ENSURING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN (OVC) THROUGH SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE HOSTEL BOARDING FACILITIES

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List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community-based organization
FHI	Family Health International
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
NEPRU	Namibia Economic Policy Research Unit
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
SIAPAC	Social Impact Assessment and Policy Analysis Corporation
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Global and national educational contexts for the study

It is important to locate this report in the global and national educational contexts. At the global level, the world witnessed, in 1990, the advent of the **Educational for All** movement. *The World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs* was the first product of this movement (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, 1990).

Made up of ten articles, this declaration captured the understanding, planning and strategies for meeting basic learning needs of all learners in the world. Two of the articles are of particular relevance to the present work. Article 2 mandated all countries to provide access to basic education to *all* children, youth and adults. To ensure that this was done in an equitable manner, the article stipulated that obstacles and barriers should be removed out of the way of *all* children (especially the marginalized children, vulnerable children and children with special needs) wishing to access education. At that time it was not clearly understood how the impact of HIV/AIDS would not only create children in need of care and protection but also place barriers in the way of their access to education. As a result of this, no specific reference in the declaration was made to orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS.

Article 6 of the declaration focused on enhancing learning environments. Noting that learning did not occur in isolation, this article urged societies to ensure that all learners received the nutrition, health care, and general physical and emotional support they needed in order to participate actively in and benefit from their education. Through this, the declaration envisioned the creation of learning environments that would be experienced by *all* learners to be safe, vibrant and warm (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, 1990, pp. 46- 47). Information on how educational systems have put this vision into practice is lacking. When related to the education of orphans and vulnerable children, a lack of attention to the creation of safe and supportive learning environments becomes a hindrance to these children's access to quality education.

Consistent with the *Educational for All* principles, Namibia founded its educational reforms on educational goals of access, quality, equity and democracy (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993, pp. 32-44). In addition to expanding the educational system in order to effect access to it by more learners, the country put in place mechanisms for removing barriers that prevented some children from attending school. For example, learners who were unable to pay school development fund and school hostel fees were exempted from doing so (Ibid, p.33; pp.148-149). To systematize the process of removing barriers that blocked the way to education for a number of learners, an Intersectoral Task Force on Educationally Marginalized Children was established. This task force facilitated the development of policy options for educationally marginalized

children (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2000). Although briefly covered in the policy options, the issue of how orphans and vulnerable children could be provided with safe and supportive learning environments in schools was not dealt with. It is important to note that the development of such environments should be informed by the knowledge of who these children are and what makes them vulnerable.

Generally, an orphan is a child under the age of 18 years whose primary caregiver and/or mother, father or both parents have died. Such a child is usually in need of care and protection. A vulnerable child (who might or might not be an orphan) is a child under the age of 18 years who can easily be harmed and is in need of care and protection (Mallmann, 2002). The manner in which Namibia has contextualized this definition is provided in section 1.4 of this report.

1.2 The general vulnerability of orphans and other children

To understand why orphans are vulnerable it is important, for the purposes of this report, to take note of the following information:

❖ A number of orphans are denied access to education when guardians and other extended family members cannot afford to pay school development fund fees and hostel fees, buy uniforms, buy books and other school supplies. This situation is exacerbated when orphans fail to attend school regularly because they are needed at home to perform domestic chores such as those of fetching water and collecting firewood, obtaining and preparing food, looking after younger siblings and in some cases nursing the remaining sick parents. In the rural areas, orphans may be forced by circumstances beyond their control to engage in life sustaining activities such as those of livestock keeping and subsistence farming. These burdens of responsibilities at times force the orphans to absent themselves from school for prolonged periods of time and eventually they drop out of school. Because there is stigma attached to HIV/AIDS, persons who suffer or die from it may be shunned by society. Orphans left behind by such persons, in not uncommon cases, experience shame, fear and rejection perpetrated by their peers, teachers and the general public. Afraid to be shunned by others, some orphans become reluctant to go to school (UNAIDS and UNICEF, 1999; Black, 2000; Grainger, Webb and Elliot, 2001; World Bank, 2002).

❖ Because of depleted household resources, orphans usually face the risk of being malnourished, stunted and unable to receive the health care they need (UNAIDS and UNICEF, 1999).

❖ In the context of HIV/AIDS, some orphans experience and live through long periods of their parents' pain and illness. Due to this, they suffer from depression, anxiety and hopelessness as they grieve before their parents' death. After the death of their parents, some orphans are stressed even further when everything that offered them comfort, security and hope for the future is taken away from them. For instance, in addition to losing their parents' love, affection, guidance

and emotional support, they may lose the family home, property and regular income. As a consequence of this, the orphans become emotionally vulnerable and financially desperate, a state that places female orphans in a situation where they are more likely to be sexually abused, forced into prostitution as a means of survival and put at risk of HIV infection (UNAIDS and UNICEF, 1999; Black, 2001; Grainger, Webb and Elliot, 2001). All this may result in a situation where orphans display low self-esteem, disturbed social behaviour, low levels of life skills and a general lack of ability to cope with life challenges in a resilient manner (USAID and Family Health International, 2001).

❖ There is evidence indicating that some orphans are mistreated, exploited and abused by their guardians. In addition, some guardians may misappropriate and misuse the inheritance meant for orphans under their care. This state of affairs increases the orphans' vulnerability, despair and hopelessness (Black, 2001; Grainger, Webb and Elliot, 2001; Subbarao, Mattimore and Plangemann, 2001; Deininger, Garcia and Subbarao, 2001; Ainsworth, 1992).

1.3 A synopsis of intervention strategies to mitigate the impact of orphan-hood and child vulnerability in educational settings

To mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and the impact of child vulnerability, the international community has recently isolated a number of intervention strategies. In the educational sector, for instance, the following approaches have been proposed for implementation:

❖ To allow the most needy children access to education, schools could be provided with material and financial incentives. This would mean, for example, increasing the operation budgets of schools, which enroll orphans and vulnerable children (USAID and Family Health International, 2001). In addition, it has been proposed that to access education, the children should be provided with educational, health and nutritional subsidies that would cover the cost of school fees, uniforms, books, medical expenses, food and other school supplies. This would not only allow children to attend school but it would also enable them to acquire marketable skills, improve their ability to provide for their own needs in future and be better integrated in the local community (Subbarao, Mattimore and Plangemann, 2001; Hunter and Williamson, 2000; World Bank, 2002). The extent to which all this has been attempted in Namibia will be reported in the results section of this report.

❖ It has been recognized that teachers and students in school should be educated about how HIV/AIDS affects children and about the support that such children need from others. Whether this has been done in Namibia will be discussed in later sections of this report.

❖ Because the impact of child vulnerability is multifaceted, it has been advised that educational interventions should be integrated with those that pertain to psychosocial support, the meeting of material needs, policy and law. This is that there should be policies ensuring that existing residential care of vulnerable children meets their developmental, psychosocial and material needs. Moreover, such policies should protect the children from abuse-including sexual abuse or exploitation, neglect and from harmful child labour practices. Enforceable legal legislations to protect these children should prohibit discrimination and stigmatization of access to education, basic health services and ensure the protection of their inheritance rights (USAID and Family Health International, 2001, pp.3-4). The extent to which the current policies and legal legislations in Namibia protect vulnerable children in school hostel residential settings was one of the areas investigated in the present study. Some data on this will be reported and discussed in this report.

❖ In terms of psychosocial support, the intervention involves empowering teachers with skills that would enable them to recognize and respond supportively to vulnerable children who may become stressed, withdrawn and display disruptive behaviour, show declining academic performance and increased school absenteeism. Finding out whether Namibian school personnel who managed hostels had competencies to support the vulnerable children in this way was another area of focus for the present study.

1.4 Mitigating the impact of vulnerability on the education of orphans and other vulnerable children in Namibia

Could this vulnerability when experienced by orphans in Namibia be mitigated in school by the provision of safe, supportive and caring-oriented school hostel living conditions? Do such conditions exist in the hostels? Although responses to these and other questions are the basis of this report, it is important to give a general background on how Namibia, with the support of its development partners and NGOs, has been confronting the issue of orphans and vulnerable children in the recent past.

According to a consensus decision that was reached at the second National Conference on Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) that took place on 25-27 June 2002, it is understood that "*an OVC in Namibia is a child under the age of 18 whose mother, father or both parents or primary caregiver has died, and/or is in need of care and protection*" (GRN, UNICEF, FHI, and USAID, 2002, p.7; Conference draft report). The explanatory notes indicated that:
   ❖ the definition encompassed children who were infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and others;
   ❖ access to OVC-related services might be extended to the age of 21 for children who were still attending secondary school;
   ❖ eligibility for social and economic assistance required a separate assessment;

❖ the draft child care and protection act defined a child in need of care as "an abandoned child, a neglected child, a child without adequate supervision or a child whose needs are not met."

Before this conference, efforts had been undertaken to mitigate the impact of vulnerability on OVC. To document the efforts, a comprehensive directory of resources for Namibian vulnerable children was prepared in 1998 and reviewed in 2000 (Steinitz, 1998; Kandetu, 2000). The resources annotated in the directory are provided by government ministries and NGOs. Under the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, the directory documents procedures on exemption of paying school and hostel fees for children in need of care, and for needy children in general.

The ministerial regulation on which these procedures are based states that "*needy children, including but not limited to children in need of care, may receive a discount or be exempted from paying school and hostel fees. Hostels may function as a viable 'alternative placement' for some youngsters, particularly orphan teenagers and pre-adolescents" (Kandetu, 2000,* p.9).

It is noted in the directory that procedures for exemption from paying hostel fees are rather complicated. In addition to being subject to the availability of space in the hostels, applicants may be asked to produce documented proof to show that they are unable to pay. This may include certified copies of the most recent salary slips of the parent or guardian, certified copies of the most recent tax assessment and/or sworn statements of income. To exacerbate matters further, it is stated in the directory that there are no pre-determined eligibility criteria for the discount or elimination of school and hostel fees. Because the application of procedures such as these would limit OVC's access to hostels, a revision in exemption policy is required.

Another milestone to recognize is that the first National Conference on Orphans and other vulnerable children took place in Namibia on 8-10 May 2001. Organized by the Ministry of Health and Social Services and funded by GRN, UNICEF, FHI and USAID, the conference deliberated on how the local community could support OVC, the identification of key stakeholders in the area of OVC and their roles, ensuring that the rights of OVC were protected, using existing HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities to support and promote OVC and on ensuring long-term and effective social safety nets for OVC (GRN, UNICEF, FHI, and USAID, 2001). It was reported at the conference that there were three kinds of services for OVC in the educational sector. These included, as indicated earlier, exemption from paying school development funds and hostel fees, the practice of the school feeding programme at some schools and the operation of the school counseling support groups. Notwithstanding these services it was recognized that teachers and education officers needed specialized training to counsel children affected by HIV/AIDS as counseling support groups did not suffice and that easy mechanisms for school fund exemptions were needed (Tjikuua, 2001). At the same conference, Cownie (2001) reported that contrary to popular belief, Namibian parents and guardians went to great lengths to keep OVC in school. He noted that despite this, some households needed

support to meet the cost of educating OVC and keeping them in school. In addition to this, he noted that OVC needed adjustment counseling at the emotional level.

In 1999, with the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Social Services commissioned SIAPAC to undertake a situation analysis of orphan children in Namibia. Published in April, 2002, the study reported that with respect to the educational sector, orphans in Namibia were being kept in school by their guardians with difficulty. In mitigating the difficulties, guardians and parents asked that they be supported not only in meeting the cost of keeping orphans in school but also in ensuring that all other children under their care attended school (GRN, UNICEF, SIAPAC, 2002, p.ES6; pp. 59-61). This study provided little information on the situation of orphans in school hostels. The only information that some participants from the Erongo region gave was that because they were unable to pay hostel fees, they covered long distances to get to school from their homes. As a result they were absent from school for many days.

Another important milestone in the process of mitigating the impact of orphan-hood in the educational sector was reached with the conduct of the impact of HIV/AIDS on education in Namibia study (Kinghorn, et al., 2002). In addition to identifying economic, home environment, Psychological trauma and greater HIV risk factors that would present obstacles to good educational outcomes of orphans, the study provided information on how to overcome the obstacles. One important idea in this process was the development and implementation of *circles of support for orphans* at each school. With the orphan in the center, it was proposed that class teachers, guidance and counseling teachers, social workers, health workers, the community in the form of school boards, parents, the church and CBOs, NGOs, the Police and the legal assistance organizations, peers and hostel superintendents would form a circle of support. Amongst other things, the operation of this system would enhance capacity within schools to coordinate circles of support and provide specific support in the form of:
- ❖ strengthening the number and skills of guidance and counseling teachers to address vulnerable children issues;
- ❖ build class teacher sensitization, skills and confidence to recognize and manage vulnerable children.

The other aspect to exemplify the operation of the circles of support for orphans idea is the enhancement of flexibility and responsiveness of school organizations and systems to vulnerable children's needs. Related to the purpose of the current study, this included:
- ❖ reviewing hostel and accommodation policy to ensure support for the most vulnerable;
- ❖ considering community boarding alternatives for learners in areas where there were limited or no facilities. The justification of this was that community-based orphan care had been deemed the best and most cost effective way of caring for orphans and other children in need of accommodation (Kinghorn, et al., 2002, pp.28-29). One of the objectives of this study was to find out the situation of community-based boarding facilities in the research sites visited.

At the second National Conference on Orphans and other Vulnerable Children, 25-27 June 2002, a summary of the Kinghorn, et at. (2002) study's findings were presented by one of the Chief Education Officers of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. Some of the educational impacts on Namibian orphans that the officer summarized included those of dropout and declining/delayed enrolment, erratic school attendance, declining academic performance, ill-discipline and school attendance disruption due to transfers. Some of the recommendations presented at the conference focused on issues pointed out in the preceding two paragraphs (GRN, UNICEF, FHI, USAID, 2002)

During the preparation of this report, the Cabinet of the Government of the Republic of Namibia took important concrete steps to mitigate various impacts on OVC. Noting that the number of orphans in the country stood at 82 671, the Cabinet decided to establish a high level national permanent task force on OVC and an OVC fund to be sustained by a levy every Namibian tax payer would be required to pay. Focusing on the educational sector, the Cabinet mandated the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare to work out mechanisms of accommodating children in need of care in school hostels and to ensure that these children remained in school (Maletsky, December 17, 2002). It is hoped that some findings of this report will be used when working out the mechanisms.

To ensure legal protection of OVC, the draft National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the Educational Sector has devoted 7 articles on the children. The gist of the articles obligate heads of educational institutions to be informed about permissible exemptions in respect of payment of school and hostel fees at government educational institutions, to note that no learner should be excluded from attending school on account of their inability to pay these and other fees, to facilitate the access of OVC to support and counseling services and where necessary to school feeding schemes, to ensure effective inter-school referral systems to avoid disruption, to ensure that allocation of accommodation in hostels should favour the most vulnerable learners, to facilitate community-boarding alternatives for learners in areas where there are limited or no hostel facilities and to work in consultation with the HIV/AIDS advisory committee to develop networks of circles of support for orphans and vulnerable children at each educational institution (AIDS Law Unit, Legal Assistance Centre, October 2002, pp. 12-13).

Although presented and discussed at the second national conference on orphans and other vulnerable children, an OVC policy for Namibia is still under consideration. The summary report on the conference has very limited information on OVC's access to education in the draft policy.

The vulnerability of marginalized children in Namibia can be exemplified by the existential situation of the San, the Ovahimba and other neglected children.

According to le Roux (1999), San children from the Southern African region are vulnerable due to a number of factors. The first of these is chronic poverty. Because of poverty, a number of San children are malnourished, susceptible to disease, exploited by

commercial/communal farmers as a source of cheap labour and dwell in shelter unfit for human habitation. Attended by poverty, their parents are unable to afford basic necessities such as those of food, clothes, soap and other items that are necessary for maintaining hygiene.

Although it can be argued that a large number of non-San children live under these conditions all over the Southern African region, the San children are further made vulnerable by stigmatization and discrimination. Being at the bottom of societies in the region and because of being different from others in culture, tradition, appearance and stature, the San and their children are subjected to verbal, emotional, physical and sexual harassment and abuse (le Roux, 1999, pp. 82-92). Because of this, the children lead vulnerable and traumatized lives.

Talavera (2002, p.46; p.71) has provided research evidence to the effect that Ovahimba and Ovaherero girls can be made vulnerable to sexual abuse. This is the case because it is understood by tradition that their consent is unnecessary when boys or men wish to have sex with them.

Kandirikiririra (1999, pp. 8-9) has provided a detailed narrative of the vulnerability of children who are left in one rural area of Namibia in the custody of under-resourced grandparents and other guardians. According to him, such children are denied adequate nutrition, clothing, bedding and medical care. When they are old enough, they herd livestock in the field for long periods of time.

For the purposes of this report, the information provided in the preceding paragraphs conceptualizes what is meant by vulnerable children who are in need of care and protection. One of the main questions of the research on which this report is based was whether government, private and community school hostels could facilitate such children's access to education and provide them with living environments in which they would experience the physical, health and psychosocial support, safety, care and protection that they need. If the hostels would not be able to do this in their current state, what should be taken into account when attempting to bring the environmental transformation about? Are there good practices that could be adapted? How should the adaptation benefit from a situation analysis of conditions and life in school hostels in Namibia? This report will address these questions.

1.5 Background on school hostel provision in Namibia

School hostels exist in Namibia for a number of reasons. Firstly, because the Namibian population is sparsely distributed across long distances, it is not possible to provide schools that are in the walking distance of *all* learners. Consequently, a number of learners can only attend school if they are accommodated in school hostels. Secondly, learners with special needs (e.g. those with visual and physical impairment) would have difficulty attending schools that are located several kilometers away from their places of residence. Thirdly, it was recognized after independence that marginalized children (e.g. children from the San and Ovahimba communities, children of farm workers, street

children, neglected and abused children and children from remote areas) would be facilitated to attend school if they were accommodated in school/community hostels (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2000). Fourthly, it has been noted that rather unsafe, unhygienic and sometimes abusive informal accommodation arrangements may be used by learners desperately in need of education. In extreme circumstances, for instance, some learners have been observed either sleeping in the open or accepting community informal accommodation without adequate nutrition and ablution facilities (GRN, 1999). Based on these reasons, government hostels, private hostels that are subsidized by the government, unsubsidized private hostels and community hostels are situated at more than 203 government schools (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2002). In fact, the current Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture's position on government hostels includes the following:

❖ Concerning Primary School hostels, the Ministry will provide schools as near as possible to the learners in order to avoid the building of new hostels.
❖ Because of long distances between centres where there are secondary schools, the Ministry accepts the fact that hostels should exist.
❖ In Government hostels the Government will provide all other services free of charge and the parents will be responsible for the payment of food (MBESC, undated memorandum).

Table 1 presents statistics on government hostels in the regions we visited. We were informed that the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture did not have similar overall regional statistics on community hostels. Table 5 gives statistics of community hostels we visited.

Table 1: Statistics on government hostels in the regions visited

REGION	NUMBER OF HOSTELS	TOTAL CAPACITY	TOTAL NO. OF PRIMARY SCHOOL BOARDERS	TOTAL NO. OF SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARDERS	TOTAL NO. OF BOARDERS
Katima Mulilo	7	1482	0	1436	1436
Ondangwa West (Omusati)	12	4756	256	4728	4984
Windhoek (Omaheke)	20	5665	3080	2024	5104
TOTAL	39	11903	3336	8188	11524

Source: 1st Trimester, 2002; Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture; Division of Inspectorate and Hostels Management.

To assess whether the current **official admission criteria of hostel learners** make any provision for OVC, we provide the following description from the Hostel Guide of 1991, pp.4.1-4.3:

Only school-going children in the following priority order may be accommodated in a government hostel, provided that there is place:

    a) Children of parents resident in Namibia.

    b) Parents who are residing outside of the feeder area of a school , shall be permitted to place their children in the hostel of the school concerned at the normal tariff rate, only if the application has definite merit. The merits of each case must be determined by the regional Director of Education.

    c) Should there be accommodation available in a government hostel, a school-going child may be accommodated in such a hostel despite the fact that the child's parents are resident within the municipal areas or town area in which such a school is located, or within 5 km of such a school. The above exception may be made with the permission of the Regional Director of Education on the grounds that one or more of the following conditions be met:

        1. Poverty of the parents or guardian.

        2. The child comes from a one-parent home and this necessitates the parent being out of the home full-time for reasons of work.

        3. Neglect of such a child by parents or guardian.

        4. Owing to any disability of the child which makes it difficult for the child to travel daily between home and the nearest state school.

        5. Owing to geographical or unsafe circumstances.

        6. The health of the child, substantiated by a medical certificate, necessitates the attendance by the child at a school other than the nearest government school to his home.

        7. The subject choice, or alternative education of the child, subject to directorate approval, or the psychological or medical treatment, necessitates attendance by the child at a school other than the nearest to home.

        8. The parents or guardian of the child, who, owing to leave or illness are temporarily absent from home.

        9. The Regional Director of Education considers that, in the interest of the child and owing to circumstances, it is justifiable to admit the child to a hostel.

    d) The Regional Director of Education determines the priority order for admission to hostels and is empowered to alter this should circumstances demand, e.g. where more deserving applications for hostel accommodation are received, after permission has been given to less-deserving applications.

As can be noticed, these government hostel admission criteria are vague on the admission of OVC and do not make any provision for these children. In addition, they do not provide specific guidelines on how schools should handle the admission of these children. In addition to noting that criteria 1, 5, 7, and 9 may be open to a variety of interpretations and abuse, the admission criteria in general place too much power in the hands of the Regional Director of Education. In our view to facilitate the processing of exemptions of OVC from hostel fees, such powers should be decentralized to the school level.

We presented some information on the **current exemption criteria in section 1.4** above. To clarify the **current procedures for admitting needy/destitute learners into government hostels** further, it should be noted that:

    i. The social worker/body/parent concerned is to enquire of the specific superintendent or of the hostel section as to whether there is place available.

    ii. An official application form (annexure NN), must be completed and submitted to the hostel section. The social worker could be of assistance concerning this matter. Forms are available from either the superintendent or the hostel section.

    iii. In the case of free admission:

        • Parents must apply for this in writing;

        • Accompanied by a report from the social worker, and on completion of the application must submit it to the Regional Director for swearing in and further handling.

    iv. A form containing the minimum basic requirements should provide parents and social workers with the necessary guidelines in this respect. Should necessity demand it, the social worker , in collaboration with the superintendent, may approach the following bodies for assistance:

        • Social welfare and pensions;

        • The Christian social council;

        • The church concerned;

        • The school concerned, should they have such a support fund at their disposal.

    v. An admission card (annexure D), containing information of relevance to the superintendent must be completed by the social worker (family doctor/chemist/weekend leave etc.).

    vi. Social workers can be of assistance in all cases of financial need and alleged uncared for cases among children (e.g. so as to place children in places of safety in cases where the whereabouts of parents cannot be established (Hostel Guide, 1991; pp.4.6-4.7).

vii.   The authorization form (i.e. form allowing a learner to stay in the hostel) for pupils of parents who have made application for a reduction or exemption (from hostel fees), will be received later in the year. This will occur after such an application for reduction has been handled by the Director, and after it has been submitted to the financial adviser of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Permanent Secretary and the Treasury for recommendations and final approval (Hostel Guide, 1991, p.4.6).

These exemption procedures have been reproduced in full to show how cumbersome their application can be and to show how out of date some of them are. It should be clear from reading these procedures that they do not give specific provision for orphans and that the support suggested would be out of reach of many of these children. For example, very few orphans have access to social workers, family doctors, chemists and the Christian social council (if it exists). The role of guardians is also not stipulated in the exemption procedures. Moreover, both the admission criteria and the exemption procedures are given on condition that space is available in the hostels. Unless they are prioritized, orphans' admission into the hostels would be greatly restricted by this condition.

Over the years, the issue of reducing the running costs of government hostels has received a lot of attention. The problem has been that of maintaining a balance between hostel provision on one hand and increasing access to and ensuring quality of education on the other. To discuss this and other related issues, a conference on the future of hostels was held on 17th August 1994. At the conference, it was reported that running government hostels cost N$ 108 000 000.00 in 1993. Of this amount, parents contributed only N$ 8 000 000.00 in hostel fees (i.e. 6.6% of the total cost). Whereas N$ 58 000 000.00 covered the cost of food for boarders, N$ 43 000 000.00 went to hostel personnel costs (Ankama, 1994). According to table 2, the cost of school hostel provision continued to be high during the period of 1995 to 1998. Although we did not have access to the latest figures on this, we expect the current cost of school hostel provision to still be high.

Table 2. Key MBESC school hostel provision cost indicators for 1995-1998 in N$

COST INDICATOR	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total expenditure on hostel accommodation	108 309 884	112 705 883	108 001 836	114 169 344
% of total expenditure of MBESC	10.7	9.1	8.1	7.9
Total expenditure on supplies and services	66 338 330	62 153 413	51 605 562	52 319 702
% of total expenditure on hostel accommodation	61.2	55.1	47.8	45.8
Total expenditure on staffing	41 971 554	50 552 470	56 396 275	61 849 642
% of total expenditure on hostel accommodation	38.8	44.9	52.2	54.2

Source: GRN (2000). **Presidential Commission on Education, Training and Culture**, Vol.2, Annex 1, p. 128.

The conference noted that although hostel provision was seen as a necessity, the cost involved was difficult to sustain. Among other things, it was resolved at the conference that the cost and responsibility of running government hostels should be shared amongst the government, parents and the community. For instance, it was agreed that the government would stop providing bedding to hostel boarders and that learners living within the 5km range would either be removed from hostels or be requested to pay higher hostel fees. In addition, it was recommended that the cost of food should be shared

between parents and the government. Cost saving measures (e.g. asking boarders to do their own laundry, clean the dormitories, etc.) were also to be instituted to reduce personnel costs.

The theme of cost recovery/cost sharing was reiterated in the 1995 NEPRU study on school hostels (Tlhase I., Mupotola, M. and Hiakaere, I, 1995). The study recommended that parents should pay the full cost of food for their children and the full cost of maintenance in the hostels. In addition, it was recommended that boarders should be required to pay a deposit for breakages and medical fees. Notwithstanding this stance, the authors of the report argued against the privatization of government hostels on the grounds that cost sharing should take into account regional disparities in resource endowment and that there should be a balance between cost sharing and issues of access and equity in educational provision. The needs of OVC were not addressed in the report.

Whereas the 1999 report of the presidential commission on education, training and culture and the Auditor General's report on hostels of 2000 continued with the cost recovery/cost sharing theme, the study on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the educational sector (Kinghorn, et al., 2002) presented a paradox. One aspect of this paradox was that although the cost of running hostels was high, the escalating numbers of HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children would increase the need for hostel accommodation. The other aspect of the paradox was that hostel accommodation presented living conditions that put boarders at risk of HIV infection. This was so because there was a lack of security and safety, sexual abuse and neglect in the hostels that resulted from limited control and supervision of boarders. This report provides some information on how resources could be mobilized in support of OVC in the hostels and on how the living environment in the hostels could be made safe, supportive and caring for these children and other boarders.

1.6 Some aspects of the current situation of orphans and vulnerable children in school hostels in Namibia

With respect to service provision in the school hostels, we need to base appropriate intervention strategies on how orphans and vulnerable children are enabled to access education, encouraged and supported to remain in school. Before we turn to research findings of the present study let us consider, in the following manner, available information on the extent to which school hostels in Namibia accord orphans and vulnerable children opportunities to access education and provide them with safe and supportive living conditions:

1.6.1How the current utilization of school hostels can influence orphans' and vulnerable children's access to education

The issues that follow relate to how the provision of school hostels whose existence has just been justified, would influence orphans' and other vulnerable children's access to education.

The first issue to consider is that of admission to government school hostels. Available information (e.g. Tlhase, et al., 1995) reveals that either official hostel admission criteria are ignored or adapted by schools to suit their local circumstances. The Auditor General's report on government school hostels of 2000 indicates that some of the criteria are that to be admitted into school hostels, learners should:

1. obtain certain marks in their previous examinations (e.g. passing with at least 22 points at grade 10);
2. fall within a certain age-range only;
3. be able to pay school hostel and school hostel development fees,
4. be catered for on the basis of the *first come first served* principle,
5. come from certain identified schools,
6. be of good behaviour.

As will be reported in the results section, we were informed that several of these criteria were used at a number of schools. It should be noted that a number of the above criteria can be used to block the admission of orphans and vulnerable children into the school hostels. For example, criterion 3 when used in combination with criterion 4 can effectively deny these children access to school hostels because a number of them would not be able to pay the fees, if at all, on time. This is exacerbated by the fact that because they are charged according to the category of the hostels these fees can be set out of the reach of orphans and vulnerable children at some schools. The fact that they can be exempted from paying the fees would not help some of these children wishing to be accommodated at schools where hostel superintendents and school principals, for fear of losing hostel fee money, may offer hostel space only to learners who can pay fees. Moreover, orphans and vulnerable children who apply for exemptions from paying hostel fees may be disadvantaged further by the fact that their applications take too long to be processed (Nel and Nangolo, 2002; Auditor General's Report, 2000).

Another practice that would negatively influence orphans' and vulnerable children's access to education is the misinterpretation and misuse of the regulation that to be accommodated in the school hostel, a learner should reside either outside the radius of 5 kilometres of a school or reside outside the boundaries of the municipality area in which a particular school is located. Some parents who can afford to pay hostel fees prefer not to place their children in schools near their homes but in hostels far away, thereby taking up room that could be used by vulnerable children. Although this is subject to the regional educational director's discretion and approval, the practice can be abused by some parents.

An additional issue is that of school hostel capacity. In the Omaheke and some areas of the Omusati and Ohangwena regions, most hostels have less capacity than the number of learners who may wish to use them (Auditor Genera's Report, 2000; Hailombe, 2002). When the ability to pay hostel fees, high academic achievement and the principle of *first come, first served*, are used as selection criteria for admitting learners into the hostels, most orphans and vulnerable children would fail to be accommodated in the hostels.

Because they are not regulated by the state, the problems of admitting orphans and vulnerable children into private and community hostels may be worse than those experienced in government hostels.

One of the purposes of the present study was to find out whether these hostel admission impediments affecting orphans and vulnerable children had been ameliorated. If they could not, what changes in policy would facilitate these children's admission into the hostels?

1.6.2 Hostel living environments

It has been recognized that school hostels form part of the learning environment. For learners to participate meaningfully in their education, they must feel safe, cared for and secure. Van der Merwe (1989) notes that because of this, boarders should experience hostel life as safe and secure. He further points out that personnel managing the hostels have the responsibility of creating warm, intimate and homely atmosphere at the premises. Recognizing this, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture strives "to ensure that every hostel child in Namibia has access to effective education through the (satisfaction of his or her) physical, psychological and spiritual needs" (Hostel Guide, 1991, p.1.1). The goal of this is the creation, in the hostel, of the 'home from home' environment for boarders. Echoing this, the Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training of 1999 advanced the view that "residence in a hostel could be an important and formative experience for learners in an environment which is caring and not radically different from the care of a family"(GRN, 1999, p. 143).

Notwithstanding all these noble intentions, several research reports have pointed out that because of dilapidated infrastructure, unhygienic sanitation facilities, limited control and supervision, abuse and neglect of learners, lack of physical security and overcrowding, boarders in government and community hostels were not safe and free from harm (Tlhase, I, et. al, 1995; GRN, 1999; Auditor General, 2000; Nel and Nangolo, 2002; Hailombe, 2002; Kinghorn, 2002). Although these conditions adversely impact the safety and security of *all* hostel boarders, one of the tasks of the present study was to find out whether orphans and vulnerable children were influenced in unique ways. For instance, would orphans and vulnerable children be more prone to physical, social-emotional and sexual abuse than other children? Due to their vulnerability, would these children be more at risk of HIV infection than other children in the hostels? Another point that could be made is that instead of providing relief from adversity at home, the physical and social conditions in the hostels would not offer a safe haven but prolong or worsen the already harsh life circumstances confronting orphans and vulnerable children. ***These children do not only need a 'home from home' but a 'better home from home'***. The issue then was that of finding out what it would take to transform the living environments in the hostels in such a way that they became safe and secure for orphans, vulnerable children and other boarders.

As was indicated earlier, orphans and vulnerable children may, for various reasons, be grieving, in mourning, depressed, anxious, withdrawn, and experience shame,

helplessness and hopelessness. This means that in additional to the provision of shelter and nutrition, these children would need psychosocial support and care from hostel staff and other school personnel. Several pieces of literature on school hostels have provided evidence that instead of support and care, a number of hostel boarders are exposed to physical, social-emotional and sexual abuse and harassment, neglect, stigmatization and discrimination (GRN, 1999, pp. 142-143; Kinghorn, et al., 2002; Kandirikiririra, 1998; le Roux, 1999). In response to this, part of the task for the present study was to find out if the school hostel situation with respect to lack of care and abuse had changed. We were also mandated to enquire into whether school and hostel staff had the training, capacity and disposition to provide supportive pastoral care to boarders in distress.

2.0 THE NEED AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To ameliorate some of the hostel problems that were presented earlier, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture has, over the years, taken corrective actions. Recent educational monitoring activities conducted by the Ministry's officials in Ohangwena, Oshikoto, and Omahake regions of the country have, however, revealed that the situation in several school hostels was still beset with operational, organizational, managerial, safety and relational problems (Nel and Nangolo, 2002; Hailombe, 2002). The living conditions in a number of the hostels were not as safe and supportive as they should be. To deal with the situation, recommendations had been made to run the hostels cost effectively and transform them into havens of safety and centers that support learning (Tlhase, I. et. al., 1995; Auditor General, 2000; GRN, 1999).

Notwithstanding these initiatives and recommendations, there is a policy vacuum on how to set up and support community-run hostels and on how to use hostels to enable orphans and vulnerable children access to educational services and stay in school.

The need for policy guidelines on community hostels particularly arose because of two issues. The first one pertained to the official position on these hostels. The position of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture is that:
   ❖ parents would be responsible for running and maintaining the community hostels;
   ❖ parents would supervise the learners in the hostels on a rotation basis;
   ❖ parents would provide food to be supplemented by the Ministry through the National School Feeding Programme;
   ❖ food would be prepared by parents on a rotation basis;
   ❖ the Ministry would support communities' efforts to provide accommodation for the children in the hostels;
   ❖ the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture would not be involved in the running of the hostels (Nel and Nangolo, 2002, p.1).

Notwithstanding this official position, when community hostels fail to provide learners with adequate boarding, ablution, sanitation, kitchen and dining facilities, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture is not only blamed for this but expected by communities to solve the problems encountered (Nel and Nangolo, 2002). This has

necessitated a clarification at the policy level of the roles of communities and the Ministry in running community hostels.

The second issue was based on experiences of running community hostels in Ondangwa West and East Educational regions. In these regions it was observed that after running for some time some community hostels applied to be elevated from the status of community hostels to the status of fully-fledged government hostels. Such status seemed to have been granted in two instances. This precedence raised the fear that when replicated in several community contexts, very high financial costs may be incurred by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. Such a prospect would defeat the rationale that community-run hostels would help the Ministry reduce the cost of providing boarding facilities to learners. This situation also necessitated the need to design official policy on community hostels (Hailombe, 2002, p.3).

In addition, there is a dearth of knowledge and understanding pertaining to resources, skills and expertise school personnel and hostel staff would need to provide optimal guidance, counseling and psychosocial support to OVC. Moreover, according to the terms of reference, the study aimed at enabling the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture to develop guidelines for:
  ❖ prioritizing orphans and vulnerable children in need of hostel accommodation in entry requirements;
  ❖ setting up and managing community hostels (i.e. this study was to feed into the current efforts to develop a policy on community hostels);
  ❖ managing hostels in a way that children's basic needs were met and that they became part of the circles of support for orphans and other vulnerable children.

The other aspect was that the study was intended to document different Namibian experiences in community alternatives to formal and informal hostels.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to the terms of reference, the main objectives of the study were to:
  ❖ ascertain how far existing government and informal hostels catered for the needs of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and those of educationally marginalized children. We interpreted the needs to be those for education; basic needs for shelter, health, nutrition, clothing; needs for protection against neglect, abuse, exploitation, stigmatization, discrimination; and needs for psychosocial support.
  ❖ assess the merits of alternatives to hostels, such as practices of learners staying with families (which may or may not be remunerated for providing accommodation and food);
  ❖ present an analysis of the factors determining the success/failure of current community hostels;
  ❖ make recommendations on re-formulating entry qualifications for formal and informal hostels, for strategies to render hostels supportive and caring of vulnerable children, and for a policy on community hostels.

4.0 METHOD

4.1 Population

In consultation with officials from the Division of the Inspectorate and Hostels Management at the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, it was agreed that the population of the respondents for the study should come from the Caprivi, Omusati, Kunene and Omaheke regions of Namibia. The justification for this selection was that these regions met the study's criteria on orphans affected by HIV/AIDS, vulnerable children and educationally marginalized children.

4.2 Sample

Applying the purposeful sampling technique, documentary, key informant interview and observational data were obtained from:

- ❖ some officials in the division of the inspectorate and hostels management at the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture Headquarters;
- ❖ representatives of the inter-sectoral task force for educationally marginalized children;
- ❖ representatives of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture task force on HIV/AIDS and education;
- ❖ regional directors of education;
- ❖ regional hostel inspectors;
- ❖ principals of selected schools with government, private and community hostels;
- ❖ superintendents of selected school hostels;
- ❖ hostel supervisory teachers;
- ❖ hostel matrons;
- ❖ community hostel managers;
- ❖ some community leaders/regional and local government officials;
- ❖ some orphans and vulnerable children residing in the hostels or those in need of hostel accommodation.

The summary of the sample is provided in table 3 and its detailed description is provided in appendix 1. Summaries of government and community hostels visited are provided in tables 4 and 5.

Table 3. Summary of the sample

CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS	EDUCATIONAL REGION			
	Katima Mulilo	Ondangwa West (with two schools from Kunene political region)	Windhoek (Omaheke)	Total
Officials at MBESC Headquarters	0	0	4	4
Educational regional directors	1	1	1	3
Regional school hostel inspectors	1	2	1	4
School principals	5	4	4	13
School hostel superintendents	2	2	2	6
School hostel supervisory teachers	5	3	2	10
Hostel matrons	4	2	2	8
Community hostel managers	0	3	2	5
Orphans and vulnerable children	11	5	12	28
Community leaders	3	1	2	6
TOTAL	**32**	**23**	**32**	**87**

Table 4. Summary of government hostels visited

Educational Region	Hostel Number	Capacity	Number of Boarders	Quality of boarding facilities	Quality of ablution facilities	Quality of Kitchen facilities	Quality of dining facilities
Katima Mulilo	1	192	189	Excellent	Excellent	Very good	Very Good
	2	210	176	Very poor	Very poor	Poor	Poor
	3	120	190	Very Poor for boys; very good for girls	Very Poor for boys; very good for girls	Poor	Poor
Ondangwa West	4	600	570	Very poor	Poor; malfunctioning plumbing equipment	Poor, needs renovation	Good
	5	400	393	Poor for boys and good for girls	Poor, need renovation	Good	Poor, needs renovation
Windhoek (Omaheke)	6	600	400	Poor	Poor	Fair	Poor
	7	159	212	Very poor, overcrowded	Very poor; blocked sewerage	Poor; insufficient facilities	Poor

Note: On a scale of 1 to 6, 1 = Very poor; 2 = Poor; 3 = Fair; 4 = Good; 5 = Very good; 6 = Excellent. Some descriptive instances of these qualities are provided in the results section under meeting basic needs for accommodation, sanitation, hygiene and under the quality of hostel infrastructure.

Table 5. Summary of community hostels visited

Educational region	Hostel Number	Capacity	Number of boarders	Quality of boarding facilities	Availability of ablution facilities	Quality of ablution facilities	Availability of kitchen facilities	Quality of kitchen facilities	Availability of dining facilities	Quality of dining facilities
Ondangwa West	1	Unknown	57	Very poor	Pit latrines, no showers	Poor	Non available	N/A	Non available	N/A
	2*	96; formal hostel	96	Fair	Available	Fair	Informal shelter with gas stoves	Fair	Non Available	N/A
		Unknown, informal hostel	218, informal hostel	Poor	Non available	N/A	As in formal hostel	Fair	Non Available	N/A
	3	Unknown	65	Good	Available	Poor	Available	Poor	Non available	N/A
Windhoek	4	268	252	Excellent	Available	Excellent	Available	Excellent	Available	Excellent
(Omaheke)	5	252	252	Fair	Available	Fair	Available	Fair	Available	Fair

* There existed at a combined school, a formal hostel component and a community hostel component.

Note: On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 = Very poor; 2 = Poor; 3 = Fair; 4 = Good; 5 = Excellent. Some descriptive instances of these qualities are provided in the results section under meeting basic needs for accommodation, sanitation, hygiene and the quality of hostel infrastructure.

4.2.1 A brief history and supervisory structure of community hostels visited

We were informed that except for two church-supported community hostels that were established in the 1970s, two were established in 1993 and one was established in 1999.

Whereas community hostel 3 in the Ondangwa West region was established by the Catholic Church, community hostels 1 and 2 were established by parents, teachers and members of the community. Community hostel 5 in the Omaheke region was established by the Dutch Reformed Church and community hostel 4 was established by farmers and the school with the support of UNICEF, the European Union and some Scandinavian countries (See table 4). As can be noticed, the initiative to establish the community hostels did not solely come from the communities in which they were located.

The three community hostels in the Ondangwa West region were established for needy and marginalized children who lived between 25 kilometres to 170 kilometres away from the nearest school. To attend school such children needed a place to stay. The Ovahimba, San and children from very poor families were offered an opportunity to access education in this way. The two community hostels in the Omaheke region were initially established for San children and children of farm workers. Currently, the two hostels are also used by children from other groups, especially those from the resettlement farms and camps. In both regions, the hostels were not specifically established to cater for orphans. These may have been included under the category of 'needy children'.

All the community hostels were run by management boards. In the Ondangwa West educational region, the Catholic Church-supported hostel was run by a board that was made up of the Bishop, sisters, community members, the Parish priest and parents. The community hostel at a combined school was run by a board consisting of 8 teachers, a

matron, and a superintendent. No parents were represented in the board. The third community hostel we went to in the Ondagwa West region was run by a board consisting of teachers, members of the school board and parents.

In the Omaheke region, the community hostel supported by the Dutch Reformed Church was run by a board chaired by one of the farmers. The other members of the board were two teachers and two parents. Although most children accommodated at the hostel had San parents, no San parent was a member of the board. The donor-supported community hostel was run by a trust whose chairperson was a farmer. The other members of the trust were the school principal, the hostel matron, two teachers and two parents. It should be recognized that these hostels were atypical of community hostels in the Omaheke region. As reported by Nel and Nangolo (2002), the region has several community hostels that are as constrained as those in the Ondangwa West educational region.

The boards and the trust seemed to run the hostels independently. The involvement of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture was minimal, if at all in evidence. Should the Ministry have some kind of oversight in matters pertaining to these hostels? Because they were in the minority in the community hostel boards and the trust, we wondered about the quality of parental involvement in the running of the hostels.

4.3 Research instruments

Open-ended interview questions were prepared for each category of respondents in table 1. In this way, 10 interview schedules were generated. Furthermore, research reports, official documents, circulars and other information on hostels and on access to education by orphans affected by HIV/AIDS, vulnerable children and educationally marginalized children were used to collect data. Some statistical information on hostels and boarders from the target regions was also employed to facilitate data collection.

4.4 Procedure

To collect data, we:

- ❖ analytically reviewed pertinent reports, documents, circulars and policy guidelines on government, private and community school hostels;
- ❖ reviewed other relevant literature on how difficulties to access education faced by orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children might be mitigated by school hostels provision and other community-based boarding facilities;
- ❖ obtained some statistical information on government hostels from MBESC headquarters;
- ❖ in consultation with officials of the Division of the Inspectorate and Hostels Management at the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, made logistical arrangements to carry out fieldwork in the selected regions;
- ❖ went on fieldwork in the selected regions to conduct hostel case studies, and to interview persons specified in the sample.

In each research area, we worked with the regional school hostel staff to identify school hostels to be included in the sample and to make logistical arrangements. Before commencing with data collection at each target school, we explained the purpose of the study and sought the help of the school principal to organize interviews with persons included in the sample. Whereas the majority of the individual interviews were conducted in English, translators were used when interviewing some community leaders and some Primary school learners who were unable to communicate in English very well. While interviews with officials at MBESC Headquarters, educational regional directors, regional school hostel inspectors, hostel superintendents and supervisory teachers took about 1 and half hour to complete, interviews with other respondents took about one hour or less than one hour to complete.

After completing interviews at each school, we conducted a tour of hostel facilities and made observations on the quality of services provided to hostel dwellers. We, while touring hostel facilities, also carried out informal discussions with hostel staff on some hostel service provision concerns. Furthermore, on our trips to and from research sites we took the opportunity to engage the regional school hostel staff accompanying us in reflective discussions on how school hostels could be used by orphans and vulnerable children to access education.

5.0 FINDINGS AND THEIR DISCUSSION

We shall report the findings according to the study's objectives. To do this, we shall firstly present findings to ascertain the extent to which existing government and informal hostels catered for the needs of OVC and educationally marginalized children. Secondly, we shall present findings to assess the merits of alternatives to hostels. Thirdly, an analysis of factors determining the success/failure of community hostels will be given.

5.1 Findings on the extent to which existing government and informal hostels catered for the needs of OVC and educationally marginalized children

Obtained from the study's respondents, the findings in this sub-section will cover the extent to which OVC's and educationally marginalized children's needs for education, shelter, health, nutrition, clothing, protection against neglect, abuse, stigmatization, discrimination and needs for psychosocial support were met in government and community hostels that we visited. To readily compare them, findings on meeting the children's specific basic needs from government and community hostels will be integrated and presented in the manner that follows.

5.1.1 Hostel admission criteria

The information we obtained from principals of the 11 schools we visited, hostel superintendents, community hostel managers, regional hostel inspectors, and from officials at MBESC Headquarters revealed that **no** uniform hostel admission criteria were used.

With respect to community hostels, community hostel managers reported that the admission criteria in the three community hostels in the Ondangwa West Region were the payment of hostel fees, hostel capacity, educational marginalization, distance from school and applying for accommodation. Although there were no clear exemption criteria in use in the community hostels, it was reported that children from very poor families were exempted from paying fees and that the distance criterion was not applied to them. Although no formal admission criteria were used before boarders were accommodated in the Omaheke region community hostels we visited, the San children were given first priority during the admission process. The other informal criterion applied in the region was that potential boarders needed to be children of farm workers. The issue of orphans was not addressed in the informal admission criteria in use.

To highlight the impact of the criterion of community hostel fees further, four of the five community hostels charged hostel fees that ranged from N$ 45.00 per term to N$ 260.00 per term. The issue of exemptions from these fees was unclear. The Catholic Church-supported hostel that charged the highest fees per term had informal arrangements through which those who were unable to pay were paid for by the church. Whether those treated this way included orphans was unclear. In the other hostels, we were told that orphans and vulnerable children were either exempted from paying the fees or the fees were paid for them by the Ministry of Health and Social Services through its Welfare and Social services directorate. Despite all this, we did not come across clear procedures for conducting exemptions from the fees at community hostels. In our judgment, a number of orphans and vulnerable children would be denied access to the community hostels on account of not being able to pay the hostel fees.

At government school hostels, a variety of admission criteria were used. One common criterion was that learners should pay hostel fees before being accommodated in the hostels. The other criteria were high academic achievement (e.g. passing grade 10; first admit learners with high points), good behaviour, space availability, the principle of first come first served, and living a long distance from school (i.e. living more than 5 kilometres away from school). Orphans and vulnerable children could be exempted from paying hostel fees if they produced evidence from traditional authorities, church leaders and regional councilors indicating that they were unable to pay. Guardians or poor parents needed to help the children to obtain this evidence.

A perusal of the official hostel admission criteria that were provided above reveals that a number of the hostel admission criteria actually used in government hostels were not official government policy. As noted earlier, orphans and vulnerable children could be barred from the hostels either simply by being unable to pay fees before the hostels were filled up on a first come first served basis by those who could pay the fees promptly or by being unable to gather information on fee exemption on time. They may also not be amongst those who displayed exemplary behaviour and produced high academic results.

With this concern in mind we enquired from the hostel superintendents about the presence of orphans and vulnerable children in government hostels. Five out 6 of the superintendents reported that there were orphans and vulnerable children in the hostels.

Their number was however not provided. One of them was unaware of these children's presence in the hostel he administered. Except for one government school where more than 50% of the children in the hostel were marginalized and vulnerable, a clear picture on the proportion of these children in the rest of the government hostels we visited did not emerge. However, the picture from the community hostels was clear. For example, at one school in the Omaheke region, 46% of the 272 learners in the community hostel were either orphans or vulnerable children. At another school in the Ondangwa West educational region almost all the 314 hostel boarders were marginalized and vulnerable children.

The implication of this is that OVC were not a minority in the community hostels we visited. They seemed to be a minority in the government hostels. Is this due to the fact that their access to these hostels is somewhat restricted? Consistent with what school principals reported, hostel superintendents appeared to answer this question in the affirmative. They indicated that because the processing of exemption forms took a long time, some orphans and vulnerable children dropped out of school before they were allowed to stay in the hostels. In some cases because selection committees for hostel applicants did not receive documented evidence on orphans and vulnerable children, they were unable to use it in favour of the children during the selection process, a process which one of the superintendents reported to be very competitive. Another point made was that some orphans were ashamed to fill in the exemption forms and go into the hostels without basic necessities such as those of soap, body lotion, tooth paste, extra pairs of clothes and shoes.

Regional Hostel Inspectors affirmed this position. While confirming that most schools ignored the official admission criteria and instead used their own criteria when admitting boarders in the government hostels, the hostel inspectors acknowledged that using the 'first come first served' criterion worked against admitting OVC into the hostels. This was also the case when exemption criteria were either ignored or exemption applications were not filled in by guardians. One inspector informed us that sometimes guardians failed to apply for exemptions because they did not want their extended family to be disgraced and put in bad light. In some instances, exemption forms were not filled in because schools did not inform guardians that orphans under their care were entitled to state support. The inspectors also confirmed that these applications sometimes took too long to be processed.

The sampled MBESC officials at Headquarters confirmed that the hostel fee exemption procedures for OVC were cumbersome for parents and guardians and as a result, some of them opted to keep their children at home. They added that some guardians and parents were not aware that orphans and vulnerable children could be exempted from paying hostel fees. In ignorance, such parents and guardians "stretch whatever resources available" to raise money for the fees or keep children at home without the school knowing why they were not coming to school.

The inspectors pointed out that the other factor that worked against these children was the high demand for hostel accommodation. The result of this was that the hostels either

became too overcrowded to admit these children or admitted only those who were able to pay fees. At the time of the interviews, all three hostel inspectors reported that there was overcrowding in hostels in their regions. To ameliorate the situation, the inspectors recommended that church and community leaders should inform schools about orphans and help guardians to apply for hostel fee exemptions well in advance.

Although this was inconsistent with the statistics we gave in tables 4 and 5 and with what school principals and hostel superintendents reported, officials at MBESC headquarters unanimously reported that there was overcrowding in most school hostels and earning admission into them was difficult for every learner wishing to use the facility. They thought that this might be even more difficult for OVC. One official said the following to explain this:

"One would think that orphans and vulnerable children who would not have parents to plead for a place will be on the brink (i.e. fail to get into the hostel)".

Notwithstanding these inconsistencies, overcrowding in some government and community hostels should be considered as one of the important factors impacting on OVC's use of the facility when a national perspective is taken because the number of these children is expected to drastically increase (Kinghorn, et al., 2002) and because overcrowded dwelling facilities may be breading grounds for disease.

Another important factor is that of hostel fees. To clarify this issue further, we asked orphans in the sample about the ease with which they got into the hostels. Fifteen out of the 23 children who were in the hostel reported that they had difficulties getting into the government hostels. Mainly, the 15 children had problems obtaining money for hostel fees and money to buy basic necessities that were not supplied by the hostels. This was the case because either they did not have any guardians or they had guardians who had problems raising the money to pay the fees and buy the things that the children needed. In a number of cases, the fees were eventually paid by teachers, friends or some good Samaritans. This was surprising because officially, these children should have been exempted from paying hostel fees. Largely because of failure to pay fees, 5 of the orphans and vulnerable children we interviewed were unable to get into the hostels. In our judgment, a lot more orphans and vulnerable children might have been in the situation similar to the one in which the five were. All this supports the point that hostel fees are an impediment for OVC who wish to stay in the hostels. It also communicates the message that the hostel fee exemption system was not functioning as well as it should have been.

To facilitate the process of admitting OVC into the government hostels several proposals were made. Whereas superintendents suggested that the 5km regulation should not be applied to OVC because the issue for them was not distance but need, that schools should be given the authority to process exemptions and that all basic necessities for these children should be provided either by the state or by some other conglomerate of bodies and sources, some principals suggested that there was need for MBESC to come up with regulations on the identification of orphans and on clear and efficient procedures for

exempting orphans and vulnerable children from paying hostel fees. It was noted by several principals that traditional leaders, headmen, church leaders and regional councilors could be used to obtain authentic information on orphans. If they were to give orphans and other vulnerable children priority when processing hostel admissions, principals needed to receive this information well in advance, preferably before the end of the school year. Applying these procedures would ensure that only OVC who deserved to be exempted should be exempted. To enforce this, it was pointed out that ways for screening real OVC in need should be designed.

In support of the school principals' position, the three educational directors unanimously proposed that the application form for admitting learners into the hostel should include information on whether some learners were orphans. When verified, this information would be important in treating orphans as a priority in the hostel admission process. Moreover, the educational regional directors suggested that to shorten the time for processing exemption application forms, the exercise should be decentralized. This is that with recommendations from schools, regions should be allowed to approve or reject the applications. As noted earlier, superintendents proposed that the whole process should be completed at the school level. While endorsing this, we would add that hostel fee exemptions should be publicized in the mass media.

5.1.2 Hostel physical infrastructure and facilities

Boarding, ablution, kitchen and dining facilities were the hostel infrastructure and facilities that we assessed to ascertain the extent to which OVC's needs for physical security and hygienic living conditions were met in the hostels we visited. Whereas boarding facilities included the state of dormitories and the availability of beds and mattresses, ablution facilities included bathing, toilet and laundry facilities. While the state of and availability of hostel kitchens equipped with food preparation and food storage facilities was another area of assessment, dining facilities included dining halls equipped with tables and chairs. We shall present data here for community and government hostels separately as follows:

5.1.2.1Physical infrastructure and facilities in community hostels

We were informed by community hostel managers that the situation of physical infrastructure and facilities in the Ondangwa West educational region was inadequate. There were no beds and mattresses at one informal community hostel. Boarders slept on the floor in two classrooms. Boarders in the community hostel section of the combined school did not have beds. They slept on small and narrow mattresses. In some cases, young children shared these mattresses. In addition, because this hostel had inadequate space, the mud huts they used as dormitories accommodated more learners than they were supposed to.

The sanitation situation in the three community hostels we visited in the Ondangwa West region was not good. Pit latrines that were not near the dormitories were in use. Using them at night posed a security risk. Another security risk was posed by the fact that the

three dormitories were not fenced off and that dormitory doors could not be locked at one of them. Taking a bath was not easy as water had to be collected in buckets before using it in makeshift bathrooms. At one of these community hostels water for bathing and cooking was supplied by NAMWATER at a price the hostel could barely afford. These three hostels did not have showers and washbasins. Under these conditions, sanitation and hygiene were not as good as they should have been, thereby compromising the health of the hostel dwellers.

In addition, the three Ondangwa West community hostels **did not** have lights, formal kitchens with food preparation and food storage facilities and they did not have dining halls with tables and chairs. Consequently, food was either prepared in the open or in makeshift kitchen facilities. The standard of hygiene in these facilities was low. In the absence of dining halls, boarders in these hostels had their meals in the open. Because these hostels were not equipped with pantries and cold rooms, they could not store food for a long time.

It is clear from the information just provided that OVC's needs for physical security and hygienic living conditions were not adequately met in the community hostels we visited in the Ondangwa West education region. To meet these needs, school principals suggested that an *'affirmative-action' type of policy for OVC* should be established for community hostels. Such a policy should require the state to support these hostels where large numbers of vulnerable children are cared for. This could be done by ensuring that community hostels met basic standards for accommodation, ablution, kitchen and dining facilities and for hygienic living conditions. In practice, this would entail **facilitating** the community hostels to establish and procure dormitories furnished with beds, mattresses and bed linen, kitchens and kitchen equipment, establish and equip dining halls and fully fledged ablution blocks.

The situation of the Omaheke community hostels that we visited demonstrated that it was possible to establish and resource adequately run community hostels. In this region, it was reported that the donor-supported community hostel accommodated its boarders in dormitories equipped with beds, mattresses, blankets, towels and lockers. In addition, the hostel had enough space for boarders under its care. Most orphans and vulnerable children would need this kind of support. Although the other community hostel in the Omaheke region also supplied its boarders with beds and mattresses, it had insufficient capacity to accommodate boarders in grades 1 to 4.

With respect to hygiene, it was reported that there were no sanitation problems in the two community hostels we visited in the Omaheke region. Boarders in these hostels used flush toilets, showers, and washbasins that were in working order. They also had access to tap water.

5.1.2.2 Physical infrastructure and facilities in government hostels

It was reported by school principals, hostel superintendents, regional hostel inspectors and orphans that in terms of infrastructure and facilities, some government hostels were

beset with water shortages because they were serviced by water pumps that were also meant to supply water to surrounding communities, blocked sewerage and drainage systems, toilets that did not flush and dormitories that were in such disrepair that they were unable to protect boarders from rain, the cold, mosquitoes, intruders and thieves. For instance, at one school in the Omaheke region, intruders and thieves were reported to come into the hostel, threaten and beat up children, break into the kitchen and steal food. Some hostel buildings in the Ondangwa West Educational region had big cracks that could cause walls to collapse on boarders and in a number of hostels, damaged geysers, beds and mattresses were rarely replaced. At one hostel in the Caprivi, for instance, we observed that beds and mattresses were not enough for all boarders. As a result, three boarders were observed to share two small beds by joining them together. In addition, regional hostel inspectors informed us that ablution facilities in a number of government hostels were dilapidated, in disrepair and in need of renovation.

Our observations revealed that there was so much disrepair and squalor in these hostels that they created physical environments that were not only unsafe and unhygienic but also unfit for human habitation. Boarders and their property were in some cases at the mercy of hostel intruders who could freely come in and out of the hostels.

The challenge posed by this state of affairs is not only that there is need to mobilize resources to place OVC in the hostels but it is also important to recognize that to make them physically safe, several government hostels will have to be renovated and refurbished. This will of course not be for the benefit of OVC only but for all hostel boarders. Physical environments fit for human habitation should both be created and maintained in several government hostels. If this is ignored, OVC and other boarders in the hostels will be exposed to physical harm and disease.

To support this point, one hostel inspector noted that:

"Current conditions for most hostels (made them) unfit for accommodation for all learners" .

One official at MBESC Headquarters was so appalled by the state of hygiene in some community hostels that he said the following:

" If I were a health inspector, I would have these hostels closed immediately".

5.1.3 Basic needs

There was agreement amongst school principals, hostel superintendents, hostel matrons, hostel inspectors and orphans that it was in this area that OVC needed urgent support. Because they were not supplied by government and community hostels, 19 out of the 28 OVC we interviewed reported that they needed several basic necessities. These included toiletries (e.g. soap, tooth paste, body lotion, washing powder, etc.), blankets, bed sheets, plates, cups, cutlery, clothes, shoes (including sports shoes), school supplies (e.g. pens, pencils, calculators, mathematical sets, school bags, stationery, etc.), pocket money, extra

food and special diet food for those with allergies, money (for school fees, hospital/clinic fees, transport to and from school, sanitary pads, etc.) uniforms and mattresses.

To acquire these things, some children borrowed money from teachers or used money they earned from doing odd jobs. We were also informed by a number of school personnel that some OVC were forced to earn the money for buying the needed basic necessities by engaging in sexual relationships with those who had money to give them. Such children put themselves at the risk of HIV infection. The point to note here is that all the nineteen children and others in their position needed financial and material support to be in the hostels and attend school. Strategies on how this support can be provided will be suggested in a later section of this report.

5.1.4 Needs for safety and psychological security

School principals, hostel superintendents, supervisory teachers, orphans and hostel inspectors concurred that government and community hostels in their current state **do not** provide OVC adequate safety and psychological security. For instance, most principals reported that stealing, fighting, drunkenness, rudeness, bullying (especially of the vulnerable children), disobedience, absconding from the hostels without permission, coming late at night and sexual harassment and abuse of girls were common in some hostels. This means that as living environments, the hostels we visited do not necessarily provide personal safety to orphans and vulnerable children.

Confirming the issue of insecurity in the hostels, superintendents reported that incidences of alcohol abuse (especially during the week-ends), disturbances during study sessions, playing music too loudly so that no one can concentrate on anything else and sexual relationships between boarders and between boarders and non-boarders were rife. Moreover, other forms of indiscipline included loitering at shopping centers and sleeping out without the hostel authorities' knowledge.

Reiterating the theme of lack of safety in the hostels, supervisory teachers reported that they encountered a lot of indiscipline in the hostels. Some learners refused to cooperate, quarreled, swore at and insulted each other, and in not uncommon cases, engaged in sexual relationships. Moreover, some schools had insufficient numbers of supervisory teachers to care for boarders and maintain order. For instance, there were only 2 supervisory teachers for 192 boarders at one hostel.

The officials at MBESC Headquarters agreed that there was inadequate security in government hostels for all the boarders. They added that the experience of this would be worse for OVC who would not be able to defend themselves. In addition one official pointed out that:

"During out-week-ends when there are no caregivers to pick them up and they have to 'hike' to various villages, homesteads and towns, I foresee a problem (of possible abuse)".

The issue of lack of psychological security was expressed more clearly by orphans. Most of them reported that they were teased because they did not have parents, nice shoes and clothes, nice blankets and bed sheets. In addition, some orphans were teased for not bringing food, money and other things after the holidays and after the out-week-ends. One of the disabled learners was teased because of her impaired leg. Afraid of being bewitched by her, some learners refuse to share utensils with her. Moreover, they did not wish to speak to her because of her disability.

For some San children, peers from dominant groups did not merely tease them and make fun of them but harassed them, pulled them around and beat them up for nothing. When asked about what they did when they were treated this way, most of them told us that they did nothing. Whereas some of them explained to their peers why they did not have the things they were being teased about, a number of them simply cried, felt unhappy and very sad. This implies that although they were grateful to be in the hostels, most orphans and vulnerable children were sad to be there but had nowhere else to go. These findings are also inconsistent with the non-discriminatory and non-stigmatization picture that school principals, hostel superintendents and supervisory teachers painted. The tragedy was that these school personnel, based on what they informed us, did not have the capacity to work with and support these children in distress.

To clarify the situation of psychological insecurity further, the majority of the orphans we interviewed were most afraid of being punished and expelled from the hostel for either misbehaving or for damaging hostel property. This fear was quite acute for orphans who did not have guardians or anyone else to represent them before the school authorities when in trouble. Some of them were afraid of dropping out of school and thereby have an even more difficult future. The San children were most afraid of being bullied, harassed and being beaten up by boys from the dominant groups.

The situation of lack of safety and psychological insecurity was as prevalent in government as it was in community hostels. This was so because, safety at community hostels was non existent as there were no security guards engaged on the premises to protect learners and property. At one of the schools, for instance, learners slept in the classrooms, some distance away from teachers' houses.

Although it might sound contradictory, the majority of the OVC we interviewed liked living in the hostels. The reasons they gave for this, should act as an impetus for improving safety and psychological security in government and community hostels. The OVC accommodated in the hostel told us that they liked living there. They informed us that this was because unlike at their homes where they had a lot of chores to perform and problems to confront, they were given time and opportunity to study and do their homework in the hostel. In addition, they did not have to walk long distances to school, they were provided with food that was prepared for them, a place to sleep and friends to socialize with. Furthermore, some of them indicated that because they did not have relatives nearby and because they had no one and nowhere else to stay, the hostel provided them with a home. One implication of this is that despite lack of safety and lack

of psychological security, the hostel had become a sanctuary for these children, a place that rescued them from problems at their homes.

5.1.5 Needs for protection against neglect, abuse and the risk of HIV infection

If the school hostels were to be used as safe havens for OVC, they needed to provide protection from sexual abuse and from the risk of HIV and STD infection. When asked about whether their schools provided this protection, principals whose schools were served by either government or community hostels were very clear on steps that had been taken to protect all hostel boarders from HIV and STD infection. They had, operating at their schools, HIV/AIDS prevention programmes such as the 'future is my choice', provided access to condoms to learners old enough to need them, NGOs such as the Catholic AIDS Action and the Namibia Planned Parenthood Association, nurses and pastors trained peer AIDS counselors in the schools. In addition, some schools, through AIDS Clubs provided lessons on sexual harassment and abstinence and controlled sexual relations between boys and girls.

All these actions, according to some principals, were undermined by what happened in the community. It was reported that what happens in some communities (e.g. at the resettlement camps) was the opposite of what was taught at school. There, children drunk alcohol with their parents and sometimes had sex with over-aged partners for food and money. These behaviours put them at risk of HIV infection.

Some school hostel inspectors reported that real risks of HIV infection existed in the school hostels despite the concerted efforts to prevent it. They reported that in a number of government hostels security fences were vandalized to either allow boarders to sneak out of the hostels without permission or to give outsiders free access to the hostels. This increased the risk of HIV/AIDS infection in the hostels. In fact one of the hostel inspectors with more that 7 years of experience informed us that:

" There was a very high risk of HIV/AIDS infection in the hostels."

Inconsistent with what principals, superintendents and supervisory teachers informed us, the inspector of hostels told us that this was the case because

"*boys in some hostels frequently fought over girls and teachers went out with girls who they enticed with food, drinks and clothes. Because of poor supervision, some boarders sneaked out of the hostels and came back in after many hours."*

He went on to say that although condoms were freely available outside hostels, their free distribution was not allowed in some hostels. Other hostel inspectors agreed with this and cited cases in which boys and girls, teachers and female learners were in love relationships. In addition, the hostel inspectors confirmed the situation where men from other ministries made school girls pregnant without incurring any sanctions because MBESC had no policy on how to deal with them. In the light of this information,

measures to prevent HIV/AIDS infection in hostels should be reappraised for their effectiveness.

Hostel superintendents concurred with the hostel inspectors' position. Because there had been rape and other sexual abuse cases reported at some hostels, they could not say that OVC would be spared from this type of abuse. In the Omaheke region, for example, the sexual vulnerability of San girls was especially highlighted. We were informed that in some hostels these girls were forced into sexual activity by boys from other groups. Because of San girls' low status these boys believed that they could sexually abuse them without incurring any form of punishment. Although schools in general and hostels in particular engaged in concerted efforts to prevent HIV infection (e.g. covering HIV/AIDS issues in life sciences and other school subjects and exposing them to several HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns), superintendents observed that OVC were more at risk of being infected with the virus in their communities during the school holidays. Because of this it would be reasonable to suggest that hostel boarders in general and orphans and vulnerable children in the hostels in particular should be provided with coping skills to fight off risks of HIV/AIDS infection not only at school but in the community as well. Hostel personnel should be equipped to impart such skills. Moreover, support from communities should be sought on this.

In line with this, community leaders reported that regulations were in place to deal with sexual abuse that was perpetrated by school personnel. Using the regulations, the school boards dealt with cases of sexual abuse committed at school. Although the legal enforcement of these regulations were sometimes undermined by private negotiations between teachers and parents of abused children and by the unwillingness of some abused learners to report that they had been abused, traditional authorities in places such as the Caprivi region, were known to handle the cases more effectively. They asked the abusers to give large numbers of heads of cattle (e.g. 20 of them) to the parents of the abused learners. It was suggested that cases of sexual abusers other than teachers should, where applicable, also be referred to the traditional authorities.

At community hostels, all the five community hostel managers reported that their hostels had put in place procedures to protect orphans and vulnerable children from physical harm, sexual abuse and the risk of HIV infection. Except for one community hostel where 3 members of staff were finding it difficult to care for 65 boarders, protection from neglect was reported to be in place at the remaining four community hostels we visited. Because of inadequate resources to employ sufficient numbers of institutional workers at community hostels in the Ondangwa West Educational region, our own observations revealed that boarders with personal problems could be neglected in these hostels.

Another instance of OVC neglect that superintendents reported was the tendency of guardians and parents to dump children at the hostels and then forget about them. This was particularly serious in primary school where parents and guardians should regularly find out if their children in the hostels were all right and that they did not need anything. Moreover, some parents and guardians were reported to hide information on diseases that their children had. When these children became sick in the hostels, superintendents found

it difficult to communicate with parents and guardians who did not have telephones and lived long distances away from hostels.

To ameliorate these problems, superintendents suggested that guardians and parents of OVC should be supportive and open about the status of these children. They should do this by providing schools and hostels accurate information on what the children need, giving the children pastoral care and whenever possible by meeting their basic needs. They should not misuse resources and materials they may obtain for the children's education and hostel maintenance from governmental and other sources. Furthermore, superintendents observed that the guardians' and parents' social-cultural and educational levels should be taken into account when requiring them to be involved in their children's education and stay in the hostels. For instance, it was pointed out that it would be difficult for guardians and parents to be committed to the lives of their children in the hostels if they did not value education. Such parents should first be made aware of the value of education.

The issue at policy level then becomes that of putting in place mechanisms and frameworks for empowering and requiring guardians and parents to be responsible for and provide pastoral care and guidance to OVC. In other words, based on the findings just presented enforceable policy guidelines on the roles of guardians and parents of these children should be formulated. The school boards as envisaged in the Educational Act of 2001 should be used to come up with such guidelines.

5.1.6 Needs for protection against discrimination and stigmatization

According to school principals, information on what schools did to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who resided in the hostels from stigmatization and discrimination communicated two messages. Firstly, schools did not know the identity of orphans who were affected by HIV/AIDS because guardians did not provide information on this. In the state of anonymity, the issue of discrimination and stigmatization would not arise. This would be all right as long as the status of being orphan was also not hidden. To support them, it is important that schools know who the orphans are.

Secondly, it was reported that some vulnerable children such as the San children chose to separate themselves from other groups. We judged this to be due to discrimination because superintendents from the Omaheke region, reported the existence of discrimination and tribalism perpetrated against the San children who were called derogatory names and regarded as less human. To illustrate this, one superintendent informed us that in order to insult them, the San children were asked the following question:

"When did you see a bushman sleeping in a house?"

We were informed that because of this maltreatment some San children ran away from hostels, walked long distances to their parents who worked at farms far away from schools. Sometimes some of the children escaped the mistreatment at night, risking being

abducted, kidnapped, sexually abused, raped or even being killed. Furthermore, we were informed that some San children fought against the discrimination by denying their heritage and choosing to assume ethnic identities of other groups such as the Damara or the Nama. Unfortunately, doing this hides them from help and support. To handle this, some schools organized counseling support groups composed of the school management, some teachers and some parents from the school board. In addition, the policy guidelines pertaining to OVC that are provided in the draft national policy on HIV/AIDS for the educational sector should be adapted to meet the specific needs of San and other marginalized children.

At the community level, community leaders from the Caprivi region indicated that these children were not discriminated against because they were absorbed in the extended family. When in this position they were not considered orphans and the orphans themselves did not wish to be referred to as such. As a result, awareness against the discrimination was not engaged in. The problem was that under this system, orphans could have their inheritance 'grabbed' from them by unscrupulous relatives.

The Chief Community Liaison Officer of the Uutapi Regional Council agreed that the problem of discrimination against orphans existed, albeit not openly. Because of this it was difficult to detect and handle. Acknowledging that the community did not know how to deal with the problem, she suggested that the solution lay in parents talking to their children against discrimination and in actively disseminating information indicating that children orphaned by HIV/AIDS would not spread the disease.

The Omaheke regional officials informed us that no awareness campaigns were undertaken in the region on discrimination against orphans affected by HIV/AIDS. Emphasizing what was indicated earlier, the Community Development Officer working with the Omaheke San Trust reported that San children were discriminated against in various ways. For instance, because they were exempted from paying school and hostel fees, they were at some schools, told what follows.

"You do not pay. You use our money. We have less food (in the hostel) because you do not pay."

The Omaheke San Trust community development officer suggested that to deal with the problem of discrimination, schools should be sensitized about the needs of San children.

Officials from MBESC Headquarters agreed with this and indicated that teachers should be sensitized and trained about how to deal with discrimination and stigmatization of OVC in hostel settings. In addition, hostel supervisors and all hostel dwellers should be sensitized about discrimination and stigmatization of these children. To forestall negative effects of discrimination, they should also establish OVC support groups that utilized the "big brother or buddy" idea.

5.1.7 Needs for psychosocial support

Orphans who are stressed, depressed, anxious, grieving and in mourning need to be emotionally supported not only by caring and sympathetic people but also by persons who have some training on how to provide this support. When asked whether hostel superintendents, supervisory teachers and hostel matrons had this type of training, principals unanimously gave a negative response. They then suggested that these school personnel and principals needed to receive training in psychosocial support and counseling. In the form of seminars and workshops, such training should involve grief and bereavement counseling, guidance and counseling, personal communication skills and the handling of stress, anxiety, depression, management of the deceased parents' estate, discrimination and stigmatization.

To put this in context, we asked superintendents about personal problems that OVC had brought to their attention and whether they were able to help the children solve these problems. In general, superintendents reported that it was rare for OVC to share personal problems with them. For instance, San children were characteristically not eager to share their problems with others-even when it was clear that they were being harassed, beaten up and abused by others. The few personal problems that were brought to OVC shared included not having toiletries, fearing to go home because of poor conditions there, lack of money to pay hostel fees, wishing to commit suicide because of controversies over inheritance and fear of being beaten up by bullies in the hostels. They reported that because they did not have skills to solve psychosocial problems that OVC displayed, they needed training to counsel and to help the children to talk about the problems. This means that any programme intended to improve the living environment in the hostels should include this kind of training.

Consistent with what was reported by superintendents, supervisory teachers indicated that a number of OVC were unwilling to share their personal problems with others. Some OVC who did, asked for help in attending to their sick parents at home, some orphans complained about being isolated by others because their parents had died, and some orphans asked to be released every week-end to look after their young siblings because there was no one else to look after them. Others approached supervisory teachers for transport money, soap, body lotion, and sanitary pads.

In addition to indicating that there were unable to emotionally support OVC in the hostels and that they needed training to do so, government hostel matrons and community hostel managers reported that these children displayed a variety of personal problems. A number of them were depressed, anxious and worried. For instance they looked particularly sad just before out-week-ends and just before school holidays. This was usually because they were either not eager to go home or they did not have anywhere to go. In addition, the children were reportedly sad because they did not have clothes, shoes, washing detergent and transport money to go home. As a result of these problems some of them engaged in undesirable behaviours such as those of fighting, quarreling, stealing and abusing alcohol.

The inadequate psychosocial support that OVC received in the school hostels was verified by the children themselves. They reported that hostel superintendents, supervisory teachers, school prefects and friends were in most cases unable to help solve their personal problems.

5.1.8 Needs for health

In terms of meeting the health needs of hostel boarders, supported by hostel superintendents, 9 out of the 11 principals reported that their hostels did not have sick bays and that they had several problems attending to sick children. At a number of schools (e.g. in the Omaheke region), clinics and other health facilities were more than 40 kilometres away. In the absence of transport, taking sick children to such facilities was not only cumbersome but also expensive. For instance, it was reported that a trip to Gobabis from one of the Omaheke schools cost N$50.00. In addition to using principals' and teachers' own transport to take sick boarders to health facilities, some schools established 'medical funds' to which hostel dwellers contributed modest amounts to be used in medical emergencies and to cover the cost of clinic fees. To access the funds, boarders should make prior contributions. Because this cost is not covered by exemptions from paying hostel fees, OVC were reported to have difficulties in accessing the funds. To illustrate this, an 18-year old orphan from the Caprivi region said:

"I'm not treated at the clinic if I cannot pay".

Article 25(12) of the 2001 education act may be used by some principals to deny orphans such as this one protection and support. This would be the case because the article states that
*"if a parent refuses or **fails** to pay the school development fund contribution, a school board may exclude the learner of such parent from taking part in any activity financed with the school development fund contributions"* (GRN, 2001, p. 20).

This means that OVC who fail, for example, to make contributions to this fund would be denied access to funds for health expenses. They may also be excluded from field trips financed by the fund. Except for one community hostel, hostel superintendents confirmed this by stating that some orphans had difficulties accessing school 'health funds' they did not make contributions to.

Other examples were given by a principal of a school in the Ondangwa West region that operates a community hostel for marginalized children. She said the following:

"Due to congestion in the small rooms (i.e. small dormitory mud huts) when learners get sick, all other learners get sick.

During March this year when there was a Malaria outbreak, one learner died because of no transport and no clinic in the area."

We clarified this situation by talking to OVC themselves. Whereas 12 of the children said that health facilities were close to their schools, 16 of them reported that they were very far. For two community hostels in the Ondagwa West region for example, the nearest clinic was 25 kilometres away and the nearest hospital was 140 kilometres away. As was discussed earlier, the problem here was not only that health facilities were difficult to reach for several children but also that the OVC needed to pay clinic fees before they could be treated. As was the case at government hostels, transporting sick children to health facilities at community hostels was difficult in the absence of institutional vehicles.

5.1.9 Needs for nutrition

In government hostels, hostel inspectors identified the food problems that follow. If not checked some caterers delivered insufficient food to the hostels, food was not well prepared at some hostels and at other hostels, it was stolen by workers. The combined result was that at such hostels, OVC and other boarders were undernourished.

One principal illustrated the shortage of food by stating:

"You will not die but kept alive".

The information we obtained from OVC was inconsistent with this because it showed that whereas those in the hostels had sufficient and adequately balanced food to eat, OVC not in the hostels seemed to be malnourished. Those non hostel residents at schools without feeding schemes told us that they usually had one meal a day.

In the community hostels, the food supply and consumption was a bit more complicated. Except for the community hostel supported by the Catholic Church which bought its own food, the other community hostels benefited from the school feeding scheme under which needy learners were served with either one or two meals in a day. To supplement this, subsidies from the government were used to buy more food for the remaining meals in two of the four hostels. The donor-supported hostel bought additional food from its own resources. For three of the community hostels, the supply of food was not the problem. As was pointed out earlier, the problem was its storage, preparation and surroundings under which it was consumed. Using their own (if they had any) cutlery, boarders ate their food in the open. The donor-supported community hostel had a well-equipped clean kitchen, good food storage facilities and an excellent dining hall with tables, chairs, plates and cutlery. To serve children adequately, food should be stored, prepared, served and consumed under conditions such as these.

5.2 Suggested strategies for meeting OVC's basic needs in government and community hostels more adequately

It should be clear from the findings we have presented so far that OVC's basic needs of various kinds were not adequately met in both government and community hostels. To ameliorate the situation, various respondents made several suggestions. In this section,

we would like to present these suggestions in the form of strategies for supporting OVC in the hostels more adequately. These strategies are in the areas of resource mobilization, capacity building, and community involvement.

5.2.1 Resource mobilization

In addition to financial and material resources, we also cover in this section the mobilization of resources in kind. It was observed that before resources were mobilized it was important for policy makers to realize that OVC should not be catered for at the expense of reducing the quality of education for all learners. It was therefore crucial that exemptions from paying school and hostel fees did not deplete the school and the hostel development funds. Money should be sourced from elsewhere to cover the cost of exemptions from these fees. To illustrate this point, one principal said: *"We need the school fund. We cannot do without it."* Furthermore, it was noted that to serve them better, OVC should be identified, registered and their needs assessed to distinguish between OVC in need of support and OVC who may not be in need of such support.

To meet the cost of placing and maintaining OVC in government and community hostels, school principals and community leaders proposed the following strategies:

1) In addition to asking the state to create a separate budget line for OVC the communities in which these children resided should be organized to mobilize resources to be used by orphans in need and their families. For instance, households in some rural areas could be asked by traditional authorities to donate livestock in support of OVC. Such livestock could be sold to raise funds that would be used by orphans to buy uniforms, pay for school and hostel fees, buy books and other school supplies. In urban areas, communities could be mobilized to establish trust funds for orphans in need. Some of these trust funds could be transformed into bursary/scholarship funds to be accessed by deserving orphans in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Communities could also be mobilized to directly donate to OVC in the hostels food, blankets, clothes, money and stationery; participate in the running of the hostels; donate labour and expertise to repair broken hostel doors, windows, toilets and showers and provide general maintenance of government/community hostels.

2) At a modest level, persons in their private capacities could be mobilized to either donate to OVC in the hostels clothes, shoes, school uniforms, money, blankets and other bed linen or sponsor orphans attending educational institutions by paying for their hostel and school requisites. We observed this in practice at some schools where some teachers bought uniforms and paid school and hostel fees for some OVC.

3) To avoid instilling the spirit of dependency into OVC income-generating activities could be facilitated and run by OVC and their guardians/parents. This would ensure that guardians and parents do not abrogate their responsibilities of raising these children.

4) In addition to noting that currently, the private sector in the regions sampled, did not support OVC it was proposed that business-men and women could establish

regional trust funds for OVC. Financial and other contributions could then be periodically made to the trust funds. OVC could access the trust funds using guidelines that regional councils would put in place. Furthermore, individual business-men and women could sponsor individual OVC and support then in paying school and hostel fees and in buying clothes, toiletries and other basic necessities. The only proviso in doing this would be that the help should be provided to those who need it in a genuine way. It should neither be done to obtain publicity nor to boost sales. Rather, it should be done purely on humanitarian grounds.

5) To further mitigate HIV/AIDS adverse effects such as the increasing number of orphans, the failure of the extended family to adequately cater for the orphans and the problem of child-headed families, it was suggested that communities should establish more community hostels. However, it should be realized that communities can only be able to do this when they have resources to spare.

5.2.2 Capacity building

In addition to the need to develop capacities of hostel staff in the area of psychosocial support, other areas of need for capacity enhancement were identified in the study. We offer here some strategies of how to meet this need with respect to specific hostel personnel and community members.

Supervisory teachers' need for additional skills

Supervisory teachers reported that they did not need to meet specific selection criteria to perform their duties. In our judgment, this was unfortunate because in the absence of any selection and vetting procedures it would be difficult for schools to protect OVC or any boarder for that matter from individuals who were abusive. Furthermore, it would be difficult to put in charge of the hostels individuals who are supportive and good at pastoral care. If they do not yet exist, we suggest that some selection criteria to be met by potential supervisory teachers should be put in place. These criteria should be based on tasks that supervisory teachers are required to perform in the hostels.

We were informed that supervisory teachers cared for the boarders, supervised them, maintained order, discipline and hygiene in the hostels, counseled learners with personal problems, provided security and organized recreational activities for the hostel dwellers. In terms of providing care, the teachers handled hostel emergencies, assisted learners when they were sick, took them to health facilities and looked after them after hours. They provided security by monitoring hostel visits, conducting roll calls, issuing permission slips, opening and closing hostel gates, preventing conflicts amongst learners and waking them up in the mornings. They supervised boarders during meals, cleaning-up time, at study time and at recreation activities. As can be noticed, the supervisory teachers were crucial in creating safe and secure hostel living environments. This is why they needed to be persons of mature, calm and patient disposition. Obviously, not every teacher would have these personality characteristics. Previous research by the Auditor General (2000) and by Tlhase, I.et al., (1995) revealed that supervisory teachers did not

perform their tasks as well as they were supposed to. It can be seen from what we have just described, that this would create disorder in the hostel, insecurity and thereby put boarders at risk of being harmed. In our case, these boarders would include OVC. To build the needed capacity, in-service training for supervisory teachers should be organized in the short term. In the medium and long terms, teacher educational institutions in Namibia should include in their curricula school hostel pastoral care.

School hostel matrons' need for additional skills

To find out how the role of matrons would impact on the lives of OVC in the hostels, we enquired about their duties. The seven matrons informed us that their duties entailed supervising hostel institutional workers, conducting hostel inspections, solving day to day problems in the hostels, looking after boarders (e.g. taking care of them when they became sick), orienting and advising boarders about how to live in the hostels, overseeing the use and maintenance of hostel equipment (e.g. kitchen equipment, beds, mattresses, lockers, utensils, etc.), and making arrangements for the procurement and preparation of hostel food. Our judgment is that when these duties are not performed very well, life in the hostels can be unbearable for OVC and other boarders. This implies that any initiatives to enhance living conditions in the hostels should take into account ways of supporting matrons in the performance of their duties. We make this suggestion because the biographical data on matrons that we provided in appendix 1 revealed that they needed more academic and professional training (e.g. in catering, institutional management, pastoral care, hospitality training etc.) to adequately perform their duties. We propose that the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, the Polytechnic of Namibia, the University of Namibia and Colleges of Education should collaborate and enhance hostel matrons' capacity by offering them pre-service and in-service workshops, seminars, and hands-on courses on catering, hospitality training, school hostel management and pastoral care.

5.2.3 Community involvement

It was emphasized that guardians should assume and take their parental role with respect to OVC under their care seriously. They were urged to encourage orphans to remain in school and not to squander their inheritance and drop out of school. In addition, guardians, if they could afford, were to make sure that orphans living in the hostels were supplied with soap, toothpaste, clothes, shoes, pocket money, bed linen and other basic necessities. If they were unable to do this, it was incumbent on them to seek help for the orphans by supplying schools with needed information well in advance. Guardians should also ensure that orphans obeyed hostel rules and monitor their school progress by talking to teachers and by checking their books. In addition, they should care enough not to abandon orphans at school but pick them up or make transport arrangements for them to travel home for the holidays instead of letting them walk long distances.

For the OVC to be served better, guardians, parents, regional councilors and traditional leaders should supply information on them to the schools in advance. Such information

would be crucial in mobilizing donations for orphans and vulnerable children that would be in the form of clothes, uniforms, bedding, shoes, stationery and money.

It should be noted that community involvement in the maintenance of community hostels and the repair of hostel infrastructure depended on resources that community members could garner. For instance, although community members from the Ondangwa West educational region did not participate in the maintenance of the hostels we visited and the repair of broken doors, windows, toilets, beds and damaged toilets, they supplied to the hostels *mahangu* during harvest, wood for cooking, water when the bole holes were not working and some meat. Moreover, they helped build the traditional dormitory huts at one combined school.

The strategy communicated by this is that communities should be supported when their means were exhausted. In line with this an urgent call was made to help equip the community hostels in the Ondangwa West region with dining halls, kitchens, and food storage facilities.

The community leaders in the Caprivi Region illustrated the operation of the same strategy by suggesting that to support government hostels, communities should donate food after harvesting and supply schools with up-to-date information on orphans at the beginning of each year. In addition, they suggested that through the Indunas and the entire traditional authority establishments, the community should be mobilized to donate to the hostels not only material things but also labour and expertise that could be used in the repair and maintenance of the hostels.

To raise awareness about the needs of OVC in government and community hostels, there was need to actively advocate for them. For example, the Omaheke Sun Trust helped the san children to enroll in school, to get exempted from paying school and hostel fees, and by actively participating in the activities of the task force on educationally marginalized children. Another example was given by the Chief Community Liaison Officer of the Uutapi Regional Council. She informed us that the awareness was created at school meetings where poor parents and guardians taking care of several orphans asked for help to pay school fees, hostel fees and buy uniforms for these children. They did this because according to her,

 "exemption from paying school and hostel fees was just on paper. Teachers should be aware of this policy and implement it."

Another insightful community involvement strategy that was proposed by the Chief Community Liaison Officer of the Uutapi Regional Council was that to support the hostels, existing school boards should establish sub-committees on food, health, culture, religion and finance. To become active members, parents should be trained to occupy roles and perform their functions in the sub-committees.

Furthermore, in order for members of the community to effectively participate in the running of government or community hostels, they should be empowered to do so. For

example, there was need to facilitate the involvement of San parents, parents of other marginalized children and guardians of orphans in the running of hostels. This could be done by providing them with transport to attend meetings on hostel matters. At the meetings, translation facilities should be offered to enable parents from different ethnic groups to effectively communicate with each other. The minutes of such meetings should be read out aloud as a number of parents did not know how to read. Moreover, schools should recruit and train guardians and parents from marginalized groups (e.g. San parents) to become hostel workers. These parents would encourage marginalized children to remain in school as they would act as role models and communicate with the children in their own languages. The other suggestion was that guidelines on good hostel practices should be put in place. In order to share knowledge on them and encourage their wide use, a newsletter to disseminate good hostel practices could be published periodically. Such a newsletter could be circulated in schools and communities. In our view, as part of the community empowerment process, the publication and circulation of the newsletter could be decentralized to regions in the whole country.

5.3 Findings on the assessment of the merits of alternatives to hostels

Alternatives to hostels entail community-boarding facilities that are offered to learners who fail to be accommodated either in government or in community hostels. The system operates in such a way that private individuals in the communities put aside space in their homes for use by learners who may need it. This could be offered at a cost or at no cost. Usually, learners using such boarding facilities supply their own food and bedding.

It was reported at the 1994 conference on the future of hostels that in the Keetmanshoop educational region, MBESC used to provide direct assistance to foster parents who looked after learners in their homes and provided them with food at the rate of N$ 2.00 per child per day (Ankama, 1994). Although cheaper than the cost of maintaining learners in government hostels, this system was discontinued because of abuses (GRN, 1999, p.141).

The Presidential Commission report on education, training and culture judged as unacceptable the informal boarding arrangements "where learners gather together without any formal building. Sometimes they sleep in the open and sometimes are allowed to sleep in a classroom. Some get food through the school feeding scheme" (GRN, 1999, p. 141).

Kinghorn, et al., (2002, p. 68) observed that children boarding out in communities around schools were subjected to poor adult supervision, high risk of abuse and HIV infection and generally poor living conditions.

Given this background, alternatives to hostels seemed to offer boarding facilities to learners that could be abusive and of low quality. Our task in the present study was to assess the merits of some OVC utilizing community boarding facilities other than hostels.

Hostel superintendents and community hostel managers reported that it was rare for OVC to use alternative boarding facilities. One reason for this was that community members were afraid of shouldering the responsibility of housing and maintaining the children. When used, guardians and parents of OVC made private arrangements with relatives who lived near schools. In such cases, no payment was involved and the children were required to supply their own food. In some cases, the children would make private accommodation arrangements and have meals either in the hostel or through the school feeding scheme. How much such services cost the learners concerned was unclear.

The hostel inspector from the Katima Mulilo educational region reported that there were seasonal informal boarding facilities at Schuckmansburg, near the boarder with Zambia and at Mbalasinte, near the boarder with Botswana. The facilities were only in operation during the flooding season. The educational region was not involved in the running of these facilities. We were informed that because of lack of security, learners using these facilities were in the past abused by some community members who under the cover of darkness traveled to and from the facilities by canoe. The abuse exposed a number of learners to HIV infection.

Although we did not obtain enough information on which to base firm suggestions, the information from past research and our own discussions with respondents lead us to conclude that the use of alternative boarding facilities by OVC may not be viable. This is because many OVC would be unable to supply their own food, bedding and other necessities. In addition, it would be difficult to protect the children from abuse and monitor the quality of care that they would be offered in the private homes.

5.4 Findings on the analysis of factors determining the success/failure of community hostels

To carry out this analysis in a contextual way, we shall present findings in the form of two case studies. One case will be based on a successfully run donor-supported community hostel and the other case would be on two community hostels that were being run with difficulty. To provide benchmarks for good hostel practice we shall precede the cases with good hostel practice indicators we obtained from various respondents.

5.4.1 Suggested good community hostel practice indicators

To ensure that community hostels had the ability to meet learners' basic needs, hostel inspectors and Regional Directors of Education suggested the following procedures:

❖ Before they are established, community hostels should satisfy the existing regulations for establishing hostels. This would be done to protect all boarders from possible abuse.
❖ The community hostels should be registered before commencing any operations.
❖ The community hostels should be allowed to use relaxed admission criteria (e.g. not being rigid about the payment of hostel fees, the non use of the 5km

regulation for OVC, etc.) as they largely catered for OVC and marginalized children.

❖ The community hostels should meet the basic infrastructure and equipment requirements for any boarding facility (i.e. have fully equipped boarding, kitchen, ablution, sanitation and food storage facilities).

❖ In terms of personnel, the community hostels should ensure that enough hostel workers are employed to run the hostels, provide adequate boarder supervision and care. If employing sufficient salaried workers is not possible, communities should organize themselves to run the hostels and provide boarder supervision and care.

❖ MBESC should share responsibilities for running community hostels with the communities. This could be in the form of providing guidance on how to adequately meet the needs and protect the rights of the children in the hostels and in the form of facilitating the enhancement and building of community capacity to run the hostels.

❖ To protect and support OVC, information to exempt them from paying hostel and other fees should be disseminated in the mass media.

❖ Before they are established, all community hostels should demonstrate how they would protect learners under their care from sexual abuse and the risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

❖ MBESC should ensure that all community hostel personnel are empowered through sensitization seminars and workshops to provide supportive pastoral care to all boarders. They should specifically be in a position to protect, support and counsel OVC and marginalized children in distress.

❖ In order not to waste resources on undeserving learners, a successful community hostel would be one which accommodates only learners who are supposed to be accommodated in it. Such learners would include OVC. To ensure that this is the case, the hostel would prioritize the admission of OVC.

❖ A successful hostel is one that adheres to official policy guidelines on hostel admissions, behaviour of boarders and roles of hostel staff. Such a hostel should only adapt official hostel policy to protect boarders such as OVC from abuse and harm. To enforce this, community hostels should be aware of official government hostel policy.

❖ For it to be successful, boarders should participate in the upkeep of a community hostel. For instance, in such a hostel, boarders would be required to clean hostel surroundings, refrain from vandalism and help to maintain hygiene.

❖ A successful community hostel should be clean, secure, safe and hygienic. Security and safety should here include protection from the risk of HIV/AIDS infection. All hostel staff and boarders should work in unison for these conditions to be created and maintained.

❖ A successful community hostel should enjoy the support and involvement of guardians and parents of the boarders. This involvement would entail that community members actively participate in the running of the hostel and ensure that some learners are not abandoned at the hostel without anyone checking up on whether they are safe or not. In addition, guardians and parents should be

assertive enough to speak out on the rights of their children and report malpractices when they occur.

5.4.2 The case of a successfully run community hostel

Using the suggested good hostel practice indicators, we judged the donor-supported community hostel in the Omaheke region that was for San children, children of farm workers and other marginalized children to be successfully run. Five factors appeared to determine the success of the hostel.

Firstly, the hostel was managed by an effective trust that was chaired by a local commercial farmer and composed of the school principal, the hostel matron, two teachers and two parents. In addition to managing the hostel, the trust mobilized resources to run the hostel from its own sources, development agencies and international NGOs.

Secondly, the organizational style of the school and the hostel contributed to the success of the hostel. Using a firm and strict leadership style, the school principal run a well coordinated and supervised school and hostel. Teachers and hostel staff worked in unison to attend to the welfare of learners under their care. As a consequence of this, the school and the hostel were clean and with infrastructure and facilities that were not vandalized. Learners were aware that they would be asked to replace or pay the cost of damaged property.

The third factor was that the hostel was well resourced. Its dormitories, kitchen and ablution block were fully equipped with modern facilities that were in working order. Specifically, the hostel had a kitchen with adequate food preparation equipment and food storage facilities. Its dining hall was furnished with tables and benches to sit on and supplied with plates and cutlery for the boarders' use. The ablution block for the hostel had flush toilets, showers and wash basins that were all clean and in working order. The dormitories were clean, well maintained and equipped with bunk beds, mattresses and bed linen that were supplied to the boarders. This meant that the hostel provided a hygienic and pleasant living environment in which health problems were minimized. This was also the case because sick boarders could easily be taken to health facilities using a vehicle the school had for the purpose.

The fourth factor that contributed to the success of the hostel was the high quality of teachers and hostel workers. For instance, the hostel was supervised by a caring and humane matron who was also a teacher. Because she was able to speak several local languages fluently, she was able to communicate with all boarders in their own mother tongues. This meant that she could readily identify learner problems and provide informed pastoral care. The other hostel workers were highly motivated and committed to their work. Moreover, the learners received high quality education from well-qualified teachers and a dedicated school principal.

The fifth factor related to maintenance. The hostel equipment and facilities were maintained on a continuous basis by a resident handy man that the school had engaged.

We thought that this was a good practice that could be replicated in various ways by government and community hostels.

Notwithstanding the positive factors, we observed that the community did not actively participate in the running of the hostel and that a number of learners we talked to appeared to be frightened and afraid of being severely punished for any property damage. Based on the suggestions we made earlier in the report, the community members should be empowered to actively participate in the affairs of the hostel. In addition, to promote social-emotional well-being children should not be frightened into compliance and forced obedience. Rather, a supportive psychosocial living environment should be developed, nurtured and maintained at the school by creating responsible friends out of children.

5.4.3 The case of two community hostels that were being run with difficulty

Both of the community hostels to be discussed here were in the Ondangwa West Educational region. The first one of these serviced a combined school. As indicated earlier, this hostel was initiated and established by the school for marginalized and needy children. At the time of our visit, the community hostel was being run in a manner that was not successful. A number of factors were responsible for this.

The first problem was that the management board running the hostel did not include parents and guardians. The school principal and teachers ran the hostel. Although some parents and guardians were involved in erecting and maintaining informal dormitory structures, they were not mobilized and organized to participate in the running of the hostel on a day-to-day basis.

The second inhibiting factor was that the hostel was poorly resourced. It had overcrowded boarding facilities that were not equipped with beds. Boarders, using limited bedding, shared small mattresses. Ventilation and lighting in the informal dormitories were poor. The community hostel had inadequate toilet facilities that were in the form of pit latrines. There were no dining facilities at the hostel and a makeshift shelter without food storage facilities served as a kitchen. Under these circumstances, hygiene was difficult to maintain at the hostel.

The third factor was that the community hostel did not have a sufficient number of hostel workers to provide adequate boarder supervision and care.

The fourth factor pertained to inadequate medical services. Because it was located more than 40km from the nearest health facility and because it did not have its own transport, it was very difficult for the community hostel to meet the boarders' health needs.

Inadequate nutrition was another difficulty. Although the school operated a school feeding scheme, there was not enough food for the over 200 boarders accommodated in the community hostel.

Despite these limitations, we observed that the school principal tried very hard to provide education to marginalized children who would otherwise have no access to it. Although doing this was noble, our view is that the community served by the hostel should be actively involved in the running of the hostel and empowered to mobilize and generate resources that could be used for the upkeep of the hostel boarders. Because doing this will be difficult for a community with limited resources, we propose that the state should compliment the community efforts by mobilizing and making its development partners, development agencies, NGOs and CBOs aware of the needs of community hostels such as this one. This support would galvanize the self-reliant spirit demonstrated by the community.

The Catholic church- supported community hostel in Ondangwa West educational region was the second community hostel that was run under serious constraints. This was the case because of the following factors:

Firstly, the hostel was run independently of the school it was servicing. This robbed the hostel of input from school personnel that would have assisted in providing boarder supervision and care. Because of the limited number of workers at its disposal, the hostel was unable to provide adequate cooking, supervision and general house keeping services to its boarders.

Secondly, as was the case with the hostel at the combined school, the independently run community hostel had limited accommodation, kitchen, toilet and bathroom facilities. Makeshift bathrooms without doors and roofs provided little privacy to boarders. Moreover, although clean, two small pit latrines were not enough for 65 boarders who were accommodated in six small rooms.

Thirdly, because it was not serviced by a school feeding scheme and because it bought food from its own resources, the hostel had inadequate capacity to supply food to its boarders.

Fourthly, the hostel did not have clear procedures for prioritizing the admission of OVC. In fact, because it charged N$ 260.00 per term and it did not provide bedding and toiletries, OVC would find it difficult to be admitted into the hostel.

By taking these limitations into account, we concluded that for them to adequately meet the needs of OVC and other boarders, community hostels such as this one needed support in providing adequate psychosocial care, food, accommodation and bedding, bathroom, toilet, kitchen and dining facilities. The resource mobilization strategies that were suggested earlier in the report could be employed in providing this support.

While collecting data at the community hostel we observed that the needed support would be complimentary to the efforts already made by the community and the Catholic mission that managed the hostel. Demonstrating the spirit of self-reliance, the community built modern dormitory blocks for boarders and the mission had an orchard, a garden, some livestock and chickens. From these resources, the community hostel could easily be

supplied with meat, fruits and vegetables. It was not clear during the visit whether these resources were used in this way.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's background literature, findings that have been presented in the preceding section and in addition to what has already been proposed in the draft National Policy on HIV/AIDS for the educational sector, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture should facilitate OVC's access to education through the use of school hostels by revising its policy on hostels and by taking a number of actions. In proposing how this could be done we, in this section, make recommendations on re-formulating hostel admission criteria for government and community hostels, on strategies for rendering hostels supportive and caring of OVC and on a policy for community hostels. Recommendations pertaining to government hostels will be presented separately from those pertaining to the proposed policy on community hostels.

6.1 Re-formulating admission criteria for government hostels

1. It was noted earlier in the report that current government hostel admission criteria were vague on the admission of OVC and that they did not make any provision for these children. In response to this, we recommend that OVC should be specifically mentioned in the revised hostel admission criteria and that their admission into the hostels should be prioritized. To do this, article 7.6 of the draft national policy on HIV/AIDS for the educational sector which stipulates that "*heads of educational institutions and heads of hostels should ensure that allocation of accommodation in the hostels should favour the most vulnerable learners…*" should be applied. This means that OVC should be given first priority in government hostel admissions.
2. To ensure that schools give OVC first priority in hostel admissions and to ensure that deserving children receive this treatment, it is important for the schools to have verifiable information on the children in need. For this to take place, we recommend that using the definition of OVC, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture should, in collaboration with the Ministries of Home Affairs and Health and Social Services, traditional leaders, local and regional government councils, churches and NGO's working with OVC, put in place mechanisms for identifying, screening, assessing and registering OVC in need of educational support and care. Such mechanisms should spell out the role of guardians and parents in supplying school principals with information on OVC in need of hostel accommodation. For this information to be given well in advance, schools in collaboration with communities should proactively gather it from guardians and parents of OVC.
3. It was observed that the use of unofficial hostel admission criteria (e.g. requiring that no admission to the hostel should be granted to those who fail to pay hostel fees, applying the principle of *first come first served* and requiring that to be admitted into the hostel learners should attain specific points in previous examinations) would bar OVC from being admitted into government hostels. To

forestall this, we recommend that the revised hostel admission criteria that would prioritize the admission of OVC should be made mandatory for use by all government schools. School boards should monitor and enforce this.

4. Because the current hostel fee exemption procedures are unspecific on how OVC should be exempted, inefficient in their application (i.e. they take too long to serve OVC), are unknown to a number of guardians and parents of OVC and because they can be ignored by schools, we recommend that they be streamlined in such a way that they specifically identify OVC to be exempted, conditions under which they can be exempted and contain the condition that their enforcement is mandatory and binding on all government schools. Moreover, consistent with what many respondents proposed and to ensure that hostel fee exemption procedures are applied more efficiently, we recommend that their processing be decentralized and finalized at the regional and school levels. In addition, to ensure that OVC and their guardians and parents know about their existence, hostel fee exemption procedures should be publicized on radio, in newspapers, on TV, in churches, at political party meetings, at teacher union meetings, at youth organizations' conferences and in HIV/AIDS community awareness campaigns.

5. To further ensure that OVC are prioritized in government hostel admissions, we recommend that school hostel application forms and hostel fee exemption forms be revised to take the needs of OVC into account.

6. Because the main issue with OVC is need for care and protection, close proximity to schools with hostels should not be used to bar them from hostel accommodation. To ensure that this is the case, we recommend that OVC should be exempted from the application of the regulation that boarders in government hostels aught to reside more than 5km away from hostels they wish to be accommodated in.

6.2 Strategies for rendering government hostels supportive and caring of OVC

One main message of this study is that OVC's basic needs of various kinds are currently not adequately met in both government and community hostels. In section 5.2 of this report, we presented suggested strategies for meeting OVC's basic needs in government and community hostels more adequately. These were organized under the headings of resource mobilization, capacity building and community involvement in support of OVC in hostels. Recommendations in this section will be based on the suggested strategies and on some of the background literature. This will be done as follows:

6.2.1 Resource mobilization

1. The Cabinet of the Government of the Republic of Namibia has decided to establish an OVC fund to be sustained by a levy every Namibian tax payer would be required to pay. The Cabinet has also mandated the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare to work out mechanisms of accommodating children in need of care in school hostels and to ensure that these children remained in school. We

recommend that the fund should partly be used to pay for OVC's maintenance in the government hostels. In addition, to further support schools in their efforts to accommodate OVC in the school hostels and based on the educational act of 2001guidelines for the operation of the educational development fund, the establishment of an educational subsidy programme for these children should be urgently organized and implemented. Such a subsidy should be used for paying OVC's school and hostel fees, for buying uniforms, blankets, and other basic necessities required in the hostels.

2. To complement the state's efforts, we recommend that communities in which OVC reside should be organized to mobilize resources to be used by orphans in need of hostel accommodation and maintenance. In both urban and rural areas communities should be mobilized to establish trust funds for OVC in need. Some of these trust funds could be transformed into bursary/scholarship funds to be accessed by deserving OVC in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. The trust funds could also be used by OVC to buy uniforms, pay for school and hostel fees, buy books and other school supplies. Moreover, communities should also be mobilized to directly donate to OVC in the hostels food, blankets, clothes, money and stationery. We propose that the implementation of this recommendation should be based on the details that were given in section 5.2 of this report.

3. To support the community trust funds, we recommend that local business-men and women should be sensitized to the needs of OVCs and support them by making contributions to the trust funds. OVC could access the trust funds using guidelines that regional councils would put in place. Furthermore, individual business-men and women should be mobilized to sponsor individual OVC and support them in paying school and hostel fees and in buying clothes, toiletries and other basic necessities.

4. At a modest level, we recommend that persons in their private capacities should be mobilized to either donate to OVC in the hostels clothes, shoes, school uniforms, money, blankets and other bed linen or sponsor orphans attending educational institutions by paying for their hostel and school requisites. Civic organizations such as churches, CBOs, NGOs, regional councils and political organizations should be mobilized in support of this effort.

5. To avoid instilling the spirit of dependency into OVC, we recommend that wherever possible, income-generating activities should be facilitated and run by OVC and their guardians/parents. For instance, OVC should be supported to engage in part time employment during school holidays.

6. Our findings revealed that physical infrastructure and facilities in most of the government hostels we visited did not enable OVC to have their needs for physical security and hygienic living conditions adequately met because of disrepair and squalor. The insight to note here is that there is not only need to mobilize resources to place OVC in the hostels but that it is also important to recognize that to make them physically safe for OVC and other boarders, several government hostels will have to be renovated and refurbished. In light of this, we recommend that a programme to rehabilitate and renovate government hostels be put in place. To ensure that hostels are maintained on a continuous basis, we recommend that a separate government hostel maintenance unit be established.

This unit should be attached to the Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture for accountability purposes.

6.2.2 Capacity building

Another major finding of this study was that OVC's needs for safety and psychological security, protection against neglect, abuse and the risk of HIV infection, protection against discrimination and stigmatization and the need for psychosocial support would not be adequately met in the government hostels. Related to this, we also found that in general, hostel staff and other school personnel did not have the capacity to support OVC and other boarders to meet the various psychosocial needs. To ameliorate this, we make the following recommendations:

1. In the short term, we recommend that the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, the Polytechnic of Namibia, the University of Namibia and Colleges of Education should collaborate and enhance hostel matrons' capacity by offering them pre-service and in-service workshops, seminars, and hands-on courses on catering, hospitality training, school hostel management and pastoral care. In a similar way, in-service training on pastoral care, non-discrimination, non-stigmatization and the management of learners in the hostels should be organized for supervisory teachers. Such capacity building should benefit from guidelines provided in the draft national policy on HIV/AIDS for the educational sector. In the medium and long term, teacher education institutions in Namibia should include in their curricula pre-service and in-service training on school hostel pastoral care and management.

2. Because OVC living in government hostels displayed several social-emotional problems, we recommend that to support them, principals, hostel staff and all teachers should receive in-service training in psychosocial support and counseling. In the form of practice-oriented seminars and workshops, such training should involve grief and bereavement counseling, guidance and counseling, personal communication skills and the handling of stress, anxiety, depression, management of the deceased parents' estate, discrimination and stigmatization. This would ensure that the residential care provided by hostels would protect the rights of and meet the developmental and psychosocial needs and rights of OVC and other boarders. Teacher education institutions, NGOs with appropriate infrastructure, capacity and resources, teacher unions and other civic organizations should be mobilized by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture to provide this training.

3. Based on the information that was provided in detail earlier, we recommend that circles of support for OVC be established in all schools with government hostels. As noted earlier, the operation of this system would enhance capacity within schools to provide specific support in strengthening the skills of guidance and counseling teachers to address vulnerable children issues and build class teacher sensitization, skills and confidence to recognize and manage vulnerable children. Regional educational school councilors should be mandated to facilitate the establishment of the circles of support in schools.

6.2.3 Community involvement

1. The Education Act of 2001 has detailed guidelines on the establishment and running of school boards. We recommend that these guidelines be used when encouraging guardians and parents to take their parenting role seriously and refrain from neglecting and abandoning OVC in the school hostels. Moreover, based on the findings presented in this report, we recommend that enforceable policy guidelines on the roles of guardians and parents of OVC in hostels be formulated. The school boards as envisaged in the Educational Act of 2001 should be used to come up with such guidelines.

6.3 Recommendations on community hostel policy

Based on the suggested benchmarks for good community hostel practice, the community hostel case studies, other relevant findings of this report and on some background literature, we shall make community hostel policy recommendations in the areas of admission criteria for community hostels, the management of community hostels, resource mobilization and fundraising for community hostels and community involvement in the day-to-day running of community hostels. This will be done as follows:

6.3.1 Community hostel admission

1. As reported earlier, ad hoc admission criteria were used by the community hostels we visited. We recommend that community hostels should adapt the revised government hostel admission criteria to suit their circumstances.
2. Because they can be accessed by any learner in need of accommodation, we recommend that as a matter of policy, community hostels should prioritize the admission of OVC. As was the case for government hostels, this means that OVC would be given first priority in community hostel admissions.
3. Because they largely cater for OVC and marginalized children, we recommend that community hostels should be more flexible in admitting learners (e.g. not being rigid about the payment of hostel fees, the use of the 5km regulation, etc.).
4. To facilitate OVC access to education, we recommend that the revised hostel fee exemption criteria and procedures that we suggested for government hostels should be applied by community hostels as well.
5. In order to prepare for possible hostel admission difficulties and crises, we recommend that community hostel managers should be familiar with the revised government hostel admission and hostel fee exemption criteria. To implement this, hostel inspectors should supply community hostels with information on the criteria.

6.3.2 Management of community hostels

1. We recommend that community hostels be managed by school boards. In their operations, the school boards should establish community hostel sub-committees on hostel admission and record keeping, accommodation, food supply and preparation, kitchen facilities, ablution and toilet facilities, maintenance, fundraising, boarder supervision and care and medical services. Using the suggestions that were made earlier in the report, community members should be empowered to play their roles in the sub-committees. In addition, there should be collaboration between the school and the community in running the community hostels. To avoid the situation where community members make minimal input in the management of community hostels, school principals and teachers should not run community hostels on behalf of the communities.

2. To ensure that learners in the community hostels have their basic needs met, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture should exercise some oversight of the hostels. This should be in the form of providing guidance on how to adequately care for the learners and facilitating the enhancement and building of community capacity to run the hostels. The school hostel inspectors should perform this role on behalf of the Ministry.

3. In order to provide adequate pastoral care and psychosocial support to boarders, school boards in charge of community hostels should either employ a sufficient number of staff to run the hostels or organize a cadre of volunteers from the community to perform the various hostel tasks on a rotation basis. As a matter of policy, MBESC should give guidelines on the minimum qualifications and number of workers the community hostels should have. This should be based on the core functions that aught to be performed in a school boarding facility. These include providing and maintaining boarding facilities, procuring and preparing food, water, fuel/power supply, supervision and care of boarders, maintaining hygiene and security. Leaving this to the communities would lead to situations where very few individuals are engaged to perform multiple functions and care for large numbers of boarders.

4. Although the school boards should have the overall authority with respect to managing community hostels, we recommend that principals of schools serviced by the hostels should be responsible for the welfare of boarders. This means that there should be an administrative link between the community hostel and the school management. This would ensure a working link between the school and the community. In the absence of this link, it would be difficult for MBESC to monitor the operations of the hostels.

5. Through hostel prefects and participation in hostel hygiene maintenance, we recommend that boarders should take part in the management of school hostels.

6. To ensure that they meet the basic infrastructure and equipment requirement for any boarding facility (i.e. have fully equipped boarding, kitchen, ablution, sanitation and food storage facilities), we recommend that community hostels be registered with MBESC. This would enable the Ministry to have data on the hostels and to prevent possible harm to boarders.

7. Because they are currently unavailable, we recommend that school hostels should gather and maintain statistics on hostel capacity, the number of boarders, gender of boarders, grades of boarders, hostel staff, infrastructure, equipment and facilities. Educational regions and the Hostels Division of MBESC should keep and update this information on an annual basis. This information would be vital for planning purposes and when mobilizing material and financial resources for the hostels.

6.3.3 Resource mobilization and fundraising

1. We recommend that community hostels should establish and maintain trust funds. Managed by the school boards, such trust funds would receive contributions from the community, local and international NGOs, CBOs and development agencies. Permanent fundraising sub-committees of the school boards should annually mobilize the community and possible donors to maintain the trust funds. Resource mobilization strategies that were given in section 5.2 of this report could be adapted when doing this. Schools serviced by the community hostels should be supported by educational regions and the Hostels Division of MBESC to access possible sources of funding.

2. OVC and marginalized children in the community hostels should be enabled to access the fund that the Cabinet of the Government of the Republic of Namibia has established. Based on community hostel statistics, educational regional offices should put in place mechanisms of how the fund should be accessed at the school level.

3. We propose that the resource mobilization recommendations we made in section 6.2.1 of this report should be adapted and adopted by community hostels where appropriate.

4. In addition to the trust funds, community hostels should be allowed to charge modest hostel fees for boarders who can afford. OVC and marginalized children who cannot afford to pay the fees should be exempted from paying them. The fee exemption procedures that were proposed earlier for government hostels should be used when doing this.

5. We recommend that development agencies and partners who establish community hostels should not only equip these hostels but help maintain them financially until the communities are able to run them on their own. During the transition period, the development agencies should empower communities to raise and manage their own financial resources.

6. Because of the expected escalation of the OVC numbers, we recommend that MBESC should take the needs of community hostels into account when preparing its budget and when seeking for development support from its partners and other institutions.

7. To cut down the cost of feeding boarders in the community hostels, we recommend that the school feeding programme be extended to all schools with community hostels.

8. Because they already have organized and mobilized community structures, we recommend that some schools that operate school feeding programmes be

encouraged to transform these programmes into community hostels. The goal of this would be to increase the number of community hostel facilities for use by OVC.

6.3.4 Community involvement

1. MBESC should sensitize communities to recognize that they are primarily responsible for the management and running of community hostels. The state's main role is to advise communities on how to run the hostels. This should be done at community meetings, teacher union meetings and in circulars on community participation in education.
2. Under the auspices of the school boards, we recommend that not only should community members get involved in the activities of the sub-committees that would be organized to run the hostels, they should also participate in the maintenance of community hostels and the repair of hostel infrastructure. Furthermore, they should be mobilized to donate to the hostels food, water, wood, labour or anything in kind to help run the hostels.
3. We recommend that when communities are unable to provide for the hostels on their own, they should be empowered by the state and its development partners to seek help for putting in place infrastructure in the form of dining halls, kitchens, ablution and food storage facilities.
4. In order to raise awareness and advocate for OVCs and marginalized children in the community hostels, communities should supply schools with up-to-date information on these children at the beginning of each year. In addition, they should help OVC to get exempted from paying school and community hostel fees and they should participate actively in the activities of organizations that work for the welfare of these children.
5. We recommend that because they implicate community involvement, recommendations that were proposed under the policy for managing community hostels should be taken into account when designing policy on community involvement for the hostels.

7.0 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The main purpose of the study on which this report is based was to ascertain the extent to which government and community hostels would be supportive of and meet the basic needs of OVC. This report has documented the results of the assessment and outlined various ways of making the hostels supportive of OVC. In addition, the report has presented suggestions on which a policy on community hostels could be based. One important issue that has been emphasized in the report is that to be supportive of OVC government and community hostels would need human capacity, material and financial resources. Resource mobilization, capacity building and infrastructure procurement and maintenance should be considered very seriously when revising school hostel policy and when using hostels to mitigate the impact of adversity on OVC. To us, it is important to ensure OVC's access to education and at the same time meet their basic needs and protect them from further harm of a physical or psychological nature. We urge the readers of this

report to seriously consider the importance of the relatedness of these issues. One should not be advocated at the expense of the other. The challenge is to make the government and community hostels 'better homes from home' for OVC.

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9.0 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Descriptive summary of the sample

At the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture Headquarters, we interviewed four officials. Whereas one of these was a chief hostels officer who worked in the school hostels division, two were chief educational officers for primary schools and members of the inter-sectoral task force for educationally marginalized children, and the remaining official was the chairperson of the task force on HIV/AIDS and education. Two of the officials were female and the other two were male. Holding Bachelor's degrees and with a mean age of 51 years, the number of years the four officials had been working in education ranged from 11 to 32 years.

Three regional directors interviewed were from Katima Mulilo, Ondangwa West and Windhoek Educational regions. Two of the schools in the Ondangwa West region formerly belonged to the Khorixas Educational region in the Kunene political region. Whereas one had been acting regional director for one month, one had been director for 8 years and the third one had been director for 11 years. With a mean age of 54 years, the three directors were male and had both professional training in education and bachelor's degrees.

Three regional hostel inspectors and one regional hostel officer were interviewed. The hostel inspectors' age ranged from 39 years to 57 years. Their mean age was 49 years. Whereas two of the inspectors had bachelor's degrees and professional training in education, the remaining one held a four-year teachers' diploma. Aged 31 years, the regional hostel officer held a national diploma in Agriculture. He had been hostel officer for one and half years. In addition to being male, the period of experience as inspector for the three officials ranged from 6 and half years to 15 years.

Although 14 schools were visited, we only interviewed 13 school principals. The community hostel servicing the 14th school was managed independently. The schools were located in the educational regions as indicated in table 1.Two of the remaining 13 schools did not have school hostels. They only operated the school feeding scheme programme. Eight of the principals at schools with hostels were male and three of them were female. With a mean age of 44 years, 3 of the 11 principals had Bachelor's degrees with professional educational diplomas, 3 of them held BETD qualifications and 5 of them had HED qualifications. Whereas the average number of years of experience as principal was 7.9, the range of this experience was from 1 and half years to 17 years.

6 hostel superintendents were interviewed. Whereas 2 were from the Katima Mulilo educational region, 2 were from Ondangwa West and 2 were from the Windhoek region. With the mean age of 32 years, 5 of the superintendents were male and 1 of them was female. Four of them had bachelor's degrees, one had an NEC qualification and one had a BETD qualification. While one of them was a superintendent for 9 years and half years, another had held her job for 10 years. The experience as superintendent for the remaining four ranged from 9 months to 1 and half years.

Ten hostel supervisory teachers were interviewed. Five of these were from the Katima Mulilo region, 3 were from Ondangwa West and 2 of them were from the Windhoek region. Six of the teachers were male and 4 of them were female. With a mean age of about 32 years, 6 of the supervisory teachers had Bachelor's degrees, 4 of them had diplomas and certificates in education. With a mean of about 2 years, the supervisory teachers' experience ranged from 1 year to 5 years.

Of the 7 hostel matrons interviewed, 4 were male and 3 were female. Except for one who had grade 12 as his highest qualification, 6 of them had grade 10 as their highest qualification. With a mean age of 46 years, 5 of them had been matrons for either 12 years or more than twelve years, one had served for 5 years and the seventh one had served for 8years. Whereas 1 of the matrons was from the Windhoek region, 4 were from the Katima Mulilo region and 2 were from Ondangwa West.

Of the 5 community hostel managers interviewed, 4 were female and 1 was male. Whereas, 2 of them had the BETD qualification, 2 had grade 10 as their qualification and one of them was a grade 12 certificate holder. Three of the community hostel managers were from Ondangwa West (i.e. Omusati and Kunene political regions), two were from the Windhoek region (i.e. Omaheke political region). The age of the managers ranged from 27 years to 63 years and their mean age was 42 years. Whereas one of the managers had been performing her job for 18 years, the manager with the least experience had been at her job for half a year. The remaining three mangers had been in their jobs for 3 years, 5 years and 9 years, respectively.

Out of 28 learners, 15 were female and 13 were male. Whereas twenty of the learners were orphans, 8 were vulnerable children. The age of the learners in the sample ranged from 8 to 23 years and its mean was 16 years. Nine of the learners were in Primary School and 19 learners were in Secondary school. In addition, 18 learners were in

government school hostels, 5 were in community hostels and 5 were not in the hostels although they should have been.

Three of the 6 community leaders were from the Caprivi region, 2 were from the Omaheke region and 1 was from the Omusati region. Professionally, 2 of the leaders were regional government officials. Whereas 1 of these was a regional governor, the other one was a chief control officer. Two were traditional leaders occupying the position of *Induna*. One of the remaining 2 leaders was a chief community liaison officer and the other one was a community development officer. It should be noted that one of the school principals in the Katima Mulilo educational region was also a regional Councilor and the outgoing school hostel inspector in the Ondangwa West educational region had taken up employment with the Uutapi Regional Council at the time of the interview. The age of the community leaders ranged from 28 years to 62 years and its mean was 45 years. On average, the community leaders had been in their positions for 5 years. Three of the leaders had diploma level qualifications, 1 had a grade 12 certificate and 2 had qualifications less than grade 12.

9.2 Appendix 2: Research Instruments

STUDY ON ENSURING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR ORPHANS AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN THROUGH SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE HOSTEL/COMMUNITY BOARDING FACILITIES

Questions for community hostel managers

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions on how your community hostel can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive community hostel boarding facilities. The information obtained from you will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can viably be done.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? ---
2. How old are you? -----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? ---
5. What is your position in the community hostel administration-------------------------
6. For how long have you been the manager of the hostel? --

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

1. When was the community hostel established?

2. Who established the community hostel?

3. Why was the community hostel established?

4. Is there a board that runs the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'yes' who sits on the board? Is the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture represented on the board?

5. What criteria does the community hostel use when admitting boarders?

6. How much are the community hostel fees?

7. Is any learner exempted from paying these fees ☐ Yes ☐ No if the answer is 'yes', who is exempted from paying the fees? What criteria are used to exempt some learners from paying community hostel fees?

8. Are there orphans and vulnerable children in the community hostels? If there are, are there special measures to have these children exempted from paying hostel fees? If there are, what are these measures?

9. Are beds and mattresses sufficient for the number of boarders you have in the community hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'no' what should be done to obtain more beds and mattresses?

10. Is there enough space for boarders in the community hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If there is not enough space in the community hostel, are some learners who fail to be accommodated in the hostel accommodated in private houses in the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'yes' do the owners of private houses charge fees? How are the arrangements made between the learners and the owners of the houses?

12. Who supplies the community hostel with food? Who pays for the food?

13. What do boarders eat for breakfast, lunch and supper? Is there enough food for three meals for each boarder? If not, what should be done?

14. Does the school feeding scheme operate at the school that is served by the community school hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If it does, how many food portions are served to orphans and vulnerable children? What kind of food are they served?

15. Do children have tables and chairs in the dining hall? Do they use table knives, forks and spoons when eating?

16. Does the hostel use pit latrines or toilets that flash? If it uses flash toilets, do they flash? If they do not, why?

17. Is the hostel supplied with enough water for bathing and washing clothes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Are there showers and wash basins for the boarders' use? ☐ Yes ☐ No If they are, are they in working order? If they are not, how do boarders keep themselves clean?

19. Does the community school hostel adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:

19.1 Bedding? If not, why not? What could be done to meet bedding needs

19.2 security? If not, why not? Are there broken dormitory doors and windows that need to be repaired? If there are, who does maintenance work for the hostel?

19.3 medical care? If not, why not? What does the hostel do when a boarder gets sick? Does the hostel need help in this area? What kind of help does it need?

20. What does the schools which is served by the community hostel do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children resident in the hostel are protected from:

20.1 Neglect;

20.2 physical harm;

20.3 the risk of HIV and STD infection?

21. Have there been cases of sexual abuse in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'yes', briefly describe how these cases took place? How can such cases be prevented in future?

22. Are orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who reside in the hostel bullied, teased, ridiculed and called bad names by members of the school community? If they are, what do you do to protect them from this harassment?

23. Are orphans affected by HIV/AIDS prevented from participating in extra-curricular school and hostel activities by their peers? What do you and other hostel staff do to protect the children from this?

24. What examples of cases of personal problems have some orphans and other vulnerable children come to seek advice from you or your colleagues on?

25. Have you or your colleagues been trained to counsel young people in distress? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer is 'no', what skills would you need to counsel learners with personal problems?

26. What do guardians and parents do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children meet needs that are not met by the community hostel (e.g. clothing, soap, blankets and bed sheets)?

27. What does the community do to maintain the hostel and repair infrastructure (e. g. repair broken dormitory doors, windows, broken toilets, damaged showers, broken beds)?

Questions for community leaders

Instructions

3. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions on how school and community hostels in your community can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive community hostel boarding facilities. The information obtained from you will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can viably be done.
4. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

7. What is your name? ---
8. How old are you? -----------------------------------
9. Are you male or female? ---------------------------
10. What are your highest qualifications? ---
11. What is leadership role do you play in the community?------------------------
12. For how long have you been a community leader? ---------------------------------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

13. What contributions does your community make to help maintain orphans and vulnerable children in the government/community hostels? Does the community:
14. donate food to the school hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. donate blankets, clothes and stationery to orphans and vulnerable children?   ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. repair broken hostel doors, windows, toilets and showers? ☐ Yes ☐ No
17. participate in the running of the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No
18. raise money and donate it to the school to cover the hostel fees for orphans and vulnerable children ☐ Yes ☐ No
19. provide general maintenance of government/community hostels (e.g. painting the hostel) ? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. What does the community do to raise awareness about the needs of orphans and vulnerable children who reside in government/community hostels?

21. What does the community do about sexual abuse in the hostel that is committed by school and community members?

22. What does the community do about lack of learner security and protection from harm in the government and community hostels?

23. How can local community business men and women help maintain orphans and other vulnerable children in government and community hostels?

24. What does the community do to raise awareness about abuse and discrimination perpetrated against orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children by some members of the public?

25. In your opinion, what should your community do to help run government and community hostels better?

Questions for Educational Regional Directors

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how your educational region in collaboration with various communities in your area of jurisdiction can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you and from other respondents will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can viably be done.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

3. What is your name? --
4. How old are you? -----------------------------------
5. Are you male or female? ---------------------------
6. What are your highest qualifications? ---
7. What is the name of your Educational Region? -------------------------------
8. For how long have you been the Educational Director of your Region? -------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

1. How does your region handle the admission of orphans, other vulnerable children and marginalized children into government school hostels?
2. Who usually comes to school to apply for hostel admission for orphans and vulnerable children?
3. To your knowledge, are there orphans and vulnerable children in government hostels in your region? If there are, are there special measures to have these children exempted from paying hostel fees?
4. Are orphans and other vulnerable children exempted from the application of the 5km regulation?
5. Do community hostels apply the same admission criteria? If not, what criteria do they use?
6. In your opinion, would government school hostels adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:
7.

7.1 accommodation and bedding? If not, what should be done to improve the situation?
7.2 food? If not, what should be done to provide adequate food?
7.3 hygiene? Why or why not? How could hygiene be improved?
7.4 security? Why or why not? What should be done to improve security?
7.5 medical services? Why or why not? What should be done to cater for medical services better?
8. Would community school hostels adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:
8.1 Accommodation? If not, why not? What should be done to provide adequate accommodation?
8.2 Bedding? If not, why not? What could be done to meet bedding needs?

8.3 Food? If not, what could be done to provide adequate food?

8.4 hygienic sanitation? If not, why not? What could be done to improve hygiene?

8.5 security? If not, why not? What could be done to make the hostels more secure?

8.6 medical care? If not, why not? What could be done to supply needed medical care?
9. What do schools with government hostels and those that are served by community hostels do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children resident in the hostels are protected from:

9.1 Neglect;

9.2 sexual abuse;

9.3 physical harm;

9.4 the risk of HIV and STD infection?

10. What should schools with government and community hostels do to ensure that orphans affected by HIV/AIDS resident in the hostels are protected from:

10.1 Stigmatization?

10.2 discrimination?

11. Based on your experience and knowledge, do you think school principals, hostel superintendents, hostel supervisory teachers and hostel matrons have professional skills to counsel and emotionally support grieving orphans and those in distress?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

11.1 If your answer to this question is 'yes' why do you agree?

11.2 If your answer to the question is 'no', why do you disagree?

12. What support do you think school principals, superintendents, supervisory teachers and matrons need to acquire these competencies?

12.1 support for principals
12.2 support for superintendents
12.3 support for supervisory teachers
12.4 support for matrons

13. What should the private sector do to support the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture in its efforts to enable orphans and other vulnerable children access education services by being placed in government school hostels?
14. Are you aware of the practice of providing boarding facilities to learners in private homes in the communities? ☐Yes   ☐ No
15. If your answer to question 9.1 is 'yes', how are these arrangements made? How does the practice operate?
16. In your opinion, what factors make the functioning of a hostel
16.1 successful?
16.2 unsuccessful?
17. What community cultural beliefs, values, traditions and practices may hinder the process of turning government school hostels into havens of physical and psychological well-being and support for orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children?
18.   What should the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture do to overcome the barriers?
19. What policy revisions would you suggest to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in government school hostels?

20. To protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children from further trauma and hardship, what criteria for establishing community hostels would you suggest?

21. What do you think would be the role of guardians and parents in ensuring orphans and other vulnerable children access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels?

22. What role would communities play in ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children have access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels.

Questions for officials in the division of the inspectorate and hostels management at the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture Headquarters, representatives of the inter-sectoral task force for educationally marginalized children and representatives of the task force on HIV/AIDS and education

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture in collaboration with various communities in Namibia can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you and from other respondents will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can viably be done.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? --
2. How old are you? ----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? ---
5. What is your official position in the Ministry? ---------------------------------
6. What section of the Ministry do you work for? ---------------------------------
7. For how long have you been an employee of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture? ---

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

8. How does the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture handle the admission of orphans, other vulnerable children and marginalized children into government school hostels?
9. Who usually comes to school to apply for hostel admission for orphans and vulnerable children?
10. To your knowledge, are there orphans and vulnerable children in government hostels? If there are, are there special measures to have these children exempted from paying hostel fees?
11. Are orphans and other vulnerable children exempted from the application of the 5km regulation?
12. Do community hostels apply the same admission criteria? If not, what criteria do they use?
13. In your opinion, would government school hostels adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:

    a. accommodation and bedding? If not, what should be done to improve the situation

    b. food? If not, what should be done to provide adequate food?

    c. hygiene? Why or why not? How could hygiene be improved?

    d. security? Why or why not? What should be done to improve security?

    e. medical services? Why or why not? What should be done to cater for medical services better?

14. Would community school hostels adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:

    a. Accommodation? If not, why not? What should be done to provide adequate accommodation?

    b. Bedding? If not, why not? What could be done to meet bedding needs?

    c. Food? If not, what could be done to provide adequate food?

    d. hygienic sanitation? If not, why not? What could be done to improve hygiene?

    e. security? If not, why not? What could be done to make the hostels more secure?

    f. medical care? If not, why not? What could be done to supply needed medical care?

15. What do schools with government hostels and those that are served by community hostels do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children resident in the hostels are protected from:

    a.   Neglect;

    b.   sexual abuse;

    c.   physical harm;

    d.   the risk of HIV and STD infection?

16. What should schools with government and community hostels do to ensure that orphans affected by HIV/AIDS resident in the hostels are protected from:

    a.   Stigmatization?

    b.   discrimination?

17. Based on your experience and knowledge, do you think school principals, hostel superintendents, hostel supervisory teachers and hostel matrons have professional skills to counsel and emotionally support grieving orphans and those in distress?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

    a.   If your answer to this question is 'yes' why do you agree?

    b.   If your answer to the question is 'no', why do you disagree?

18. What support do you think school principals, superintendents, supervisory teachers and matrons need to acquire these competencies?

    i.   support for principals

    ii.   support for superintendents
    iii.   support for supervisory teachers

    iv.   support for matrons

19. What should the private sector do to support the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture in its efforts to enable orphans and other vulnerable children access education services by being placed in government school hostels?
20. Are you aware of the practice of providing boarding facilities to learners in private homes in the communities? ☐Yes   ☐ No
21.
22. If your answer to question 9.1 is 'yes', how are these arrangements made? How does the practice operate?In your opinion, what factors make the functioning of a hostel

22.1 successful?
22.2 unsuccessful?

23. What community cultural beliefs, values, traditions and practices may hinder the process of turning government school hostels into havens of physical and psychological well-being and support for orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children?

    a.   What should the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture do to overcome the barriers

24. What policy revisions would you suggest to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in government school hostels?

25. To protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children from further trauma and hardship, what criteria for establishing community hostels would you suggest?

26. What do you think would be the role of guardians and parents in ensuring orphans and other vulnerable children access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels?

27. What role would communities play in ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children have access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels.

Questions for hostel matrons

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how your school in collaboration with the community in which it is located can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you, the hostel superintendents and hostel supervisory teachers will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can be done viably.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? ---
2. How old are you? -----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? ---
5. In what region is your school? -------------------------------
6. What is the name of your school? --
7. For how long have you been the hostel matron? ---------------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

1. Do you have orphans and vulnerable children in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'yes', what do you do to make them feel at home?

2. What are your duties in the hostel?

3. What problems do you have in working with orphans and other vulnerable children in the hostel? If you have some problems with these children what help do you need to solve them?
4. Do learners who need hostel accommodation but fail to get it obtain accommodation with some members of the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No If they do, how do they make arrangements for it? Who in the community provides this accommodation? Are such learners charged for it? Please explain your answer.
5. What do you do when a hostel boarder gets sick?

6. What difficulties, if any, do orphans and other vulnerable children have in receiving medical attention when they are sick? What do you do to help them
7. What problems have you been experiencing in running the school hostel?
8. Given these problems, would the hostel at your school adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for accommodation, bedding, food, hygienic sanitation, security and medical services? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'no', what improvements do you wish to see in the areas of:
8.1 Accommodation and bedding?

8.2 Food?

8.3 Hygiene?

8.4 Security
8.5 Medical services?
9. Have there been cases of sexual abuse in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'yes', briefly describe how these cases took place? How can such cases be prevented in future?

10. What does your school do to ensure that hostel boarders are protected from physical harm and the risk of HIV and STD infection?

11. Are orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who reside in the hostel bullied, teased, ridiculed and called bad names by members of the school community? If they are, what do you do to protect them from this harassment?

12. What examples of cases of personal problems have some orphans and other vulnerable children come to seek advice from you on?
13. Have you been trained to counsel young people in distress? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer is 'no', what skills would you need to counsel learners with personal problems?
14. Do you think the hostel admission criteria in terms of hostel fees, the 5km regulation and in terms of things boarders are supposed to supply on their own should be revised in order to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel? If your answer is 'yes', what specific revisions would you suggest?

15. What do guardians and parents do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children meet needs that are not met by the school hostel (e.g. clothing, soap, blankets and bed sheets)?

16. Are orphans affected by HIV/AIDS prevented from participating in extra-curricular school and hostel activities by their peers? What do you and other hostel staff do to protect the children from this?

Questions for hostel superintendents

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how your school in collaboration with the community in which it is located can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you, the hostel supervisory teachers and the hostel matron will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can be done viably.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? --
2. How old are you? ------------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? ---------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? --
5. n what region is your school? -------------------------------
6. What is the name of your school? ---
7. For how long have you been the hostel superintendent? ---------------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

8. Do you have orphans and vulnerable children in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'yes', what criteria did you use to admit these children?

9. How many boarders **are supposed** to reside in the school hostel?

10. How many boarders are **actually residing** in the hostel right now?

11. Do learners who need hostel accommodation but fail to get it obtain accommodation with some members of the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No If they do, how do they make arrangements for it? Who in the community provides this accommodation? Are such learners charged for it? Please explain your answer.

12. Do you have a sick bay in the school hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No
13. If your answer to question 5 is 'no', what do you do when a hostel boarder gets sick?
14. What problems have you been experiencing in running the school hostel?

15. Given these problems, would the hostel at your school adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for accommodation, bedding, food, hygienic sanitation, security and medical services? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'no', what improvements do you wish to see in the areas of:

    a. Accommodation and bedding?

    b. Food? Do orphans and other vulnerable children receive additional food through the school feeding scheme? If food sufficient for the boarders? If not, why not?

    c. Hygiene?

    d. Security

    e. Medical services?

16. Have there been cases of sexual abuse in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'yes', briefly describe how these cases took place? How can such cases be prevented in future?

17. What does your school do to ensure that hostel boarders are protected from physical harm and the risk of HIV and STD infection?

18. What does your school do to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who reside in the hostel from stigmatization and discrimination?

19. What examples of cases of personal problems have some orphans and other vulnerable children come to seek advice from you on?

20. Have you been trained to counsel young people in distress? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer is 'no', what skills would you need to counsel learners with personal problems?

21. What suggestions do you have for meeting the cost of placing orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel?

22. Do you think the hostel admission criteria in terms of hostel fees, the 5km regulation and in terms of things boarders are supposed to supply on their own should be revised in order to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel? If your answer is 'yes', what specific revisions would you suggest?

23. What is the role of guardians and parents in ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children have access to education by being placed in your school's hostels?

24. Do guardians, parents and other members of the community help to maintain, renovate and repair government hostels? If they do give examples?

25. What does your school do to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS from being teased, called bad names and discriminated against participating in school and hostel activities?

    This is the end of our interview. Thank you very much for taking time to answer the questions. We are very grateful.

Questions for hostel supervisory teachers

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how your school in collaboration with the community in which it is located can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you, the hostel superintendent, and the hostel matron will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can be done viably.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? ---
2. How old are you? -----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? ---
5. In what region is your school? -------------------------------
6. What is the name of your school? --
7. For how long have you been the hostel supervisory teacher? --------------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

9. What qualifications did you have to meet before becoming a hostel supervisory teacher?

10. What are your duties as a hostel supervisory teacher?

11. What difficulties do you have in performing these duties?

12. What support do you need to overcome the difficulties you have identified?

13. Do learners who need hostel accommodation but fail to get it obtain accommodation with some members of the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No If they do, how do they make arrangements for it? Who in the community provides this accommodation? Are such learners charged for it? Please explain your answer.

14. What do you do when a hostel boarder gets sick?

15. What problems have you been experiencing in supervising learners in the school hostel?

16. Given these problems, would the hostel at your school adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for accommodation, bedding, food, hygienic sanitation, security and medical services? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer to this question is 'no', what improvements do you wish to see in the areas of:
    a. Accommodation and bedding?

    b. Food?

    c. Hygiene?

    d. Security

    e. Medical services

    f. Learner discipline?

17. Have there been cases of sexual abuse in the hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No If the answer is 'yes', briefly describe how these cases took place? How can such cases be prevented in future?

18. What does your school do to ensure that hostel boarders are protected from the risk of HIV and STD infection?

19. What does your school do to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who reside in the hostel from being teased, bullied, ridiculed and called bad names?

20. What examples of cases of personal problems have some orphans and other vulnerable children come to seek advice from you on?

21. Have you been trained to counsel young people in distress? ☐ Yes ☐ No If your answer is 'no', what skills would you need to counsel learners with personal problems?

22. What suggestions do you have for meeting the cost of placing orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel?

23. Do you think the hostel admission criteria in terms of hostel fees, the 5km regulation and in terms of things boarders are supposed to supply on their own should be revised in order to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel? If your answer is 'yes', what specific revisions would you suggest with respect to:

    a. hostel fees?

    b. the 5km regulation?

    c. general hostel admission criteria
    d. clothing

    e. blankets and bedsheets

24. What do guardians and parents do to ensure that orphans' and other vulnerable children's stay in the hostels is as comfortable as possible? If they do not do anything, what contribution should they make towards the children's stay in the hostels?
25. What does your school do to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS from being discriminated against participating in school and hostel activities?

Questions for orphans and vulnerable children

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions on how government and community hostels can ensure that you have access to education by providing you with safe and supportive boarding facilities.
2. Your answers to the questions will not be share with any one else. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? --
2. How old are you? -----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. In what grade are you? ---------------------------------------
5. Are you in a government or community hostel? -------------------------------
6. The learner is an orphan or a vulnerable child

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

1. Was it easy for you to be admitted into the hostel? If it was not, why?
2. What do you need that the hostel does not supply?
3. What do you eat for breakfast, lunch and supper?
4. Are you provided with some food during school break? If you are, who gives you the food?
5. Are toilets in the hostel clean? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Can dormitory doors lock? If they cannot, why not?
7. Do you sleep on a bed and mattress? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Do you share you bed with other learners? If you do, with how many others?
9. Is there a clinic near the school? If there is not, how do you go to the clinic?
10. Who do you talk to when you have a personal problem? Does the person you go to help you solve your problems?
11. Do you like living in the hostel? Why or why not?
12. Do people make fun of you in the hostel? If they do what do they say to you? What do you do when they do this?
13. How many friends do you have in the hostel?
14. What are you afraid of in the hostel?

Questions for School Hostel Inspectors

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how school hostels in your region in collaboration with various communities can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you and from other respondents will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can viably be done.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

1. What is your name? --
2. How old are you? ----------------------------------
3. Are you male or female? --------------------------
4. What are your highest qualifications? ---
5. What is the name of your Educational Region? -------------------------------
6. For how long have you been a school hostel inspector? ------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

1. What problems do you encounter with respect to aspects of government school hostel provision listed below?

   1.1 Application of School Hostel admission criteria in your region

   1.2 School hostel fees

   1.3 Food provision

   1.4 Dining hall tables, chairs, table knives, forks and spoons

   1.5 Provision of beds, mattresses, blankets and bed sheets

   1.6 Medical services

   1.7 Toilets, showers and wash basins

   1.8 Dormitory doors and windows

   1.9 Security fencing

   1.10 Risk of HIV/AIDS infection

   1.11 Sexual abuse

   1.12 Supervision of Hostel boarders

   1.13 Coordination and cooperation between school principals and school hostel staff

   1.14 Capacity of school hostels

   1.15 Recreation facilities

2. Based on the problems that you have outlined above, would government school hostels in your region adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:

2.1 Accommodation? If not, what should be done?

2.2 Bedding? If not, what should be done?

2.3   Food? If not, what should be done?
2.4   Hygienic sanitation? If not, what should be done
2.5   Security? If not, what should be done?
2.6   medical services? If not what should be done?

3   Does your region, exempt orphans and other vulnerable children from:

3.1   Paying hostel fees? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why not?

3.2   The 5km regulation when admitting them into school hostels? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, why not?

4   Do you have community school hostels in your region? If the answer to this question is 'yes' what role does your region play in the running of these hostels? If it does not play any role, what role should your region play? Why?

5   Based on information you have gathered through your job, would community school hostels in your region adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for:

5.1   Accommodation? Why or why not?
5.2   Bedding? Why or why not
5.3   Food? Why or why not?
5.4   Hygienic sanitation? Why or why not?
5.5   Security? Why or why not?
5.6   medical care? Why or why not?

6.What should the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture do to ensure that community hostels have the ability to meet these needs before they are established?

  a.   To protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children from further trauma and hardship, what criteria for establishing community hostels in your region do you suggest?
  b.   What rules and regulations should your region put in place to monitor the running of community school hostels?

7.   What do schools with government and community hostels in your region do to ensure that orphans and other vulnerable children resident in the hostels are protected from:
  a.   Neglect?
  b.   sexual abuse?
  c.   physical harm?
  d.   the risk of HIV and STD infection?

8.   What do schools with government and community hostels in your region do to ensure that orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who are resident in the hostels are protected from:
  a.   stigmatization?
  b.   discrimination?

9.   Based on your experience and knowledge, do you think school principals, hostel superintendents, hostel supervisory teachers and hostel matrons in your region have professional skills to counsel and emotionally support grieving orphans and those in distress? If your answer to this question is 'yes' why do you agree? If your answer to the question is 'no', why do you disagree? What support do you think they need to acquire these competencies?

  a.   Support for principals

  b.   Support for hostel superintendents

  c.   Support for supervisory teachers

  d.   Support for hostel matrons

10. What should the private sector do to support your region in its efforts to enable orphans and other vulnerable children access education services by being placed in government and community school hostels?

11. What community cultural beliefs, values, traditions and practices in your region may hinder the process of turning government school hostels into havens of physical and psychological well-being and support for orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children? What could your region do to overcome the barriers?

12. What do you think is the role of guardians and parents in ensuring orphans and other children access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels?
13. What role do communities play in ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children have access to education by being placed in either government or community hostels?

Questions for Principals of Schools to which government hostels are attached

Instructions

1. The main purpose of the questions that follow is to find out what your views, opinions and suggestions are on how your school in collaboration with the community in it is located can ensure access to education for orphans and other vulnerable children through the provision of safe and supportive hostel/community boarding facilities. The information obtained from you, the hostel superintendent, the hostel supervisory teachers and the hostel matron will be used for making policy recommendations on how this can be done viably.
2. Your responses to the questions will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Because of this, answer the questions as frankly as you can. You will not be penalized for being open and critical in your responses.

Background Questions

3. What is your name? --
4. How old are you? -----------------------------------
5. Are you male or female? ---------------------------
6. What are your highest qualifications? ---
7. In what region is your school? -------------------------------
8. What is the name of your school? ---
9. For how long have you been the principal of your school? ---------------------

Questions on issues pertaining to the study

10. What criteria does your school use to admit learners into the school hostel? Using these criteria would orphans and other vulnerable children be admitted into the school hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. If your answer to question 1 is 'no', how should the admission criteria be revised to enable orphans and vulnerable children to be accommodated in the hostels?
12. How many boarders **are supposed** to reside in the school hostel?
13. How many boarders are **actually residing** in the hostel right now?
14. Do you have a sick bay in the school hostel? ☐ Yes ☐ No
15. If your answer to question 5 is 'no', what do you do when a hostel boarder gets sick?
16. What problems have you been experiencing in running the school hostel?
17. Given these problems, would the hostel at your school adequately meet the orphans' and other vulnerable children's needs for accommodation? bedding, food, hygienic sanitation, security and medical services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If your answer to this question is 'no' what would it take for the hostels to meet these needs adequately?

If your answer is 'yes', why do you agree?

18. What does your school do to ensure that hostel boarders are protected from sexual abuse, physical harm and the risk of HIV and STD infection?
19. What does your school do to protect orphans affected by HIV/AIDS who reside in the hostel from stigmatization and discrimination?
20. Do hostel superintendents, supervisory teachers and matrons at your school have training to counsel and emotionally support grieving orphans and those in distress? If your answer to this question is 'yes' why do you agree? If your answer to the question is 'no', why do you disagree? What support do these hostel personnel need to acquire these competencies?
21. What suggestions do you have for meeting the cost of placing orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel?
22. What policy revisions would you suggest in order to facilitate the placement of orphans and other vulnerable children in your school's hostel?
23. What is the role of guardians and parents in ensuring that orphans and other vulnerable children have access to education by being placed in your school's hostels

24. What preparations does your school make before admitting orphans affected by HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable children in its school hostel

Appendix 3: Schedule of Research activities

REGION VISITED	PERIOD OF VISIT	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN
Katima mulilo	29-9-2002 to 4-10-2002	Visited government hostels at three senior secondary schools; visited two primary schools with school feeding scheme; interviewed respondents as given in table 3 of this report
Ondangwa west (Omusati)	5-10-2002 to 12-10-2002	Visited community hostels at one primary school and two combined schools; visited government hostels at two senior secondary schools; interviewed respondents given in table 3 of this report
Windhoek (Omaheke)	22-10-2002 to 25-10-2002	Visited community hostels at two primary schools; visited two government hostels at one primary school and at one senior secondary school; interviewed respondents indicated in table 3.
Windhoek (MBESC Headquarters and regional office)	24th-25th September; 11th Nov.-19th Nov. 2002	Interviewed MBESC staff at Headquarters and regional office as given in table 3
Windhoek (UNAM offices)	September to December, 2002	Reviewed related literature, analysed data, drafted and revised research report