularly in a context of declining government resources.
- vi. There is no certainty that the ultimate benefits of the project – in terms of improved, sustainable livelihoods, if/when realised – will outweigh the costs incurred, or that this represented the best way of assisting the people of Kavango. No substantial economic analysis has been carried out for either KFSRE or RLSP.

Northern Namibia Environmental Project (NNEP)

6.7 NNEP has established a very useful GIS database which is used by a wide range of government departments and projects in the 4O's region. A major benefit of the project has been making information available for general development planning. NNEP has also played a very valuable networking role, and has undertaken some innovative work on indigenous land classification. It has also made an initial contribution to re-introducing wildlife and developing tourism to the north of Etosha. Much of the credit for these achievements lies with the project team.

6.8 However, when judged against either the original or latest logframes, overall effectiveness and sustainability is limited.

6.9 Most of the problems can be traced to project design. Despite the efforts of the project team, the project has never recovered from an over-ambitious, unfocused, and institutionally flawed design. The addition of ambitious wildlife/CBNRM output in the first year, without a commensurate increase in project resources and skills, added to the problem.

6.10 Institutional design can either be seen as 'high risk' and justified by 'Namibian realities' (99 OPR) or as simply inadequate. The evaluators consider that poor institutional design and appraisal is a major reason why project achievements have

been limited and unsustainable. First, NNEP was designed by one, forward-thinking, department of MET (DEA) for implementation by another, conservative, department (DRM). DRM middle/regional management had neither ownership, interest nor capacity. When the Minister, PS and Director changed, the project lost its constituency outside DEA. NNEP has suffered from very limited ownership by, and support from, DRM as a result. This has reduced impact and influence, and made sustainability doubtful.

6.11 Second, the degree of change required in DRM was underestimated. NNEP implied a huge change in the way DRM operated, and what it did. Third, MET as a whole lacked the capacity to supply the staff to a project of this type in the North. MET capacity has declined since the start of the project. Fourth, the necessary enabling institutional environment in the regions was lacking. Regional government capacity remains weak, and DRM has neither the mandate nor the capacity to act as an over-arching environmental agency. The expectation that MET could create and sustain an environmental monitoring and management capacity in this context was unrealistic.

6.12 While most of the problems can be traced to poor design, management of the project can also be criticised. First, DFID and MET did not take steps to simplify and focus the project and/or to increase its resources in line with its expanded CBNRM mandate. Second, DFID and MET have, since May 1999, been working to find a sustainable home for the information component, but have yet to succeed. Third, both parties only agreed to a six month project extension (and the possibility of a further extension for one of the TA staff). This is insufficient to maximise or sustain the achievements of the considerable investment already made. An 18-month project extension, as suggested by the 1999 OPR, would have been more appropriate.

6.13 Part of the reason for the decision not to extend NNEP further may have been the fact that it is not seen as a DRM priority, nor is most of it seen as directly contributing to DFID's current emphasis on poverty elimination. NNEP was designed in an different DFID policy environment. Hence the decision to continue the

CBNRM/enterprise development work in a new DFID project (NCCED), but to exit from the rest.

6.14 The evaluators believe that the project should be rated as *largely unsuccessful*. Achievement of objectives has been limited, with few significant benefits in relation to the costs (£ 1.5m). That said, the project has created some outputs of real value to the regions. These are now at risk. A more considered and extended exit might ensure that these at least are sustained.

Fisheries Information Advisory Services (FIAS)

6.15 FIAS was designed to assist the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) with the establishment of an integrated fisheries management information system (FIMS). It was a classic TC project, identified and supported by a single sectoral adviser. The main input to the project has been a long-term singleton TCO (1994-98), plus short-term consultancy inputs.

6.16 The original timetable (two years) for the implementation of the FIMS was over-ambitious. The project was therefore extended in 1996, and again in 1998. A serious system failure (caused by a lack of error checking in the software) meant that major elements of the FIMS were not operational for much of 1998. These extensions trebled the project cost from £ 0.3m to £ 0.9m.

6.17 The extension of the project in 1996 ran directly counter to the draft ODA RNR Strategy, which had recommended that support for fisheries (and forestry) be phased out. This was not necessarily wrong: strategic decisions should not preclude support for ongoing commitments. However, the way in which the decision was made (i.e. after the strategy had been developed and agreed with the government) damaged DFID's credibility in Namibia.

6.18 The OPR team in 1999 concluded that all the outputs will be achieved by the end of the project. Information generated by the system is being used for policy

decisions, quota allocation, and revenue generation. The project Purpose was also judged to be likely to be fully achieved, albeit four years later than originally planned.

6.19 Most objectives, including the purpose, will probably be largely achieved by the end of the project. FIAS is credited with having contributed to the computerisation of MFMR. Compared to other Ministries, MFMR is well advanced as a result of FIAS. Nevertheless, the DFID review in 2000 was less favourable. While most of the FIMS was working, it is not being fully or routinely used. Many sections of the Ministry have developed parallel systems, and IT capacity remains limited in several key areas.

6.20 FIAS has cost three times as much, and has taken three times as long, as originally envisaged. Project design underestimated the likely hardware and software problems, and the low level of computer literacy within the Ministry. Human resources issues were very poorly appraised.

6.21 Subsequent DFID monitoring has generally been light-touch and uncritical. Wider monitoring inputs from other advisers or consultants would have been beneficial once it became clear that the original, very small, project required additional time and funds. Inputs from other advisers were requested by the Fisheries Advisers, but were not provided in most instances.⁵ On the other hand, it may be questioned, first, whether such a small project justified the attention of a multidisciplinary team, or second, whether such a team would have identified the design and implementation weaknesses.

6.22 FIAS also raises a more general monitoring question: how should DFID monitor specialised software development projects? The type of skills required to monitor these type of projects do not exist within the normal resources available to DFID programmes.

⁵ At least one monitoring mission was undertaken with an economist accompanying the Fisheries Adviser.

6.23 The sustainability of the information system is a concern. As so often happens, the TCO became a line manager, rather than simply an adviser, and key IT staff trained by the project have been tempted away to the private sector. MFMR is now using specialist external computer support. Fortunately for Namibia there are sufficient fisheries revenues to fund this support on a recurrent basis.

6.24 The project has not yet finished. A recent DFID review (June 2000) has made a number of recommendations aimed at improving training, awareness and use of FIMS. If implemented, these may improve project performance and impact. The review concluded that FIAS is likely to be *largely successful* when judged against its stated purpose and goal. MFMR officials are also reported to be very positive about the benefits of the system. However, FIMS is not yet widely used and, to the extent that it is, it has not yet significantly contributed to improved planning and management of the fishing industry. While the latter has certainly improved – with the Namibian fishery now one of the best managed in the world – the contribution of FIAS to this state of affairs is not yet apparent.

Botswana

Botswana Range Inventory Management Project (BRIMP)

6.25 BRIMP was the most important project arising out of the 1993 RNR Strategy, the main aim of which was to address the issue of (possible) range degradation within Botswana. The Outputs and Purpose are judged to have been largely achieved, and the project is accordingly rated as being *successful* in these terms. However, the Goal – a national range inventory and monitoring programme that will provide reliable technical and sociological information on the use and condition of the rangeland – is arguably unachievable, largely for technical reasons (see below).

6.26 BRIMP has provided useful seasonal information to the Inter-Ministerial Drought and Early Warning Committees. It has also provided information to Land Boards. However, the original project memorandum and logframe were too broad, too ambitious in terms of time allocated, and provided insufficient guidance to staff particularly on what the project was to achieve technically. This pilot project had to

develop an overall vision, test a large number of methodologies, train staff and work with users, within a multidisciplinary environment. There was pressure to implement too much too soon, which resulted in considerable tensions.

6.27 Institutional locus remains an issue. The proposed Dept. of Natural Resources may provide a more appropriate home for the Range Monitoring Unit than does the Dept. of Crop Production and Forestry, although some have argued that the unit should be located outside the Ministry, in order to ensure its independence.

6.28 A second Phase has now started. However, as the Project Completion Report states: 'expanding the pilot into a National Range Monitoring and Inventory programme requires that numerous institutional issues are critically and innovatively addressed. These include manpower shortages, skill retention, budgets, institutional location and out-sourcing'. According to the FM, these issues have been recognised and are being addressed. Phase 2 will also require more support from RNR research support into finding sufficient means of quantifying long-term rangeland degradation trends for large areas. Worldwide there are currently no generally accepted methods for doing this.

6.29 This latter issue is one of the weaknesses of the project. The RNR strategy, and the design of BRIMP, made two fundamental assumptions. First, that long-term changes in range condition could be reliably monitored, and second, that there was the willingness and means to use this information once generated. In the opinion of the evaluators, twenty years of experience in Botswana and elsewhere suggests that both assumptions are and were questionable. The technical difficulties associated with the assessment of long-term trends in range resources were well known in Botswana, and elsewhere, at the start of the project. Even if these difficulties could be overcome, there is little indication from recent Botswana history that government or range users can or will act on this information. Existing land use regulations are not enforced on commercial ranches, and there is little possibility of feasible or cost-effective communal range management schemes. For these reasons the evaluators conclude that there is little prospect of BRIMP leading to improved range management, and therefore to improved ecological sustainability.

6.30 The counter-argument to the above is, first, that the long-term range monitoring output was only one of a number of outputs. The evaluators agree that it is not fundamental to the Purpose, but believe that it was central to the objective of developing sustainable land management and grazing policies. Second, it can be argued that the government policy is more sensitive to improved information than implied, and that it takes time to build the necessary confidence for policy influence. This may or may not prove to be true in this case. Either way, there is little prospect of BRIMP leading to improved range management unless it is able to influence policy.

Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics Section (VEES)

6.31 VEES has made significant and positive progress. Veterinary Epidemiology and Economics sections have been established under the project through a dedicated effort by TC and Ministry staff. Epidemiology is, however, more advanced than the Economics. That aside, DAHP has recognised the importance of VEES in its work of disease prevention and control, and continued support by GoB seems assured. DAHP has stated its commitment to continue funding after the completion of Phase II.

6.32 However, VEES appears to have had little influence on policy so far,⁶ nor is there any sign of a more cost-effective animal health service, or of a demand for such a service within the Ministry. The combination of a risk-averse approach to animal health care, and generous government funding, means that there is little incentive for a more economic approach. This may change as the Ministry reviews the cost effectiveness of its programmes, and if government subsidies are reduced more generally. It can also be argued, with some justification, that any influence on policy will take time to achieve.

6.33 Phase I of VEES was neither entirely effective nor sustainable. Hence the need for a two-year Phase II. Explanatory factors include:

⁶ Policy impact, and the openness to change, may have increased since mid-2000. Foot and Mouth Disease control policy has been reviewed.

- inadequate development of counterpart staff;
- incomplete understanding of the role of the Unit by stakeholders;
- underestimation of time and management problems involved;
- slow recognition of the importance new data.

6.34 Even without these and other problems, VEES would not have completed its work in the 3 years approved for Phase 1. A much longer time frame should have been allocated from the start. As at May 2000 the epidemiology unit had been strengthened with some progress on economic issues. Yet in reality the animal health programme was virtually unchanged. Although much useful information had been generated, DAHP appeared to be functioning in much the same as before VEES started.

6.35 More fundamentally, there is reason to question why VEES was seen as a suitable project for a RNR strategy aimed at poverty alleviation and environmental improvement, and which intended to reduce DFID support for animal health. The project has made little progress towards developing capacity or policies which ‘promote the integration of wildlife and livestock and maximise the sustainable use of Botswana’s rangelands, targeting areas of greatest poverty’.

6.36 This is less a failure of implementation as a failure of design. It is unclear how the VEES (as opposed to DAHP) was expected to promote the sustainable use of rangelands or target areas of greatest poverty. As with BRIMP, the justification for the project seems to have been based on a simplistic argument: some of the rural poor depend on livestock; animal health services protect livestock; so a project with DAHP will contribute to reducing poverty. The likely contribution of VEES to poverty reduction was, and remains, unclear.

6.37 This may change as DAHP becomes more committed to a poverty agenda. There are signs that this is happening. DAHP has started some work on smallstock – which are more important to more poor people than are cattle – and is committed to defining its strategy with regard to poverty reduction.

6.38 One other justification for VEES has been suggested. Although not stated in

the project documentation, VEES may have been seen by DFID as a way of engineering a gradual exit from the livestock sector, thereby ensuring a non-disruptive end to the OSAS scheme. The evaluators recognise the merits, but not the cost-effectiveness, of VEES as part of such an exit strategy.

CHAPTER 7

IMPACT AND INFLUENCE

7.1 Very little information exists on the impact of these projects on food security, poverty, sustainable livelihoods, the productivity of natural resources, or the environment. None of the projects reported any impact on the status of women. The main reason for this lack of reported impact is the fact that, with the exception of KFSRE, all the projects were directed at creating an enabling framework (i.e. capacity or policies). Apart from policy and institutional impacts, most of the developmental impacts were expected at Goal level or above, information on which is not collected by projects or reviews. It follows that the assessment of impact given below reflects the judgment of the evaluators.

7.2 There are three possible explanations for the lack of impact identified below. The first is that it is simply too early to assess the impact. Most of these projects did not aim for immediate impact on, for example, livelihoods or sustainable resource management. Rather, they aimed to create the systems and capacity which would, in the longer term, lead to changes in policy and practice which would have these desired impacts. KFSRE falls into this category, and the (extended) FIAS project is not finished.

7.3 The second explanation is that the projects have either only achieved the objectives to a limited extent and/or are unlikely to be sustainable. Significant positive impact will not be achieved in these circumstances. This applies to NNEP.

7.4 The third explanation is that certain projects are, by virtue of their design, unlikely to make a contribution to a particular development objective, even if successful and even in the long term. VEES is a case in point. Regardless of its other merits, it is hard to see how this project was ever seen as likely to make a significant contribution to a strategy which aimed to address rural poverty and environmental degradation. BRIMP represents a similar, though more debatable, case.

Impact on food security and poverty

7.5 It has been argued that it is inappropriate and unfair to assess the poverty impact of these projects, all of which were designed well before the post-1997 DFID emphasis on poverty reduction. The evaluators discount this argument for three reasons. First, the evaluators are required by the Terms of Reference to assess the impact on poverty. Second, poverty reduction has been one of the explicit objectives of UK overseas aid since 1992. Third, for Botswana at least, support for RNR was explicitly aimed at rural poverty alleviation (and environmental degradation) in the 1993 RNR Strategy and the Country Objectives Papers.

7.6 A more valid objection is that most of these projects were ‘enabling’. Enabling actions are intended to ‘support the policies and context for poverty reduction’,⁷ not to reduce poverty directly. Such actions are, however, meant to ‘lead to increased social, livelihood and other opportunities’ for poor people. This is one of the three tests that is applied here. Table 7 below contains a summary assessment.

Table 7 Likely poverty impact

PROJECT	Support the policies and context for poverty reduction	Lead to increased social, livelihood and other opportunities for poor people	Direct positive impact on poverty
KFSRE	√	√	?
NNEP	√	?	X
FIAS	√	X	X
BRIMP	√	?	X
VEES	√	X	X
Key :		√ = positive contribution likely ? = positive contribution possible but uncertain X = positive contribution unlikely	

7.7 All the projects reviewed can be seen as contributing to the policies and context for poverty reduction. This is not, however, a very demanding test. A more demanding test is whether the projects are likely to lead to increased opportunities for

⁷ *Poverty Aim Marker*, Statistics Dept., DFID, March 1998.

poor people. Only KFSRE is judged likely to make a positive contribution. In the opinion of the evaluators, the contribution of the other projects is uncertain or unlikely.

7.8 The extent to which **KFSRE** will directly lead to improvements in food security, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability is uncertain for reasons given above (para. 6.6). KFSRE has made limited progress in developing viable and sustainable technologies; it has worked in a very small number of communities; and there are few signs of a more pro-poor national research agenda. More generally, increased farming systems capacity does not necessarily lead to improved agriculture or livelihoods, as the Botswana experience demonstrates. The poor security situation in the Caprivi only increases this uncertainty.

7.9 **KFSRE** was the only project which could have impacted positively and directly on poor people's livelihoods. In the judgment of the evaluators, none of the other projects are likely to have a significant direct impact on food security and poverty.

7.10 There is little likelihood that **BRIMP** will contribute to a reduction in poverty. The initial assumption was that because many of the rural poor depend in part on range resources, improved range monitoring could contribute to reducing rural poverty. This was not a credible justification. The links between range monitoring, range management, and reduced poverty have not been analysed either before or during the project. The evaluators conclude that the link is tenuous. The poorest groups own no cattle (but may benefit to some extent from cattle owned by others). For those that do own livestock, or who depend in part on range resources, it is far from clear that improved range management offers a feasible route out of poverty.

7.11 It is true that many of the poorest do depend on veld products, and are adversely affected by cattle owned by wealthy absentee owners or by current fire prevention regimes. The **BRIMP** team argue that changes in *policy* relating to access to range resources or drought relief, rather than improved range management *per se*, will therefore potentially benefit the poor. There is certainly potential for pro-poor

policy change. Government rangeland policy has long been criticised within Botswana for its negative impact on the rural poor. The key question, therefore, is whether BRIMP Phase II is likely to lead to pro-poor changes in policy and practice. In the absence of any positive indications, the evaluators conclude that such an outcome is unlikely.

7.12 The seasonal monitoring component of BRIMP is arguably the most successful and influential. However, although used and valued by the Inter-Ministerial Drought Monitoring Committee, it not yet clear how BRIMP's seasonal monitoring outputs will improve food security. Drought relief measures, and food security at the household and national level, are already good. BRIMP data does nevertheless have the potential to improve the quality of drought relief planning, and the cost-effectiveness of drought relief programmes.

7.13 It is unlikely that **VEES** will have a significant positive impact on rural poverty. The project has not succeeded in 'targeting area of greatest poverty' nor is there evidence that it has lead to more pro-poor animal health and production policies. However, there are signs that DAHP is, through VEES, becoming more aware of the poverty issues.

7.14 It is important to distinguish between the importance of the animal health services for the poor (and the wealthy), and the potential contribution of VEES for the poor. These are often confused. Nobody doubts that effective veterinary services are important for the poor, even if wealthier cattle owners benefit disproportionately. It is less clear how VEES has, or is likely to, benefit the poor. As with the drought relief programme, Botswana's animal health services are already highly effective. If VEES does eventually contribute to a more cost-effective and less subsidised veterinary service, it seems likely that poorer communal area farmers (who can least afford to loose livestock) would be adversely affected.

7.15 Unlike the two Botswana projects, **NNEP** was not the product of a strategy explicitly aimed at alleviating poverty. It was more the product of an environmental agenda than of a poverty agenda. That aside, NNEP may benefit the poor through

facilitating the improved planning of government services and infrastructure. Its initial work on promoting tourism and natural resource management may also, in the longer term, bring benefits to the north. The extent to which poorer and marginalised groups will benefit from any initiatives is, however, uncertain.

7.16 **FIAS** was likewise not aimed at poverty reduction. Rather, it was intended to support an important industry, which employed large numbers of Namibians, and which provided an important source of government revenue. As such, its contribution could only be to support the enabling environment for poverty reduction. Although the effectiveness and sustainability of the fisheries information management system (FIMS) is not yet secured, FIAS is likely to make an enabling contribution.

Impact on the productivity of natural resources

7.17 The Namibian sea fishery is internationally regarded as one of the most effectively and sustainably managed fisheries in the world. Fish stocks are managed on a sustainable basis, and yields have been maintained or even increased since 1994. However, with FIMS still not being widely used, it is unlikely that the improvement in fisheries management can be attributed to **FIAS**.

7.18 **KFSRE** probably had some limited impact (via seed) on the productivity on natural resources in the communities where it worked. However, the sustainability of these seed inputs is uncertain, and in general **KFSRE**'s local impact has been limited for reasons outline above (para 7.2).

7.19 There is no evidence, and little likelihood, that any of the other projects will have a significant impact on the productivity of natural resources. **NNEP** might have had an impact through improved planning, and ultimately perhaps through the community based natural resources management (CBNRM) initiatives (if they are successful) planned as part of the project. **BRIMP** was more directed towards securing sustained, rather than increased, productivity of range resources (see below). The nature of **BRIMP**, and the fact that the national range inventory and monitoring system has yet to be put in place, means that there has so far been no enhancement. In

the opinion of the evaluators, any enhancement remains a distant and unlikely possibility.

Environmental impact

7.20 According to the Project Memorandum, **NNEP** was expected to ‘improve natural resources management and monitoring in the communal areas of northern Namibia’. The evaluators consider it very unlikely that the project will have made a significant or sustainable contribution to this objective. It is possible that, for example, improved waterpoint planning might reduce localised pressure on range resources. The CBNRM initiatives planned under the project may also have local positive impacts if successful. However, for reasons outlined above (paras 6.10-11), NNEP has not been able to create sustainable environmental planning and monitoring capacity.

7.21 None of the other projects is likely to have a positive environmental impact. According to its Purpose, **VEES** was intended to contribute to ‘new animal health and production policies which ... maximise the sustainable use of Botswana’s rangelands’. In reality, ecological or environmental considerations were and are largely absent within either VEES or the Department of Animal Health and Production (DAHP), and it is hard to see what environmental impacts might be attributable to the project. To the extent that VEES has contributed to maintaining the effectiveness of the veterinary services, and therefore reduced livestock mortality, grazing pressure will have been increased. However, this is considered to be unlikely and insignificant.

7.22 For reasons outlined in para. 6.24, it is unlikely that **BRIMP** will lead to improved range management or range condition in Botswana. If a national range monitoring system (including long-term monitoring) can be fully developed it has the potential to have an impact on ecological sustainability and environmental improvement. However, assessing long-term change in range condition remains problematic, in Botswana and elsewhere. Even if short or long-term trends are detected, any impact on ecological sustainability will depend on whether GOB and range users are able and willing to act on the information. Past experience in

Botswana suggests that this is unlikely. Existing regulations relating to range use have not been enforced.

7.23 The original (1993) Goal for **KFSRE** includes the objective of decreasing environmental degradation. The original Purpose and Outputs likewise referred to 'sustainable farming systems'. The 1997 revision to the logframe removed the mention of environment in the Goal, but retained the output referring to 'environmentally sustainable' farming systems and new technologies. There is no evidence of environmental impact to date. Practical work has not gone on long enough; apart from new varieties, no 'technologies' were developed during the project; and there has been no assessment of adoption by communities over a long enough period to make a meaningful judgement.

7.24 **FIAS** was intended to contribute to the Goal of sustainable fisheries utilisation. Real progress has certainly been made in this regard since Independence, and fish stocks are now managed on a sustainable basis. The contribution of the FIMS, or of FIAS more generally, is not apparent. At present, with FIMS being relatively little used, it would appear that credit for any improvement in sustainable resource management lies elsewhere.

Institutional impact

7.25 All the projects intended, and to some extent achieved, improvements in skills and institutional capacity within government departments. In all cases, however, the improvement in skills and capacity was less substantial and sustainable, and required longer inputs, than was envisaged or required.

7.26 **KFSRE** has been notably successful in building up a farming systems capacity in Kavango region, and there is some evidence of sustainability. However, reductions in the running cost budget, weak incentives for the retention of staff, and the poor security situation, all threaten this achievement.

7.27 **FIAS** has increased computer literacy within the Ministry of Fisheries and

Marine Resources, and the Ministry is now well advanced compared to others. However, despite the increased use of private sector IT support, internal IT capacity remains a problem. It is hoped that the training which is still ongoing or planned in the remainder of the project will address this.

7.28 **NNEP** has increased the awareness of environmental issues, and of the benefits of GIS, within regional government and sectoral departments. Some skills have been transferred, and inter-sectoral networking increased. However, the capacity of DRM (the parent department) has not been significantly enhanced, and sustainability is far from assured.

7.29 Both **BRIMP** and **VEES** have faced problems securing and retaining counterpart staff. **BRIMP** has trained 14 people, but has suffered from high staff turnover, in part because of the high demand from the private sector. As a result, the sustainability of the pilot range monitoring systems which have been established is fragile. **VEES** has successfully established epidemiology and economics sections within DAHP. These were not sustainable at the end of Phase I because of the inadequate development of counterpart staff. Phase II is likely to improve sustainability.

Policy influence

7.30 **KFSRE** has had the most noticeable impact on policy of all the projects reviewed. The considerable impact on the policy debate within the country was due to opportune timing, a receptive Ministry, the enthusiasm of **KFSRE** team members, and the efforts put into linking up with existing systems and personnel.

7.31 There is no evidence that **BRIMP** has influenced range and land use policies to date, nor is this considered likely as a result of Phase 2. **FIAS** has not been influential in policy terms, but then was not designed to be. The other projects have been slightly more influential. **VEES** has had some, but limited, influence on animal health policy so far. **NNEP** has influenced the attitudes of Government and tour

operators towards the people and tourist potential north of Etosha, and has contributed to the decision to open a northern gate to the national park.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

Strategies

8.1 DFID supported sustainable agriculture activities in Namibia and Botswana were consistent with, and supportive of, the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (SAS). There is no evidence, however, that they were directly guided by the SAS.

8.2 RNR sector strategies have been of limited value in both countries. The Namibia programme has operated without an effective NR strategy (or even a Country Strategy) since 1991. The draft 1996 strategy, which had been agreed with the Government of Namibia, was not accepted by DFID-SA because it recommended the discontinuation of support for fisheries. Since 1998, the programme has been guided more by the DFID SL approach than by any strategy.

8.3 In Botswana, the proposed strategic focus on rural poverty and the environment, and away from animal health, has, on the evidence of the two projects reviewed, not been particularly effective. Support for animal health has continued through VEES, and neither VEES nor BRIMP is likely to contribute significantly to either a reduction in rural poverty or to environmental improvement. It is acknowledged that other projects in the DFID portfolio – such as the rural development and environmental projects in Ngamiland – have been much more consistent with the strategy. These were not included in this evaluation. It is also recognised that VEES may, in part, have been seen a part of an exit strategy from the livestock sector (6.33).

8.4 In principle, well-focused strategies, based on a proper understanding of rural livelihoods and poverty, would have been beneficial given the small size of both programmes. However, two features of DFID limit the long-term relevance and effectiveness of any strategy: the rapid turnover of advisers, and the short life-span of any DFID policy or strategy, relative to the long-term requirement of projects. NNEP is a case in point.

8.5 Recent experience in both countries also highlights the danger of strategies (explicit or implicit) driven by DFID preoccupations. In Namibia, and to a lesser extent Botswana, the Sustainable Livelihoods approach is being driven by DFID without the full ownership and understanding of local partners. This latter conclusion is disputed by the DFID FM in Namibia. While agreeing that DFID's Namibian partners have not adopted the SL approach, in his opinion the current NR strategy in Namibia is not driven by DFID preoccupations.

Performance and impact

8.6 Most of the projects reviewed were effective. The summary table of project achievements in chapter 6 reveals a familiar pattern of (revised) Outputs which are 'likely to be largely achieved'; Purposes which are 'likely to be partially achieved'; and Goals which are 'only likely to be achieved to a very limited extent'. Other common observations are that :

- projects have generally taken far longer, and cost far more, than originally envisaged
- sustainable improvements in the capacity of government departments have been difficult to achieve
- time and skills required to implement new information systems have been underestimated

8.7 The overall picture is one of a collection of small, largely unrelated SA projects which have largely achieved their revised objectives, but at a higher cost and over a longer time-frame than originally envisaged.

8.8 The evaluators conclude that all the projects have, to a greater or lesser extent, increased skills and capacity within the government departments involved, and have had some influence on policy. However, the likely *impact* of the projects reviewed on poverty, food security, or environmental sustainability is at best uncertain, and more

probably very limited. Furthermore, the sustainability of project achievements is not assured.

Analysis

8.9 Revised Purposes and Outputs were rated as ‘largely achieved’ in four of the five projects reviewed. Credit for this rests with the project team, especially the technical cooperation staff, and with the country Field Managers.

8.10 However, when judged against their original objectives, or by the likelihood of significant impact, the performance of the DFID agricultural projects reviewed in Namibia and Botswana is more disappointing. Only one of the projects is judged likely to lead to increased opportunities for poor people. A number of factors may explain this.

8.11 First, the decision to work within government to improve the enabling framework meant that any impact on, for example, rural poverty or the environment was bound to be indirect, diffuse, long term and difficult to attribute. However, this does not in itself mean that the programme has or will be a failure. In some respects it is simply too early to judge.

8.12 Second, the economic and physical environment of Botswana and much of Namibia is increasingly unsupportive of agricultural enterprise. It is questionable whether agricultural interventions have significant potential to reduce poverty in this context, particularly in Botswana.

8.13 This analysis is contested by the DFID SL Field Managers in Namibia and Botswana. In the case of Namibia, the SL Field Manager argues that the majority of the poor and absolutely poor depend critically on RNR for their food security, and that there is potential to increase agricultural productivity, as evidenced by the commercial sector. In Botswana, RNR remain critical for the livelihoods of the rural poor, even allowing for transfers from government.

8.14 The evaluators do not dispute the residual importance of agriculture for the rural poor. However, the facts are that the relative importance of agriculture is declining as income from non-agricultural employment, either direct or via remittances, increases. More importantly, it should not be assumed that improvements in *agriculture* (crop or livestock) offer the best, or even feasible, route out of poverty for poor rural households in much of Namibia and Botswana. The fact that an activity is still important does not necessarily mean that it can, cost-effectively, be made more productive. This is particularly true for Botswana, where huge agricultural investment by government and donors (including DFID) has not succeeded in significantly raising either total production or productivity in recent years.⁸

8.15 Third, four of the five projects were poorly designed and/or uncritically appraised. In the opinion of the evaluators, neither BRIMP nor VEES were likely to make a significant contribution to poverty reduction or environmental improvement in Botswana – which were DFID’s stated country priorities at the time – however well they were and have been implemented. NNEP was institutionally flawed from the outset, and FIAS was over-ambitious.

8.16 Finally, the extent of the institutional challenge, and the time required to build capacity, skills and information systems, was under-estimated in all cases. Problems with obtaining, training and retaining counterparts were a common (but hardly novel) theme. In Namibia, the need for long project involvement clashed with DFID’s desire for a new programme which better fitted new DFID priorities. In the opinion of the evaluators, but not the Namibia FM, both NNEP and KFSRE would have benefited from a longer exit.

8.17 The Namibia FM does not agree that the new programme has compromised achievements or past investments. Two of the new projects build on aspects of NNEP and KFSRE, and DFID support to the Ministry of Fisheries continues. The evaluators

⁸ A recent study found that government invests 40% of agricultural GDP, or ten times as much as comparable countries, and yet overall productivity has increased by only 1.57% pa over the period 1979-1996. Cattle productivity has declined, and the total investment by government in crops is greater than the resulting increase in output. C. Thirtle *et al.*: *Agricultural Productivity and the Returns to*

accept this, but conclude that there is sometimes a trade-off between continuing 'old' activities originated under previous DFID policies and starting 'new' activities which better fit the current policies.

8.18 Mention has already been made of the SL approach and the way in which it is being actively promoted by DFID in these two countries. The findings of this study support these initiatives, but emphasise the need for a holistic understanding of poor people's livelihoods, and for a critical analysis of the potential for improvement. As recognised by DFID advisers, this may indicate the need for interventions outside the agricultural sector, and possibly outside rural areas, if the SL approach is to lead to programmes which are more likely to contribute to the reduction of rural poverty than the projects reviewed.