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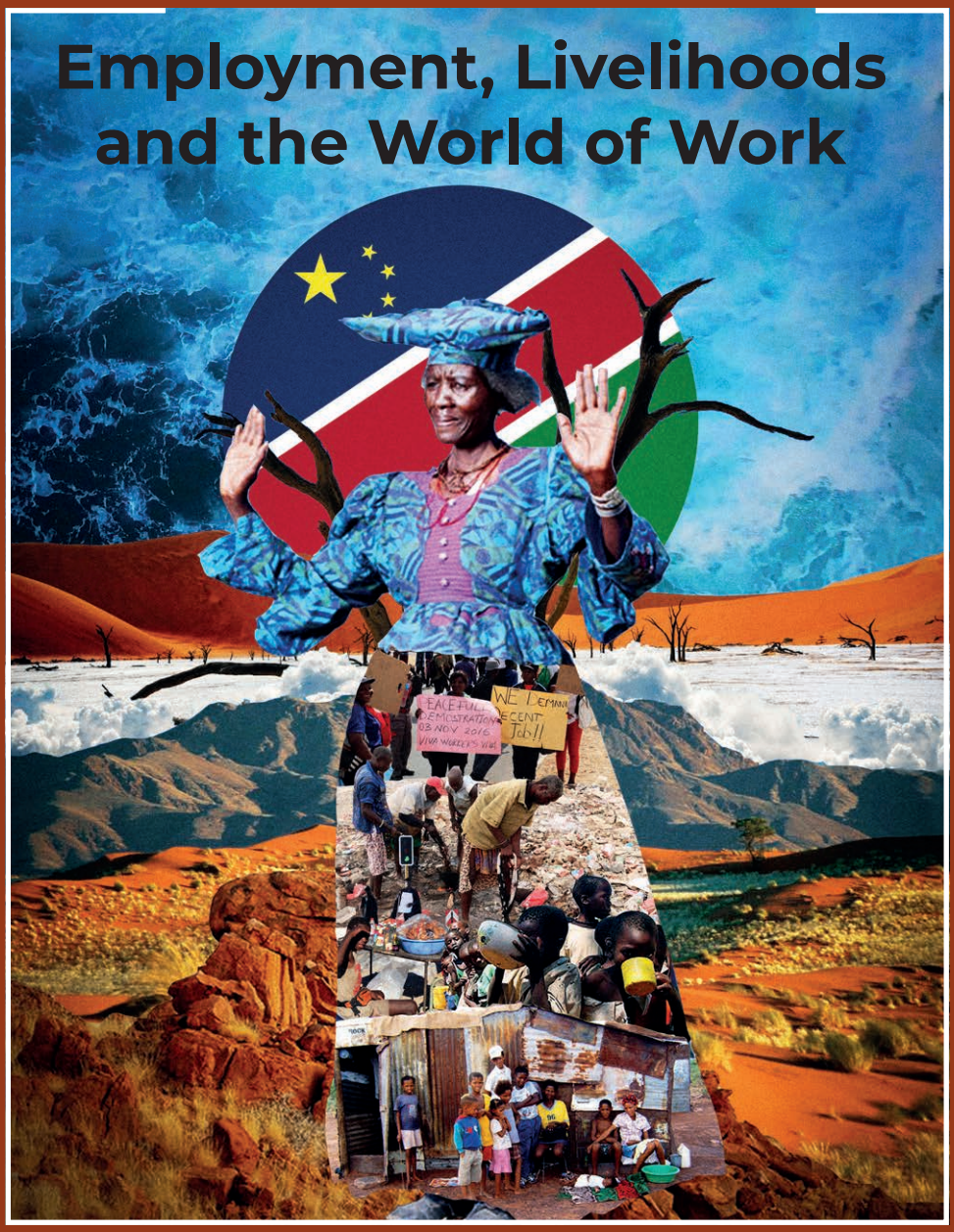
# Employment, Livelihoods and the World of Work




Artwork on the cover: “Land of Disparity” by Titus Shitaatala

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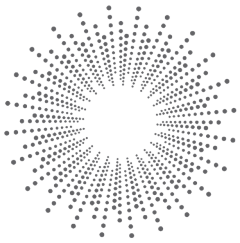

Namibian Journal of Social Justice

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# Acknowledgements

The Economic and Social Justice Trust is proud to present the third edition of the Namibian Journal of Social Justice (NJSJ). This edition, on *livelihoods and employment*, follows on the second edition, published in 2022, which dealt with *inequality and social justice,* and the first edition of 2021, which was dedicated to the issue of *housing*.

We wish to thank the editor of this edition, Prof. **Lucy Edwards-Jauch**, and the co-editor, Dr **Ndumba Kamwanyah**. We are likewise grateful for the contributions of the other members of the NJSJ editorial collective, Ms **Ndeshi Namupala**, Dr **Guillermo Delgado,** Dr **Ellison Tjirera**, Ms **Rinaani Musutua** and Mr **Claudius Riruako**. We deeply appreciate the commitment shown by all our **authors** and **peer reviewers**.

We thank Mr **Titus Shitaatala** for permission to use his artwork "Land of Disparity" for the cover page. We also thank Mr **William Hofmeyr**, who enhanced the publication with a comprehensive and meticulous language edit; Ms **Bryony van der Merwe**, for the layout; and all **photographers**, for making their photos available for publication in this journal (they are individually mentioned in the photo captions).

A special word of thanks goes to the **Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Namibia Office**, for their ongoing support that has made the publication of the third volume of our journal possible. In particular, we wish to thank the Country Director, Ms **Freya Grünhagen**, for her unwavering encouragement, and the Project Manager, Ms **Inge Neunda**.

# Acronyms and Initialisms

| | |
|---|---|
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| AU | African Union |
| CCDT | capital-centred development theory |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CESCR | Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| DESA | Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| ECC | Environmental Clearance Certificate |
| EU | European Union |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FDI | foreign direct investment |
| FLTS | Flexible Land Tenure System |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| GH2 | green hydrogen |
| GIZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| ICESCR | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| ICT | information and communication technology |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| LaRRI | Labour Resource and Research Institute |
| LFS | Labour Force Survey |
| LLD | labour-led development |
| MAWLR | Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform |
| MEFT | Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism |
| MLIREC | Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation |

| | |
|---|---|
| NAMPOL | Namibian Police Force |
| NDF | Namibian Defence Force |
| NPC | National Planning Commission |
| NSA | Namibia Statistics Agency |
| NUNW | National Union of Namibian Workers |
| OTA | Ovaherero Traditional Authority |
| REC | Regional Economic Community |
| RWE | Rheinisch-Westfälisches Elektrizitätswerk Aktiengesellschaft |
| SAPs | structural adjustment programmes |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SDI | Shack Dwellers International |
| SEWA | Self-employed Women's Association |
| SONA | State of the Nation Address |
| SSA | sub-Saharan Africa |
| TA | Traditional Authority |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCTAD | UN Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNDESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| UNECA | UN Economic Commission for Africa |
| UNECA | UN Economic Commission for Africa |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

# Editorial

When last measured in 2018, the Namibian unemployment rate stood at 33.4%. The high level of unemployment in Namibia, particularly amongst the youth, is a matter of great concern. It is exacerbated by a demographic transition that increases the number of young people entering the labour market. Youth unemployment stood at 46.1% in 2018. This is almost three times higher than the global average of 17.2% (Republic of Namibia, 2023b). The high level of unemployment is primarily caused by the structure of the Namibian economy, but is intensified by a confluence of global and local crises.

Volume 3 of the *Namibian Journal for Social Justice* focuses on *Employment, Livelihoods and the World of Work*. The livelihoods crisis replicates itself globally and has caused displacement and mass migration within and between countries and continents. Volume 3 explores different aspects of employment and livelihoods. These include the structural context of unemployment; the human rights implications of unemployment and underemployment; the right to livelihoods; technology and livelihoods; the informalisation of employment and livelihoods; unionisation; migration; climate change; and the use of natural resources for livelihoods and job creation. In an array of scholarly articles, case studies, opinion pieces and artworks, different authors reflect on critical aspects of work and livelihoods in Namibia. There is a rich body of Namibian-based research and authorship that is not always known and accessible to the general public; in this edition, we present a review of a book on anthropology in Namibia. All articles approach the questions of employment and livelihoods from a social justice perspective that includes matters of rights, access, equality and participation.

As was the case with previous volumes, we were not able to cover all aspects of the subject matter, in this case livelihoods, unemployment and the world of work. There are some very obvious gaps that we hope will be covered elsewhere. The most obvious of these is workplace discrimination on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation, as well as discrimination against people living with disabilities. What is also missing is the growing phenomenon of the working poor. We often assume that employment is a vector out of poverty, and hence the focus on job creation. However, growing numbers of people are trapped in low-wage jobs, and despite being employed,

they remain poor and vulnerable (Feder & Yu, 2019). This raises the question of social protection, which is dealt with only indirectly in this volume and was not the focus of most authors. The topic remains extremely important because of high levels of unemployment and the devasting effects of climate change on livelihoods. Although 600 000 Namibians (mainly orphans, vulnerable children and the aged) receive social grants from the state (Petersen, 2023), there are substantial gaps in Namibia's social protection architecture as there is little to no access to social protection for the unemployed and informally employed. The gender aspects of labour markets do not receive adequate attention; in particular, women's unpaid social reproductive labour and the gender division of labour are underrepresented. A lot of women's care work is invisible because it remains unenumerated and unremunerated. The mere fact that this volume does not deal with these topics does not render them less important. We hope that future editions will do justice to them.

## Underemployment and Unemployment

Unemployment has devasting consequences for individuals and society at large. It has ripple effects that reverberate throughout entire communities and countries. At a macroeconomic level, unemployment leads to reduced income and reduced consumption. Unemployment erodes the tax base of the economy, with fewer tax receipts for the fiscus. It represents a loss of productive capacity and skills, and higher welfare costs. It places downward pressure on wages and lowers standards of living (Rom Economics, 2017). It can be a major source of social unrest and political contestation (Mouhammed, 2011). At a micro-level, unemployment can have devasting consequences for individuals and families. It affects mental and physical health, increases levels of mortality, depression and anxiety, and is associated with psychosomatic symptoms, low subjective well-being, and poor self-esteem (Belle & Bullock, 2010).

Communities with high levels of unemployment face higher levels of poverty. This intersects with other forms of exclusion like inadequate and low-quality housing, underfunded schools, few recreational activities, restricted access to services and public transportation (Belle & Bullock, 2010). High levels of unemployment also drive up levels of crime in affected communities (Skentelbery, 2021).

## Focal Areas and Articles in Volume 3

### *Economic theories*

There are many different theories of unemployment, including classical economic theories of demand and

supply, Keynesian aggregate demand theories, skills mismatch theories, and more systemic social-structural crisis theories. In his article *Enclave Growth and Development in Africa*, Godfrey Kanyenze links unemployment to the structure of the dualist enclave economy. His core argument is that outward-oriented and orthodox economic policies, particularly economic stabilisation policies, have left sub-Saharan Africa with a deepening crisis of poverty, unemployment and underemployment. The lack of economic diversification and beneficiation are core features of dualistic, enclave economies. These economies have limited vertical and horizontal linkages for job creation through the beneficiation and value addition of raw materials. A big stumbling block in the path of job creation through economic diversification is the lack of domestic saving for investment into secondary industries, because the enclave economy lacks the capacity to generate internal savings, and hence its reliance on foreign investment and foreign aid. This causes dependency, under-development and the lack of articulation required for the beneficiation of raw materials to develop Namibia's industrial base and thereby support job creation.

## *Livelihoods and human rights*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 23) proclaims: "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment" (United Nations, 1948). All over the world people are not able to claim these rights. In his article *Unemployment, Underemployment, and Livelihoods in Namibia: The Human Rights Connection,* John B. Nakuta advances an argument for an "expansive interpretation of the right to life" and a legally guaranteed right to work as set out in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Article 23(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. He argues that the right to decent work should be at the heart of all labour legislation and that the state should be held liable for the decent work deficit in Namibia.

## *Livelihoods and informality*

Participating in the informal economy is often a survival strategy for those who are marginalised by formal labour markets. Informality includes informal employment, informal sector enterprises and informal employment in the formal sector. It also often intersects with informal markets, informal settlement and informal housing. Informality is characteristic of underdevelopment that traps people in low-income and precarious jobs

without legal and social protections (Loayza, 2009). The International Labour Organization (2018) estimates that globally, about 61% of workers are informally employed. This figure is often much higher in developing countries, where it can be as high as 90%. In Namibia, 57.7% of workers are in informal employment (men 54.1%; women 61.2%) (Namibia Statistics Agency, 2018).

Informality and formality are not binary opposites. There are overlaps and movements between these sectors (Anda et al., 2023). Both contain forms of outsourcing, subcontracting, and precariousness (Abramo, 2022), though informality in the labour market may intensify and reproduce inequalities (Deakin, 2013). There is debate on whether the informal sector normalises marginalisation, or whether it is a potential engine for growth. For some it is a choice, but for many it is a last resort in the absence of decent formal sector employment (Anda et al., 2023).

Phillip Lühl's article *Everyday Decolonisation: The Popular Urban Economy of Herero Mall* explores the informal economy as part of a decolonising process that subverts the apartheid economic, spatial, and social logic and restrictions on black economic activities and entrepreneurial acumen. He sees informal sector enterprises as a very active assertion of agency and traders' right to the city. His ethnographic study focuses on informal trade and informal markets at Katutura's Herero Mall. His narrative illuminates a unique, vibrant, innovative informal market imbued with meaning. In addition to it being a trading space, it is also a space for social interaction. Lühl delves into the micro-level interactions of solidarity, reciprocity and bartering amongst competitors. He dispels what he regards as a myth, namely that the informal economy is simply a survivalist strategy. Herero Mall represents a hive of complex entrepreneurial activity. He outlines how through human agency, a formerly peripheral space was transformed to create both an identity and an economy away from colonial spatial and economic constructs.

Judy Tymon shifts the focus from informal trade to informal settlement. The site of her study is Freedom Square, an informal settlement in Gobabis, Omaheke Region. In her article *Namibia's Flexible Land Tenure System: The Impact on Livelihoods in Gobabis*, she raises the question of whether greater tenure security as envisaged by the Flexible Land Tenure System will have positive effects on social and economic livelihoods and therefore bring about more redistributive justice for people residing in informal settlements. She engages with the complexities of formalisation of informal settlements. Her study showed

mixed result on whether tenure security has positive effects on livelihoods. Her findings show that social livelihoods improved as a result of tenure security. This was reflected in improved access to water, sanitation and energy. More permanence and stability also resulted in neighbourhood upgrading that generated a sense of pride, and allowed individual households to attain greater privacy. With regard to economic livelihoods, tenure security provided improved opportunities to access finance and credit for housing through the Shack Dweller's Federation of Namibia, but residents did not leverage credit for income generation. An important finding was that tenure security did not improve income levels, and consequently, 96% of residents remained below the poverty line. Residents struggled to make land payments and pay fees related to toilet and water meter installations. Her main conclusion is that there is a positive relationship between the legal tenure security and social capital formation. There is, however, no clear relationship between legal tenure security and economic capital.

In his article *Organising the Informalised: A Monumental Challenge for Namibia's Trade Unions*, Herbert Jauch focuses on the challenges of organising informally employed workers. To explain unemployment and informal employment, Jauch provides a brief historical overview of economic and labour market development in Namibia. His core argument is that Namibia's industrial relations model is more suited to industrialised economies of the global north and excludes informal workers. He further argues that improvements in living and working conditions through minimum wage agreements have not benefitted the under- and unemployed, informal sector workers, casual workers, or domestic workers because they remain outside the realm of collective bargaining and unionisation. He outlines the reasons why such workers are underserved by Namibia's trade unions. These include the inability of trade unions to deal with the informalisation of work, and the highly diverse nature of workers and economic units in the informal economy. Unionisation of informal workers is further impeded by divisions and in-fighting in the trade union movement. He calls for a rethink of trade unions' approaches, from traditional industrial trade union models towards social movement trade unionism.

Casper Bowora documents the achievements and challenges of an informal trader in Windhoek's Hakahana settlement. In his case study, *The Livelihood of an Informal Trader in Hakahana*, Windhoek, he shows how a low-income neighbourhood sustains a vibrant informal economy. Due to low

entry requirements and administrative costs, informal traders are able to provide a variety of goods and services at prices community members can afford. The income generated from informal trade feeds the family. He also shows how informal trade intersects with other aspects of informality. These include informal housing and inconsistent or non-existent access to basic services like electricity and water. The informal trading spaces also expose traders to the elements and can pose safety and security risks.

To delve deeper into the lived experiences of unemployment, Nafimane Hamukoshi presents a short case study on the daily struggles of a 29-year-old unemployed resident of Okahandja Park. The case study, *Informality in Okahandja Park*, *Windhoek* illustrates the cycle of poverty, deprivation, exclusion and intergenerational transfers of poverty that unemployed people experience. It shows how precarious life is for the unemployed, and how it leads to multiple economic and social exclusions, for example poor living conditions, over-crowding, insufficient sanitation, health risks, inadequate nutrition and lack of access to affordable transport.

## *Livelihoods and migration*

Migration is motivated by a number of social, political, economic and environmental causes. War, conflict, political, ethnic and religious persecution, economic and employment opportunities, educational opportunities and adverse climate events all contribute towards migration (European Parliament 2023). It is anticipated that Namibia will remain vulnerable to climatic variations and adverse climate events throughout this century. Droughts, desertification, deforestation, water scarcity, rising sea levels, and coastal erosion will negatively impact livelihoods, particularly, land-based livelihoods (International Organization for Migration, 2022). In the subsistence dryland farming areas, women have been most vulnerable because they are mainly responsible for crop production and securing household food supplies, as well as energy and water procurement. All these are negatively affected by the protracted droughts caused by climate change.

Climate change causes disruptions in the water-food-energy nexus and negatively affects women's livelihoods, care work, health and migration (World Food Programme, 2021). Stress migration is at times a climate change adaptation strategy. Women who migrate from rural areas to urban areas may find themselves on the outskirts of towns and cities, mostly in informal settlements and slums with poor living conditions (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2020).

In their article *Trapped in Poverty and Informality: The Effects of Climate Change-Induced Migration on Women in Urban Settlements in Windhoek*, Bruno Venditto, Christian Nekare and Ndumba J. Kamwanyah advance the argument that climate change affects men and women differently due to the intersecting forms of discrimination women face. Some of the core activities related to women's social roles and social reproductive labour such as agriculture and the procurement of food, water and firewood are all influenced by the natural environment and climate variability. Their study amongst female migrants in Windhoek found that changing weather patterns indeed affect livelihoods. Study participants developed different adaptation strategies to combat declining crop yields. Most who migrated to urban areas find themselves in informal settlements where their livelihoods are precarious and they struggle to access basic services like housing, water, electricity and sanitation. Most are engaged in informal income-generating activities.

While migrants provide a source of cheap labour and therefore heightened profits for those who employ them, in many countries they are regarded as a social and political problem. Migrants are often stigmatised, criminalised and subjected to racial, ethnic and xenophobic discrimination. With the advent of Zimbabwe's extended economic crisis, the country has become a net exporter of labour and skills. This has depleted its own human resource base and brought about a significant global distribution of Zimbabwean migrants, mainly to other African countries (Hadebe, 2022).

As is often the case with long-term migration, Zimbabwean migrants to South Africa retain familial bonds. Although they reside in split households, they still take part in decision making, transfer remittances, and share intimacies with family members and spouses in Zimbabwe. In their article *Keeping the Fire Burning: How Migrants Rejuvenate Relations with Spouses at Home: The Case of Gwanda District, Matebeleland South Province, Zimbabwe*, Emelder M. Tagutanazvo and Vupenyu Dzingirai shed light on how spousal intimacies are maintained with the aid of technology. Their study focuses on the maintenance of spousal bonds between South African-based male migrants and their female spouses in the Gwanda District of Matebeleland in southern Zimbabwe. The study found that almost all migrants had regular communication with their spouses (only 4% of participants did not), and for 31% this communication occurred on a daily basis. Technology-mediated intimacies keep conjugal bonds alive amidst physical separation.

Technological change, climate change, demographic transitions and economic trends impact on job creation and job destruction. Digital access and frontier technologies make certain jobs redundant while at the same creating new jobs. Digitalisation, automation, robotics, artificial intelligence, machine learning and large language models are set to have a greater influence on the world of work in the future (World Economic Forum, 2023). Digital divides and unequal access to digital technology within and between countries increase inequalities. Conversely, access to technologies can improve livelihoods and incomes.

In his opinion piece *Inclusive and Universal Access to the Internet and Digital Technologies: A right to access Public Goods and Improved Livelihoods in Namibia*, Dickson Kasote raises the question of access to the internet and digital technologies. He sees access to such technologies as a human right and argues that the lack of universal access denies citizens their right to improved access to information, improved income generating capacities, improved job searches and access to health services.

## *Livelihoods, natural resources and agriculture*

Economic diversification is central to job creation, improved incomes and improved livelihoods. Despite its vast natural resources, Namibia remains captured in an extractivist economic model and dependent on primary exports. The country aspires to the environmentally sustainable use of natural resources, economic diversification, and value addition (Republic of Namibia, 2004; Republic of Namibia, 2017). To this end a Joint Value Addition Committee was established (McGregor et al., 2017). Small steps towards value addition and localised production were taken through a ban on exports of unprocessed lithium (Dlamini, 2023) and the imposition of import quotas for horticultural produce (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ], 2022).

Structural transformation and diversification of the Namibian economy require huge amounts of capital. Most African countries rely on external finance in the form of foreign aid, external debt or foreign direct investment (FDI) because they lack domestically generated finance for investment (Achuo et al., 2021). Namibia's reliance on foreign capital is a double-edged sword. It can bring investment for job creation in crucial sectors of the economy, but it can also be a source of external control over the economy, and this affects the country's sovereignty. About 80% of Namibia FDIs go to mining and the financial mediation sectors. The

employment ratio generated by these FDIs remains relatively low, at 6.6% of total employment. This is because FDIs are skewed towards capital intensive sectors of the economy, like mining (Bank of Namibia, 2020).

The challenge lies in clearly and unambiguously defining Namibia's own interests in relation to FDIs and its long-term economic, social and environmental goals, and then developing policy responses that will channel such investments towards those goals and interests.

Agriculture contributes 5.1% to gross domestic product (GDP) but is by far the biggest source of jobs and livelihoods, being responsible for 23% of all employment (Nangolo & Alweendo, 2020). Seventy percent of the Namibian population depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood. The sector holds many more possibilities for growth and job creation if one considers that Namibia only produces 43% of its food requirements, and that 400 000 Namibians are food-insecure (De Klerk, 2023b). Both agricultural production and agro-processing are avenues for job creation (GIZ, 2022). Agriculture holds the potential for food security and food sovereignty, job creation, income generation, innovation, industrialisation, and poverty eradication.

Besides very skewed land distribution patterns, the sector faces climate change-related rain variability, water scarcity, livestock diseases, a lack of skills, and a lack of finance (Republic of Namibia, 2018). With the adoption of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme, African governments committed to the allocation of 10% of their national budgets to agriculture and rural development (African Union, 2021). To transform Namibian agriculture from its current dualism and to achieve the development objectives, very sizeable investments are needed in agriculture (Dlamini, 2022). However, the allocation to Agriculture as per the budget vote of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform for the 2023/2024 financial year was only 2.4% of non-statutory expenditure and 0.8% of GDP (Republic of Namibia, 2023a).

Claudius Riruako's case study of a communal farmer in Ohangwena Region titled *Livelihood and Living Conditions of a Female Communal Farmer* demonstrates what the chronic underinvestment in agriculture means for small-scale subsistence farmers. The case study illustrates how the low investment, low skills and low yields model of subsistence agriculture perpetuates a cycle of unemployment, underemployment and multi-dimensional poverty. The case study also

attests to the multiple exclusions small-scale subsistence farmers suffer. These include access to adequate land, access to finance, access to agricultural inputs, access to skills training and agricultural extension services, and access to water and water infrastructure.

### *Minerals-energy complex*

Mining forms the backbone of Namibia's economy and on average contributes about 13% annually to Namibia's GDP. It is also a major source of government revenue and foreign exchange earnings (Republic of Namibia, 2021). Namibian mines are 88.1% foreign-owned (Republic of Namibia, 2021). Hopes for local job creation and income generation are high following successive off-shore oil discoveries in Namibia's Orange basin (Brandt, 2023). There is also renewed interest in exploiting Namibia's Kudu gas field to ensure SADC regional energy security (Republic of South Africa, 2023). It is still not certain how these resources will affect job creation and livelihoods in Namibia, as we are in a time of an energy transition when the world is moving away from fossil fuels in order to attain carbon neutrality. There are also fears that exploitation of these resources may follow the same colonial extractivist model with which we are currently saddled.

The mineral extraction sector is a major source of illicit outflows (which amount to around 8% of GDP in Africa) that deprive the fiscus of crucial revenue (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2017). It is also a source of ecological destruction and negative health impacts, as seen with lead exposure at Rosh Pinah (Albertz, 2023b,) the suspected contamination of water sources from lithium mining in Daures Constituency (De Klerk, 2023a), and ReconAfrica's alleged oil drilling in the Cubango-Okavango River Basin (Esterhuyse, 2023). Namibia's mining industry remains extractive, with little upstream value addition (McGregor et al., 2017). Despite its huge GDP contribution and due to its capital-intensive nature, it only contributed 1.7% to total employment in 2018 (Namibia Statistics Agency, 2018).

We currently have a free-for-all in the mining sector, with often lawless deployment of FDI. Foreign mining companies shift profits; under-declare the value of the minerals they extract; avoid taxes; deprive local communities of livelihoods; deplete and contaminate water sources; ignore health, safety, environmental and labour standards; dispossess communities of their ancestral land; privatise public infrastructure; and ruthlessly destroy the environment and cultural heritage sites. A case in point is dimension stone mining in the Otjohorongo communal area in Daures Constituency. In their case study *The Right to Say No to Mining when it Destroys Livelihoods, the Environment and*

*Cultural Heritage Sites*, Lucy Edwards-Jauch and Herbert Jauch expose how indigenous communities who previously experienced genocide and dispossession are once again engaged in a battle for survival amidst environmental and livelihood destruction by foreign mining companies.

## *Green hydrogen (GH2) and solar energy*

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2023) identified different pathways towards the utilisation of renewable resources to achieve diversification and sustainable development. These include the establishment of domestic renewable energy industries and technologies; synergies between digital and green technologies; and capacity-building for diversification. To achieve such structural transformations, Namibia will have to ensure that the "green hydrogen" (GH2) industry is localised in respect of skills, technologies, capacities and infrastructure (Bruna, 2022).

The partial shifts towards decarbonisation have seen a clammer for Namibia's renewable resources, particularly in the production of GH2. This has raised great expectations for job creation, and it is estimated that the Hyphen GH2 project will create 15 000 jobs during the construction phase and 3 000 permanent jobs during operations (Albertz, 2023a). However, some are questioning whether this is not simply another form of extractivism, namely, green extractivism.

In her opinion piece *Green Hydrogen: Reality or Fantasy?*, Bertchen Kohrs of Earthlife Namibia provides a basic understanding of GH2 and questions how "green" GH2 actually is. She also raises a number of concerns around the distribution of benefits and burdens of GH2 production in Namibia. These questions focus on how GH2 will ensure Namibia's own energy security and self-sufficiency, it's impact on Tsau//Khaeb Conservation Park's biodiversity, other environmental costs, and the use of Namibia's already scarce water resources.

In another opinion piece on GH2, *Germany's Hydrogen Rush in Namibia: Green Extractivism at its Best*, Johanna Tunn and Franziska Müller pose the very important question of whether what is paraded as a just green transition is not just another form of colonialism and exploitation of African resources. They raise the concern that the GH2 project in Namibia may just be another form of extractivism, namely green extractivism.

Solar energy is globally the fastest growing energy technology. The increase in solar production has

also made it cheaper. Solar energy contributes towards decarbonisation by lowering the use of fossil fuels and therefore greenhouse gas emissions (Blakers, 2023). In his opinion piece, *Turning Katutura into a Transformative Namibian Social and Energy Powerhouse*, Andy Gheorghiu makes a compelling argument for using repurposed shipping containers to house plug-and-play photovoltaic systems in Windhoek because Namibia has the highest average practical photovoltaic power potential in the world.

### *Book review*

Anthropology has had a contradictory relationship with Africa. On the one hand, it has sought in-depth information about the people of the continent, but on the other, it has always been deeply steeped in colonialism, and has therefore viewed Africans through a colonial lens. It has often pursued the racist objectification of Africans as the other, and is associated with colonial political complicity and the cultural denigration of Africans (Murunga, 2002). In recent years there have been more critical reflections on the discipline and a push to decolonise it. Heike Becker reviews Robert J. Gordon's *Ethnologists in Camouflage: Introducing Apartheid to Namibia*, which was published by UNAM Press in 2022. The book is a critique of apartheid era anthropology in the Afrikaner nationalist tradition. Becker provides an insightful analysis of the book and extracts the core issues and thematic areas contained in it.

**Lucy Edwards-Jauch**
**Ndumba Kamwanyah**

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