LAND REFORM IN NAMIBIA: AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA COVERAGE

By

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ABSTRACT

The highly inequitable land ownership that resulted from nearly a century of colonization is an important socio-economic issue that must be overcome in order to ensure Namibia's long-term stability and success. The media plays an important role in ensuring that land reform is successfully designed and executed. The media informs the public, sets the public and political agenda, holds the government accountable, and serves as a public sphere. This project analyses Namibia's three primary daily newspapers' coverage of land reform from 2003 to 2013 utilizing interpretive content analysis to determine how the papers are reporting on land reform and related themes. I then compare their portrayals to see to what they are fulfilling their roles. I find that the papers' reporting is mostly event-driven and lacks depth and greater context. Furthermore, the papers offer a mostly one-sided view of issues. While the papers regularly reported on land reform, they generally struggle to accomplish the function that the media fulfills in a democracy.

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INTRODUCTION

Upon gaining its independence in 1990, Namibia inherited an extremely inequitable distribution of land ownership as a result of the successive colonization by Germany and then South Africa. Approximately 4,200 white farmers owned 43% of the arable land, while the remainder of the population, numbering almost one and a half million, was relegated to 44% of the land.[1] The newly elected government of independent Namibia recognized that a land reform program would be necessary to overcome past inequalities, reduce poverty and spur economic growth. The media is an essential institution in ensuring that land reform is successfully designed and executed. In democracies, the media plays important roles with regards to informing the public, setting the public and political agenda, holding the government accountable and serving as a public sphere on the issues of land reform in the absence of strong opposition parties and a robust civil society.

This project analyses the three major Namibian daily newspapers portrayal of land reform because land reform is an important socio-economic issue in Namibia, and it is essential for the long-term stability of the country. Few studies have been done on land reform in Namibia, and no studies were found on the Namibian media's portrayal of land reform. In the years proximate to Namibia's independence, some studies considered various options for land reform, however, interest quickly waned. During the 'fast track' land reform in Zimbabwe that began in early 2000, there was a renewed interest on the issue in Namibia, with discussions of the past successes and failures as well as options for the future. Since then, however, the few academic studies have focused almost exclusively on the legality and necessity of expropriations of farms.

1. Sarah Loveday, "The land question in Namibia: land reform and social transformation in the post-apartheid Era" (St. Mary's University, 2005).

The media in Namibia has also been largely ignored as a research topic in academic circles, perhaps because it is commonly seen as the freest media in all of Africa; it even ranks well compared to Western countries.[2]

My focus on the three main daily newspapers in Namibia relates, first, to their ease of accessibility and the fact that they lend themselves to easy content analysis. Furthermore, one can expect that the state-run newspaper, *New Era* would offer the point of view of the government, while *Die Republikein* would serve its readership of mostly Afrikaner[3] commercial farm owners. *The Namibian*, which prides itself in being a critical voice, may be the most even-handed of the three, offering critique where it is warranted. I chose to focus on the period immediately after Zimbabwe's 'fast track' program, because it renewed the debate about land reform in Namibia. I analyzed the three daily newspapers' coverage of land reform from early 2003, the earliest year that the available archives permit, until the end of 2013 – a period of eleven years.[4]

I will utilize interpretive content analysis in determining the newspapers' portrayal of land reform. My method for interpretive content analysis is based on one developed by Wester, Pleijter and Renckstorf.[5] With this method of interpretive content analysis, the researcher identifies events or themes and examines the newspapers for coverage of the topic. The news reports are then analyzed by reading and re-reading them, with special attention being paid to the way the themes are presented by the papers. By comparing the reports within and between an

2. Freedom House rates the media in Namibia as the 2nd freest in Africa, and Reporters without Borders rate it as the 19th freest in the world.

3. The descendants of the original Dutch settlers in South Africa came to be known as Afrikaners. The majority of Afrikaners in Namibia moved there shortly following WWI. Some farmers in Namibia are of German descent, however they are a very small demographic and are often, for the sake of simplicity, be lumped in with other white farmers.

4. *New Era*'s archives are available from 2004.

5. Fred Wester, Alexander Pleijter, and Karsten Renckstorf, "Exploring Newspapers' Portrayals: A Logic for Interpretive Content Analysis," *Communications* 29 (2004).

event or theme the researcher is able to formulate an interpretive frame.[6] The researcher must read the entire series of articles in order to understand the portrayal thoroughly, therefore a second reading of the articles is required to allow the researcher to identify relevant parts of the texts. The information is registered in a research protocol, and creates overviews to enable the researcher to describe and compare the newspaper's portrayal of the event or theme.[7]

The research began with utilizing the search engines on the archives to identify and download all articles related to land reform by searching for the key term "land reform" on the English newspapers, and both "land reform" and "grondhervorming" on the Afrikaans newspaper.[8] The themes and topics I utilized are listed in Figure 1.

Topic/Theme:	Characterization / Definition
Land Reform	Process, progress, successes or failures of land reform, including agrarian reform, debates or conferences on the subject, alternatives and effects
Zimbabwe	The effect of land reform in Zimbabwe, economic impact, violence and it's use as a tool for political mobilization
Fast Track Land Reform	The expropriation of white farmers' land in Zimbabwe, with no compensation
Legislative Acts or Bills	Bills under consideration, or Acts already passed by the Namibian Legislature that legislate or impact land reform, including the Namibian Constitution
Expropriation	The seizing of of land, violently or not, with or without compensation; the legal means of forcing the owner to sell the farm to the government
Farm Workers	Current or former employees of white farm owners, their treatment, the impact land reform has on them
Beneficiary	Any person who receives land through the land reform process, either by being resettled, registering communal land, or by purchasing land via the Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS); the support and training the receive, the process of being selected, their successes or failures and challenges
Whites	Whites, white farm owners and their families, their behavior, actions, motivations as they relate to land reform in Namibia
Women	The consideration that women receive in the land reform process, discussion of their rights, roles, inheritance of land, the effect land reform has on them, their successes and challenges
The Campbell Case	The court case brought by Michael Campbell and other white Zimbabwean farmers against the government of Zimbabwe in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), impacts, arguments, outcome
Source / Actor	The source or sources used by the journalist, or the primary person, actor, or organization being reported on
In Depth Reporting	Does the article offer more than one point of view, is it nuanced, does it offer background information and place the story in context, or is it merely even-driven?

Figure 1. Themes and Topics

6. Ibid., 501.
7. Ibid.
8. *Die Republikein* does sometimes publish in English, with the understanding that their audience can read English as well as Afrikaans.

These themes guided my analysis while reading the news reports and serve as a tool to investigate the aspects of the story most pertinent to the analysis. As I read articles, guided by these themes, I recorded key words or phrases that indicate the articles' stance on the topic. The research protocol I used to record the data is shown in Appendix 1. Upon completion, I was then able to quickly review all the data to determine trends, which I describe and compare in this paper.

Radio, a preferred media for many in Namibia, was not analyzed due to a number of limitations. First, none of the radio stations, public or private, have significant archives of prior broadcasts, if any. Furthermore, the radio stations are primarily for entertainment – offering music, sports and contests, while shying away from news.[9] Finally, listeners often turn to newspapers for an in-depth analysis of the news they heard on the radio.[10]

The analysis shows a significant difference among the papers' portrayals of the themes and topics discussed above. There are differences within each paper too, and some papers' portrayals morphed over time. Generally, however, the newspapers are one-sided and do not serve as a discursive realm for civic engagement. The papers are event driven and do not provide much in depth coverage of issues. Most significantly, however, the media neither brings neglected issues to light, nor does it reflect the voices of those generally ignored and relegated to silence. Nonetheless, the papers do serve their watchdog function by reporting on corruption and inefficiencies, although not consistently.

The following chapter discusses the role of the media and the contours of the media landscape, specifically the newspapers, in Namibia. It additionally offers an overview of the debate surrounding land reform as well as providing historical context for land dispossession and

9. Andreas Rothe, *Media Systems and News Selection in Namibia* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 54.
10. David Randall, *The Universal Journalist*, 4th ed. (London: Pluto Press, 2011).

land reform in Namibia. Chapter two turns to the three papers to provide an overview of their coverage of the various themes, followed by a comparison between the papers and concludes with an analysis of their coverage *vis-à-vis* the role of the media.

CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

The media is a powerful institution, capable of influencing the knowledge and perceptions of society. It has the potential to serve an important role in Namibia, by educating the public about land reform, holding the government accountable, bringing neglected issues and voices to the forefront and by creating a space where free debate can take place. In Namibia, the coverage of the three major daily newspapers (*The Namibian, New Era* and *Die Republikein)* should therefore inform and influence the pace and contours of land reform in Namibia. Land reform itself is a complex and often emotional issue, and it is no less so in Namibia. The struggle for land reform pits the previously disadvantaged (most of whom remain so) against the white commercial farmers. Land reform is intended to redistribute land to the landless, and thereby economically, and perhaps politically, empower them, leading to greater democratic inclusion and economic growth. However, numerous challenges make this seemingly simple task an extremely difficult one, and long-term success in land reform is not yet evident in Namibia, while there has been a limited amount of short-term success.

This chapter is divided into five sections. First I examine the various important roles that the media plays. I then provide an overview of the media landscape in Namibia, with a focus on the three major daily newspapers. Then, in order to deliver greater context, I provide an overview of the issues and debates surrounding land reform. In the last two sections of the chapter, I discuss how the skewed ownership of land in Namibia came to be, and explore how the land reform program has taken shape since independence.

The Role of the Media

The media played a powerful role in the run-up to independence and democracy in Africa. Today, the media continues to fill an important part in the political landscape of Africa, and particularly so since civil society remains weak in many countries, and specifically in Namibia. The media is powerful and can influence knowledge, beliefs, values and social relationships.[1] The media can empower people to be able to participate substantially in the political process. An informed citizenry is the foundation of democracy; hence, the primary purpose of the media is to inform the populace. The media must further serve as a discursive realm, where new ideas can be created, discussed and disseminated. Furthermore, by paying attention to neglected issues, the media can serve to bring issues to the forefront and to thereby set the agenda for the citizenry and the government. Similarly, the media serves to give voice to the neglected in order to have their voices heard. Finally, the media serves as an important watchdog of the government – reporting its actions and inactions, and enforcing a measure of accountability on government officials.

The primary purpose of the mass media is to inform the public. The media must discover and report information to both inform and empower people.[2] In a democracy, information is vital and the media therefore has a responsibility to inform the citizenry.[3] An informed citizenry is empowered to make better decisions, and the citizenry gains the majority of its information from the mass media.[4] However, the media must not simply provide information; rather, it needs to analyze and place the information in context for the citizenry, and there must be some level of

1. Norman Fairclough, *Media Discourse* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995), 2.
2. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 3.
3. Julian Harriss, Kelly Leiter, and Stanley Johnson, *The Complete Reporter: Fundamentals of News Gathering, Writing and Editing* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1977), 3.
4. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 12.

analysis in any story of substance.[5] The analysis should scrutinize the events and developments to try to explain their significance, place them in context, and attempt to explain they mean for the future.[6] The media can be a path for political education and plays a role in ensuring there is popular understanding of government policy.[7] Thus, the media functions as an educator in the country by providing information regarding government policies and procedures.[8] Consequently, the media can act as agents in national development through their informative and educational functions.

The media further serves as the creators of a discursive public realm, a space where debate can occur, where the citizenry can participate in the dialogue.[9] Free and open debate, in which one can dissent, criticize, agree or disagree, is the engine of democracy and development.[10] The media must help to foster this space for discourse, to provide an area of dialogue between protagonists and to bring issues of concern to light.[11] It is especially important that the media provides a platform for those with viewpoints that are counter to the prevalent philosophies in order to promote the free exchange of ideas.[12] Hence, the media provides the citizenry with access to different views and opinions.[13]

5. Harriss, Leiter, and Johnson, *The Complete Reporter: Fundamentals of News Gathering, Writing and Editing,* 3.

6. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 203.

7. Goran Hyden et al., *Media and Democracy in Africa*, ed. Goran Hyden, Michael Leslie, and Folu F. Ogundimu (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 2.

8. Dhyana Ziegler and Molefi K. Asante, *Thunder and Silence: The Mass Media in Africa* (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1992), 38-42.

9. Goran Hyden and Charles Okigbo, "The Media and the Two Waves of Democracy," in *Media and Democracy in Africa*, ed. Goran Hyden, Michael Leslie, and Folu F. Ogundimu (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 35.

10. Gretchen Walsh, *The Media in Africa and Africa in the Media: An Annotated Bibliography* (London: Hans Zell Publishers, 1996), xv.

11. Walsh, *The Media in Africa and Africa in the Media: An Annotated Bibliography,* 12.

12. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 3.

13. Wisdom J. Tettey, "The Politics of Media Accountability in Africa: An Examination of Mechanisms and Institutions," *International Communication Gazette* 68, no. 3 (2006): 10.

Through the daily selection of what news to report, or not to report, the media powerfully influences the public's attention to the issues and opportunities facing the community.[14] In the long run, the media's focus on certain topics affects the public's agenda, which, in turn, places the issues on the government's agenda. Sometimes, these issues are not necessarily amenable to the government, which is why the media's agenda-setting role is so important. Without this focus on certain issues, the government may never pay any attention to them. However, there are limits to this agenda-setting ability. The issues must resonate with the public, or they are unlikely to ever find a place on the public agenda despite the attention that the media pays to them.[15] Furthermore, the media may only be reflecting the dominant discourses, and not paying attention to neglected issues.[16] Nonetheless, the media is a key institution in democracies that can represent the public interests to the government. It is their responsibility to bring the key issues to the agenda.[17]

The media is the most capable institution that can voice the preoccupations of people who are generally neglected and condemned to silence.[18] The outcomes of public policy decisions affect these people, and their voices count as much as that of any others.[19] By providing the neglected with voice and enabling dialogue as well as grassroots participation, the requirements of the public are better met. After all, who knows the concerns of the neglected better than themselves? In addition to providing a voice for those who are not normally heard in public, the media must

14. Maxwell McCombs, "Building Concensus: The News Media's Agenda-Setting Roles," *Political Communication* 14 (1997): 433.
15. McCombs, "Building Concensus: The News Media's Agenda-Setting Roles," 437.
16. Ruth Wodak et al., *Qualitiative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. Ruth Wodak and Michal Krzyzanowski (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 32.
17. McCombs, "Building Concensus: The News Media's Agenda-Setting Roles," 438-39.
18. Marie-Soleil Frère, *The media and conflicts in Central Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007), 3.
19. Hyden et al., *Media and Democracy in Africa*.

tell the story in terms of real people.[20] This serves to humanize the issues, and this reporting provides a sense of connection and community for the public at large.

Finally, the media serves to expose activities within the state that would otherwise have been unknown to the citizenry.[21] They report on cases of corruption and hold government officials accountable. The media serves as a watchdog, pressuring and motivating the government to be more transparent and accountable.[22] Furthermore, by educating citizens on their civic rights and responsibilities, they make it unacceptable for government officials to act outside of the law.[23] Lastly, the media scrutinizes action or inaction of the government, and thereby pressures the government to act.[24]

Newspapers in Namibia

The media in Namibia is generally considered free and consistently ranks well in reports conducted by organizations that measure media freedom. Reporters Without Borders recently ranked Namibia's media as 19th in terms of freedom in the world, ahead even of the United States, the United Kingdom and many European countries.[25] Freedom House is not quite as supportive, ranking Namibia at number 64; however, this still makes the media in Namibia the second freest in Africa, after Ghana and just above its neighbor, South Africa, which is ranked at

20. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 7.
21. Tettey, "The Politics of Media Accountability in Africa: An Examination of Mechanisms and Institutions," 10.
22. Frederico Links, "'We write what we like' The role of independent print media and independent reporting in Namibia," *Namibia Analyses and Views* (2009), under "Media and Publications," http://www.nid.org.na/pub_docs/AnalysisViews320061.pdf (accessed 22 November 2013). 18.
23. Hyden and Okigbo, "The Media and the Two Waves of Democracy," 48.
24. Randall, *The Universal Journalist,* 3.
25. Reporters Without Borders, "2013 World Press Freedom Index: Dashed Hopes after Spring," http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html (accessed November 12 2013).

71.[26] Very little literature exists on the media in Namibia, perhaps as a result of this press freedom.[27]

Namibia has a fairly robust print media landscape, considering how it has a population of merely two million. Although there have been many startups (and failures) in the print media throughout Namibia's history, there are four major daily newspapers have existed from independence in 1990 until today. They are: *The Namibian, New Era, Die Republikein* and *Allgemeine Zeitung. Allgemeine Zeitung* has a small readership and is owned by the same company as *Die Republikein*.[28] Its circulation is just over 5,000 per day. *Allgemeine Zeitung* caters exclusively to the German-speaking population of Namibia, who are almost entirely urban business owners and live primarily in the capital, Windhoek, and the coastal tourist town of Swakopmund. Furthermore, it is only published in German, and no English translation of the newspaper exists. The paper is therefore not considered for this analysis.

Die Republikein is an Afrikaans-language daily newspaper. It was started in 1977 as a mouthpiece for the newly created National Party. It later was supported by (and in turn supported) the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), which was a merger of a number of political parties, including the National Party. After numerous disputes with the DTA, *Die Republikein* broke with the party in 1997 and has since attempted to become more independent. According to the Editor, the paper sees its role as informing the public, advertising, and as an extra-parliamentary opposition by reporting critically on Government's actions.[29] However, making money seems to be their primary function, and they are the largest print advertiser in

26. Freedomhouse, "Freedom of the Press 2013," http://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2013#.U4Y_MpRdXmU (accessed November 12 2013).

27. Freedomhouse assess "the degree of print, broadcast, and internet freedom in every country in the world" and " examine the legal environment for the media, political pressures that influence reporting, and economic factors that affect access to information."

28. Martin Buch Larsen, *The media environment in Namibia, 1990-2007* (Windhoek: Media Institute of Southern Africa - Namibia, 2007), 20-21.

29. Links, "'We write what we like' The role of independent print media and independent reporting in Namibia," 12.

Namibia.[30] Advertisers may therefore be able to influence what is printed; however the Editor denies that this occurs.[31] Recently the paper has increased publishing on government corruption, indicating that the paper is fulfilling its watchdog function. Alternatively, others may argue that this is in fact a display of their ideology, which (based on their history) can be assumed to still be critical of Swapo.

Die Republikein has a daily circulation of 18,000 Monday to Friday and is distributed to all major, medium and some small towns.[32] It is owned by Democratic Media Holdings (DMH), which was established by the Democratic Media Trust of Namibia. Democratic Media Trust was established in 1992 with a key aim of promoting a free and independent media in Namibia.[33] A South African media conglomerate, Media24, holds 50% of DMH. DMH also owns *Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Namibian Sun*, a daily English-language paper started in 2007 to attract young readers.

New Era is a state-owned daily newspaper, published in English. Once a week the paper publishes pages in the languages of Ojtiherero, Oshiwambo, Damara/Nama, Silozi and Khwedam, allowing it to reach a larger audience.[34] The paper was created in 1992 as a weekly, but it became a daily in 2004. The paper receives state subsidies, in addition to its advertising revenues, and only became profitable in 2009.[35] The publishing house is independent and run by a board of directors. However, the board members are appointed (or removed) by the Minister of Information and Communications Technology.[36] Often, when critical articles are published of various government ministers, the ministers call the paper directly to complain,

30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Larsen, *The media environment in Namibia, 1990-2007,* 102.
33. Democratic Media Holdings, "About Us," http://dmh.com.na/about-us (accessed 22 November 2013).
34. Rothe, *Media Systems and News Selection in Namibia,* 24.
35. Ibid.
36. The reasons behind the removal and appointment of members of the board of directors are not always clear. The media tend to report the changes with no comment at all, or conversely, they portray the changes as a result of personal or professional conflicts between the members of the board and the Minister of Information.

invoking the fact that they "own" the paper.[37] This is problematic for the paper in their attempt to remain unbiased in their reporting, since it may lead to self-censorship in an attempt to avoid pressure from the ministers. While the paper was generally objective in reporting on the news, they were decidedly pro-government in their editorials.[38] *New Era* has a daily circulation of 8,000 Monday to Thursday, with 11,000 on Friday.[39] The Friday circulation for all the daily newspapers is larger, owing to the fact that the Friday papers all have special editions, roughly equivalent to Sunday papers in the United States.

The Namibian is the largest of the daily newspapers in Namibia. It was started in 1985 by Gwen Lister as an "independent newspaper committed to independence for Namibia" with European Union and international donor support.[40] It was critical of the apartheid-era government. Even its name was a challenge to the government – at the time Namibia was still called South West Africa by the South African government. The paper faced harassment and violence before and immediately after independence. Its offices were bombed on two occasions, and journalists were threatened. *The Namibian* is still considered a reliable and credible outlet and is apparently the most independent of all the papers in Namibia.[41] The paper is owned by The Free Press of Namibia.

Although *The Namibian* supported the liberation struggle and Swapo prior to independence, it soon turned its critical eye on the new government and its corruption. As a result, it was not well received by the government soon after independence.[42] In 2000, the government banned any governmental advertising in the paper and also prohibited any government agencies from purchasing it. The ban was lifted in 2011. The paper has a daily circulation of 35,000 Monday to

37. Rothe, *Media Systems and News Selection in Namibia,* 24.
38. Larsen, *The media environment in Namibia, 1990-2007,* 33.
39. Rothe, *Media Systems and News Selection in Namibia,* 28.
40. Links, "'We write what we like' The role of independent print media and independent reporting in Namibia," 9.
41. Ibid., 12.
42. Ibid., 28.

Thursday, reaching over 46,000 on Fridays. The paper has a readership of over 200,000, and politically *The Namibian* is "fairly leftist and critical of the current political situation."[43]

Despite the purported freedom of the Namibian media, there remain significant challenges to the media and its ability to unreservedly report and debate issues. Article 21 of the *Namibian Constitution* guarantees press freedom, limited only by laws "required in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of Namibia, national security, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence."[44] However, many pre-independence laws remain on the books. One is the *Protection of Information Act of 1982*, which forbids one of passing on information gained from a government official. Although this law has not been enforced, it continues to exist and is seen as a threat by the media.[45] The government also passed the *Communications Act of 2009*, which, amongst other things, denies journalists the right to protect their informants. The Act is so restrictive it is often referred to as the "Spy Bill" by reporters.[46] In addition to these legal challenges to the media, there is no freedom of information act in Namibia. This means that there is no right to free access to information, which limits government transparency.[47] The Communications Act and the lack of an information act both serve to limit sources of information available to journalists, which, in turn can lead to a dependence on government statements and a one-sided presentation of the facts.

The tendency by the press to be over-reliant on government officials for information and quotes hinders a reflection of the diversity of opinions in Namibia. Furthermore, much of the

43. Larsen, *The media environment in Namibia, 1990-2007,* 102.
44. Republic of Namibia, "The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia," (Windhoek 1990).
45. Larsen, *The media environment in Namibia, 1990-2007,* 28-29.
46. Rothe, *Media Systems and News Selection in Namibia,* 78.
47. Ibid., 77.

coverage is reactive, with little in-depth reporting of societal issues.[48] The difficulty in distribution of the papers throughout the large, sparsely populated country, in addition to the purchase cost, mean the daily newspapers do not often reach the poor or those in rural areas.

The media landscape in Namibia is robust and generally free, while still having some challenges in objectively reporting the news. Before I can analyze the media coverage of land reform in Namibia, however, it is beneficial to provide a greater understanding of the debates surrounding land reform in general, the circumstances that led to the inequitable ownership of land in Namibia, and the contours that land reform has taken since independence.

Land Reform

Land reform in the developing world is a highly contentious issue. In many former colonies of the West that were settled by Westerners, there exists a highly unequal distribution of land as a result of colonial-era policies. Generally, a small percentage of the population own and exploit the vast majority of the land, while the majority of the population remains poor with little or no access to land. There is a general consensus among scholars and policymakers that land reform is needed for a number of reasons. Before delving into the arguments surrounding land reform, it is necessary to establish the definition of the term.

There is no consensus among scholars on the definition of the term 'land reform,' Michael Lipton most recently provided a useful starting point when he defined land reform as "legislation intended and likely to directly redistribute ownership of, claims on, or rights to current farmland, and thus benefit the poor by raising their absolute relative status, power, and/or income,

48. Links, "'We write what we like' The role of independent print media and independent reporting in Namibia," 22.

compared with likely situations without the legislation."[49] His interpretation highlights the focus of land reform – that of the *redistribution* of land to the poor. Yet, he neglects two major concerns. The first is that of communal land reform. Under communal land systems, the poor generally already have customary rights to a plot of land but usually lack legal rights to it, which reduces incentives to invest and simultaneously limits their access to credit. Therefore, communal land reform considerations need to be added to Lipton's definition. Second, and more importantly, he ignores the additional requirements that aim to ensure the poor do in fact benefit from receiving land, to ensure that the program does not merely replace one type of poverty with another. These requirements are commonly referred to as 'agrarian reform' and include features such as training and education, infrastructure, access to markets and credit, government policies and other efforts needed to ensure the farmer can succeed. However, it is key to remember that at the root of land reform is the actual redistribution of land from the rich to the poor.

The justifications for land reform are numerous. First and foremost, land reform is a necessary tool in the fight for socioeconomic justice or equity for those peoples previously (or currently) disadvantaged under the colonial system or under the current system. Providing land to the disadvantaged leads to economic empowerment, out of which political empowerment can grow. Land reform, therefore, reduces the potential for conflict, as it provides the beneficiaries with political power, which tends to reduce the chance for violent confrontation.

Poverty reduction is also a commonly cited reason for land reform by the World Bank, the United Nations, peasant organizations such as La Vie Compensia and developmental economists. Land, in the global South, is poor people's primary productive asset.[50] Land access and rights

49. Michael Lipton, *Land Reform in Developing Countries: Property Rights and Property Wrongs* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

50. Peter Rosset, Raj Patel, and Michael Courville, *Promised land : competing visions of agrarian reform*. Competing visions of agrarian reform, ed. Peter Rosset, Raj Patel, and Michael Courville (Oakland: Food First Books, 2006).

raise the poor's income because not only are they able to rent out the land, but they can also earn income from the agricultural commodities from the farm.

A third case for land reform is that of the economic development of the country. This justification is closely tied to poverty reduction, and is one of the key tenets of the World Bank's land policy. Rights to property increase the farmers' access to credit for investment in their farms, leading to an increase in production and thereby economic growth.[51] Furthermore, in many developing countries, large tracts of productive land lay idle, and redistributing this land would lead to economic growth.

The World Bank and other similar organizations, as well as economists, point to the fact that small farms are more labor intensive than large farms. In industrialized countries, where labor tends be scarce or expensive, heavy labor use is considered inefficient. However, in so-called developing countries there is an overabundance of labor. From an economic perspective, therefore, labor-intensive small farms are more efficient than large commercial farms because they use more labor. This is because economic efficiency is concerned with optimal production and allocation of resources given existing factors of production. So, using a great deal of the abundant labor supply is economically efficient. Small farms do indeed use more labor per hectare than large commercial farms, as is indicated by studies on Asia.[52] This efficiency is also enhanced because small farms tend to use more family labor, as opposed to wage labor, and members of the same family have a greater incentive to be productive laborers as well as requiring less supervision. Small farms can also be seen as a solution to urban problems.[53] In developing nations, the rural poor move to urban areas to earn a living, leading to rapid

51. Klaus Deininger and Hans Binswanger, "The Evolution of the World Bank's Land Policy: Principles, Experience, and Future Challenges," *The World Bank Research Observer* 14, no. 2 (1999).

52. John Sender and Deborah Johnston, "Searching for a Weapon of Mass Production in Rural Africa: Unconvincing Arguments for Land Reform," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 4, no. 1/2 (2004): 145.

53. Carmen Diana Deere, "Foreword," in *Promised Land: Competing Visons of Agrarian Reform*, ed. Peter Rosset, Raj Patel, and Michael Courville (Oakland: Food First Books, 2006), x.

urbanization, overcrowding and overburdening of the city's services. By absorbing labor, small farms can alleviate these issues by keeping the rural poor in rural areas and by drawing some of the urban labor force. Land reform is a key element to ensuring that many have access to land for production and therefore food.[54]

Land Dispossession in Namibia

The current system of land ownership in Namibia also has its roots in the colonial era, which commenced in 1884 when Germany declared the land now known as Namibia their colony and named it German South West Africa (German SWA).[55] During the pre-colonial era, the land could be divided into two distinct systems. In the North the indigenous peoples, consisting mostly of the Ovambo and closely related Kavongo ethnic groups, were able to combine agriculture with animal husbandry. This was due to a fairly predictable rainfall, as opposed to the southern and central regions of Namibia, which are extremely arid. In the North, the Ovambo had strong, centralized political systems and practiced a form of communal land tenure. Under this system, grazing lands were communal lands, open for anybody to use, while customary rights were given for plots of land used for agriculture.

In the more arid southern and central regions of Namibia, the Nama, Herero and Damara people were essentially pastoralists. The highly unpredictable rainfall and frequent droughts required them to be highly mobile to allow them to find grazing and water for their cattle. Due to the requirement to remain highly mobile, no fixed boundaries existed between different groups, and the political systems were correspondingly weak and decentralized.

54. Rosset, Patel, and Courville, *Promised Land*.

55. This section draws on Wolfgang Werner's "A Brief History of Land Dispossession in Namibia," *Journal of Southern African Studies,* 19, no. 1 (January 1993) and Leevi Shigwedha's "Thesis on the National Resettlement Programme," (May 2004).

Despite the fact that Germany had declared German SWA a colony in 1884, and concession companies had acquired most of the southern half of Namibia's land, very little actual colonization took place before 1897. In that year, a rinderpest pandemic struck, and over 90% of all cattle were wiped out.[56] The former pastoralists, now without cattle, were forced into wage labor to make a living. German settlers took advantage of the pastoralists, now with no need for land due to their lack of cattle, by dispossessing much of the remaining lands. By 1902 only approximately 30% of the remaining lands were still in black hands.

This loss of land did not go unchallenged, however. The Herero and Nama fought a war of resistance in 1904, which was viscously battled by the German military. Between 75 and 80% of the Herero people were exterminated (approximately 60,000) and 50% of the Nama were killed (approximately 15,000). Those who had displayed loyalty to the German colony, such as the Baster community and some smaller Nama and Damara communities, were rewarded with small reserves. The Germans expropriated all other land.

Namibians in the North were largely unaffected by the war. The Ovambo had rejected German attempts at protection treaties, and their kingdoms remained too powerful a force for the Germans to directly attack. Faced with the inability to completely subjugate the northern half of the country, the German colonial administration divided the country into two halves. The south would henceforth be the Police Zone, an area under direct colonial control and administration. The Ovambo people in the North would largely be left alone to continue their historic farming practices but would also be denied roads and infrastructure development.

During World War I, South Africa entered the war on the side of the Allies as part of the British Commonwealth. They occupied German SWA in 1915, and, after the German defeat in

56. Rinderpest is an infectious viral disease with a very high mortality rate that affects cattle, buffalo and some other similar species. More than 100 years after the pandemic, in 2011, the WHO announced that the disease had been completely eradicated.

1919, were granted a League of Nations mandate over the land, which was henceforth called South West Africa (SWA). South Africa began ruling Namibia as a fifth province, and various laws and acts quickly followed to facilitate white settlement. Divisions of land along racial lines continued, and were further entrenched, in line with South Africa's apartheid policies. High levels of financial assistance to white settlers meant that by 1954 (after the Police line was shifted further North) the total amount of white farms were 5,214, totaling over 60% of the country.[57]

Black Namibians continued to resist their forced resettlement onto more marginal land to make room for white farmers. The South African government was willing to respond with force. When the Herero near Windhoek opposed being resettled, their windmills and pumps were destroyed and their huts burnt. When that did not force them to move, the South African military dropped bombs, which forced the chief to lead his people away.

In 1962 the Odendaal Commission finalized the forced resettlements and the entrenchment of apartheid. The commission argued for reducing the number of black homelands[58] while slightly increasing the sizes of them. The commission did not envision economic development for these homelands, only subsistence farming with income supplemented by wage labor on white farms further to the south. The former "red line," which had previously divided Namibia into two parts, continued to exist as an agricultural boundary. The boundary served to ensure that the cattle and small stock of the black Namibians would not come into contact with those of the whites, for fear of disease. This also ensured that black Namibians could not easily sell their

57. Wolfgang Werner, "A Brief History of Land Disposession in Namibia," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, no. 1 (1993), 5.

58. The apartheid government created the homelands as a way of segregating and controlling blacks in South Africa and Namibia. The homelands were nominally self-governing, but reliant on funding from the South African government for their survival. They were also extremely overcrowded and situated on undesirable lands. Furthermore, the apartheid government pursued a policy of separate development in the homelands for education, healthcare and other services – all of which were inferior to those in the rest of the country.

stock on the market, further relegating them to subsistence farming. With the implementation of the Odendaal Commission's recommendations, the distribution of land along racial lines in Namibia was further entrenched.

The struggle for independence, in which the quest for land was one of the motivators, began with the establishment of the Ovambo People's Organization, in 1959. The organization eventually transformed into the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO[59]) under the leadership of Sam Nujoma.[60] SWAPO eventually became the pre-eminent nationalist movement in Namibia. From the beginning, land reform featured prominently in their platform, and it is discussed in SWAPO's manifesto.[61] SWAPO petitioned the United Nations to declare South Africa's occupation of Namibia illegal, and in the wake of the SOWETO uprising in South Africa in 1976, as well as the end of failed Portuguese colonialism in 1975, the West (primarily Canada, Great Britain, France and the US) was ready to do something. The UN passed the UN Security Council Resolution 385, which revoked South Africa's mandate over Namibia, called for their withdrawal and for UN-supervised elections to be held.[62] The West opened negotiations with South Africa as a way of preventing the spread of Soviet influence and to ensure their interests were preserved.[63] In 1978, South Africa and all parties involved accepted, in principle, the passing of UNSCR 435, which generally called for the same as UNSCR 385. The South African government tried to engineer an internal solution that sought to empower an emerging black middle class in order to weaken SWAPO's base of support. This was coupled with increasing military excursions into independent Angola, where SWAPO was based and where they enjoyed significant Cuban, and to a lesser extent, Soviet support. The cost of the military

59. After independence and transition to a political party, SWAPO became the Swapo Party, or simply Swapo.

60. Chris Alden and Ward Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 126.

61. SWAPO, "Swapo Election Manifesto, 1989," 11-12.

62. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,* 126-7.

63. Ibid.

excursions, along with the potential for South African military defeat in Angola and international pressures forced the South African government to complete the negotiations. A ceasefire took effect in 1988. As part of the agreement, the Cuban troops were withdrawn from Angola, and South Africa ceased their military incursions into Angola. A UN force was sent to Namibia to ensure free and fair elections and to maintain security. There was significant violence by both the South African security forces as well as SWAPO in an attempt to affect the outcome of the election. In November 1989 the elections took place. SWAPO won 57.3% of the vote; the DTA 28.6% and the rest of voters support went to other smaller parties.[64] SWAPO did not have the two-thirds majority needed to unilaterally adopt a constitution, and the Constituent Assembly[65] adopted the 1982 Constitutional Principles, which would eventually lead to an extremely liberal constitution. Plans to socialize the economy were quietly put away, primarily as a result of the government's wish to remain within the South African Customs Union and the large presence of South African business interests in Namibia. Discussions of land reform, as well as nationalization of the mining industry, which had been extremely prominent during the liberalization struggle, now became less of an issue as well, as Nujoma decided to focus on reconciliation.[66] On 21 March 1990, Sam Nujoma was sworn in as the president of Namibia.

64. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,* 128-33.

65. Each party had proportional representation in the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly produced the constitution and the bill of rights. On February 16, 1990, the Constituent Assembly became the National Assembly, retaining its original members.

66. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,* 132.

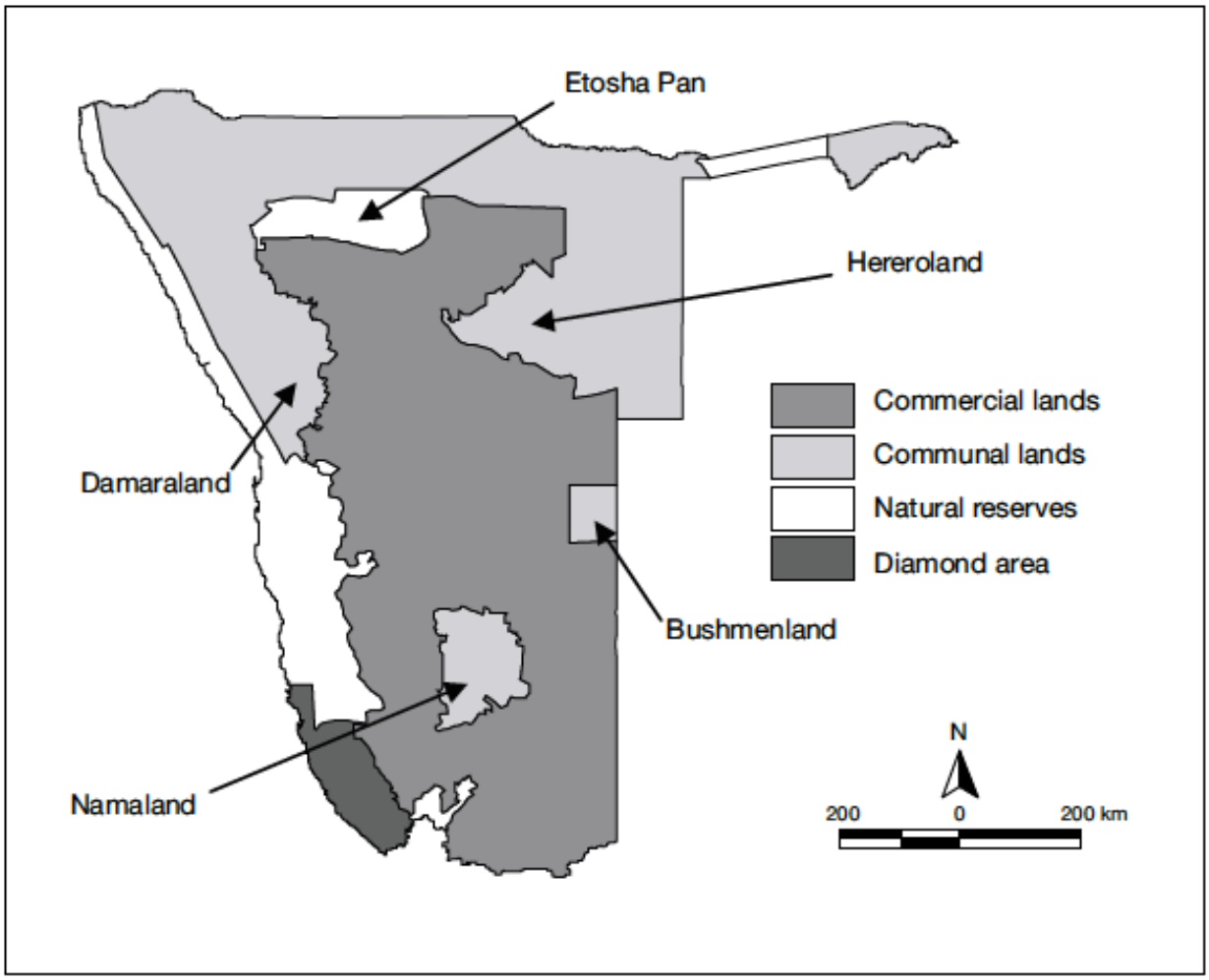

Figure 2. Land Ownership at Independence. The area labeled "Commercial lands" is the area where white commercial farmers owned their farms.[67]

Land Reform in Namibia

At independence, 4,200 whites controlled 43% of all agricultural land. 40% of agricultural land was communal and supported 140,000 households, a population of approximately 700,000. 36,000 blacks worked on white commercial farms, who, along with their families, totaled a population of approximately 200,000.[68] Their futures depended on the outcome of the 1991 National Land Conference, which included delegations from 500 government, opposition, civil

67. C. Tapia Garcia. "Land Reform in Namibia: Economic versus Socio-political Rationale." Land Reform, Land Settlement and Cooperatives, http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5639t/y5639t05.htm (accessed June 17, 2014).

68. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,*133.

society, media and other agencies. The result of the conference was a denial of restitution of ancestral lands and a confirmation of a market-based approach to land reform. The Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLRR) was designated as the organization that would carry out land reform. At the time, Zimbabwe's land reform program was seen as generally effective, and it was therefore used as a model for Namibia. Similar to Zimbabwe, Swapo saw the expediency in maintaining tribal authorities in the communal lands, primarily because they were Ovambo and therefore the base of support for Swapo. As a result, communal land reform would not feature prominently in Namibia's land reform for many years.

The first legislation for land reform, the *Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act* (ACLRA) was passed in 1995. The ACLRA granted the government the right of first refusal for any farm being offered for sale, and reaffirmed their right to expropriate property in the interest of the public.[69] Expropriation, also granted under Article 16 of the Namibian Constitution, would require "just compensation" for the property owner. The Act (amended in 2003 to provide more power to the government as well as closing some loopholes) created the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement (MLR) who was charged with running the land reform program. The beneficiaries of land reform were to include: "Namibian citizens who do not own or otherwise have the use of any or of adequate agricultural land, and foremost to those Namibian citizens who have been socially, economically or educationally disadvantaged by past discriminatory laws or practices."[70] Such a broad definition includes nearly every single non-white Namibian since all, or virtually all, indigenous Namibians were discriminated against by the apartheid-era government, and prior to that by the German colonial administration.

69. Republic of Namibia, "Act No. 6 of 1995: The Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act," (Windhoek: 1995).
70. Republic of Namibia, "Act No. 14 of 2003: Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Amendment Act," (Windhoek: 2003), 1.

Land reform would take two forms. The first was aimed at those who had already proven themselves successful farmers and who had significant assets. The Affirmative Action Loan Scheme (AALS) would provide subsidized loans to black Namibians to purchase a commercial farm. The requirements to qualify included owning 150 Large Stock Units (LSUs or cattle in other words) and N$150,000 (approximately 15,000 USD). The AALS was envisioned as a pathway to move successful farmers with substantial assets from the overcrowded communal areas and into a formerly white-owned commercial farm.

The second form that land reform took in Namibia was aimed at poorer Namibians. It is called the National Resettlement Programme (NRP). Under this system, the MLR would acquire a white-owned commercial farm, subdivide it into economic units, and resettle successful applicants on those small-scale commercial farms. Economic units were eventually established at 3,000 hectares[71] in the arid South, while 1,000 hectares was seen as sufficient in the North, where there was more rainfall.[72] The beneficiaries are provided a 99-year leasehold title to the land, but the leasehold is not tradable; therefore one cannot use it as collateral. Furthermore, if a beneficiary dies, it is not guaranteed that the land can be inherited. Both of these issues reduce the possibility and incentives of improving infrastructure and increasing agricultural output. The NRP is seen as a stepping-stone on the path to large-scale commercial farming via the AALS. Under this system, an applicant is settled on the small-scale farm. There, if they prove themselves successful farmers, and gain enough LSUs (cattle), they could then qualify for an AALS loan, with which they could buy a larger commercial farm. However, to qualify for the AALS, one has to have the equivalent of 150 LSUs. The farm sizes allocated to beneficiaries are not of sufficient size to support 150 LSUs, making the transition from small-scale to large-scale

71. One hectare (abbreviated ha) is approximately 2.47 acres, and can be imagined as slightly larger than an American football field.

72. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,* 138.

commercial farming highly unlikely, if not impossible, for resettled farmers.[73] The Namibian Agricultural Union (NAU – the commercial farmers' union) recommends 8,000 ha in the South and 5,000 ha in the North for an economically viable unit.

Communal land reform was not originally given any priority by the government. Cynics ascribe this to the fact that the communal land in the North is the traditional land of the Ovambo people, from whom Swapo draws the majority of its support. The Nama, Herero and Damara were the peoples mostly affected by the settlers' acquisitions of land in the South, while the Ovambo were not impacted at all.[74] This was due to the weakness of the German colonial government and their inability to challenge the strong, politically centralized Ovambo kingdoms in northern Namibia. Eventually, however, the government passed the *Communal Land Reform Act of 2003*, which aimed to provide some semblance of land tenure security to the people living and farming in the communal areas. The key elements to this act were the requirement to register ones' traditional property, not to exceed 20 hectares. The act also limited the potential use of this land – it could only be used for agriculture, not business or other activities.

The average commercial farm in Namibia is 5,000 ha.[75] Each farm, on average, employs six farm workers; however numbers and estimations vary. Counted with their families, these farms support over 220,000 Namibians (again, estimates vary).[76] Despite appearances of prosperity, 60-70% of commercial farms in Namibia are not profitable, and most white farmers supplement

73. Wolfgang Werner and Willem Odendaal, *Resettlement: How Viable Is the Small-Scale Farming Model?* (Namibian Institute for Democracy, 2010), 4.

74. Alden and Anseeuw, *Land, liberation and compromise in Southern Africa,* 134.

75. 'Commercial' is in fact misleading, as farms in the communal areas also sell agricultural products commercially. Also, instead of 'farm' one should consider the commercial farms in the South 'ranches' as they were only suitable for livestock rearing.

76. Wolfgang Werner, "Promoting Development among Farm Workers: Some Options for Namibia," in *Who Should Own the Land? Analyses and Views on Land Reform and the Land Question in Namibia and Southern Africa*, ed. Justine Hunter (Windhoek: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2004), 20.

their income by allowing hunting, for example, or by taking other jobs.[77] Prior to independence, farmers were heavily subsidized, and even then, some failed. Beneficiaries of land reform are only allowed to use their land for agricultural purposes, thereby denying them other sources of income that may allow them to succeed as small commercial farmers.

Land reform, as it exists now, displaces almost the same number of black Namibians as it resettles. This is due to the fact that farm workers are kicked off the land when the government purchases it for resettlement. Farm workers do not figure prominently into any of the government's plans for resettlement. Furthermore, it is does not appear that any of the new small-scale farms are succeeding.[78] Many beneficiaries have already returned to the rural townships, where they lived slightly better, and have a chance at limited wage labor. Others are able to make a fairly comfortable subsistence-level living but do not contribute to the GDP.[79]

Today, land reform progress is still slow, and has had very limited success.[80] Only a few dozen farms have been expropriated (although it is not clear what the true numbers are), and approximately 5,000 people have been resettled.[81] Although the AALS has succeeded in acquiring over 500 farms, almost a third of those owners defaulted on their loans. It is estimated that black Namibians now own approximately 700 of the 4,200 commercial farms.[82] Poverty levels, however, remain unchanged.

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77. Samuel Kwesi Amoo, "Constitutional Property Rights and Land Reform in Namibia," in *VIIIth World Congress of the International Association of Constitutional Law* (Mexico City: 2010), 16.

78. Sydney L. Harring and Willem Odendaal, *'No Resettlemnt Available': An Assessment of the Expropriation Principle and Its Impact on Land Reform in Namibia* (Windhoek: Legal Assistance Centre, 2007), 24.

79. Ibid.

80. Although there is disagreement about what "success" entails when dealing with land reform, there is general consensus that is should include some type of secure access to land for individuals and communities, the right to work that land, and the expectation that the land reform has led to the betterment of the beneficiary, usually in the form of secure access to food or food production.

81. Shinovene Immanuel, "5 000 People Have Benefitted from Land Reform since 1991," *The Namibian*, 11 November 2013.

82. Amoo, "Constitutional Property Rights and Land Reform in Namibia" (Mexico City, 2010).

CHAPTER 2 – ANALYZING COVERAGE OF LAND REFORM IN NAMIBIA

Zimbabwe's fast track land reform in the early 2000s refocused attention on Namibia's land reform process in the Namibian press. The subsequent announcement in 2004 that the Namibian government would begin expropriating white-owned farms created strong reactions in the media. These reactions varied from paper to paper, with some supporting expropriation, while others fearing that expropriation would lead to similar outcomes as it had in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe continued to feature prominently in newspapers' coverage of land reform into 2013.

This chapter describes and analyzes each paper's coverage of various issues related to land reform in Namibia, while also examining how each paper portrayed Zimbabwe's fast track land reform. The chapter then provides a comparison of the coverage of the main issues between the papers and concludes that the papers succeeded in fulfilling their roles to a certain extent.

The Namibian: Number of Articles Published	
2003	21
2004	47
2005	17
2006	45
2007	24
2008	26
2009	16
2010	18
2011	30
2012	48
2013	55
Total:	347

Figure 3. Number of Articles Published by The Namibian

The Namibian – Portrayal of Land Reform and Surrounding Issues

The Namibian is generally seen as the most reliable and credible paper in Namibia, and the analysis shows that it is generally even-handed in its coverage of issues related to land reform, although it is often critical of the government.[1] The paper is supportive of land reform, yet views it generally as a failure, mainly due to government corruption and inefficiency. The paper is further supportive of expropriation, yet fears that it would lead to a Zimbabwe-style failure. The paper's portrayal of the issues did not vary through time and remained fairly static.

The Namibian's portrayal of Zimbabwe's land reform program remained consistent over the time period under consideration. While the paper fairly regularly quoted individuals praising Zimbabwe's land reform, the overall portrayal of Zimbabwe's land reform is one of failure, violence, lawlessness and chaos. The number of articles discussing land reform in Zimbabwe peaked in 2003 and then tapered off, until in later years merely one or two articles were written on the subject per year. One notable exception was 2008, during which time an important court case relating to Zimbabwe's expropriation of farms was underway in South Africa. Additionally, there are more articles about this subject in 2013, a presidential election year for Zimbabwe, showing that the paper's coverage is event-driven, as is to be expected.

Land reform in Zimbabwe is a topic that is used by *The Namibian* both as a warning and to caution patience. A typical sentence referencing Zimbabwe is: "…Namibia was sliding towards the kind of chaotic land grab that has plunged Zimbabwe's economy into crisis"[2] or "…fear that Zimbabwe style land grab would spread to Namibia."[3] The actual situation in Zimbabwe is seldom discussed in detail; the paper appears to assume that the reader already knows what has happened in Zimbabwe. Land reform in Zimbabwe is said to be "chaotic," a "crisis" that

1. Links, "'We write what we like' The role of independent print media and independent reporting in Namibia," 12.
2. Tangeni Amupadhi, "Namibia: 300 Farms On New Government List," *The Namibian*, August 15, 2003.
3. Ibid.

plunged the economy into ruin. It is used as a warning to show people that something must be done with regards to land reform, lest a Zimbabwe style land grab occurs in Namibia as well. It is also used as a way of cautioning patience on the part of those who want land immediately. It may likewise be a way of instilling fear on the part of the white commercial farmers, who would have the most to lose if a similar situation played out in Namibia.

This continued negative portrayal is often juxtaposed with statements made by government officials. From time to time, officials used inflammatory language, usually praising the successes of Zimbabwe's land reform program and expressing their desire to conduct the same type of land reform in Namibia. In 2006, Lands Deputy Minister Isak Katali, while visiting Zimbabwe, praised their land reform program, stated that it was commendable and that he would like to emulate it in Namibia.[4] Over three-fourths of this article condemned these statements. It quoted both the NAU and the National Society for Human Rights (NSHR) and their various criticisms of Zimbabwe's land reform. Most significantly, the NSHR said that Namibia would not follow in the "bloody footsteps" of President Robert Mugabe, "who has earned himself a bad name as one of the most notorious tyrants and human rights violators on our continent".[5] A few months after this article, Justice Minister Pendukeni Ivula-Ithana, made statements similar to Kitali's, also while visiting Zimbabwe.[6] Statements such as these are often in conflict with official Namibian policy and with statements made by the government as an entity, and *The Namibian* consistently highlights that fact. Additionally, when such controversial statements are made, the paper usually publishes more than one article discussing land reform.

The paper did, on a few occasions, publish opinion pieces or editorials, sometimes on the front page, that strongly criticize the land reform process in Namibia and call for radical change

4. Christof Maletsky, "Namibia: Land Reform Statements Condemned," *The Namibian*, May 26, 2006.
5. Ibid.
6. Christof Maletsky, "Namibia: Zim Land Reform Impresses Ithana," *The Namibian*, 20 July 2006.

in Namibia, similar to the dramatic turn of events in Zimbabwe. While these pieces, few in number, are prominently published, they do not counterbalance the overwhelmingly negative view of Zimbabwe's land reform process espoused by the paper. They may serve two purposes for the paper – by providing a semblance of impartiality on the issue of land reform, or as an alternative way of critiquing Swapo, since these pieces are not apprehensive of attacking the party.

The Namibian sometimes used misleading headlines to catch the reader's attention. The paper used attention-grabbing or provocative statements in their headlines. A quick reading of the introductory sentences of the article often supported the claim made in the headline. However, a further in-depth reading of the rest of the article usually provided more information that was not in accordance with the provocative headline. One prime example of this was published in 2008.[7] The headline read: "Namibia: Minister Wants to Fast Track Land Reform." The first line points out how the Lands Minister, Alpheus !Nasureb urged the Land Reform Advisory Commission to accelerate land reform. Further readings indicate that the Minister merely urged the commission, which has no authority other than an advisory one, to consider multiple avenues to increase the speed of land reform, which had stagnated. One such avenue he suggested was to have regional authorities, who are more familiar with their population's needs, draw up prioritized lists of candidates for land reform. In that manner, the people most in need could be more rapidly resettled. This section was then quickly followed up with a negative portrayal of land reform in Namibia as a zero-sum game that has benefited few and that there are over 200,000 landless Namibians still awaiting resettlement. The article ended by repeating the Namibia National Farmers' Union's (NNFU) criticism of the slow pace of willing-seller, willing-

7. Christof Maletsky, "Namibia: Minister Wants to Fast Track Land Reform," *The Namibian*, October 14, 2008.

buyer process and the warning that the slow pace could cause a Zimbabwe-style takeover of white farms.

During the eleven-year period under discussion, there is a scarcity of articles in which *The Namibian* offered in depth discussion or nuanced debate on land reform in Namibia. Most of these cases coincided with the publication of new studies or books by academics or NGOs, such as the Legal Action Center (LAC). These articles were essentially book reviews and offered a summary of the main arguments of the publication. Consistently, the case of Zimbabwe is offered to underscore the importance of land reform in Namibia – do something, or Namibia could become like Zimbabwe. Other examples offer socialistic alternatives to the land reform process, and advocate a Zimbabwe-style land reform, although usually no mention of violence is made.[8]

The plight of farm workers is often compared to Zimbabwe, where the workers failed to benefit from land reform. Similarly, in Namibia, farm workers are generally not considered when the government debates land reform – no provisions are made for them. The farm workers are a truly marginalized group in Namibia, and their voices are seldom heard in the paper. Even when, in 2003, the Namibian Farm Workers' Union's (NAFWU) General Secretary Alfred Angula announced that they were set to occupy 15 white-owned farms, no farm worker was actually interviewed.[9] Similarly, one rarely hears the voices of women, white farmers, or those black Namibians who have actually been resettled. The only article published in *The Namibian* that gives voice to a beneficiary of land reform occurred in 2011, and the article was insightful.[10] The journalist interviewed the beneficiary, Paul Goagoseb. The value of hearing his voice is important, as he had a fresh perspective heretofore unseen in the paper. His point was that not all

8. Alexactus T. Kaure, "Namibia: Debating the Land Issue," *The Namibian*, July 28, 2006.
9. Christof Maletsky, "Namibia: Union to Occupy 15 Farms," *The Namibian*, November 5, 2003.
10. Steve Felton, "Namibia: Black, White - They're All Farmers," *The Namibian*, June 14, 2011.

Namibians need land and that not everybody was suited to farming. He suggested training before becoming a farmer and the withdrawal of the land from those who after five or six years prove they are unsuccessful farmers. Furthermore, the article discusses Paul's partnership with Wolfie, a white commercial farmer who has been teaching and mentoring Paul on farming under an EU program called the Emerging Farmers Support Programme. Paul found the program had been essential to his success as a farmer. Both the government, and other white farmers, could benefit from his perspective, which could serve to actually enhance the land reform process.

One topic that received thorough coverage was the Campbell Case. Mike Campbell, William Campbell and 77 other white Zimbabwean commercial farmers brought their case before the SADC Tribunal. They asserted that the land reform program of Zimbabwe had violated their rights as provided for in the SADC Treaty and Protocol. The plaintiffs further claimed that fast track land reform was racially motivated, which is also illegal under the protocol's clause prohibiting discrimination on a number of bases, including race. The "Campbell Camp," as they had begun to be called, received an interim injunction on 12 December 2007, prohibiting the government of Zimbabwe from seizing their farms.

The Namibian portrayed the Campbell Case as an important case, with important implications for SADC and one that has international attention.[11] The paper goes to some length in humanizing the white Zimbabwean farmers and to garner sympathy for them in other ways. Michael Campbell's age and frailty are often mentioned. Campbell and the other farmers have owned land in Zimbabwe for generations.[12] In later articles, after there had been attacks upon the Campbells and their farm, the paper focuses on the extent of their injuries. Crowds coming to the courthouse were "shocked to see one of the affected farmers, 38-year-old Ben Freeth, in a

11. Brigitte Weidlich, "Namibia: Land Boards Overwhelmed By Land Applications," *The Namibian*, May 28, 2008.
12. "Southern Africa: Landmark Farm Case At SADC Tribunal," *The Namibian*, December 11, 2007.

wheelchair with bad bruises still visible around his eyes."[13] Michael Campbell was still so unwell after he and his wife, who was 66 at the time, were beaten that they could not travel for the case. The attacks are described as being a "brutal assault and kidnapping"[14] that was "directed against whites."[15]

The Namibian's coverage of land reform is generally objective, although critical of the government. While lacking in-depth coverage of many issues, they do attempt to provide multiple viewpoints, although not very often. *New Era,* on the other hand is a state-run newspaper and faces pressure from government ministers when they are critical of government policies and actions. This leads one to deduce that *New Era* will be less objective in their coverage.

New Era: Number of Articles Published	
2004	27
2005	75
2006	31
2007	34
2008	24
2009	12
2010	14
2011	15
2012	44
2013	27
Total:	303

Figure 4. Number of Articles Published by New Era.

13. Brigitte Weidlich, "Zimbabwe: SADC Tribunal Hears Farmers' Case," *The Namibian*, July 17, 2008.
14. "Southern Africa: Landmark Farm Case At SADC Tribunal."
15. Weidlich, "Zimbabwe: SADC Tribunal Hears Farmers' Case."

New Era – Portrayal of Land Reform and Surrounding Issues

New Era is the state-sponsored newspaper in Namibia, and can therefore be expected to be supportive of the government and of the government policies related to land reform. While the paper initially, during the period under consideration, was almost exclusively supportive of land reform and especially expropriation, the paper's opinion appeared to change and become more critical of the government, before again becoming more supportive. The paper portrays certain issues, particularly Zimbabwe's transformations and the issue of land, in a significantly different light than other papers.

New Era's portrayal of land reform in Zimbabwe was usually positive, yet still fairly nuanced. The paper consistently portrayed Zimbabwe in a positive light and highlighted the ties and similarities between Zimbabwe and Namibia, while also stressing that in Namibia, land reform would be done in line with the constitution. Any difficulties stemming from fast-track land reform in Zimbabwe are attributed either to challenges that the government is working on overcoming or to external enemies. The number of articles published in the paper discussing or related to Zimbabwe's land reform program, as expected, dwindled from a high of seven or eight per year in the years most proximate to the expropriations, to merely one or two per year, with some years having no articles discussing the issue at all. The paper had more editorials or opinion pieces, which, as one may expect, were more opinionated than normal articles, yet tended to consider the issues more thoroughly.

The announcement to begin expropriations published in *New Era* was portrayed in a positive manner, with members of civil service, diplomats and the press corps applauding the decision.[16] At the party, which was hosted by the Namibian Prime Minister, an unnamed Zimbabwean is

16. "Namibia: Now is the Hour for Land Reform," *New Era*, February 27, 2004.

quoted as saying "Welcome to the club," on hearing of the declaration.[17] The idea of being in a similar club, and of having similar issues and being closely tied together is a theme that is consistently echoed during the decade under consideration.

Some articles discuss the common history between the countries, in particular highlighting the similarities of their independence struggles.[18] The parallels in colonial history, and references to the similarities in land issues between Namibia and Zimbabwe in particular, serve to open articles, which then discuss the urgency of land reform in Namibia.[19] Other articles discussing the close ties between the neighbors are published during periods of time when Zimbabwean delegations visit Namibia and are a reflection of the discourse of the governments. They speak of a "special relationship" between the two countries, without actually expounding on what that relationship is, and usually mention further the strong bilateral, diplomatic and trade links.[20] Zimbabwe and Namibia are "all-weather friends," and they would continue to work together no matter what.[21] Most importantly, Zimbabwe's fast-track land reform is lauded as being the reason for the reinvigoration of the land reform process in Namibia in 2005.[22]

Issues with land reform in Zimbabwe are framed in *New Era* as challenges that the government is working on overcoming. The challenges of land reform are being addressed by the government of Zimbabwe, and they are working on tying up "loose ends," the Zimbabwean Minister of Information is quoted as saying.[23] *New Era* emphasized the successes of land reform in Zimbabwe as well. Fast track land reform is said to have transferred farms from 4,500 white

17. Ibid.
18. B.F. Bankie, "Namibia: Political Parties And Democracy in Namibia," *New Era*, January 17, 2007.
19. Irene !Hoaës, "Namibia: Land Issue Under Spotlight," *New Era*, July 15, 2010.
20. Mbatjiua Ngavirue, "Namibia: Mugabe Gets Royal Treatment," *New Era*, March 1, 2007.
21. Ibid.
22. Uzo G.O. Okafor, "Namibia: Managing Land Reform As a Borderless Project," *New Era*, August 15, 2005.
23. "Zimbabwe - the Challenges," *New Era*, March 5, 2004.

owners to over 25,000 black farmers.[24] In 2013 it was stated that 300,000 to 400,000 black farmers benefitted from land reform in Zimbabwe and that "the peasants finally own the land."[25]

External enemies are allegedly to blame for continuing issues with regards to land reform, in both Zimbabwe and Namibia, according to the articles in *New Era*. The food shortages that followed the fast track land reform program in Zimbabwe are blamed on economic sabotage and corruption.[26] The West, in particular, is targeted as being to blame for the issues in Zimbabwe. They are accused of destabilizing the regime[27] and of wanting fast track land reform to fail.[28] The targeted economic sanctions levied against Zimbabwe are "evil pieces of law" designed to destroy Zimbabwe, and all of Zimbabwe's challenges stem from the "evil policies of Western Countries."[29] The media is "hired" and "evil armchair academics and their World Bank-IMF seek to control" Zimbabwe.[30]

Although expressing solidarity with Zimbabwe, the Namibian government was usually careful to point out that land reform would be executed under the law as established in the Constitution and the various legislative acts relating to land reform.[31] During a speech in the National Council, Swapo's Deputy Chairperson, Margareth Mensah-Williams stated that Namibia will pursue land reform according to the law, and that they are not "copycats" out to follow the same path as Zimbabwe.[32] In response to statements made by Namibia's Deputy Minster of Lands, Isak Katali in Zimbabwe, where he praised the success of land reform and stated that Namibia could learn from them, the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement released a

24. Viola Zimunya, "Zimbabwe: Zim Focus Now On Food Security," *New Era*, March 1, 2004.
25. "Zimbabwe: Report Dismays Zimbabwe Embassy," *New Era*, September 4, 2013.
26. Zimunya, "Zimbabwe: Zim Focus Now On Food Security."
27. Staff Reporter, "Namibia: Youths Condemn West," *New Era*, March 15, 2005.
28. Okafor, "Namibia: Managing Land Reform As a Borderless Project."
29. "Namibia: Why Zimbabwe is Where It is Today," *New Era*, February 22, 2008.
30. Udo W. Froese, "Southern Africa: Africa: the Other Side of the Coin," *New Era*, May 6, 2005.
31. Wezi T. Jaronda, "Namibia: Resettlement Process Too Slow," *New Era*, May 16, 2006.
32. Frederick Philander, "Namibia: Sell Or Leave Farmers Warned," *New Era*, October 6, 2005.

statement affirming their adherence to the law and policies already in place.[33] There are two possible implications of this. First, it may simply be that the Minister was catering to a different audience in Zimbabwe, and had no intention of his remarks being printed in Namibia. Secondly, this possibly indicates that Ministers in the Namibian government may be at odds with official government policy. Therefore, the government felt the need to clarify its position so that Namibians can understand the Minister's statements were not a reflection of government policy.

New Era offers a big caveat to this legal framework of land reform. It would be white farmers' faults if Namibians were forced to resort to land grabs such as what occurred in Zimbabwe. The Namibian National Farmers Union (NNFU) especially espoused this line of reasoning in 2004, when they announced that they would begin seizing white-owned farms.[34] The leader of the NNFU stated people would take radical action if "pushed to the limit," however, he was careful to say that they would not be violent.[35] He did not elaborate on how they would achieve this non-violent goal. Officials and union leaders further accused white farmers of artificially inflating land prices[36] and of being hesitant to sell their land.[37] Whites additionally undermined the process of land reform because they sell only poor-quality land to the government.[38] Lastly, and perhaps most deviously, some white farmers had incorporated their land and, instead of selling the land itself, they sold controlling shares of the land in an effort to bypass the legal requirement of the right of "first refusal" of the government.[39] The right of first refusal is integral to the government's land reform process. If a farmer wishes to sell his land, he must first offer it to the government. If the government declines to purchase the

33. Kuvee Kangueehi, "Namibia: Would Namibia Ever Copy Zimbabwe Model?," *New Era*, May 26, 2006.
34. Wezi T. Jaronda, "Namibia: Farm Union Warns White Farmers," *New Era*, July 5, 2004.
35. Ibid.
36. T. O. Emvula, "Namibia: Land: A Natural Cause of Conflict," *New Era*, August 6, 2004.
37. Philander, "Namibia: Sell Or Leave Farmers Warned."
38. Catherine Sasman, "Namibia: Giving the Land Back to the People," *New Era*, May 16, 2007.
39. Magreth Nunuhe, "Namibia: Heated Debate On Land," *New Era*, December 18, 2013.

land, then the farmer is able to sell the land to whomever he wishes. The loophole used by white farmers to incorporate their land and sell it in that manner was technically legal under the law, however. The government in 2003 tried to close the loophole, apparently unsuccessfully, since the charge that white farmers are doing this was levied as late as the end of 2013.[40] Thus, it is the actions of white farm owners that will force the action of Namibians: "Those that lose their farms will have no one to blame but themselves."[41]

An important aspect in the paper's portrayal that land-grabs would be white farm owners' fault is the way that whites are consistently portrayed. White farm owners are portrayed in an extremely negative light. This portrayal became less severe over time; perhaps reflecting the moderating influence of President Pohamba, who, unlike his predecessor Pres. Nujoma, does not often use racial rhetoric. The starkest example of *New Era*'s portrayal of white farm owners took place in 2004, when the atmosphere was charged with the recent announcement of the pursuit of expropriation in Namibia. White farm owners were accused of violating the human rights of blacks, of treating them like slaves, whipping and killing their farm workers who they regard as "pieces of farm equipment" that they can get rid of as they please.[42] Some articles offer graphic examples of what white farm owners have done. The NNFU accused a white farm owner of "nearly castrating" his farm worker, whom he suspected of theft, by "pinching" him with some equipment.[43] Others accuse white farm owners of acting as if apartheid has not ended, as if the "baas/kaffir"[44] relationship still applies.[45] More recently the rhetoric has

40. Ibid.
41. "Namibia: Now is the Hour for Land Reform."
42. "Namibia: Now is the Hour for Land Reform."
43. Jaronda, "Namibia: Farm Union Warns White Farmers."
44. "Baas" is the Afrikaans word for "boss," and although still commonly used by employees in reference to their employers, it can also be used derogatively. "Kaffir" is an ethnic slur referring to black people, used in South Africa and Namibia.
45. Emvula, "Namibia: Land: A Natural Cause of Conflict."

moderated, although white intransigence is still viewed as the primary reason for the sluggishness of land reform in Namibia.

The plight of the farmworker is the *raison d'être* of the NAFWU, and the Union features in almost all the articles discussing farmworkers. In 2007, the union held a forum titled "Give the Land Back to the People" where they, as well as other government officials, discussed land reform in Namibia.[46] They stated that few farmworkers have benefited from land reform in Namibia, and the Minister of Agriculture gave a good explanation of why:

> "(It) must be assumed that the majority of workers on farms bought by the State for redistribution had to leave those farms. If land acquired for redistribution is allocated to farm laborers currently employed on these farms, it is likely that sustainable redistributive land reform will not put more people on freehold farms than the agricultural sector is currently employing."

It is clear, therefore, that the union understood that land reform in Namibia displaced as many people as it benefitted. The union continued to advocate for land reform, yet attempted to ensure that farm workers wore considered as well.

The issue of land is described as being an unfulfilled objective of the independence fight in *New Era*.[47] "People must understand that the Namibian liberation struggle was all about the acquisition of land," the Deputy Chairperson of the National Council is quoted as saying. When a member of the Republican Party, Henk Mudge, made a statement that land reform only became an issue after independence, he was met with a spirited and heated response by members of Swapo, who stated, "it has always been about the land." A fairly detailed analysis of political parties in Namibia also highlight the fact that liberation objectives had not been achieved and that land was one of those objectives.[48]

46. Sasman, "Namibia: Giving the Land Back to the People."
47. Philander, "Namibia: Sell Or Leave Farmers Warned."
48. Bankie, "Namibia: Political Parties And Democracy in Namibia."

Pieces in *New Era* discussing land reform are often editorials or opinion pieces. Many of the authors of these pieces can generally be classified as academics, although not all of them. There are often pieces offering substantive, and in-depth discussion of land reform in Namibia, with the authors calling for more to be done to speed up the process. Some of these articles agitate for more extreme forms of land reform. The NNFU agitated for seizing the land of white farmers without government involvement.[49] Reconciliation has not worked, and the reelection Swapo shows the party has a mandate; they must take back stolen wealth.[50] Why, asked one article, must "we buy back stolen land?"[51] Others, however, offer discussions that are less far-reaching in their approach. Some called for institutional changes, such as consolidating the ministries involved in land reform, to speed up the process.[52] Others discuss why restitution, adopted in South Africa, would be unlikely to work in Namibia.[53] Finally, one article offers and in depth conversation with regard to the issue of titling, finding that it is "necessary, but not sufficient" to achieving land reform.[54] The more moderate of these authors, also warn that the land reform in Namibia must not be perceived by the international community as going down the same route as Zimbabwe. This, they contend, would scare of investors and would have dire consequences for the economy.[55]

New Era had very limited coverage of the Campbell Case. When the Zimbabwean government violated the initial SADC injunction against seizing white-owned farms, Campbell and his co-plaintiffs filed an "urgent application" to the Tribunal. The article was published during the urgent application, but before any decisions had been made by the Tribunal. It

49. Jaronda, "Namibia: Farm Union Warns White Farmers."
50. Froese, "Southern Africa: Africa: the Other Side of the Coin."
51. Surihe Gaomas, "Namibia: 'Why Buy Back Stolen Land?'," *New Era*, August 17, 2005.
52. Okafor, "Namibia: Managing Land Reform As a Borderless Project."
53. Wezi T. Jaronda, "Namibia: 'Ancestral Land Claims May Be Tricky'," *New Era*, Novermber 5, 2007.
54. "Namibia: Land Titling No Magic Bullet," *New Era*, September 28, 2012.
55. Catherine Sasman, "Namibia: What Criteria for Expropriation?," *New Era*, March 5, 2004.

primarily discusses the implications of Zimbabwe's non-compliance of the SADC Tribunal's ruling. The article states that it challenges the "legitimacy and relevance of the tribunal and the entire institution of SADC."[56] The case is not further discussed.

After consideration of how *New Era* and *The Namibian* covered land reform, it is time to turn to *Die Republikein.* The paper, originally strongly supportive of the DTA, but more recently attempting to be more independent, is still beholden to, and supportive of, its Afrikaner readership.

Die Republikein: Number of Articles Published	
2003	9
2004	25
2005	13
2006	17
2007	17
2008	14
2009	14
2010	13
2011	12
2012	13
2013	21
Total:	168

Figure 5. Number of Articles Published by Die Republikein

Die Republikein – Portrayal of Land Reform and Surrounding Issues

Die Republikein is the Afrikaans-language newspaper of Namibia, and serves the almost exclusively Afrikaans-speaking white commercial farmers. Therefore, one may suspect that the paper would be anti-Swapo and anti-land reform. While the paper does seem to offer more details on land reform, reflecting the interests of its readership, it is not overtly critical of either Swapo or of land reform. In fact, the paper published about half the amount of articles about

56. "Zimbabwe: Land Challenge Acid Test for SADC Tribunal," *New Era*, July 22, 2008.

land reform compared to either other paper. The paper instead stresses the need to conduct land reform, including expropriation, under a legal framework and the need to avoid a Zimbabwe-style outcome, without sounding warning bells.

Die Republikein's portrayal of Zimbabwe remained consistent throughout the period under consideration. Much attention is given to the country's fall from grace and continued economic troubles. The "land question" in Namibia is generally given detailed attention, perhaps reflecting the paper's readership's interest in the issue. The paper does not generally appear alarmist about expropriations, instead highlighting the need to stay within the democratic and legal framework for land reform, without strongly opposing expropriation. The articles also warn of not politicizing land reform, which is viewed as leading to the outcomes in Zimbabwe.

When the government of Namibia announced that they would begin expropriating white-owned farms, the response from *Die Republikein* was muted. The initial article published the day after the announcement by Prime Minister Guireb stated that expropriation was "merely an extension" of the decision made by the National Assembly in 2002 to expropriate farms in the national interests.[57] Of note, no mention was made in the article of Zimbabwe nor the fact that the announcement was made at a state dinner in honor of the Zimbabwean Information Minister. Nor was there an attempt to indicate that expropriation could lead to economic problems, as had happened in Zimbabwe. An article published the following day quoted the Namibian Agricultural Union (NAU) president, Jan van der Wet at great length.[58] Although expropriation was inevitable, according to van der Wet, he stated that it nonetheless came as a shock. He urged farmers to remain calm and wait for further details to emerge on the process. Van der Wet focused on the positive aspects of the announcement, such as the fact that expropriation would be

57. "Swapo wil nou haastig raak met grond," *Die Republikein*, February 26, 2004.
58. "De Wet vra vir kalmte op plase," *Die Republikein*, February 27, 2004.

conducted in accordance with the constitution and within a legal framework. Zimbabwe is mentioned, but was not portrayed as an example of what could happen in Namibia. Instead, van der Wet urged calm so that the international community does not assume that a "Zimbabwe situation" would occur in Namibia, which would drive off foreign investors.

Zimbabwe itself, when discussed, is examined in great detail. Many of the articles about Zimbabwe, the former "jewel" of Africa, focus on how the country is now merely a shadow of its former self.[59] Many articles discuss how Zimbabwe, a former food exporter, is now facing shortages with production down 70%.[60] The paper discusses a "damning UN report" which found that land reform destroyed the Zimbabwean economy.[61] According to the articles, fast track land reform was lawless, chaotic, characterized by deadly violence that placed many farms in the hands of Mugabe and his "cronies."[62] The paper paints the picture that only the elites benefited and the masses have no food, no access to healthcare and are suffering through a cholera outbreak.[63] What is worse, the few poor, who did in fact benefit from fast track land reform, do not have the money or the knowledge to farm.[64] Furthermore, fast track land reform was the result of a "megalomaniac" who used reactionary politics and populist rhetoric as a tool for social mobilization.[65] This, therefore, serves as a warning to Swapo not to politicize land reform in Namibia. While some articles warn that Namibia could go the Zimbabwe route if land reform is not sped up,[66] these harrowing problems serve as a reminder of what could happen if

59. "Grond-tameletjie," *Die Republikein*, December 13, 2007.
60. "Kosproduksie in Zim daal met 70%," *Die Republikein*, October 29, 2007.
61. "VN-verslag oor grondhervorming verdoemend," *Die Republikein*, July 27, 2005.
62. "Zimbabwe judge blasts SADC court over white farmers ruling," *Die Republikein*, January 14, 2009.
63. "Dit gaan goed in Zimbabwe," *Die Republikein*, March 16, 2009.
64. "Kosproduksie in Zim daal met 70%."
65. "Regering se prioriteite skeef, sê CoD," *Die Republikein*, August 23, 2004.
66. "Grondkompromie," *Die Republikein*, July 15, 2010.

that speed is too fast. Zimbabwe, according to *Die Republikein,* is a failure in both land reform and democracy.[67]

Die Republikein, like *The Namibian,* dedicated quite a bit of attention on the statements made by Deputy Minster of Lands, Isak Katali about the successes of Zimbabwe's fast track land reform program, while he was visiting Zimbabwe. His remarks were portrayed not merely as being diametrically opposed to Swapo and the government, but also as having hurt Namibia's image on the international stage.[68] Katali' statement are not merely an attack on the legal framework under which Namibia's land reform program operates but also weakens its international standing.

The Campbell Case received extensive attention in *Die Republikein*, and articles discussing the case were very detailed. The paper covered aspects of the court arguments that were made, but also delved deeper into the legal implications for SADC and, therefore, Namibia. If expropriation were to be found to be illegal in SADC, then that would be construed as a victory for white farmers in Namibia as well. Additionally, the articles described Campbell as old and weak, and later articles gave detailed descriptions of his and his families' abduction and beatings at the hands of people trying to force them from their lands. The paper likely focused on describing Campbell as old and weak in order to highlight the injustices being visited on him by black Zimbabweans, while studiously ignoring the historical injustice of white settlers seizing black lands.

Die Republikein consistently calls for the need for land reform to be conducted under a legal framework and in accordance with the Constitution. This means that land reform should be under the willing-buyer, willing-seller concept and that any farmers whose land was expropriated

67. "Is grondhervorming geslaagd?," *Die Republikein*, December 04, 2012.
68. "Katali bots met Kabinet," *Die Republikein*, May 26, 2006.

should receive just compensation. According to the paper, land reform has enjoyed limited success.[69] Any difficulties with the program, such as the slowness thereof, are blamed on Swapo and their policies. One early article in particular takes Swapo to task for being hypocritical in their policies and stating that most of the Cabinet owns farms and blames them for taking no concrete actions with regard to land reform up to that point.[70] Furthermore, expropriation, contrary to the government's expectation that it would lead to expediting land reform, has served to slow the process.[71]

Die Republikein in early 2004, when the idea of expropriation was still relatively new, discussed the large number of Namibians that commercial farms support. One article listed the number of farmers and their families at 200,000, arguing that the government's proposal to resettle 240,000 formerly disadvantaged Namibians makes little sense.[72] Another article uses survey data to find that the smallest commercial farms, on average employ three workers, while the largest farms employ as many as eight.[73] The article proceeds to list data from the survey (which was conduced by the NAU) to discuss the salaries and benefits of farm workers in detail. Although the hourly cash wage for the workers averaged N$3.41, once other non-cash benefits are included it translates to N$7.15, a wage equivalent to the average wage of construction workers. The benefits include rations, housing, transportation, grazing rights and so forth, and vary from farm to farm. A later article, in response to a reader's question, also listed and discussed the benefits and wages, and highlighted the same non-cash benefits.[74] One article, titled "Farmers take good care of farm workers," cited a new survey by the NAU to show that

69. "Grondhervorming toets demokrasie," *Die Republikein*, May 15, 2005.
70. "Mokerhoue val oor grond," *Die Republikein*, August 17, 2004.
71. "Onteiening vertraag grondhervorming," *Die Republikein*, November 22, 2006.
72. "Grond in kalm water - Kommunikasie word beter," *Die Republikein*, October 18, 2004.
73. "Meer geld vir minder plaaswerkers," *Die Republikein*, October 22, 2004.
74. "Plaaswerkers se loon," *Die Republikein*, February 27, 2012.

farm workers actually make 2-5 times the minimum wage and receive numerous benefits, including, in some cases, antiretroviral drugs free of charge from their employer.[75]

Most of *Die Republikein*'s discussions of farm workers concerned their wages. When not showing how extensive the non-cash benefits of farm workers are, the paper worried about laws and regulations being considered that would raise the minimum wage of farm workers or affect how the farmers must treat the workers when they are considering or have already fired them. There is generally much concern on the part of the government of Namibia on the "dumping" of farm workers. While the varied reasons for potentially firing farm workers and evicting them from the farmers' land is never discussed, *Die Republikein* attributes the reason that there are fewer workers on farms currently to the effects of drought, lower prices for meat and the higher minimum wage laws.[76] For the paper, therefore, it is only business.

There were no articles specifically discussing cases of mistreatment of farm workers by white farmers. However, in one case, in an opinion piece, the author exhorts farmers to treat their workers better, without listing any actual examples of bad treatment.[77] The only other time the paper discussed the poor treatment of farm workers was when the president of the NAFWU, Alfred Angula chastised white farm owners for their treatment of their workers.[78] The same article mentioned an ongoing investigation into the theft of hundreds of thousands of Namibian dollars by Angula, perhaps to discredit his statements. Angula was eventually charged with theft of the money in 2013.

There is very little discussion of black farmers or beneficiaries in *Die Republikein*. When beneficiaries are mentioned, it is in reference to the lack of transparency in the government's

75. "Boere sorg goed vir plaaswerkers," *Die Republikein*, November 16, 2012.
76. "Meer geld vir minder plaaswerkers."
77. "Help tog die grondloses," *Die Republikein*, May 22, 2006.
78. "Alfred Angula spoeg vuur oor grond," *Die Republikein*, November 3, 2008.

selection process, the failure to pick the right candidates for resettlement and the failure of the government to provide continuing support for the beneficiaries. The one article that delved into the subject a bit more deeply listed the apparent corruption and self-enrichment of high-ranking government leaders who have all received large farms. The article is titled "Farms for friends in high places" and lists, by name, a number of government officials who received a farm as a result of land reform, to the detriment of those who actually need land.[79]

There were few articles in *Die Republikein,* which were in-depth or investigative of any aspect of land reform. Those that were more in-depth, compared to most articles, were event-driven and were merely reporting on the statements of some conference or meeting, usually conducted be nongovernmental organizations. Similarly, the coverage of the proposed *Land Bill of 2010* was merely a presentation of the debate occurring within the legislature and mostly discussed the need for white farmers to consent to land reform, lest the frustration with land reform leads to a similar situation as in Zimbabwe.[80] The bill, which attempted to fuse the commercial land reform act with the communal land reform act, eventually failed to be passed by the legislature. However, neither further coverage of the bill, nor any mention of its failure was ever reported.

Women are almost entirely absent from reporting by *Die Republikein*. The few exceptions where women are discussed in relation to land reform occurred after studies or books were released by NGOs regarding gender issues in land reform. In particular, the Legal Assistance Center's (LAC) Dr. Wolfgang Werner released a study regarding the lack of rights given women

79. "Plase vir hoë vriende," *Die Republikein*, July 12, 2006.
80. "Grondkompromie."

under the Communal Land Reform Act.[81] The article was a concise summary of the study, yet provided no other context or information.

Die Republikein, it appears, is not above using catchy, exaggerated or even misleading headlines. A prime example of this is in an article titled "Land makes Namibians poor."[82] About half of the article was devoted to the former president, Sam Nujoma, who was lambasting white farmers for circumventing the law and sabotaging the land reform process. The rest of the article was devoted to a diplomatic cable, sent to the US State Department by the US Ambassador to Namibia in which he discussed land reform in Namibia. The last line of the article cited the cable as stating: "Land reform makes Namibians emotionally richer, but financially poorer."

Die Republikein's articles about land reform are much more focused on the technical aspects of land reform. This reflects the paper's readership's concern for land reform as it actually affects them. Therefore, certain topics which are barely mentioned in other papers, such as increasing wages for farm workers, gets in-depth and repeated reporting in *Die Republikein,* because farmers would feel the effect of such a change. The land tax is also a topic that received much more attention in *Die Republikein* than the other papers. The articles on the land tax attempted to explain the mechanics of the land tax, what farmers had to do and how they would have to pay their taxes, as well as the legal arguments for or against it. In this vein, the paper serves to inform its readers. For the paper, land reform is a complex issue as is reflected in how the topic is variedly named: the land question, the land issue, land crisis and land compromise – not merely *land reform*. The issue is also referred to as a *tameletjie*, which is a candy or dessert confection and is very sticky – hence land reform is a sticky situation.

81. "Vroue op kommunale grond het ook regte," *Die Republikein*, April 15, 2008.
82. "Grond maak Namibiërs arm," *Die Republikein*, September 8, 2011.

Summary of Each Paper's Stance on Main Themes			
	The Namibian	*New Era*	*Die Republikein*
Land Reform	Negative view of progress, yet supports it	Positive view, strongly supportive	Positive view of progress, limited criticism
Zimbabwe / Fast Track	Negative	Positive	Negative
Expropriation	Positive, if owners are paid	Positive, as long as there is no violence	Negative
Whites	Neutral	Negative	Positive
The Campbell Case	Neutral	Neutral (sparse reporting)	Neutral (great amount of reporting)

Figure 6. Summary of Each Paper's Stance on Main Themes.

Comparison of the portrayal of land reform between *The Namibian*, *New Era* and *Die Republikein*

As can be seen from each paper's portrayal of various issues, there is a variance in how the issues are portrayed. Most significantly, in relation to the overarching issue of land reform, *The Namibian* views the issue as an abject failure, despite acknowledging that land reform is essential to overcoming the injustices of the past. Expropriation is acknowledged as being necessary for land reform to succeed, as long as it does not lead to Zimbabwe-like chaos. *The Namibian* expresses its displeasure with land reform by consistently discussing the issues and problems that plague the process, paying particular attention to many failures of the bureaucracy. The paper, therefore, attributes the failures of land reform to the inefficiencies of the government, and in some cases to corruption.

New Era, on the other hand, was extremely supportive, even exuberant with the renewed focus that land reform received following the announcement that Namibia would begin expropriating farms. Through time, however, this exuberance became more and more muted, and the paper began reporting on the challenges and failures of land reform to significantly alter

land ownership or address poverty. Although at times reporting on the troubles of the government, for *New Era* the failure is by and large attributed to whites and their unwillingness to participate in land reform. The paper does consistently report the cost and progress of land reform by prominently featuring an aspect of that progress in the headlines of articles such as "Namibia: Land Ministry Resettled Almost 5000,"[83] "Resettlement Gets N$102,"[84] or "Namibia: Government Purchases More Resettlement Farms."[85] There is an increase in articles that are generally positive about land reform in 2013, as compared to previous years; however the reason for this is unclear. It is possible that the increase in positive reporting on land reform by the state-run *New Era* is a deliberate decision to cast Swapo in a positive light ahead of the 2014 national elections.

Die Republikein is much more circumspect in how they portray land reform. The paper never challenges land reform outright, perhaps recognizing that such a challenge is illegitimate, considering the legacies of colonialism and apartheid. The paper also does not directly attack the government's handling of land reform – inefficient land reform is, after all, advantageous to white farmers. Any criticism of land reform is usually based on a review of reports, such as a government report in 2013 that discussed the slow speed, the high cost and the small number of people resettled in the previous year.[86] The article summarized a Ministry of Lands report, and the paper can therefore not be accused of criticizing the government or land reform, since it was merely rehashing a report, with no analysis. Another way the paper criticizes land reform is by pointing out either that land reform is not reducing poverty or that it is hurting agricultural productivity. In fact, land reform is generally portrayed as having seen limited successes,

83. Irene !Hoaës, "Namibia: Government Purchases More Resettlement Farms," *New Era*, February 5, 2013.
84. Eveline De Klerk, "Namibia: Millions of Hectares to Resettle Landless," *New Era*, October 14, 2013.
85. "Namibia: Resettlement Gets N$102 Million," *New Era*, March 7, 2013.
86. "Grondhervorming struikel," *Die Republikein*, September 13, 2013.

according to *Die Republikein.* The paper also continually highlights the need for land reform, and expropriation in particular, to be conducted consistent with the Namibian constitution and the rule of law.

A Partly Fulfilled Role

Researchers and journalists alike agree that the media serves an important role in democracies. They must not only provide information to their audience but also analyze the information and put it in perspective. Furthermore, they must serve as a forum for debate, where ideas are freely offered and exchanged. The media is instrumental in providing voice to the voiceless and bringing neglected issues to the forefront. Through their coverage of issues, the media, over time, influences and sets the agenda for the public and the government. The papers in Namibia struggled to fulfill their roles.

Many aspects of land reform are mentioned in the reporting that the three papers have done over the eleven-year period under consideration. However, the aspects are merely *mentioned* and rarely discussed or analyzed. All three papers lack critical analysis of the issues relating to land reform. Even when the papers report on a land reform symposium, for example, they simply report nearly verbatim what was discussed, without challenging or questioning the findings or statements. This may because most journalists do not understand enough about land reform, the debate and issues surrounding it, and the challenges of executing land reform successfully, in order to provide the reader with incisive analysis of the issue. Therefore, the articles fail to go below the surface, and even more troubling, fail to put the issue into context for the reader. For example, in the discussion of the proposed Land Bill, which would combine the previous two land reform bills into one, none of the papers attempted to explain what that would

mean for land reform, why the government was trying to combine the two, nor what it meant when the bill failed to pass. Journalists have a responsibility to place the issues they are reporting on into context to provide the reader with the big picture, to truly understand not just what was happening but also why it was happing and what it means for the future.

The failure to go below the surface also means that the land reform debate within the papers was extremely limited. With very few exceptions, no alternatives are discussed. Land reform is occurring throughout Africa and the world, yet journalists never draw upon other countries' experiences (with the exception of Zimbabwe) to attempt to offer alternatives to Namibia's land reform. This is particularly true of the matter of farm workers as well as the issue of restitution of ancestral lands to the dispossessed. South Africa, for example, allows restitution and has had some successes with it. An in depth report could have considered the effect restitution would have in Namibia and thereby show alternatives to the government, which may decide to attempt restitution. Similarly, South Africa has had more successes in ensuring farm workers do in fact benefit from land reform and are not excluded from the process. One of the methods they employ in South Africa to help the farm workers is by having the white farmer continue to farm a portion of his farm, while the farm workers farm other portions, under the tutelage of the white farmer. Thus, the farm worker benefits, and the white farmer does not completely lose his farm where his family has likely lived for generations. A journalist attempting to provide more in depth discussion of alternatives, methods or options in the land reform process could have considered this option as well. Furthermore, there are no comprehensive discussions of the benefits, disadvantages, costs or details of land reform. Land reform is accepted as necessary *a priori*, yet no journalist attempts to explain the details of neither the process nor what "success" would look like for Namibian land reform. Similarly, no journalists attempt to investigate the

issues surrounding land reform. The issue of farm workers being "dumped" is often brought up, yet why are farmers firing their workers? An investigation and understanding of this may provide the government or others with information to overcome this issue. Similarly, the extreme slowness of land reform is mentioned, and usually blamed on the willing buyer, willing seller framework or the intransigence of whites. Again, it would be helpful to investigate why this framework is slow, why white farmers do not want to sell their lands, and, finally, what other alternatives there are.

Since there are few articles that provide context and the big picture, and even fewer that provide an in depth discussion of land reform and the issues surrounding it, one is left with an extremely limited and partial view of land reform. This is particularly true if one only reads a single paper, as may be the case. This is certainly true for the government, which banned the purchase of *The Namibian* by government offices from 2001 to 2011, and the fact that government officials generally do not speak or read Afrikaans. They are therefore left with only one news source, the government-funded *New Era*. A reader's outlook of land reform is strongly shaped by, and dependent on which paper is read, since each paper offers a unique and mostly one-sided portrayal of land reform and the issues surrounding it. *Die Republikein* focuses almost entirely on the effects that land reform has on white farmers and hardly ever even mentions beneficiaries. There are occasions, however, that each paper attempts to show that it is not entirely one-sided, usually through the use of editorials or opinion pieces. These pieces are few and far between, and have not convinced me that the papers are truly inclusive of the opinions expressed within those articles. *New Era'*s opinion pieces are usually more radical than government or Swapo policy on issues, and more conservative[87] opinion pieces are not present.

87. By "conservative" I mean concerned with maintaining the status quo, or by making only slow and incremental changes.

The Namibian also has opinion pieces that are much more radical[88] than the paper generally is, however there are some more conservative opinion pieces as well. *Die Republikein* also attempts, from time to time, to show that it is willing to publish contrary opinions, some strongly critical of white farmers; however, there are very few articles of this nature.

The papers are over reliant on elites for sources for their articles. *New Era* relies almost exclusively on members of the government for their information, while also using union leaders as sources. *The Namibian* is less reliant on government sources, perhaps because of the antagonistic nature of its relationship with the government. The paper also uses union leaders, NGO spokespeople (in particular the Legal Assistance Centre) and opposition leaders for their sources. *Die Republikein* initially seldom used government officials as sources, yet this increased over time. They remain less reliant on the government as sources of information than the other papers, however. Similar to the other papers, it relies on leaders of NGOs, unions and in some cases academics for their sources. In and of itself, using government or elite sources for information is not problematic. It is, however, a problem when the journalists accept the statements as fact, without questioning their validity. Furthermore, the papers could broaden the scope of an article and increase the creditability of a story by using multiple sources.

This failure to expand the range of the article extends to a failure in providing voice to the usually voiceless. While the voiceless varies based on time and place, generally the most invisible are the San, women and farm workers. The San, historically semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers, were resettled on communal land and told to become farmers. Little consideration was given to the fact that farming, settling down in one place, and even managing communal land was foreign to their way of life. A simple interview with a San could have highlighted their

88. "Radical" in my usage is the opposite of "conservative." An article I characterize as radical calls for immediate expropriation of all white-owned farms with no compensation, for example, or may advocate for socializing all land.

plight, perhaps humanized their problem, garnered support amongst the general public and thereby perhaps found another solution. Women have few rights under the patriarchal communal land systems, sometimes even lacking the right to inherit the land if their husband dies. Only one woman's voice is ever heard in the ten years worth of articles considered, and she was a government official who was receiving an award for being a successful farmer – she was not exactly representative of women at large. Farm workers are generally portrayed as being victims – either at the hands of their white employers or because they do not benefit from land reform. However, no farm worker's voice is ever heard. It is entirely possible that farm workers have an alternative and valuable view or opinion – something that could affect how the population views them. Providing voice to the usually voiceless is valuable. First, it serves to humanize the problem. Instead of just viewing these groups of people abstractly, an interview shows the reader a name, a person, with real-life problems. Secondly, the voiceless can serve to counter the narrative of the elites, even when those elites claim to represent them. Finally, giving voice to the voiceless is powerful because it can provide new insights and new knowledge. Yet, with only one exception, the papers failed to provide voice to the voiceless.

The papers fairly consistently report on land reform, keeping the issue alive and on the agenda. However, the papers fail to pay attention to neglected issues such as the plight of women, issues regarding communal land reform, and resettled beneficiaries. This is directly related to the over-reliance on elites for information as well as the failure to be present the viewpoints of people usually disregarded by the government. A lack of focus on the neglected issues virtually ensures that neither the public nor the government is responding to the issue, thereby ensuring that nothing will be done to overcome the problem. An additional, and very important, neglected issue that the papers fail to address in detail is the fact that land reform in

Namibia has yet to alleviate poverty. This issue is related to the fact that journalists do not conduct in depth investigations or analysis of land reform. Again, an understanding of why land reform is not alleviating poverty, perhaps by interviewing beneficiaries who are struggling, could provide insight into the complications, which could in turn allow the government to work towards overcoming these challenges. In contrast, however, the papers continually portray land reform usually as a failure; they therefore overlook the examples of when land reform has been successful. These stories can provide valuable information and may lead to changing the outlook of the public, and perhaps influence government policy.

Much of the papers' reporting is event-driven and not based on long-term or in depth reporting. Symposiums or workshops conducted by NGOs, union meetings, press conferences and other similar events draw reporters. This reinforces and amplifies the reliance on elites for information, while simultaneously gives prominence to only those issues that the elites wish to focus on. It is important to note, however, that NGOs generally are concerned with some of the neglected issues, such as women's' rights, and that these issues are therefore reported on when the NGOs have a workshop, for instance. However, the reporting still focuses on only what the NGO or elites have to say, and the papers do not interview average women to gain their perspective on issues.

Both *The Namibian* and *New Era* fairly consistently report on corruption in the land reform process. *The Namibian* tends to report in general terms about corruption or alleged corruption and the lack of transparency in the land reform process. *New Era* also decries the lack of transparency, yet additionally discusses specific cases of corruption – such as who is being investigated for what, who is going to court and discussing the details of the cases. However, *New Era* discusses government efforts to fight corruption as well, something *The Namibian* does

not appear to do. It is important to note that there has been a steady decline in *New Era's* reporting on corruption in the land reform process, with no articles in 2013 discussing corruption and land reform. This is in accordance with the increase in positive coverage of land reform in 2013 by the paper. It either indicates that there has been a genuine improvement in land reform, and the paper is merely reporting on that, or it could indicate a form of censorship. *Die Republikein* seldom mentions corruption, and when the paper does it is by quoting others who are discussing corruption. The papers, therefore, do serve their function as watchdogs of the government yet they do so inconsistently throughout the time period under consideration.

In conclusion, one can see that the papers in Namibia, in their coverage of land reform and related issues, have struggled to perform adequately. Journalists fail to provide the big picture for their audience, are reactive, and fail to conduct in depth investigations. The papers are generally one-sided and are not a discursive realm or forum for civic engagement where one can present and debate alternatives. Nor do the papers often provide the readers with access to alternative views. This function as a platform for debate of the media is extremely important in Namibia, where civil society generally remains weak or apathetic, and there is limited opposition to the ruling party. Furthermore, while the papers are able to fulfill their agenda-setting role with regards to land reform overall, they fail to pay attention to neglected issues and do not give voice to the habitually voiceless. Finally, the papers do successfully serve as a watchdog by reporting on corruption of the government, yet they do so inconsistently.

The inability of the media to fulfill its roles in Namibia can have potentially far-ranging impacts. Since the media is unable, or unwilling, to examine land reform in depth, or to provide greater context for readers, Namibians are left with only a partial picture of what is actually occurring with land reform in Namibia. Worse, this partial picture is skewed and depends on

which newspaper one reads. Furthermore, if people are not fully informed about the issue, they cannot learn the lessons, good and bad, from their neighbors' or their own land reform programs. These lessons learned could be used to pressure the government to make substantial changes in land reform legislation to ensure that the best course of action is being taken. Instead, alternatives and options are ignored by the papers, the public and the government – meaning that land reform may never be successfully completed in Namibia. Social and political conditions make it unlikely that a Zimbabwe-style land redistribution will occur in Namibia; however, the longer the issue remains unsolved, the more likely it becomes that general dissatisfaction could lead to violence, particularly against the white farm owners.

CONCLUSION

Twenty-four years after independence, Namibia's land reform program has failed to make significant progress in overcoming the extremely skewed ownership of land. Land was one of the key reasons that Namibians fought for independence, and their dreams remain unfulfilled. In neighboring Zimbabwe, unfulfilled demand for land contributed to the outbreak of violence and the economic catastrophe that followed. Namibians fear that what occurred in Zimbabwe could occur in their country as well, if progress is not made in the land reform process.

In democracies, the media, in addition to simply providing information, fulfills and important role in bringing pressure to bear upon the government to act on neglected issues. By paying attention to certain issues, the media has the ability to focus the public and the government's attention on the same issues, effectively placing them on the agenda for action. The media is uniquely suited to bringing attention to those whose voices are generally not heard in society. Furthermore, they are an important space for dialogue and debate – a place where society has access to other points of view. The media does much more than simply inform the populace; it has the ability to analyze issues in depth, place them in context and allow citizens to understand the implications of the issues.

This project analyzed the three major daily newspapers of Namibia: *The Namibian, New Era and Die Republikein* to determine how they portrayed land reform in Namibia because their portrayal shapes the outlook of society and has an impact on the successes, or failures, of land reform. I find that although the newspapers were less overtly partisan than I had suspected, they struggled to fulfill their roles in a democracy. While the papers regularly reported on land reform, the articles seldom analyzed or gave context to the issues. The reporting was reactive

and event driven and were not investigative in nature. The articles generally also failed to serve as a forum for debate, most were one-sided articles, and rarely offered differing viewpoints. Contributing to this one-sidedness was the newspapers' overreliance on elites, particularly government officials for sources of information, particularly since the information provided was accepted as truth and rarely challenged. This further served to ensure that neglected issues, and neglected voices were not brought to the forefront and placed on the public agenda. Only in their watchdog role do the papers fairly consistently succeed. Corruption, failure, waste and incompetence is reported in all papers, although this fluctuates through time.

Namibia's land reform program has stalled, and the skewed ownership of land, which resulted from the successive colonization by Germany and South Africa, has barely been altered. Only a few thousands of black Namibians have benefited from land reform, while the government claims that there are over 240,000 Namibians in need of land. Those who have been resettled, or purchased farms through the AALS program, continue to struggle. Furthermore, it is not clear that land reform in Namibia has reduced poverty. Land reform remains an important socio-economic issue in Namibia, and the media could do so much more to ensure that equality and social justice via land reform is ensured for the majority of Namibians. They could begin by looking at the land reform program in great depth, consider alternatives, determine why the program is failing and offer suggestions to overcoming the challenges. The media could consistently interview those in need of land, those who have received land, women and other neglected groups who may be able to provide insight and knowledge that the government elites and the public at large do not know. The media could begin there, and perhaps the heretofore-unfulfilled dream of land could be fulfilled for disadvantaged Namibians.

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APPENDIX 1 - RESEARCH PROTOCOL

Topic/Theme:							
Definition:							
Number	**Filename**	**Date**	**Author**	**Headline**	**Oppositions, value judgements, assessments**	**Actors, Source**	**In Depth Discussion?**
The Namibian							
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New Era							
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