

Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020

Namibia

Introduction

This report about the development of the knowledge institutions in Namibia was made as part of the preparations for the AfricaKnows! Conference (2 December 2020 – 28 February 2021) in Leiden, and elsewhere, see www.africaknows.eu.



Reports like these can never be complete, and there might also be mistakes. Additions and corrections are welcome! Please send those to dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl

Highlights

- 1 Namibia's population increased from 0.6 million in 1960, via 1.4 million in 1990, its year of Independence, to 2.5 million in 2020.
- 2 The literacy rate is high (91%), and so is net primary school enrolment (98%). The 'expected years of schooling for children' has increased from 11.1 years to 12.6 years between 1990 and 2018, and the 'mean years of schooling for adults from 5.6 years to 6.9 years.
- 3 The education index improved from .495 to .582 between 1990 and 2018.
- 4 The best education performance can be found in Khomas/Windhoek from 2000 onwards. Before 2000 that position was for Erongo/Swakopmund (for the education index and mean years of schooling) and for Omusati and Oshana (for expected years of schooling).
- 5 The worst education performance was and is in Kunene, but in the past also for Omaheke and Ohangwena.
- 6 Regional inequality slightly improved between 2000 and 2018 for all indicators.
- 7 Namibia only has four tertiary education institutions, two public ones and two private ones. These are all in Windhoek, and they only started after Independence in 1990. Currently, there are 56,000 students in the country.
- 8 We listed four thinktanks and eight museums in the country.

Part 1: The Story

Namibia's demographic and education development

The Republic of Namibia is located in Southern Africa, bordered by Zambia, Angola, Botswana and South Africa.

Colonization by Europeans began at the end of the 19th century. In 1878, Walvis Bay, a natural seaport, became part of the British Cape Colony and in 1884, at the Berlin Colonial Conference, it was agreed that the rest of the area would become a colony of Germany under the name of German Southwest Africa. During the First World War, South Africa conquered German Southwest Africa from the Germans and in 1920 it was assigned to South Africa as a mandate territory for the League of Nations. The country's name changed to South West Africa. In 1990, the country became independent and was renamed Namibia. Walvis Bay and some islands off the coast of Namibia remained a colony of South Africa. In 1994, with the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, these areas were finally given back to Namibia.

Namibia's population increased from 634,142 in 1960 to 2.5 million in mid-2020. In 1960, only 17% of the Namibian population lived in cities (only 107,909 people), while the urban population has increased to 55.2% or 1.4 million. Namibia's largest city is Windhoek.

Namibia's life expectancy increased from 46.1 years for males and 50.6 years for females in 1960 to 61.8 years for males and 67.7 years for females currently. The median age first decreased from 19.5 years in 1960 to 16.4 years in 1985. Since then, it started to increase and is presently 21.8 years. In 1960 an average woman gave birth to 6.1 live-born children, which increased to 6.6 in 1975. Since then, the fertility rate is decreasing and currently an average woman gives birth to 3.4 live-born children¹.

¹ <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/namibia-population/>



Source: geology.com

Literacy and enrolment

In 2018, Namibia’s adult literacy rate was estimated to be 91%, with no differences between men and women. Of the youth (15-24 years old) 14,203 males and 9,361 females were regarded as illiterate in 2018. For the adult population as a whole these figures are 61,487 for males and 69,386 for females².

Namibia’s population of primary school age children (7-13 years) is 405,849 children. Education is compulsory from age 7 to age 13 (7 years). Currently, 97.5% of the primary school age group attend primary school. Children with the age to attend secondary school (14-18) are 245,419. It is not known how many children are attending secondary school. Finally, 244,869 people are in the age category to attend tertiary education (people between 19 and 23). Gross enrolment rates for tertiary education increased from 19.7% in 2014 to 22.9% in 2017 with females at 30.3%, and males at 15.3%. In total this means that there are 56,000 students in Namibia’s higher education institutions.

Regional differentiation of education results in Namibia, 1990-2018

² <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/na>

The information provided by the Globaldatalab about the subregional human development index, its components and its indicators (<https://globaldatalab.org/shdi>) provides data for the period between 1990 and 2018, and uses xxx regions. Between 1990 and 2018 the population of Namibia as a whole increased with 171%, but regional differences are considerable: from 257% in Erongo in the western part of the country to 115% in Otjozondjupa in the northeast.

The Globaldatalab provides data about the education index (one of the three indexes that together form the Human Development Index), and about two relevant indicators: mean years of schooling, showing the average education level of the adult population per region, and expected years of education, showing the expected number of years current children will attend schools.

We present the data for the years 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2018 (the latest year available at the moment). See tables 1-4 in part 2.

Education index

The education index, one of the elements of the human development index, increased from .495 to .582 between 1990 and 2018, and for Namibia as a whole the increase was continuous. However, between 2000 and 2010 five regions showed a deterioration, although the education situation picked up again after 2010. The best results can be noted for Erongo in 1990 and 2000, and in Khomas in 2010 and 2018. Erongo is the region around Swakopmund and Walvisbay; Khomas the region around Windhoek, the capital city. The worst region was Omaheke (in the east) in 1990 and 2000, and that worst position shifted to Kunene (in the northwest) in 2010 and 2018. Omaheke experienced the fastest improvements of the country, and Erongo, but also (O)Kavango (in the north) the slowest improvements between 1990 and 2018. Regional inequality slightly improved during this period.

Mean Years of Education for Adults

According to UNESCO, 'Mean Years of Schooling' is an indicator about the "average number of completed years of education of a country's population aged 25 years and older, excluding years spent repeating individual grades"³. So it is an indicator of past education performance. For Namibia as a whole this indicator was 5.6 years in 1990 and 2000, and improved to 6.2 years in 2010, and 6.9 years in 2018. Progress was visible in all regions after 2000, with the exception of Erongo between 2000 and 2010, and as a result that region has slightly worse results in 2018 (when it was the best region) compared to 1990. The position of best region shifted to Khomas after 2000. Omaheke belonged to the worst two regions in 1990 and 2000 (together with Ohangwena), but showed the fastest improvements between 2000 and 2018. In 2010 and 2018 Kunene was the region with the worst education conditions. Regional inequality improved after 2000, and particularly between 2000 and 2010.

Expected Years of Education for Children

³ <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/mean-years-schooling>

UNDP defines the ‘expected years of schooling’ as the: “Number of years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child’s life”⁴. For Namibia as a whole this indicator shows slight improvements throughout the 1990-2018 period, from 11.1 years to 12.6 years. However, between 2000 and 2010 six regions showed a deterioration, and after 2010 some recovery. The best regions in 1990 (Omusati and Oshana, in the northwest) showed the slowest improvements. The position of best region shifted to Khomas in 2010 and 2018. Kunene always was the worst region (in 1990 and 2000 together with Omaheke). The fastest improvements happened in Caprivi in the extreme northeast. Regional inequality slightly decreased between 2000 and 2018.

Namibia’s tertiary knowledge development

Namibia currently has 4 universities or other tertiary institutions. There are 2 public ones and 2 private ones. University education only started in 1992. Almost all tertiary institutions in Namibia are located in or near the capital city Windhoek. There are also some think tanks (all in Windhoek as well) and museums in Namibia (more spread out in the country). The 4icu ranking of African universities lists the University of Namibia, the Namibia University of Science and Technology and the International University of Management as among the 200 top universities of Africa. See tables 5-7 in part 2.

Historically the development of the number of universities is as given in the following table.

Namibia’s universities and other tertiary institutions 1960 – 2020

Type	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Public	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2
Private	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	2
Total	0	0	0	0	3	3	4	4	4	4

Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, 4ICU (<https://www.4icu.org/na/>, and <https://www.4icu.org/top-universities-africa/>), World Higher Education Database (https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php); and the websites of the institutions, if available.

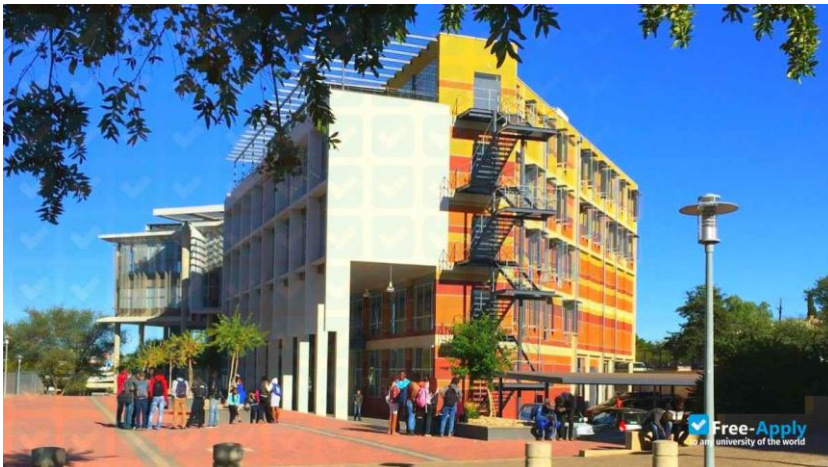
Public and private universities in Namibia

⁴ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/expected-years-schooling-children-years>

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University of Namibia⁵



Namibia University of Science and Technology⁶

⁵ <http://www.unam.edu.na/main-campus>

⁶ <https://free-apply.com/en/university/1051600001>



[International University of Management](#)⁷

Both the two public and the two private tertiary knowledge institutions in Namibia are located in Windhoek, in the Khomas Region. With 460,000 inhabitants, this region has a density of 9 tertiary knowledge institutions per million inhabitants, while for Namibia as a whole this figure is only 2. All other regions do not (yet) have any higher education institution.

Think tanks and other knowledge institutions in Namibia

According to the 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report, there are 16 think tanks or research institutes in Namibia, outside the university system, but only for four of them further details have been given. See table 7 in part 2.

According to UNESCO Namibia had 329/million researchers in 2014 (34% female), and that would mean a total of 750 scholars. 67% worked in higher education, 23% in (other) government jobs, 6% in business, and 4% in private non-profit institutions⁸.

Museums in Namibia


Most museums in Namibia are historical cultural museums, and with locations in various parts of the country. We listed eight of them in table 8, in part 2.

⁷ <https://smapse.com/international-university-of-management-international-institute-of-management-in-namibia/>

⁸ <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/na?theme=science-technology-and-innovation>

Part 2: The Data

Map and Table 1: Regions and Population in Namibia, 1990-2018

Map	Region / Région	Population x 1000		'18/'90
		1990	2018	
	Caprivi	70	130	1.86
	Erongo	70	180	2.57
	Hardap	60	90	1.50
	Karas	50	90	1.80
	Kavango	120	250	2.08
	Khomas	200	460	2.30
	Kunene	50	80	1.60
	Ohangwena	180	290	1.61
	Omaheke	50	70	1.40
	Omusati	180	280	1.56
	Oshana	150	190	1.27
	Oshikoto	130	210	1.62
	Otjozondjupa	130	150	1.15
Total Namibia		1430	2450	1.71

Source: <https://globaldatalab.org> 4.0

Map: <https://www.mapsopensource.com/images/namibia-regions-map.gif>

Table 2: Namibia: Education index 1990-2018⁹

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Caprivi	427	439	537	593	1.39
Erongo	592	606	577	622	1.05
Hardap	464	477	487	530	1.14
Karas	556	571	545	590	1.06
Kavango	474	489	460	498	1.05
Khomas	560	574	644	693	1.24
Kunene	357	367	357	412	1.15
Ohangwena	424	439	483	519	1.22
Omaheke	328	338	422	553	1.69
Omusati	488	505	520	552	1.13
Oshana	572	589	571	618	1.08
Oshikoto	510	525	515	559	1.10
Otjozondjupa	416	427	454	503	1.21
Total	495	510	538	582	1.18
Inequality	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.71	

⁹ The HDI data, and its components go from 0 (worst level) to 1 (best level). We present the figures x 1000. The inequality figure is the highest value divided by the lowest value in a particular year.

Table 3: Namibia, Regional data for 'mean years of schooling' for adults

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Caprivi	5.0	5.0	6.2	7.1	1.42
Erongo	8.5	8.5	7.6	8.4	0.99
Hardap	5.9	5.9	6.1	7.1	1.20
Karas	7.3	7.2	6.9	7.6	1.04
Kavango	4.9	4.9	4.4	5.0	1.02
Khomas	7.5	7.5	8.6	9.4	1.25
Kunene	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.7	1.15
Ohangwena	3.3	3.3	4.2	4.9	1.48
Omaheke	3.3	3.3	4.8	5.3	1.61
Omusati	3.7	3.7	5.0	5.5	1.49
Oshana	6.2	6.2	6.5	7.4	1.19
Oshikoto	5.4	5.3	5.5	6.3	1.17
Otjozondjupa	5.1	5.0	5.3	6.1	1.20
Total	5.6	5.6	6.2	6.9	1.23
Inequality	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.0	

Table 4: Namibia, Regional data for 'expected years of schooling' for children

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Caprivi	9.4	9.8	11.9	12.8	1.36
Erongo	11.1	11.7	11.7	12.4	1.12
Hardap	9.6	10.1	10.2	10.6	1.10
Karas	11.3	11.9	11.3	12.2	1.08
Kavango	11.2	11.8	11.3	11.9	1.06
Khomas	11.1	11.7	12.9	13.7	1.23
Kunene	7.9	8.3	8.0	9.2	1.16
Ohangwena	11.3	11.8	12.3	12.9	1.14
Omaheke	7.9	8.3	9.4	9.6	1.22
Omusati	13.1	13.8	12.7	13.3	1.02
Oshana	13.1	13.7	12.7	13.4	1.02
Oshikoto	11.9	12.5	12.0	12.5	1.14
Otjozondjupa	8.9	9.4	9.9	10.8	1.21
Total	11.1	11.7	11.9	12.6	1.14
Inequality	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	

Table 5: Public universities in Namibia

University	Year of establishment	Location
University of Namibia (http://www.unam.edu.na/) (4icu rank: 2 in Namibia, 39 in Africa (top 200 list))	1992	Windhoek
Namibia University of Science and Technology (Polytechnic of Namibia) (https://www.nust.na/) (4icu rank: 1 in Namibia, 37 in Africa (top 200 list))	1994	Windhoek

Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, 4ICU (<https://www.4icu.org/na/>, and <https://www.4icu.org/top-universities-africa/>), World Higher Education Database (https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php); and the websites of the institutions, if available.

Table 6: Private Universities in Namibia

University	Year of establishment	Location	Religious affiliation
International University of Management (http://ium.edu.na/) (4icu rank: 3 in Namibia)	1994	Windhoek	No
Institute for Open Learning (https://www.iol.na/)	2005	Windhoek	No

Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, 4ICU (<https://www.4icu.org/na/>, and <https://www.4icu.org/top-universities-africa/>), World Higher Education Database (https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php); and the websites of the institutions, if available.

Table 7: Think tanks and other knowledge institutions in Namibia

Think tanks	Year of establishment	Location
Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (https://drfn.org.na/)	1962	Windhoek
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (https://www.fesnam.org/)	1989	Windhoek
Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) (https://www.nira.or.jp/past/ice/nwdtt/2005/DAT/1226.html)	1990	Windhoek
Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) (https://ippr.org.na/)	2001	Windhoek

(Sources; https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=think_tanks (for: 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report); <http://africathinktanks.org/think-tanks>)

Table 8: Museums in Namibia

Museums	websites	Location
Alte Feste	https://www.colonialvoyage.com/german-fort-alte-feste-windhoek/	Windhoek
Duwisib Castle	https://www.info-namibia.com/activities-and-places-of-interest/sossusvlei/duwisib-castle	Southern Namib region of Namibia
Geological Survey Museum	http://www.gsn.gov.na/museum.htm	Windhoek
Independence Memorial Museum (Namibia)	https://www.museums.com.na/museums/windhoek/independence-museum	Windhoek
National Museum of Namibia	https://www.museums.com.na/museums/windhoek/national-museum-of-namibia	Windhoek

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Museums Association of Namibia	https://www.museums.com.na/	Windhoek
Ombalantu baobab tree	http://sme.mti.gov.na/ombalantu-baobab/	Outapi
Outjo Museum	https://www.lonelyplanet.com/namibia/outjo/attractions/outjo-museum/a/poi-sig/1282433/1328004	Outjo
Swakopmund Museum	https://www.info-namibia.com/activities-and-places-of-interest/swakopmund/swakopmund-museum	Swakopmund

(source: Wikipedia: Museums, and other sources, like <https://www.arts-store.com/mus%C3%A9es-museums-world-1/>). Not included: cultural centres

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