

# Girls' Education in Rundu Educational Region

A report on a field assessment

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## Factsheet Rundu Educational Region

	<b>Rundu</b>	<b>Namibia</b>
<b>No. of learners</b>	65902	541203
<b>No. of schools</b>	314	1541
<b>% learners in lower primary phase</b>	53.3	45.0
<b>% female</b>	49.5	49.5
<b>% learners in upper primary phase</b>	28.5	30.1
<b>% female</b>	49.5	50.9
<b>% learners in junior secondary phase</b>	15.6	19.9
<b>% female</b>	46.6	53.4
<b>% learners in senior secondary phase</b>	2.6	4.6
<b>% female</b>	37.8	50.6
<b>Survival rate to Grade 5 (%)</b>	64.4	84.3
<b>Learner/teacher ratio</b>	27.5	29.1
<b>No. of teachers</b>	2177	17645
<b>% female</b>	36.7%	61.0%
<b>% of teachers qualified according to national standards</b>	6.3	24.9

Sources: *EMIS Preliminary 15<sup>th</sup> School Day Statistics 2001*  
*Education for All: The Year 2000 Assessment*

## 1. Introduction

Since independence in 1990, Namibia has made impressive progress in providing Education for All. Successful policy reform, institutional restructuring, and consistent budgetary inputs from the Government as well as donors have led to significantly increased access to education. Although provision of new physical facilities is still not keeping pace with demand, the total number of learners has grown from 382 443 in 1990 to 541 203 in 2001<sup>1</sup>, representing an overall growth of 30 per cent.

In its efforts to achieve universal primary education, Namibia had not set itself targets for gender equity, as enrolment patterns did not reveal serious differences for girls and boys in primary grades. In 2001, 50.7% of all learners were girls. On secondary level, females accounted for 52.9%. However, as with the case of other indicators measuring access and quality of education, the national figures for gender hide regional variations. One region notable for below average participation of girls is Kavango<sup>2</sup>, where the gender gap increases progressively from primary school to junior secondary and secondary level. In 1992 only one in four learners in the two final grades of secondary school was female. By 2001, this proportion had increased significantly to more than a third. However, there is still a substantial decline in female enrolment from Grade 7 onwards. Currently, girls account for 49.5% of all Kavango learners in lower and upper primary phase. This figure drops to 46.6% for junior secondary level and to 37.8% at senior secondary level. Rundu educational region thereby displays the largest gender gap disadvantaging girls in the country. The only other educational region where girls constitute less than half of school learners is Katima Mulilo (48.8% overall)<sup>3</sup>.

In Kavango, the continuing repetition and drop-out rates continue to show an unfavourable gender pattern in primary grades already. Throughout primary grades, female drop-out exceeds that of boys, and as from Grade 5, Kavango girls repeat more often than boys. Graph 1 and 2 depict dropout and repetition.

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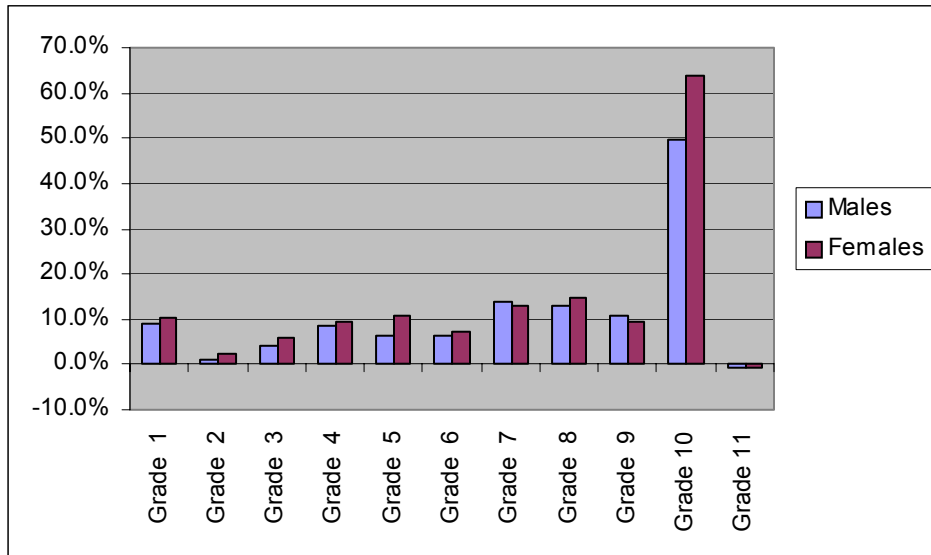
<sup>1</sup> All 2001 statistics are derived from the Preliminary 15<sup>th</sup> School Day Statistics 2001, MBESC, Education Management Information System, Windhoek March 2001

<sup>2</sup> The terms Rundu (or Rundu educational region) and Kavango (administrative region) are used interchangeably, since they refer to the same geographical area.

<sup>3</sup> Two educational regions show a gender gap of around 5% in secondary schools which disadvantage boys, namely Ondangwa East and Ondangwa West.

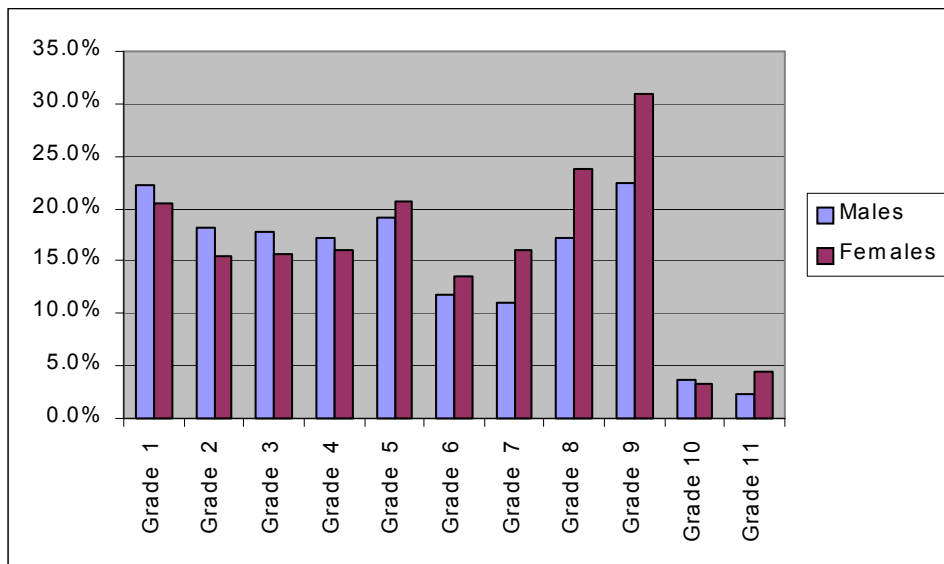
**Girls' education in Rundu – Report on a field assessment**

**Graph 1: Drop-out Kavango (1999)**



**Source: EMIS**

**Graph 2: Repetition Kavango (1999)**



**Source: EMIS**

The underlying causes for these gender discrepancies are complex and form the subject of this study. Gender differentials in enrolment must not be seen in isolation. Available data suggests that both girls and boys in Kavango region continue to be disadvantaged in educational terms, as evidenced by a high rate of unqualified teachers and unfavourable patterns of learner flow. The latter is indicated by a low survival rate to Grade 5 and a skewed distribution of learners across the different school phases: Compared to national averages, the majority of learners is enrolled in lower primary phase, whereas a lower percentage attends upper primary or secondary phases (see factsheet p. ii). In addition, the lack of facilities in many schools such as water, electricity, permanent classroom

structures and telecommunications have an impact on the quality of education in the region.

The recent insecurity on the border area to Angola caused major disturbances to the operation of schools in affected areas during the year 2000. Fortunately, the situation had largely stabilised during 2001, and the assessment covering all circuits could take place unhindered. The increased presence of soldiers in the area however is an element relevant to girls' education.

## **2. Purpose and context of the study**

The Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture's (MBESC) Strategic Plan for 2001 – 2006 regards gender as a cross-cutting issue, incorporated into the different national priority areas. It makes explicit reference to two regions with low female participation of girls in secondary education, alluding to Rundu as the most extreme with just over a third in Grades 11 and 12 being girls. The Strategic Plan calls teenage pregnancy one major factor for girls' drop-out, and envisages to tackle the issue through the implementation of the Ministry's policy on teenage pregnancy (see section 9.3).

The Logical Framework of the Strategic Plan sets itself targets for gender parity in primary enrolment as well as in secondary schools.<sup>4</sup> It provides for measures to sensitise parents on the importance of keeping girls in school, and calls for the establishment of a reporting system on reasons for drop-out.

This study sets out to provide an in-depth assessment of the school and community level of the factors that push girls out of the education system. Areas to be explored were on one hand the constraints faced through the education system itself, and factors inhibiting girls' retention caused by societal conditions and attitudes on the other hand.

The objectives of the field assessment were to

- identify and assess capacity gaps and other constraints in the formal education system leading to low retention of girls
- describe the extent to which external/community factors cause girls to underachieve or drop out of school (such as parental and community attitudes to education, teenage relationships and pregnancy, sexual harassment, poverty, lack of economic prospects/job opportunities/role models, alcohol abuse, domestic work load)
- assess the actual and potential roles of resource persons, educators, community and traditional leaders, churches, non-governmental organizations, HIV/AIDS awareness programmes to motivate girls to complete their education
- make recommendations for appropriate interventions to strengthen the education system and community mechanisms to support female achievement in primary and secondary education.

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<sup>4</sup> MBESC Strategic Plan 2001-2006, The Logical Framework, Targets 1.2.7 and 1.3.4

The field assessment forms part of a project development process geared towards formulating a set of interventions supporting education in Kavango with a special focus on girls. This project preparation phase started with data analysis conducted by the MBESC Regional Directorate Rundu, which was presented to education officers, teachers and representatives of NGOs, churches and other organisations in September 2001. (see section 4) This workshop also served to finalise the terms of reference for this field assessment.

The fieldwork for this assessment took place during October 2001. The recommendations emanating will feed into a stakeholder meeting which aims to formulate a multisectoral and integrated action plan, to be implemented by the Regional Directorate of MBESC as well as other partners such as non-governmental organisations, development agencies and church networks. Such a future 'Kavango Girls' Education Initiative' will try to pull together existing as well as new interventions, to be supported by the government, external donors and other partners.

### 3. Girls' education in UNICEF

Girls' education is a global UNICEF priority. UNICEF regards girls' education as an entry point to achieving Education for All, and as a vehicle for achieving increased access and better quality in education for all children.

A good quality basic education is not only a right in itself, but is central to the fulfilment of many other rights of the child, and for future generations of children. The quality definition used by UNICEF in regard to girls' education relates to five dimensions<sup>5</sup>:

- **Learners** must be healthy, well nourished and ready to participate and learn. Boys and girls must be raised to value themselves.
- **Content** refers to relevant and gender sensitive curricula and materials not just for literacy and numeracy, but facts and skills for life, including education on rights, gender equality, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, peace, and respect for diversity.
- Quality educational **processes** require well-trained teachers able to use child-centered teaching and learning methods, and life skills approaches free from discrimination
- The learning **environment** is part of educational quality. There must be adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities, and schools must be safe and secure for girls as well as boys.
- Learning **outcomes** need to be analysed and measured to eliminate inherent bias, particularly against girls.

The Government of Norway is funding the African Girls' Education Initiative, a multi-country programme supporting interventions to improve girls' education. Namibia,

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<sup>5</sup> The following section is adapted from Girls' Education: Improving both access and quality, Mary Joy Pigozzi, UNICEF 2001.

through its UNICEF country office, is a partner in this programme, which funded this field assessment.

#### **4. Outcomes of the 1. Workshop on Girls' education (13 Sept. 2001)**

The workshop served to present data collected and compiled by advisory teachers of the Rundu Regional Directorate to stakeholders and to set in train a field assessment. The workshop outcomes relate firstly to the data analysis itself, and secondly to formulating research questions that were to shape up the field assessment and which in themselves present a valuable brainstorming by educationalists and others on issues surrounding girls' education.

Enrolment figures for girls and boys available from the 15th school day statistics disaggregated for phases, grades and circuits were presented (Annex 1).

Additional desirable indicators were either not provided for through the statistical administration of MBESC (i.e. were not included in questionnaires sent out to schools) or had not been compiled, and had to be put together from individual school questionnaires.

Although therefore the data were not complete, and partly lacked disaggregation or correlation of different indicators, the findings were very valuable and eagerly discussed by participants. Some statistics covered only a limited number of schools, but were nevertheless illuminating.

Table 1 gives the number of drop-outs since the beginning of 2001 according to data collected by the advisory teachers, including the recorded cases of pregnancies.

**Table 1: Drop-outs per circuit**

<b>Circuit</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Drop-outs due to pregnancy/ Early marriage</b>
Rundu	260	362	622	54
Ncamagoro	112	118	230	20
Shambyu	98	163	261	21
Bunya	119	143	262	53
Kandjimi	181	136	317	21
Mukwe	180	192	372	23
Ndiyona	152	149	301	19
Mpungu	126	143	269	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1228</b>	<b>1406</b>	<b>2634</b>	<b>203</b>

It should be noted however that drop-out figures need to be treated with caution, as they do not differentiate between learners who transfer to other schools and those that genuinely discontinue their education. However, the table indicates that with the exception of Kandjimi and Ndiyona more girls than boys are recorded as drop-outs.

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Similarly, records of teenage pregnancy might not tell the whole truth, as the school officials responsible for filling in the respective questionnaire will not in all instances know, or find out, the reason for drop-out.

From a Rundu school, disaggregated drop-out records for the first half of 2001 were available. This school of around 850 learners had 24 learner pregnancies in seven months.

**Table 2: Drop-outs Rundu Senior Secondary School**

Grade	Boys	Girls	Reason
8	3	2	2 - pregnant 1 - transfer 2 - unknown
9	3	10	6 - pregnant 1 - passed away 1 - transfer 1 - male learner who impregnated girl 4 - unknown
10	6	11	6 - pregnant 1 - illness 2 - male learners who impregnated girls 1 - passed away 7 - unknown
11	0	8	6 - pregnant 1 - transfer 1 - unknown
12	5	4	4 - pregnant 1 - illness 4 - unknown

**Source: School records Rundu Sen. Sec. Sch.**

Although no comparative table could be compiled, schools in Rundu town appear to have the highest number of pregnancies.

Indicative was further a listing of Grade 12 learners at 8 secondary schools, and the number of boys and girls who gained pass rates high enough to ensure university entrance. Table 3 shows not only the lower number of girls who sat their Grade 12 exams, but also their lower performance: While nearly 8% of boys reached the required points to gain university entrance, only 2.6% of girls did so.

**Table 3: Grade 12 learners and qualification for university entrance**

School	# boys	# boys who qualified for university	# girls	# girls who qualified for university

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		entrance		entrance
Nkurenkuru High School	24	12	14	7
Noordgrens Secondary School	13	2	12	1
St Boniface	23	2	6	0
Maria Mwengere Sec School	125	7	64	0
Leevi Hakusembe Sec School	87	4	52	0
Max Makushe Sec School	47	0	30	0
Linus Shashipapo Sec School	52	2	22	0
Rundu Sec School	135	10	103	0
TOTAL	506	39	303	8

Source: MBESC Rundu Directorate

Most available statistics show that a gender gap in enrolment and performance develops gradually in upper primary and lower secondary school. Figures of learners who passed or failed from Grade 1 to Grade 9 (Annex 2) show a less drastic picture than that of Table 3; however the tendency especially in Ndiyona, Bunya, Kandjimi and Mukwe circuits points towards clear discrepancies between boys and girls.

The brainstorming of workshop participants on the issues that require investigation during an in-depth field assessment yielded the following results:

**Table 4: Brainstorming on girls' education issues to be investigated**

Home and community environment	School factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• study facilities at home (electricity etc)</li> <li>• cultural beliefs [father not prepared to cook - would rather take his daughter out of school] / parents favouring boys over girls</li> <li>• domestic work load</li> <li>• poverty/economic factors leading to early sexual relationships</li> <li>• lack of role models</li> <li>• alcohol</li> <li>• lack of recreational opportunities leading to sugar daddy symptom</li> <li>• lack of information coupled with ignorance and the desire to test virility / ability to conceive</li> <li>• taboo on talking about sex, esp. parents</li> <li>• parents subtly pushing for early pregnancies / wanting to become grandparents</li> <li>• self esteem of girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teacher/learner ratio</li> <li>• attendance patterns teachers and learners</li> <li>• performance of teachers (preparations)</li> <li>• results</li> <li>• how teachers relate to boys/girls</li> <li>• dynamics boys/girls in the classroom</li> <li>• alcohol abuse</li> <li>• guidance &amp; life skills: do learners receive life skills training, and does it have an impact?</li> <li>• peer pressure, tuck shop, school uniforms as factors leading to relationships with 'sugar daddies'</li> <li>• school's efforts to involve parents</li> <li>• extra curricular activities</li> <li>• principal/school management paying class visits</li> <li>• inappropriate placement of teachers (re subjects)</li> <li>• availability of facilities, classroom stationeries, platoon system</li> <li>• performance of girls in single sex classes/streams</li> <li>• learner - teacher sexual relationships</li> <li>• textbooks - gendered images &amp; language</li> </ul>

## 5. Methodology

The field research aimed to provide qualitative in-depth data. Research methods were based on qualitative social research methods, such as semi-structured open-ended interviews and focus group discussions. In each locality, the following interviews were held:

- 1 interview with a principal
- 1 interview with a teacher
- 1 focus group discussion with female learners
- 1 interview with a girl who had dropped out of school
- 1 focus group discussion with parents
- 1 interview with a community leader

For each of these informant groups, an interview guideline had been developed. In addition, a purpose-made checklist recorded for each sample school baseline data pertaining to number of learners and teachers, grades offered, infrastructure, absenteeism, school development funds (compare Annex 3). Interviews were further conducted with key informants from MBESC and representatives of other stakeholder organizations located in Rundu. An additional focus group discussion was held with female students at the Rundu College of Education, a teacher training institution.

The research team consisted of the principal researcher and 5 education officers from the Rundu Regional Directorate, selected by the Directorate. 4 of these are subject advisors in the region, and a fourth is a personnel officer. Apart from one field researcher and the principal researcher, all were fluent in Kwangali.

The researchers underwent training for this project, during which they familiarised themselves with the research tools and were given a crash course in basic research techniques and research ethics, and in conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Pilot interviews were carried out in Rundu town.

Each team of two field researchers spent 8 days in the field. Two teams were tasked to cover 10 schools and adjacent communities, and one team with 8 localities.

The sampling was conducted by the field researchers from MBESC, who opted to select a remotely situated schools as well as schools in closer proximity to a main road and the Kavango river. The sample was spread across all eight circuits. Excluding the schools in which pilot interviews were held, 28 schools participated in the field assessment.

The field research was carried out from 17 - 26 October 2001. Upon their return from the field, each team handed in their extended, written reports of the interviews and focus group discussions to the principal researcher. A debriefing with the teams was conducted,

during which none of the teams reported any serious problems with the field research. Respondents had generally been very friendly and forthcoming.

In the design and implementation of this field assessment, several limitations need to be acknowledged. First, the data gathered is by no means statistically representative, but mainly a qualitative assessment. The data that aimed for some quantitative context is not complete, and in parts unreliable, reflecting poor school records (see Annex 3). Second, despite the fact that researchers worked long into the evening hours, the time factor limited the amount of in-depth probing that could be carried out, as every field team had to set up and conduct an average of 7 interviews per day. However, the information gathered provides a sufficiently broad picture of the issues surrounding girls' education, and provides some insights into the status of education in Kavango in general.

## **6. Overview: Perceptions of informant groups on girls' education**

Interviewees across the sample were in varying degrees aware of a higher school drop-out by girls, most of all girls themselves and educators. However, teenage pregnancy was the uppermost concern about girls in all interviewee groups.

### **6.1 Principals and teachers**

Although the work environments of school managers and teachers varied greatly with equipment, size, urban and rural location, respondents' perceptions on factors that affect girls' performance and retention were remarkably similar. Irrespective of school phases, they noted progressively lower performance of girls across all subjects as well as higher female drop-out.

Teachers and school managers attribute this phenomenon mainly to girls themselves, as well as to parents' lack of support. They perceive girls to have a lower self-esteem and assertiveness compared to boys. In addition, they opine that girls view education as a lower priority than what is commonly termed 'social life', as evidenced by the low attention they pay to class and homework, by absenteeism, and by the fact that they engage in sexual relationships from an early age. Parents are said to often neglect their care duties, due to poor knowledge on childcare or alcohol abuse. Teachers also find that the majority of parents do not show an active interest in their children's education; furthermore they do not prepare their adolescent children for the physical and emotional changes during puberty or inform them about contraception and other reproductive health matters.

Dependent on whether informants saw the girls themselves or their parents at the core of the problem, they tended to either 'blame' girls for failing their educational careers, or sympathise with their female learners.

None of the respondents attributed poor performance or drop-out by girls to the education system itself or lack of quality education. However, some, in particular principals lamented a lack of commitment on the side of the teaching force.

## 6.2 Female learners

Interviews with female learners were conducted as focus group discussions, which allow respondents to share their views without necessarily having to expose their personal experiences. Learner ages ranged from 11 to 23, and were in grades 6 to 12. All discussions were very animated.

Virtually all girls who participated in the focus groups professed that they valued education very highly indeed, stating that they aspired not just for completion of Grade 12, but for tertiary education.

Girls mentioned a number of professional career ambitions, including some not traditionally female ones (such as law, nature conservation, journalism, piloting, police besides nursing, teaching, clerks and secretaries). By contrast, the role models that were generally mentioned did not reflect professional or educational status, but were female family members (mothers or sisters). Teachers were one of the few non-family role models mentioned.

Whereas one section of learners thought that boys and girls had equal opportunities in education, a sizeable section felt that certain push-out and 'pull-out' factors affected girls more than boys. These were unsafe hostels in which girls are prone to sexual harassment by learners and adult men, teachers seeking relationships with girls, pregnancy as well as inadequate equipment in schools and hostels (lack of mattresses, lack of chairs).

A high number of girls stated that the amount of domestic work they were compelled to do at home interfered with their schoolwork. Some also noted that parental poverty caused the termination of school careers, as households were unable or unwilling to pay school fees. In addition, parents' inability to meet girls' needs (clothes, cosmetics) was given as one of the reasons why girls aspired to relationships with adult men who could provide such items. They acknowledged however that this 'sponsor' phenomenon has become a norm among peers, and that girls themselves actively sought out boyfriends that were in a position to treat girls to 'social life' and entertainment.

The risk of falling pregnant as a result of sexual relationships was mentioned almost fatalistically as natural consequence, albeit a dire one. This contrasts the apparent general awareness of contraception methods.

As for the general quality of education, many learners complained about teachers who lacked diligence and work morale (missed many lessons, were absent etc.)

### 6.3 Girls who dropped out of school

Interviewees had dropped out of school in the years 1996 to 2001. The last grades they had attended ranged from Grade 6 to Grade 12. Of the 26 young women, all but 3 discontinued school due to pregnancy. None had re-entered school or sought readmission<sup>6</sup>, although all stated that they wished to return to school. No respondent was attending NAMCOL<sup>7</sup> or any other alternative education institution. The reasons given were that NAMCOL centres were too far, the fees unaffordable, as well as the fact that NAMCOL is not an option for learners who have not completed primary school.

The young women lived with parents or with family. 6 respondents said that they lived in customary unions with men. The overall majority was engaged with household chores and childcare. Three informants worked in shops or *cuca* shops, and one brew and sold traditional beer. Asked about their own visions about their future, the majority (16) expressed a wish to get married. 5 of these said they wanted no more children, while 11 said they planned to have one or two more children. A minority (7) stated that they had ambitions for professions such as nursing, teaching and office work.

Similarly to school-going girls participating in focus group discussions, girls who had dropped out saw no fundamental barriers to girls' education either in the education system or in traditional values. ('We are all given the same opportunities') However, girls' higher domestic workload as well as their susceptibility to falling pregnant were perceived as rendering girls more vulnerable in educational terms. Some girls also felt that boys are naturally more committed to academic and school work, whereas girls often chose to pay more attention to going out, fashion and boyfriends ('social life') than to education. At the same time though, all informants regarded education for girls as very important as it enhanced their job opportunities and economic independence.

### 6.4 Parents

Participants in parent focus group discussions had varying levels of education. Only two out of 118 parents had completed secondary education. Each focus group discussion also included illiterate parents. Findings from this group were fairly constant across the sample sites.

A major educational concern for parents was the cost of schooling, in particular the school development fund. Many parents were not aware of the entitlement to exemption, and reported that they went to great lengths to pay up, even to the extent of selling livestock. Those parents that were aware that the paying of school development funds was not compulsory stated that school managements did not comply with the exemption procedures. Parents' conclusion was phrased as "You just have to pay! Whether you are

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<sup>6</sup> This may not be construed as evidence that teenage mothers never re-enter school, but rather that the sampling design provided for out-of-school girls.

<sup>7</sup> NAMCOL is the Namibian College of Open Learning which offers tuition in distant as well as face-to-face modes for secondary grades.

rich or poor." - On the other hand, one school in the sample was reported not to have requested or collected school development fees for the past three years.

The cost of education had a clear bearing on how respondents viewed education for girls and boys respectively. Although they generally thought their sons and daughters equally capable of completing primary and secondary education, they had reservations about the risks that girls' education presented: 'Girls can easily fall pregnant, then you will have wasted all your money'. This would indicate a reluctance to invest in girls' education. As is evident from this concern, the main danger to girls' education as perceived by parents is pregnancy. A school-going daughter is overwhelmingly seen as a family calamity, albeit not a rare occurrence. As one mother put it: "My daughter fell pregnant while in Grade 11. It was very sad. When I realised she was pregnant, I wished it were a butterfly, which I can just pluck off her body. But it was it!" Parents stated that school-age pregnancy destroys a girl's future, as well as placing an economic burden on a family by adding another dependent.

Parents also mentioned that girls from poor households were more likely to leave school when they suffered ridiculing by classmates for not having the same things as others. Boys are seen to have a more stable self-esteem ('Boys are fighters'). Other causes for female drop-out were mentioned as early marriage, alcohol and drug abuse by girls. In addition, more girls than boys were perceived to fail Grade 10, and therefore unable to continue into senior secondary phase.

## **6.5 Community leaders**

A majority of community leaders interviewed were traditional leaders, including 4 headwomen. Other informants in this category were church elders (6), a retired teacher and a hospital matron.

Most respondents in this group were outspoken about what they perceived as the low quality of education in their local school (see section 8). Their major concern about girls' education was the high number of girls falling pregnant and as a result abandoning their school career before reaching Grade 10 or 12. Only 3 interviewees in this group stated that teenage pregnancy was not a problem in their community. Other problems with girls' education mentioned were HIV/AIDS, relationships with adult men, a higher female academic failure rate and a lack of interest in education on the side of female learners.

## **6.6 Education officials**

Findings from interviews with education officers from Rundu Regional Directorate MBESC and from the data presentation workshop in September 2001 indicate a broad awareness of shortcomings in quality aspects of education (see section 8). There was also a general problem consciousness regarding insufficient retention of girls. Several officials noted that girls seemed more reticent in classroom interaction than boys, that the pass

rates for Grade 10 were lower for girls, and that the most frequent cause of drop-out was pregnancy. Schools in Rundu town were said to have the highest rates of schoolgirl pregnancy.

Girls' low performance and retention were attributed to a range of factors. These include on the side of the schools problematic gender stereotypes by some teachers ('Girls aren't gifted and maths and science'), and in some schools a lack of trained teachers (particularly qualified female teachers) and poor school management. Some officials also note a dearth of career guidance and of vocational subjects, contributing to a lack of motivation of girls. A specific school related factor that renders learners more prone to teenage pregnancy was mentioned in the fact that the subject of life skills in many schools is not taught, as is the case for other non-promotional subject. A senior official even noted that in some schools he had visited, the subject did not even feature pro forma on the timetable.

Asked to assess the role of parents and girls themselves, education officials perceived girls to be less interested in school than in entertainment and boyfriends. They attributed these to a lack of encouragement for girls' academic achievement, a lack of female role models as well as insufficient parental commitment to their daughters' education.

## **7 The impact of the home environment**

### **7.1 Parental expectations from girls and boys**

As already noted, parents were generally said not to discriminate in their expectations between girls and boys, and stated that they both could reach the 'highest level'. A few parents made subtle differentiations in suggesting that their daughters could go for further studies at a college, while boys could go to university or even 'study in other countries'.

In terms of careers, most parents wanted both, their daughters and sons, to have qualified professions, although examples mentioned corresponded to conventional female and male domains. They envisaged girls as nurses, teachers or secretaries, whereas boys were described as future drivers, builders, carpenters or wood carvers.

Respondents from the teacher as well as community leader categories thought that a minority of parents counted on their daughters finding a wealthy husband - so they themselves could benefit economically - rather than a good education and career. On the other hand, many parents found it worrying that their daughters might marry early or fall pregnant, as this would prevent them from putting their education (as well as their parents' monetary investment in schooling) to economic use by gaining employment and supporting their parents. However, no concrete cases were mentioned in which parents actively discouraged their daughters from continuing education for this reason.

## 7.2 Parental care

Many primary school children, boys as well as girls, had an unkempt and neglected physical appearance, were poorly clothed and unwashed. Particularly some children who did not live with their own mother or parents looked uncared for, and said they had not enough to eat. In some cases fathers were singled out for not taking an interest or supporting children which they had fathered with women to whom they were not married. This was criticised especially for men who earned a salary, and therefore have the means to cater for their offspring. But even where parents lived together, men were perceived by many respondents across the all informant groups as neglecting their care duties towards their children. Thus, some focus group discussions of parents saw a need for community leaders to use their influence on fathers in order to get them to 'come back home from bars and girl-friends and assist mothers' in their care giver role, and in 'disciplining' children.

## 7.3 Parental involvement in education

The most concrete involvement of parents and guardians in education and school matters is paying school development funds. Across the sample the overwhelming majority of parents were fulfilling this duty, even if they found this difficult. In only case from this sample, the school had not demanded or collected any fees in the last three years.

Other monetary contributions that parents cited were fund raising activities in which they participated. On parental attendance at school meetings the opinions varied between schools; in most schools, teachers claimed that parents only came to school if their child had been suspended. Parents of some schools however contended that no general parents' meetings had been held for years.

Information on the involvement of school boards in school management issues and school policies was sketchy. A disconcerting trend was reported from several schools, where parents who happened to be present at a school prize giving ceremony (because their child received acknowledgement as good performer) were appointed as school board members.

Other ways in which parents, usually women, involve themselves in school matters was the preparation of the school meal in those schools participating in the school-feeding scheme.

Compared to other educational regions in northern Namibia, field researchers found that few schools had any traditional classroom structures, even when they evidently were in need of additional classrooms. As the erection of wooden or other traditional structures is usually done by communities and parents, their absence might be construed to indicate low levels of parental involvement.

The involvement of community leaders in education varied from case to case. Whereas some just stated that they paid school development fund as parents, others said they made sure that the children in their village went to school and that parents do not keep their children at home in order to do domestic or farm chores.

On balance, it appears that parents and guardians usually think that they do their duty, especially by going out of their way to pay school development fees, whereas school managements and educators are of the opinion that parents should be more actively involved in school affairs and take a stronger interest in the performance of the children.

#### **7.4 Domestic work load**

Although domestic chores were not mentioned as a direct cause for drop-out in interviews and focus groups discussions, schoolgoing girls said that domestic work left them with inadequate time to study. Most girls say that once they get home from school they have to give priority to household chores before they are allowed to do their homework. They stated that they were often too tired to study when they had the time to do so.

Informants among community leaders confirmed that although children are no longer kept at home to do domestic work, as might have happened in the past, but are still made to carry domestic and farming duties. Parents' focus groups listed as chores which girls are commonly tasked with: pounding, cooking, fetching water, cleaning in and around the house, working in fields (ploughing) and fishing. Boys have to herd cattle, do construction work at the homestead, work in fields and erect fences. Female learners were of the opinion that girls had a heavier workload in the family compared to boys, whose tasks tend to be more seasonal. They also said that many girls were overloaded with domestic chores.

For parents it was natural that children should help them with domestic chores, and they did not perceive it as impacting on school performance. However, the assessment also found that in some cases children, especially girls, were left to run the family household all by themselves. Many times, the adults in these families would spend many hours of the day at drinking places.

It should be noted that the domestic workload is less of an issue for learners at senior secondary level: The majority of these stay in school hostels, because of the limited number of schools offering Grades 11 and 12. This fact however does not detract from the likelihood that a high work burden for girls may lead to low retention before they reach these grades and go to boarding school.

## **7.5 Relations between parents and adolescent children**

Many respondents claim that respect between teenage children and parents is lacking, which often manifests itself in the issue of domestic chores. Parents complain that children resent helping at home, and disobey orders in this regard. Several focus group discussions (with parents as well as with female students) related cases of physical violence from adolescents on parents (mothers), for example when the teenager found that no food had been cooked for him or her.

Similarly parents' notion of "teenage girls don't listen to us" becomes evident around the topic of sexual relationships/boyfriends. Parents report that when they warn their daughters against early pregnancies and HIV, they are told "It is my body and my life, you had your youth, so leave me to enjoy mine".

## **7.6 Alcohol abuse**

Alcohol abuse emerges as a pervasive problem. Parents as well as teachers and learners abuse alcohol.

Alcoholism among parents is said to cause poor care of children, often leaving children to grow up on their own. Furthermore, domestic violence triggered by alcohol abuse affects children emotionally. Alcohol abuse may also lead to rape.

Different categories of respondents further cite alcohol abuse by teachers as detrimental, as they not only tend to neglect their teaching duties, but also solicit sex from female learners when intoxicated.

# **8 The impact of the school environment and quality of education**

## **8.1 Infrastructure, equipment and teaching aids**

The field research did not dwell at any length on the impact of a school's physical infrastructure, communications and teaching aids by probing specifically about these issues. They did not feature prominently in the educational challenges mentioned, although learners found physical conditions in some schools detrimental to education, such as the lack of chairs in some schools and the lack of mattresses in some hostels. Several community leaders voiced dissatisfaction at the lack of educational materials and textbooks in their local school. Researchers also found very poor sanitary facilities in a number of schools surveyed.

## 8.2 Hostels

Conditions in many hostels were singled out as outright harmful to girls' education. Whereas the poorly equipped so-called community hostels, such as Mukekete, were found to be generally unsatisfactory for all children, as they lacked furniture and mattresses and hostel/feeding, most government-run hostels were seen as unsafe for girls. Often the locks on doors are not working or vandalised, and provide easy access to men from outside and male learners. Cases of rape were also attributed to unsafe hostel accommodation.

In addition to the adverse physical conditions at schools the insufficient supervision at hostels compounds the scenario: "Teachers do not check what is going on at hostels" was a common observation by learners. Also, some male teachers with hostel supervision tasks are said to prey on female learners, and engage in sexual relationships with girls.

While disciplinary supervision was found extraordinarily inadequate, the research also found a near total absence of leisure activities outside extracurricular activities at hostels. Organising games, competitions, clubs or similar pursuits to keep learners busy especially at weekends, does not appear to feature as a duty of hostel supervisors or supervisory teachers.

Some girls who had the means to so, or had relatives nearby, reported that they consciously left the hostel at weekends, i.e. the time when they felt most vulnerable to sexual harassment.

## 8.3 Work attitudes of teachers

A lack of teachers' work discipline features more prominently among interviewees' criticism than lack of educator competence or teacher qualifications. This might be due to the fact that teachers who sit in the staff room 'from sunrise to sunset' are a more glaring evidence of a neglect of duties than inappropriate teaching methods.

Researchers found the absenteeism rates among teachers, as reflected in available school records, rather disturbing. Learners and ex-learners had many observations on teachers who were absent for days on end to attend to personal affairs in Rundu. Cases of teachers who were sick for long periods of time were also related.

Learners criticised teachers who did not even physically spend the whole teaching period in the classroom, for example answering cell phone calls during lessons (and often not continuing their lesson afterwards). Teacher students also pointed out that many times teachers do not give new lessons, but just go through the homework assignment, followed by a class assignment.

Some principals confirmed that they regarded some members of their teaching force as poor role models, as they were often late, dressed in an inappropriate manner or left the classroom during lessons to sit idle in the staff rooms.

As particularly poor role models many informants saw those male teachers who engage in relationships with learners as well as those who abuse alcohol.

#### **8.4 Competence of teachers and teacher support**

The concerns voiced in this regard referred in several instances to multi-grade teaching, which is used in many of the schools surveyed in junior primary level to alleviate the lack of teachers and of classrooms. Interviewees, notably community leaders, doubted that multi-grade teaching was of good quality. It appeared that many teachers teaching two or more grades simultaneously had never received any training in multi-grade teaching.

Other informants, such as student teachers and education officials, saw the quality of teaching compromised by frequent mismatches between BETD<sup>8</sup> qualifications and subject knowledge or the level that BETD graduates are placed. Especially many maths and science teachers are said to lack the necessary subject competence.

The aspiring teachers interviewed also said that the teaching pace was geared towards faster learners, even if these were a minority in the class. No measures such as remedial teaching were taken to allow slower learners to catch up (with exceptions directly before exam times). They were of the opinion that some teachers are even relieved when slow learners drop out of school, because they no longer encumber the progression in the curriculum.

The perceived low capacity of the Advisory Services, responsible for professional support of teachers and curriculum implementation, is partly attributed to the fact that subject advisors receive no specific induction training before or after they have been appointed. According to some informants among teachers and teacher students, subject advisors do not give constructive advice, or teach example lessons. According to some interviewees, subject advisors 'just tell teachers off'.

#### **8.5 School management**

Interview questions did not specifically target the efficiency and quality of school managements. However, the field assessment found that a number of schools had poor records, to the extent that they were unable to provide the information for the school checklist developed for this field assessment (compare Annex 3). In these instances, especially data on teacher absenteeism and teacher leave was missing, indicating insufficient monitoring of teacher attendance.

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<sup>8</sup> Basic Education Teaching Diploma

In addition, the frequent mention of poor work attitudes of teachers (as evidenced by teachers spending their time in the staff room rather than in class, alcohol abuse and relationships with learners) reflect negatively on the capacity of principals and school management teams in the affected schools.

## 8.6 Learner participation and motivation

Almost all teachers confirmed that adolescent girls across all subjects tended to participate less in classroom interaction than boys. Educators at the September workshop described for example that girls were less likely to answer questions posed by teachers, and that after mixed group work sessions it was usually the boys who reported back to the class.

Most teachers attribute this low level of engagement to a lack of assertiveness among girls, and to their 'lack of interest' in school. Teachers said that they try to motivate all learners to study, for example by telling them that they themselves continue with their education. None of the teachers interviewed conducted special sessions with learners on motivation, although three teachers said that they had taken girls aside in order to encourage them by pointing out role models. None of the schools had conducted systematic experiments to try and enhance girls' motivation (such as single-sex work groups or streams).

No specific gender trends emerged from the participation of male and female learners in extra-curricular activities. Whereas some schools reported higher numbers of girls participating in these activities, in others boys participated more, or there were no gender differences in total participation. There was a slight tendency for girls to be more active in the school choir, in cultural and religious groups as well as *My Future My Choice*<sup>9</sup>, whereas sports activities and environmental groups had more boys.

## 9. Sexual relationships and teenage pregnancy

### 9.1 Sexual relationships

Girls involve themselves in sexual relationships with adolescent males as well as with older men. While relationships with (near) same age men aren't rare, respondents of all groups had more concerns about adult men dating girls. Although there was no characteristic profile of the sugar daddy (beyond the proverbial 'three Cs' – cash, car, cell phone), such men are often wage earners, i.e. they can afford to take girls out, buy them clothes and other coveted items. Specific mention was made to male teachers and to soldiers in areas near to National Defence Force (NDF) bases.

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<sup>9</sup> *My Future My Choice* is a peer facilitated life skills training course supported by UNICEF and run as an extracurricular activity for 15 – 18 years olds.

At times female learners live together with same age boy friends, usually at the home of either of the parents. Such co-habitation is usually regarded as a defacto union or marriage. By contrast, female learners rarely live together with adult 'sponsors', as the men are frequently married. However, the study team came across teachers who had female learners living with them on school grounds.

The causes for the 'sponsor' phenomenon were attributed to a variety of reasons:

- **Girls' materialistic aspirations:** Girls themselves as well as other respondents opine that many girls actively seek out a working man as sponsor who can satisfy their needs for 'social life', including fashion articles, cosmetics, drinks etc. According to girls themselves, having an adult sugar daddy is also a way of ascertaining their independence and freedom
- **Peer pressure:** Securing or giving in to an adult boy friend has become almost a custom, and girls who can not boast a boyfriend with money, or presents by him, feel left out.
- **Poverty:** Girls themselves and community members reason that a minority of girls resort to 'sponsors' because this is the only way they can meet their basic needs such as food, clothes and shelter, and sometimes those of their siblings or families.
- **Lack of parental responsibility:** Some respondents among teachers attributed the fact that girls start early sexual relationships to the lack of information they receive from their parents. In one focus group it was also noted that parents fail to take sufficient interest in their daughters, and do not control them. They voiced the opinions that parents or relatives did not query how the girl had acquired expensive new possessions (bought for them by the sponsor), thus tacitly condoning such relationships.
- **Coercion / sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment including rape was said to take place at hostels, particularly at weekends when hostels are not sufficiently supervised. The perpetrators may be men from outside the school, or male learners. Another variant of coercion was reported from teachers who threaten to fail a female learner they have set their eyes on in exams, unless she accedes to his wishes.

Some informants indicated that girls from urban settings were more prone to sugar daddy relationships. At least some learners said they had observed that their peers from very rural areas did not care as much for 'social life' as those from town, i.e. had less materialistic aspirations. On the other hand, teachers who engaged in relationships with girls were sometimes observed to seek out rural girls as 'easy prey'.

## **9.2 Community and school attitudes to early pregnancy**

School age pregnancy was a problem in most of the schools sampled with the exception of very few schools that had recorded only one to two cases yearly. Girls as young as 12 have become pregnant. Community respondents, parents, teachers as learners saw teenage pregnancy as a danger, and the biggest obstacle to girls' education.

Very few of the parents participating in focus group discussions said that they did not mind a daughter becoming pregnant while still at school, i.e. were happy about a grand child. The dominant opinion on this topic was that early pregnancies were a disaster, because it interrupted and sometimes terminated the girl's school career, and because the fathers (often married men) do not support their children, thereby adding to the girl's family another mouth to feed.

Most girls who fall pregnant try to protect the identity of the fathers of their babies, especially if these are learners or teachers, because they too would have to leave the school.

Girls themselves said that early pregnancies were unwanted and unwelcome: "It is painful. It shouldn't happen in the 21st century! " On the other hand, in the interaction among peers, and the social standing among female classmates, it was also said that falling pregnant was no longer a shame, but rather seen as "cool".

As for the reactions that pregnant learners receive in school, it was said that especially male learners, but also some teachers, tease the girls with statements such as "You are making us sleepy". Girls who have babies already are sometimes mocked by teachers who call them "mother" etc.

Although no statistics are available, according to impressions from educators at the data analysis workshop, a sizeable proportion of teenage mothers seem to re-enter school, usually different schools from the ones they attended beforehand. This does not contradict the findings from the respondent group of out-of-school girls, because deliberately a sample of non-re-entrants was chosen. The findings from this group indicate that if young mothers do not return to formal school, they are unlikely to continue their education in any other formal or informal institution.

### 9.3 Implementation of the Teenage Pregnancy Policy

The status of *The Policy on Pregnancy among Learners in Schools* is somewhat unclear. The document has been in draft form since 1997. An official guideline was finally issued in April 2001 together with a circular entitled "Implementation of the Policy on Pregnancy amongst Learners"<sup>10</sup>. While the circular states that a report on the policy by ad hoc Cabinet Committee is being awaited, it gives what it calls a 'temporary guideline' that summarises the essence of the policy. It states that

- **a pregnant girl should be allowed to attend regular classes at least until her pregnancy is visibly clear**
- **girls who fall pregnant should be allowed to return to normal schooling after spending at least a year with the baby**
- **pregnant girls (should) be allowed to attend special afternoon/evening classes and they should also be allowed to sit for examinations. (Circular Formal Education 5/2001)**

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<sup>10</sup> Circular Formal Education 5/2001

- the same conditions should apply to the schoolboy who is held responsible for the pregnancy

The spirit of the policy emphasises continuation of education for affected learners, rather than sanctions and punishment.

According to findings from the field assessment, there is considerable inconsistency in how these guidelines are understood and implemented by school managements. In some schools, girls were told to leave the school as soon as a pregnancy became known about or visible. In these cases, principals seemed to misunderstand the pertinent clause quoted above, according to which learners should be able to continue classes at least until her pregnancy becomes visible (i.e. does by no means compel the school to suspend the learner at this point in time).

In other instances, girls were allowed to continue classes, until they were ready to deliver. In some schools, girls were counselled, and the content of the policy explained to them.

#### **9.4 Guidance and counselling on reproductive health issues and HIV/AIDS awareness**

Clearly one of the most disturbing findings from this study is that the cases of teenage pregnancy represent only the 'tip of the ice berg' of the sheer scope of unprotected sex that learners engage in. It was equally disconcerting that teenage pregnancy (with its implication for a girl's school career) was of more direct concern to many informants than the long-term implications of high-risk sexual behaviour.

However, all sectors of the community and school, and girls themselves, claim that they are aware of the dangers of HIV, and note that many deaths of young people in their community are attributable to AIDS. Interestingly, most parents claim that they talk to their adolescent children about HIV/AIDS, but feel that their warnings fall on deaf ears, because the young people insist on their independence and enjoyment.

##### **9.4.1 Guidance and counselling in schools**

It was noteworthy that most schools had assigned a teacher to counselling girls on 'girls' issues'. This was a female teacher either formally assigned by school management or who had taken this task on out of her own initiative. According to teacher respondents, many of these teachers had attended workshops on counselling, although none had had professional counselling training at college or university level. – In a few schools, principals had assigned all female teachers to girls' issues, whereas in some schools girls were told that they should confide in the principal.

Female learners found the teachers designated as focal persons generally understanding. In schools which had no female teaching staff, learners stated that they preferred to talk

to a female member of their learner representative council about problems, rather than to consult a male teacher or the principal.

Some schools were also found to make special efforts to invite outside resource persons such as health and social workers to discuss family planning, safe sex and related issues to learners.

Teachers were also asked how girls' issues such as reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy were covered during formal lessons. They usually referred to Science, Life Science and Life Skills. However, five of the schools sampled indicated that these issues did not feature in teaching at all. – It is disconcerting however that according to general perceptions as well as informants from the Regional Directorate the subject of life skills is effectively never taught, as it is a non-promotional subject. Therefore, the most institutionalised strategy targeting adolescent issues and HIV/AIDS awareness is not implemented in many schools.

#### **9.4.2 Accessibility of health centres**

In some areas, girls reported that they found it difficult to access health facilities for contraceptives due to the distance to the next clinic. Whether health facilities were deemed helpful and adolescent friendly seemed to depend largely on individual nurses. Girls stated that some nurses accused them of sleeping with their (the nurses') husbands, or told them to go home and return with their parents. Some would even shout at female learners and exposed them in front of other patients as 'on the lookout for AIDS'. Non-abrasive nurses were said to advise girls that they should consider abstaining from sex until they were older.

Other nurses and clinics were said to be very helpful with advice, and were prepared to come to schools to explain about physical body changes during adolescence as well as different types of contraceptives.

### **10. Summary**

The present field research has confirmed that more attention needs to be paid to girls' education. It is however evident there is no single solution that will instantly alleviate the situation, because a range of factors lead to the discontinuation of education by girls. The most obvious aspect is teenage pregnancy and sexual relationships. This problem has its underlying causes in a number of reasons, namely the lack of perspectives and role models, as well as a non-stimulating learning environment. It should however be noted that girls cannot always be regarded, and do not regard themselves, as mere victims pressurized into sexual relationships.

The research has drawn attention to the following facts:

- The quality of education, the efficiency of school management and the commitment of teachers vary greatly between schools, but are a cause for concern.
- There is a serious generation gap between adolescents and their parents or guardians, rendering constructive dialogue difficult.
- There are no longer any customary expectations on the side of communities and parents to marry early, or to be less educated than boys.
- Parents are not aware of the practical implications of the constitutional guarantee to 'free basic education', i.e. do not know or are unable to demand fee exemption.
- Girls tend to be less active in class than boys, and teachers lack the skills to enhance female participation during lesson.
- The poor management of hostels render them unsafe for girls, and not conducive to child-wellbeing.
- Relationships with 'sponsors' are a serious concern, as they make girls vulnerable to HIV infection and pregnancy.
- Despite regulations guarding against sexual relationships between teachers and learners, such liaisons are disturbingly frequent.
- All groups of informants claim to be aware of HIV/AIDS, yet behavioural changes towards safer sex have not taken place.
- The risk of contracting HIV seems 'further away' in the minds of many learners, as well as parents and teachers, than the danger of falling pregnant.
- MBESC's teenage pregnancy policy is not implemented consistently.

## **11 Recommendations**

### **11.1 Community responses**

In their respective focus group discussions, female learners as well as parents were asked how teachers, parents, community leaders and learners themselves could support girls' education. Although the responses from the two groups do not amount to concrete recommendations for interventions, they make for interesting comparisons:

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	<b>Responses from girls</b>	<b>Responses from parents</b>
<b>Parents should ...</b>	<p>share with children the 'facts of life'</p> <p>support their children by paying school fees and giving them time to study</p> <p>provide them with food</p> <p>occasionally give them special treats like shoes, clothes, food</p> <p>avoid exposure to alcohol</p>	<p>motivate and guide children</p> <p>set good examples</p>
<b>Teachers should ...</b>	<p>teach properly</p> <p>encourage learners</p> <p>equip learners with the necessary life skills, especially girls</p> <p>avoid getting involved with school girls</p> <p>avoid alcohol abuse</p>	<p>teach properly</p> <p>motivate girls to value education</p> <p>re-instate corporal punishment</p> <p>avoid relationships with learners</p> <p>ensure that school staff or learners who impregnate girls are suspended from the schools/their jobs</p> <p>avoid drinking alcohol with learners</p>
<b>Learners should ...</b>	<p>take school seriously</p> <p>stay away from relationships/postpone 'adult social life'</p> <p>use contraceptives if engaging in sexual relationships</p>	<p>take education seriously</p> <p>delay 'social life' until after completion of school</p> <p>use contraceptives</p> <p>listen to parents and teachers</p>
<b>Community leaders should ...</b>	<p>encourage/motivate girls</p> <p>attend school meetings and advise teachers</p> <p>restrict girls from hanging around bars</p>	<p>allow poor people to be exempted from school fees</p> <p>put strong regulations in place to combat teenage pregnancy</p> <p>ensure that fathers come back home from bars and girl-friends and assist mothers in disciplining children</p> <p>work closely with school boards to communicate community needs to the schools, and vice versa</p>

It is striking that despite the generation gaps in the discourse and relationships between teenagers and parents described earlier, both groups make very similar recommendations as to how learners should behave. The parallels between what both groups demand from teachers are also significant and reflect on widely perceived shortcomings of educators. Parents as well as learners emphasize that teachers should fulfil their teaching duty, should avoid alcohol and relationships with schoolgirls.

Recommendations from BETD students related mainly to measures to be implemented in schools, such as

- Stricter discipline in schools
- Separate counselling for girls and boys
- Better monitoring and support systems for teachers
- Remedial classes for slower learners
- Improved teaching methodology adapted to average and slow learners

Various respondents across the different groups saw a need to make hostels safer. Some thought that single sex hostels would be a better option, provided they were not staffed with male supervisors (who were likely to engage in relationships with learners).

Of the community leader informant group, especially traditional leaders advocated for a stronger religious content in the school curriculum in order to impart moral values.

## **11.2 Suggested interventions**

The recommendations below are grouped according to issues they are trying to address. This list is by no means comprehensive. On the other hand the recommendations need to be prioritised by stakeholders, and translated into a concrete action plan. Ideally such action plan will be coordinated by a designated unit or individual officer at the Rundu Regional Directorate MBESC.

- Learner performance
  - Establish a system whereby teachers report on the performance of male and female learners and are supported in this through practical advice by subject advisers
  - Provide in-service training on gender-sensitive motivation techniques
  - Conduct remedial classes for slow learners
  - Establish separate male/female streams in subjects in which girls' performance is low
  
- Guidance/counselling/life skills/HIV/AIDS awareness
  - Ensure that the subject of life skills is taught
  - Strengthen and expand coverage of peer education programmes
  - Designate female teachers at each school and support them as focal persons for gender issues for learners

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- Invite health and social workers to make presentations to girls and boys
- Give organizations that deal with HIV/AIDS a platform in schools (for example, interaction between learners and HIV positive people)
  
- Community involvement in education
  - Conduct information campaign on the rights to free basic education (and fee exemption procedures)
  - Strengthen school boards
  
- Teenage pregnancy
  - Improved monitoring and reporting system in schools and at the Regional Directorate
  - Inform all principals about the correct interpretation and implementation of MBESC's teenage pregnancy policy
  - Discuss the teenage pregnancy policy, including the sections on code of conduct for learners and teachers, with learners
  
- Teacher – learner relationships
  - Awareness campaign by teachers' unions
  - Rigorous enforcement of regulations by school managements (i.e. reporting incidences, disciplinary action and suspension)
  
- 'Sponsor' relationships
  - Involve local theatre groups for dramatizations in public venues (bars etc)
  - Negotiate with Namibian Defence Force commanders on code of conduct regarding relationships of soldiers with learners
  
- Hostels
  - Strengthen and monitor hostel supervision system
  - Involve school boards and learner representative councils in hostel management
  - Institute leisure activities for learners at weekends
  
- Role modelling
  - Women's organizations and church leaders to develop participatory activities with a pilot groups of female learners

The final recommendations will be formulated by a stakeholder workshop in February 2002. The Ministry will then select a sample of pilot schools in which interventions will be carried out.

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**Annex 2: Learners who passed and failed – December 2000, Rundu  
Grades 1 - 5**

Circuit	Passed (P) Failed (F) Total (T)	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4			Grade 5		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
<b>Ndiyona</b>	<b>P</b>	287	268	555	248	294	542	267	296	563	252	236	487	222	216	438
	<b>F</b>	68	64	132	60	47	107	68	56	124	69	84	153	116	109	225
	<b>T</b>	355	332	687	308	341	649	335	352	687	321	319	649	338	325	663
	<b>% P</b>	80.8	80.7	80.8	80.5	86.2	83.5	79.9	84.1	81.9	78.5	73.7	76.1	65.7	66.5	66.1
<b>Shambyu</b>	<b>P</b>	378	369	747	316	336	652	337	341	541	678	318	329	249	208	457
	<b>F</b>	122	133	255	81	77	158	85	76	161	101	75	176	152	136	288
	<b>T</b>	500	502	1007	397	413	810	422	417	839	419	404	823	401	344	745
	<b>%P</b>	75	73	74	79	81	80	79	81	80	75	81	78	62	60	61
<b>Rundu</b>	<b>P</b>	844	822	1666	677	777	1454	679	730	1409	693	732	1425	662	637	1299
	<b>F</b>	276	232	508	180	156	336	175	165	340	170	170	340	292	369	661
	<b>T</b>	1120	1054	2174	857	933	1790	854	895	1749	863	902	1765	954	1006	2960
	<b>%P</b>	75	78	77	79	83	81	80	82	81	80	81	81	69	63	44
<b>Ncamagoro</b>	<b>P</b>	421	434	855	343	342	685	292	303	595	311	249	560	208	237	445
	<b>F</b>	140	182	322	93	94	187	83	67	150	68	63	131	93	88	181
	<b>T</b>	561	616	1177	436	436	872	375	370	745	379	312	691	301	325	626
	<b>% P</b>	75	70.5	72.6	78.7	78.4	78.6	77.9	81.9	79.9	82.1	79.8	81	69	72.9	71.1
<b>Bunya</b>	<b>P</b>	413	390	803	311	309	620	312	292	604	279	306	585	269	232	501
	<b>F</b>	141	123	264	72	59	131	85	95	180	100	97	197	87	109	196
	<b>T</b>	554	513	1067	383	368	751	397	387	784	379	403	782	356	341	697
	<b>%P</b>	75	76	75	81	84	83	79	75	77	74	76	75	76	68	72
<b>Kandjimi</b>	<b>P</b>	1356	321	677	247	270	517	269	275	544	310	288	598	241	244	485
	<b>F</b>	131	125	256	96	84	180	121	68	189	122	100	222	91	110	201
	<b>T</b>	487	446	933	343	354	697	390	343	733	432	388	820	332	354	666
	<b>%P</b>	73	72	72.5	72	76.2	74.1	69	80	74.2	72	74.2	72	72.6	69	70.7
<b>Mpungu</b>	<b>P</b>	314	301	615	216	229	445	205	205	410	185	171	356	138	127	265
	<b>F</b>	138	109	247	67	44	111	55	47	102	42	40	82	56	57	113
	<b>T</b>	452	410	867	283	279	556	260	252	512	227	211	488	194	184	378
	<b>%P</b>	69	73	71	76	84	80	79	81	80	81	81	81	71	69	70
<b>Mukwe</b>	<b>P</b>	331	403	784	331	306	687	376	358	734	384	361	745	275	251	526
	<b>F</b>	153	182	385	100	77	177	135	127	262	170	169	339	244	267	511
	<b>T</b>	534	585	1119	431	383	814	511	485	996	554	530	1184	519	518	1037
	<b>%P</b>	71.3	68.8	70.6	76.8	79.9	78.3	73.6	73.8	73.7	69.3	68.1	62.9	52.9	48.5	50.7

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**Learners who passed and failed – December 2000, Rundu**

**Grades 6- 9, Total Grades 1 - 9**

Circuit	Passed (P) Failed (F) Total (T)	Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8			Grade 9			TOTAL		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
<b>Ndiyona</b>	<b>P</b>	197	178	875	168	161	329	99	25	124	102	67	169	1842	1740	3582
	<b>F</b>	60	56	116	57	93	150	69	131	200	62	60	122	629	700	1329
	<b>T</b>	257	234	491	225	254	479	168	156	324	164	127	291	2471	2440	4911
	<b>% P</b>	76.7	76.1	76.4	74.7	63.4	68.7	58.9	16	38.3	62.2	52.8	58.1	74.5	71.3	72.9
<b>Shambyu</b>	<b>P</b>	261	246	507	200	153	353	150	140	290	155	125	280	2364	2247	4611
	<b>F</b>	52	61	113	61	69	130	53	59	112	40	45	85	747	731	1478
	<b>T</b>	313	307	620	261	222	483	203	199	402	195	170	365	3111	2978	2982
	<b>%P</b>	83	80	81	76	68	73	73	70	72	79	73	76	75	75	75
<b>Rundu</b>	<b>P</b>	735	679	1414	616	575	1191	518	537	1055	406	330	736	5830	5819	11649
	<b>F</b>	101	163	264	80	109	189	197	225	422	171	206	377	1642	1795	3457
	<b>T</b>	836	842	1678	696	684	1380	715	762	1477	577	536	1113	7472	9614	15086
	<b>%P</b>	88	81	84	88.5	84	863	72	71	71	70	62	66	78	76	77
<b>Ncamagoro</b>	<b>P</b>	183	162	345	136	87	223	76	55	131	22	18	40	1992	1887	3879
	<b>F</b>	30	42	72	41	37	78	17	11	28	7	12	19	572	596	1168
	<b>T</b>	213	204	417	177	124	301	93	66	159	29	30	59	2564	2483	5047
	<b>% P</b>	85.9	79.4	82.7	76.8	70.2	74.1	81.7	85.3	82.4	75.9	60	87.8	77.7	76.0	76.9
<b>Bunya</b>	<b>P</b>	229	209	438	169	150	319	193	133	326	136	81	217	2311	2102	4413
	<b>F</b>	43	64	107	54	65	119	49	59	108	52	91	143	683	762	1445
	<b>T</b>	272	273	545	223	215	438	242	192	434	188	172	360	2994	2864	5858
	<b>%P</b>	84	77	80	76	70	73	80	69	75	72	47	60	77	73	75
<b>Kandjimi</b>	<b>P</b>	238	207	445	161	168	329	236	187	423	206	144	300	2264	2104	4368
	<b>F</b>	47	55	102	62	65	127	53	81	134	76	87	163	799	775	1574
	<b>T</b>	285	262	547	223	233	406	289	268	557	282	231	513	3063	2879	5942
	<b>%P</b>	83.5	79	814	222	72	72	817	70	76	73	62.3	68.2	74	73	73.5
<b>Mpungu</b>	<b>P</b>	132	128	260	100	79	179	62	29	91	28	30	58	1380	1299	2679
	<b>F</b>	8	19	27	11	21	32	22	25	47	10	6	16	409	368	777
	<b>T</b>	146	147	287	111	100	211	84	54	138	38	36	74	1789	1667	3456
	<b>%P</b>	94	87	91	90	79	85	74	54	66	74	83	78	77	78	78
<b>Mukwe</b>	<b>P</b>	250	198	448	195	124	319	166	103	269	145	73	218	2503	2177	4600
	<b>F</b>	89	110	199	74	84	158	112	82	194	78	76	154	1155	1174	2329
	<b>T</b>	339	308	647	269	208	477	278	185	463	223	149	372	3658	3351	6929

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	<b>%P</b>	73.7	64.3	67.2	725	59.6	66.9	59.7	55.7	58.10	65	48.9	58.6	68.4	64.9	66.4

Source: MBESC, 15<sup>th</sup> School Day Statistics February 2001: Rundu Region

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**Annex 3 Overview of schools sampled**

Name of School	Place	Grades	No. of Learners	Hostel	Multi-grade teaching	Platoon**	School Fund per annum	No. of drop outs 2001 m + f	No. of pregnancies 2001	Teacher absence Term 2, 2001 # days M + F	Facilities: water, elec., tel., fax, library	Number Classrooms Permanent Tradition
1. Bunya J.S.S.	Bunya	1-10	781	No	No	No	Grades 1-4: N\$ 25.00, Grades	22+34	12	Not available	Yes for all, except fax.	26 Permanent
2. Canchana S. P.	Canchana	1-7	224	No	No	No	N\$ 12.00	10+14	2	17+23	None of these.	6 Permanent Tradition
3. Dr. Romanus Kampungu	Rundu	8-10	700	Yes.	No	No	N\$ 75.00	16+11	8	35+50	Yes, all.	22 Permanent
4. Gava S. Primary	Gava	1-7	146	No	Yes	No	Grades 1-4: N\$ 15.00, Grades 5-7: N\$30.00	13 + 16	4	1+1	No for all.	3 Permanent Tradition
5. Himarwa lithete	Mpungu	8-10	171	No	No	No	N\$ 60.00	11+9	4	20+11	Yes for elec., water, library.	8 Permanent
6. Gwathinga Primary School	Gwathinga	1-6	95	No	* Yes	No	None.	4+5	0	3+8	No for all.	3 Permanent
7. Kamutjonga	Kamutjonga	1-6	232	No	No	No	Unclear	5+9	1	3+4	No for all, except library.	4 Permanent
8. Katji-NaKatji	Rundu	1-9	755	No	Yes	Yes	N\$ 35.00	15+17	8	36+28	No for electricity, tel., fax.	17 Permanent Tradition
9. Korokosha J. S. S.	Korokosha	1-9	Not available.	No	No	Yes	Grds 1-3: N\$18.00 + 3 Cups of Mahangu, Grds 4-9: N\$30.00 + 5 Cups	Unclear.	Not available.	Not available.	No for all, except water.	4 Permanent Tradition
10. Kandjimi Murangi S. S.	Nankundu	8-12	504	Yes	No	No	N\$ 100.00	6+9	9	Not available.	Yes for all.	15 Permanent
11. Maria Mwendere Sec. School	Kayengona	8-12	644	Yes	No	No	N\$ 100.00	8+21	11	40+58	Yes for all, except fax.	12 Permanent
12. Martin Ndumba	Divundu Village	1-10	304	Yes	No	No	N\$ 30.00	10+10	3	3+7	Yes, except fax and library.	14 Permanent
13. Max Makushe Sec. School	Biro	8-12	294	Yes.	* Yes	No	N\$ 90.00	11+15	5	0+3	Yes, except fax.	22 including library, needlework, home sc

**Girls' education in Rundu – Report on a field assessment**

Name of School	Place	Grades	No. of Learners	Hostel	Multi-grade teaching	Platoon	School Fund per annum	No. of drop outs 2001 m + f	No. of pregnancies 2001	Teacher absence Term 2, 2001 # days M + F	Facilities: water, elec., tel., fax, library	Number Classroom Permanent Tradition
14. Mukekete Junior P.	Mukekete	1-7	108	Yes.(Community)	Yes	No	N\$ 15.00	20+19	0	1+15	No, except for running water.	5 Permanent Tradition
15. Musese J. C. S.	Musese	1-9	377	No	No	No	Grds. 1-4: N\$ 18.00, Grds. 5-7: N\$ 24.00, Grds. 8-9: N\$ 30.00.	16+19	5	6+11	No, except for electricity and telephone.	11 Permanent Tradition
16. Ncamagoro J. S.	Mile 30	1-9	458	No	No	Yes	Grades 1-4: N\$ 30.00, Grades 5-7: N\$ 60.00, Grades 8-9: N\$ 90.00.	2+15	4	10+8	No, except electricity, water & library.	9 Permanent Tradition
17. Ndama Primary	Ndama	1-7	1063	No	No	Yes	N\$ 70.00	11+13	4	140+107	Yes, except fax & library.	21 Permanent Tradition
18. Ngone Combined S.	Ngone	1-9	465	No	No	No	Grades 1-4: N\$ 21.00, Grades 5-9: N\$ 30.00.	5+6	1	9+72	No, except library.	13 Permanent Tradition
19. Nyangana J.S.	Ndiyona	1-10	603	Yes.	*Yes	Yes	Grades 1-4: N\$ 60.00, Grades 5-7: N\$ 90.00 & Grades 8-10: N\$ 120.00.	18+18	8	8+11	Yes, except fax.	25 Permanent Tradition
20. Nkurenkuru C. S.	Nkurenkuru	5-10	629	No	No	No	N\$ 39.00	24+21	5	69+101	No, except for electricity, library & fax.	23 Permanent Tradition including laboratory
21. Rundu Sec. S.	Rundu	8-12	1096	Yes	*Yes	No	N\$ 60.00	Not available.	23	101 + 191	Yes, all.	29 Permanent Tradition Classroom Labs.
22. Shamangorwa	Shamangorwa Village	1-10	550	No	No	No	Grades 1-4: N\$ 15.00, Grades 5-10: N\$ 30.00.	26+22	2	34+80	Yes, except electricity & tel.	15 Permanent Tradition

## Girls' education in Rundu – Report on a field assessment

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- Notes:**
1. Six Schools are outstanding. That indicates that a lot of their information was incomplete, or the information was not ready by the time the research team left the school.
  2. \* indicates that the correctness of the information is doubted.
  3. Not available means, the space was left incomplete, or specific statistics were not available due to the teacher responsible being absent, or poor record keeping system.
  4. \*\* The platoon system refers to double shifting of lessons (morning and afternoon) due to limited number of classrooms and/or teachers

#### Annex 4: Overview of interviews conducted

Method	Number of Interviews	Number of Participants
Individual interview with principal/ acting principal	28	28
Individual interview with teachers	28	28
Focus group discussions with female learners	28	147
Interview with community leaders	25	32
Individual interview with girls out of school	26	26
Focus group discussions with Parents	26	118
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>379</b>

#### List of key informants:

Ms S Kantema, Regional Director, MBESC Rundu  
 Mr Dikuua, Chief Education Officer, MBESC Rundu  
 Ms Faustina Calay, Chief Education Officer, MBESC Rundu  
 Mr Buchani, Regional Manager, NAMCOL Rundu  
 Ms S Muremi, Regional Literacy Coordinator, MBESC Rundu  
 Ms M da Rocha, Pastor, Full Gospel Church  
 Bishop Shikongo, Roman Catholic Church  
 Mr V Likuro, Regional AIDS Coordinator  
 Ms S la Fleur, Luxdevelopment  
 Ms N Bessinger and Ms P Hamut, Namibian Red Cross Society  
 Mr Muremi, Regional Councillor Rundu  
 Mr Mbambo, Rundu College of Education  
 Mr S Mangundu and Mr M Kahare, Namibian National Teachers' Union (NANTU)  
 Ms Kudumo, Advisory teacher, MBESC Rundu  
 Ms S Hausiku, Rundu Teachers Resource Centre  
 Mr F Dittmer, GTZ  
 Mr A Voigt and Mr W Niewoud, EMIS/MBESC