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The Quality of Immigration and Citizenship Services in Namibia

Ndeyapo M. Nickanor
Southern African Migration Programme

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THE QUALITY OF IMMIGRATION
AND CITIZENSHIP SERVICES
IN NAMIBIA

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AND CITIZENSHIP SERVICES IN
NAMIBIA

NDEYAPO M. NICKANOR

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MHAI) in Namibia has sole responsibility for implementing and managing migration policy and legislation; the registration of births, deaths and marriages; and the issuing of identity documents, passports and emergency travel documents. The Ministry also manages visa and permanent and temporary residence applications and approves work permits.

In 2005, the Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) was asked by the Ministry to conduct a systematic survey of the quality of services offered to citizens and non-citizens (the Services Quality Survey or SQS). The main objectives of the SQS were as follows:

- To compare the opinions of officials about the level and quality of services with those of the clients receiving these services;
- To identify the type of problems and delays that occur in the delivery of services in Namibia and why they occur;
- To determine the extent to which the level and quality of services provided meet the expectations of clients;
- To develop a set of recommendations to improve the level and quality of service delivery.

The SQS interviewed a total number of 113 officials and 322 clients. Separate structured questionnaires were administered to officials and clients. The interviews with the officials concentrated on their familiarity with public service regulations, job satisfaction, knowledge of grievance and disciplinary procedures, information on the MHAI and attitudes towards the reporting of misconduct. The questionnaire for the clients focused on their knowledge of the functions of the MHAI, the quality of services and their experiences accessing these services. Interview sites included regional offices, land borders and the major international airport. Four research teams covered nine of the 13 regions in the country.

The major findings of the SQS in relation to the job satisfaction of Ministry employees are as follows:

- Officials are clearly better informed than clients about the role, functions and range of services offered by the Ministry. Levels of familiarity with core services were relatively high in both cases, though it is surprising that not all officials knew about the full range of responsibilities of the MHAI. Only about half of the officials and 30% of its clients seemed to know about the Ministry's role in granting Namibian citizenship. Other responsibilities about which clients knew very little included registering marriages, deporting undocumented migrants or processing refugee applications. Less than a third of the officials knew about the Ministry's role in the refugee protection process.

- Ministry officials do not have sufficient knowledge of the key pieces of legislation governing their Ministry: the Public Service Act 13 of 1995 (a third were unfamiliar with this legislation); the Immigration Act 7 of 1993 (again, a third were unfamiliar) and the Refugees Act 2 of 1999 (two-thirds unfamiliar). Although two thirds of the officials said they were acquainted with the Public Service Act, the SQS showed that they were not conversant with many of its basic service principles.
- The SQS questioned officials about their familiarity with the MHAI's Strategic Plan, Transformation Unit, IT Plan and Employment Equity Plan. Only two thirds (64%) were aware of the Strategic Plan. A smaller proportion was aware of the other structures. Just 36% said that the Ministry had an employment equity plan and only 30% were aware of the Transformation Unit (30%).
- Nearly 60% of the officials had not attended any training programmes or workshops to learn about the laws and regulations governing the Public Service and/or the Ministry. Of the trained officials, 96% stated that the training was useful/very useful in helping them perform their duties.
- Levels of job satisfaction amongst Ministry employees are relatively high. At the same time, many officials were skeptical about the fairness of decisions concerning promotions and salary increases. Nearly 60% felt that they were unfair and had nothing to do with rules and guidelines. Many officials were also skeptical about their career path in the MHIA. While 56% said that they had a strong career path, 39% disagreed.
- Dissatisfaction with remuneration was the most cited impediment to effective job performance (mentioned by 60% of officials). Other frequently-cited complaints included work overload (49%), poor working environment (41%), not enough computers (39%), poor management (38%), not enough equipment/stationery (35%) and little or no career mobility (33%). Red tape, gender and racial discrimination were not seen as serious obstacles (4%, 6% and 9% respectively).

This report also examines client perceptions of service quality offered by the Ministry and compared these with the perceptions of officials. The major findings are as follows:

- Overall, the Ministry is seen as being more efficient than it was during the apartheid era. Around half strongly approved of the way the MHAI had performed its mandate in the previous year but as many as a third disapproved of the performance of the Ministry.

- Two-thirds of the clients were happy or satisfied with the level of service they received at the office on the day of the interview. More detailed analysis showed that these levels of satisfaction extended to a whole variety of factors including office infrastructure, quality and efficiency of service, and personal interactions with MHAI officials. Some elements – particularly the cost of services and the wait times for documentation – were seen as more problematic. In general, there is a relatively consistent pattern with two-thirds of clients happy and a third unhappy with MHAI performance.
- Officials clearly have a better perception of the quality of service offered by them and their colleagues than do clients. On most measures of service quality officials gave higher scores than their clients. The difference was particularly marked with regard to the demeanor and helpfulness of officials themselves.
- Overall, both clients and officials displayed considerable disapproval of behaviour that could be viewed as inappropriate, discriminatory or corrupt. Officials consistently ranked such behaviour as more deserving of punishment than clients, except on the issue of acceptance of a “gift” in recognition of good work for a service already rendered. The majority in both groups felt this was an acceptable response to good service.
- While there is a widespread media and public perception that MHIA officials are corrupt, few of the clients interviewed in this study said they had first-hand experience of corruption. The overwhelming majority (90%) said they had never been put in such a position. The remaining 10% who had been involved in such a misdemeanor had paid a bribe to obtain a travel document, to avoid punishment for overstaying visa, to avoid deportation or repatriation, to obtain a work permit, obtain a residence permit or to attain refugee status.
- In contrast to the clients, a majority of officials (71%) reported that they had witnessed a bribe being paid or solicited during the year prior to the survey. At the same time, most officials (81%) were adamant that they had not personally accepted a bribe. A few officials reported that they had been silenced by their superiors concerning the reporting of inappropriate or illegal activities and 5% claimed that they had been asked by their superiors to participate in illegal activities. In general, therefore, there seems to be a major gap between public perceptions and actual levels of corruption. However, it is possible that neither clients nor officials were completely honest about this highly sensitive issue.

The results of the SQS in Namibia leads SAMP to make the following recommendations:

- On most measures, two-thirds of clients were satisfied with the level of service provided. This means that there is still room for improvement. Any government ministry, particularly one whose primary role is customer service, should strive to achieve total satisfaction. While customer dissatisfaction with services was much lower than expected, there was more general concern with certain key issues such as the physical infrastructure at some offices and the delays experienced by clients in getting documentation. These concerns require immediate attention;
- Officials and clients have different opinions about the level and quality of service offered by the MHAI. Officials clearly have a more positive view than do clients of themselves and their Ministry. This needs to be brought to the attention of all officials. It is critical that employees of the service know that their clients do not think as highly of the MHIA as they do. Otherwise complacency is likely to set in.
- It is encouraging that the majority of clients were relatively satisfied with the level of personal service they received from individual employees of the Ministry. This suggests that there is a good service ethic amongst employees. On the other hand, it is important to address the concerns of those clients who remain dissatisfied with the level of personal service.
- There is clearly a major gap between public perceptions and those of these clients and officials on issues of integrity, misconduct and corruption. The reasons for this gap need to be addressed. A service ministry should not have the taint of any kind of scandal or corruption attached to it. One hypothesis from this study might be that the Ministry is being unfairly targeted by the media and perhaps blowing isolated cases of corruption out of all proportion. The only other explanation is that the media and public are correct and that these SQS informants were not entirely honest in their answers. The MHIA needs to have structures and procedures in place to transparently and effectively deal with all cases of wrong-doing; to facilitate identification by officials of corrupt practices without fear of reprisal; to encourage the public to complain and to deal effectively with such complaints.
- Official knowledge and awareness of the legislation which governs their own Ministry and the internal roles, regulations and procedures of the Ministry is poor. There is an obvious need for more training of officials along the lines of the Programme in International Migration Law and Management International instituted by SAMP in partnership with Wits University. This course could be offered in Namibia to many officials at reasonable cost.

- Clients are not well informed about the range of services offered by MHAI. Education could be provided in a number of ways; for example, through newspapers, radio, posters and leaflets. In addition, clients are not informed about the work of the departments within the Ministry. No annual report is published and circulated to clients to inform them how resources are used and how much services cost, or to provide information on staffing issues, equipment delivery, services and so on. The report should also include how well the departments are performing, and whether the Ministry has kept to its undertakings within established timelines. Current negative media reporting on the delivery of services may improve if the Ministry implements strategies to inform the public more vigorously of the services offered and the rights of clients to access these services. In other words, the Ministry has to be more proactive in order for it to revive its reputation in the media.

INTRODUCTION

Namibia, like many other countries in the SADC region, is experiencing a major shift in internal and international migration patterns to and from the country.¹ The management of these movements is posing particular challenges and problems. The government ministry responsible for management (the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MHAI)) has sole responsibility for implementing and managing migration policy and legislation. The Ministry also manages visa and permanent and temporary residence applications and approves work permits. At the same time, the Ministry provides a range of services for Namibian citizens and other legal residents: the registration of births, deaths and marriages; and the issuing of identity documents, passports and emergency travel documents

The MHAI has the unfortunate reputation in Namibia of being one of the most inefficient ministries in the country (Box One). At the beginning of 2005 a Parliamentary Standing Committee was appointed to look into the operation of the Ministry. The investigation has led to numerous actions by the Ministry to try and improve services. These included enhancing accessibility to services by creating mobile teams that were sent throughout the country to rural communities. Waiting times for ID and passport issue were also improved. Other efforts included full implementation of the Immigration Control Act, a fully computerized passport system and the computerization of other services. The MHAI committed itself to constantly reviewing delivery processes and adopting needed changes, to a policy promoting zero tolerance of corruption and to achieving a reliable and effective human resource management system.

The Southern African Migration Project (SAMP) was asked by the Ministry to conduct a systematic survey of the quality of services offered to citizens and non-citizens (the Services Quality Survey or SQS). The main objectives of the SQS were as follows:

- To compare the opinions of officials about the level and quality of services with those of the clients receiving these services;
- To identify the type of problems and delays that occur in the delivery of services in Namibia and why they occur;
- To determine the extent to which the level and quality of services provided meet the expectations of clients;
- To develop a set of recommendations to improve the level and quality of service delivery.

The Ministry cooperated in the implementation of the SQS but the project itself was an independently-funded and objective survey.

Box One: Border Posts in a Mess

The offices of customs and immigration officials at several Namibian border posts are chronically understaffed and dirty, while personnel often lack sufficient training and do not have the equipment to do their work, a new report reveals. The scanning machine for luggage at the Hosea Kutako International Airport has been out of order since the year 2000, while the computer system for immigration officials has been down since 2004. DTA Chairman Johan de Waal tabled the latest report of the parliamentary standing committee on public accounts in the National Assembly at the end of last week. The report was drafted after a recent visit by committee members to the border posts at Ariamsvlei, Buitepos, Mohembo and customs offices at Rundu. For the past six years, luggage at the Hosea Kutako International Airport has passed directly from aeroplanes to the conveyor belt without being scanned because the scanner broke down. "The officials do what they refer to as profiling to determine which luggage [needs] to be physically inspected and which person [needs] to be subjected to a body search," the report said. Detained luggage was lining the corridors of the airport building and offices there were untidy when the MPs visited. There are no designated rooms for searching luggage. "There is a small room meant for body searching, but it does not have a lock and its door cannot remain shut unless held by a person and the room's surveillance camera is not functioning since 2001". No sniffer dogs are around to search for drugs, as the dogs that were stationed there in 1998 "grew old and died". The airport should have 42 customs and immigration officials, but only 28 posts were filled when the parliamentarians visited. Cases in which officials were accused of involvement in fraud or bribery took very long to finalise, which prevented their positions from being filled. The special software for computers at the immigration desks has not been functioning since 2004 and officials must share one outdated handheld scanner. "They were only provided with one scanner, so they have to pass it from one desk to the next." Staff complained to the MPs that they last received uniforms four years ago and had difficulty looking neat and presentable at Namibia's main international airport. All customs, excise and immigration officials live in Windhoek and are bussed to work and back, but they complained that the Government shuttle was rather unreliable and late to return them home. Only two staff members are stationed at the airport's cargo section, too few to inspect the volumes of cargo. At the Ariamsvlei border

post, the committee members found that offices were “filthy” and not cleaned for weeks, creating a bad impression with foreigners entering Namibia. A toilet meant for immigration and Police officers has been out of order since the year 2000 and its ceiling is falling down. Four of the 15 staff members have not received any training since they joined the directorate of customs and excise in 2004. They were supposed to undergo training in 2005, but then all training programmes were put on hold “due to a lack of funds”. The border post does not even have a safe to keep money in. The only equipment available at Ariamsvlei for cargo inspection is one pair of gloves, a bolt cutter, a torch and a helmet. Despite regulations that at least five per cent of all cargo should be inspected, the lack of a scanning machine, a ladder and even a forklift makes this impossible. Only five officers are working per shift of eight hours, but they complained to the visiting parliamentary committee that they were overworked and said at least nine to ten officials should be working per shift. A similar complaint was raised at Buitepos on the border with Botswana, where only 18 officers are stationed. A married couple with children must live in a bachelor’s flat, but two single colleagues share a family unit. The staff told the MPs that no medical facilities were available at Buitepos. Anyone falling sick must be transported to Gobabis, some 100 kilometres away. In its report submitted to Parliament, the committee recommended that the Finance Ministry should urgently build a completely new border post at Ariamsvlei, provide scanning machines to all entry points and post more officers to the border posts.

Source: Namibian 10 July 2006

SQS METHODOLOGY

The SQS interviewed 113 officials and 322 clients. Separate structured questionnaires were administered to officials and clients. These instruments were adapted from an earlier SAMP survey of services quality for the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa.² The interviews with the officials concentrated on their familiarity with public service regulations, job satisfaction, knowledge of grievance and disciplinary procedures, information on the MHAI and attitudes towards the reporting of misconduct. The questionnaire for the clients focused on their knowledge of the functions of the MHAI, the quality of services and their experiences accessing these services.

Interview sites included regional offices, land borders and the major international airport (Table 1). Four research teams covered nine of the thirteen regions in the country.

Table 1: Sites Selected for the Survey			
Region	Regional Office	Border Point	Airport
Karas	Keetmanshoop	Ariamsvlei & Noordoewer	
Hardap	Mariental		
Caprivi	Katima Mulilo	Ngoma and Wenela	
Kavango	Rundu	Katwitwi	
Otjizondjupa	Grootfontein		
Ohangwena		Oshikango	
Oshana	Oshakati and Ondangwa		
Omusati	Outapi	Omahenene	
Khomas	Windhoek Head Office, Northern Industrial Office		Hosea Kutako International Airport

SAMPLE PROFILE

PROFILE OF MINISTRY OFFICIALS

Nearly two thirds (63%) of the 113 officials interviewed by the SQS were from the Directorate of Immigration while 18% were from the Directorate of Civic Affairs. The majority of the officials classified themselves as African or black (96%) (Table 2). At least 50% of the officials interviewed were female and 42% male. Only the Caprivi/Kavango Region had a majority of male officials (68%). More than half of the officials speak Oshiwambo (56%) at home, a further 11% Lozi, 8% Afrikaans and 7% Otjiherero. A few spoke English, Kwangali, Nama/Damara or Tswana.

Half of the officials had completed high school. The figure was highest in the Karas (69%) and Northern (57%) regions. Very few had only completed primary school (1%) or held postgraduate qualifications (1%). A quarter held additional post secondary qualifications (other than university). This figure was highest in the Kommas region (46%).

Around a third of the officials (32%) had worked for the MHAI for 11-15 years. Another 26% had worked with the ministry for 6-10 years. Thirty eight percent were employed as immigration officers, 19% as senior immigration officers and 13% as clerks (Table 3). The remainder included section heads, chief immigration officers, regional control officers and principal immigration officers. Officials were asked how much of their time they spent interacting directly with clients. Nearly half (47%) said "all the time" and another 37% said "most of the time." Only 3% of the officials had never interacted with clients. In other words, the SQS targeted experienced officials on the front line of customer service; the majority were long-serving employees (with more than 5 years experience) and had direct contact with clients.

Gender			Language Spoken at home		
	No.	%		No.	%
Male	47	42	English	1	1
Female	56	50	Afrikaans	7	6
No Answer	10	8	Oshiwambo	50	44
			Otjiherero	6	5
			Tswana	1	1
Age			Nama/Damara	5	4
20-24	2	2	Lozi	10	9
25-29	18	16	Kwangali	4	4
30-34	30	27	Other	5	4
35-39	25	22	No Answer	24	22
40-44	16	14			
45-49	16	14			
50	3	3			
No answer	3	3	Level of Education		
			Some primary/ primary completed	3	3
			Some secondary/completed	64	57
			Post-secondary qualification	29	26
			Some university / degree	13	10
			No answer	3	4
N=113					

Directorate			Position		
	No.	%		No.	%
Immigration	71	63	Personnel Officer	1	1
Civic Services	20	18	Clerk	15	13
Human Resources	1	1	Immigration	42	37
Other	18	16	Principle Immigration officer	4	4
No Answer	3	2	Senior Immigration officer	21	19
Period of Employment			Cleaner	3	3
One Year or less	11	9.7	Section head	1	1
2-3 Years	19	16.8	Regional Control officer	2	2
4-5 Years	11	9.7	Chief Immigration officer	2	2
6-10 Years	29	25.7	Other	19	17
11-15 Years	36	31.9			
16-20 Years	2	1.8			
21-25 Years	1	0.9			
More than 25 Years	2	1.8			
No Answer	2	1.8			
N=113					

PROFILE OF CLIENTS

Two thirds of the 322 clients interviewed in the SQS were Namibian citizens. Of the rest, 42% were Angolans. This is a reflection of the growing volume of migration between Namibia and Angola.³ South Africans comprised 11% of the rest, Zambians 16%, Zimbabweans 6% and Germans 4%. A quarter (25%) of the non-citizens had come to Namibia for the purpose of visiting friends and family, 22% had come to shop, 18% for business, 15% for leisure (holiday) and 11% to study. Only one was making a refugee application. Very few (4 in total) had come for work or to seek employment. A large percentage (40%) had visited Namibia more than 10 times. Only 12% had never been to Namibia before.

The majority of the sample was male (65%) and over three-quarters (80%) were Black/African. About 12% were White/European, 7% Coloured/Mixed race and the remainder were Asians. A third of the clients spoke Oshiwambo as their home language. Another 12% spoke Afrikaans, 10% English and 9% Portuguese (Table 4). Other first languages included Nama/Damara (3%) and Tswana (1%).

A third of the clients had completed secondary/high school and another 22% had 'some secondary school.' Twenty-one percent had post-secondary qualifications. Despite the relatively well-educated character of the client base, 55% were unemployed (with 32% actively looking for work). Of those with jobs, only 26% were fulltime employees.

Education			Language Spoken at Home		
	No.	%		No.	%
None	9	3	English	30	9
Some primary	13	4	Afrikaans	37	11
Primary completed	26	8	Oshiwambo	102	32
Some secondary	71	22	Ojitherero	14	4
Secondary completed	103	32	Lozi	17	5
Post-secondary qualifications	32	10	Portuguese	29	9
Some university	25	8	Nama / Damara	9	3
University completed	31	10	Kwangali	13	4
Post graduate	8	3	Tswana	4	1
			German	7	2
			Other African	18	6
			Other	31	10
			No Answer	11	3
N = 322					

Twenty-one percent of the clients were students, 13% were business people and only 8% had never had a job. Subsistence or commercial farmers, farm workers, miners, domestic workers, artisans and retirees each made up 1% or less of the sample. Only 5% of the sample had no income.

Of the total of 322 clients, 182 were interviewed at regional offices of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration and the remainder at border posts and the airport. The main reason given for visiting Home Affairs offices was to obtain identity documents (30%), followed by passports (26%) and birth registrations (12%) (Table 5). A further 2% came to register a death or to complete procedures to obtain Namibian citizenship.

Reason	No.	%
Identity Documents	53	30
Passport	46	26
Namibian citizenship	5	3
Birth registration	21	12
Death registration	4	2
Visitation to Namibia/Visa	7	4
Employment	3	2
Health Services	1	0.6
Refugee application	1	0.6
Temporary residence	1	0.6
Welfare Services	2	1
Repatriation	1	0.5
Deportation	1	0.5
Other	30	17
Don't know	3	2
N = 179		

Most clients were regular users of Ministry services. Just under a third of the respondents (30%) had visited the offices 3-5 times in the 12 months prior to the survey. The same percentage (30%) had been once or twice. Around 20% had come to the offices more than 10 times in the previous year to access services. Only 6% had not been to the MHAI offices before their current visit in the year preceding the survey.

KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF MHAI STRATEGIES

FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY

One of the initial aims of the survey was to compare the perceptions of clients and officials about the main functions of the MHAI. Unsurprisingly, the officials were better informed than clients about the main functions and range of services offered by the Ministry (Table 6).

Nearly 80% of the officials said that the main function of their Ministry was to issue passports/visas and to register births. By comparison, 64% of the clients identified the issue of passports/visas as a primary function. Only 45% mentioned the registration of births. Other key functions included the issuing of identity documents (mentioned by 78% of officials and 60% of clients) and the registration of deaths (64% versus 27%). Fewer in both camps seemed to know about the Ministry's role in granting Namibian citizenship (51% of officials and 30% of clients) or in registering marriages (47% versus 10%). Very few clients knew about the Ministry's role in deporting undocumented migrants (8%) or in processing refugee applications (6%). More surprising, perhaps, is that less than a third of officials knew about the Ministry's role in the refugee protection process.

While officials are clearly better informed than clients about the range of services offered by the MHIA, their knowledge levels were far from perfect. At the same time, officials in Namibia were more knowledgeable than their counterparts in the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa.⁴ Both officials and clients would benefit from an education campaign to clarify exactly what services the MHIA offers to citizens and non-citizens.

Clients	No.	%	Officials	No.	%
Issue Passports/Visas	206	64	Issue Passports/Visas	89	79
Issue Identity Documents	194	60	Issue Identity Documents	88	78
Register births	144	45	Register births	89	79
Grant Namibia citizenship	98	30	Grant Namibia citizenship	58	51
Register deaths	86	27	Register deaths	72	64
Register marriages	32	10	Register marriages	53	47
Temporary residence	29	9	Temporary residence	43	38
Visitation to Namibia	28	9	Visitation to Namibia	24	21
Deportations	26	8	Deportations	40	35
Permanent Residence	26	8	Permanent Residence	40	35

Refugee Applications	20	6	Refugee Applications	33	29
Repatriation	15	5	Repatriation	30	27
Employment	10	3	Employment	14	12
Home Affairs	6	2	Home Affairs	11	10
Health Services	6	2	Health Services	1	.9
Policing	3	1	Policing	1	.9
Communication Services	3	1	Communication Services	2	2
Housing Services	2	0.5	Housing Services	1	1
Transport Services	2	0.5	Transport Services	1	1
Education and Training	-	-	Education and Training	3	3
Note: Multiples responses were possible					

OFFICIALS' KNOWLEDGE OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Senior management within the MHAI has been disarmingly open about the internal problems which the Ministry faces (Box 2). In an interview in November 2005, for example, the Deputy Director of Immigration identified problems of corruption, understaffing, inefficient structural organization and undocumented migration (Box 2). One issue of importance is whether officials have adequate knowledge of their own Ministry and its aims and procedures. The previous section of the report showed that Ministry officials do not have sufficient knowledge of the range of services offered by their employer. This section takes the analysis one step further by assessing the level of knowledge of officials of Ministry policies and regulations.

Box Two: Immigration in Limbo.

For the Deputy Director of Immigration, Nkrumah Mushelenga, there are numerous challenges facing his department and the way forward. He said the fact that there is a combination of authorities within the system is a serious setback for the ministry. "Currently there are five statutory bodies: immigration, refugee administration, forensic, population service, and passport and citizenship, each guided by its own act. These departments are each headed by an under-secretary. This is a serious setback for Home Affairs, as it promotes corruption. Each person is doing his or her own thing and nobody can be held accountable. For example, you cannot plan for your own training, as you may appear stepping on another person's feet. This is slowing the process," he claimed. He said this was mainly the reason why Home Affairs was not reaching its full potential because of "indecisive

elements” with “corrupt minds”. He said currently the process was unsatisfying and benefiting those involved in corruption and that they would break the back of everything just to continue benefiting from the system. “They (senior officials) have the audacity to order junior officers to do anything for them,” he said. He said another challenge was the “abnormal” structure his department was operating under. “The structure the department is implementing is abnormal and does not meet international standards. For example, there is the SADC protocol on trade and free movements of people. Other countries have standardised their structures and can meet all these requirements while we are under standard and cannot meet the requirements,” he stated. He said lack of manpower was also a problem as they have not been able to recruit new staff for about five years now. He said some border posts have been growing over the years and some new ones opened like the Katwitwi border post between Angola and Namibia. “Katwitwi border post is very small but its level of services is similar to the Oshikango border post. A lot of trucks are passing there everyday and the two immigration officials we put there were not enough. We had to take two more officials from other border posts, which are also already understaffed,” he stressed. He said a lack of modern offices and accommodation facilities at border posts and professional oriented training for staff were also a challenge. He said his department was never given an opportunity to budget for the training of its staff members. “There is always blockage within the system. That opportunity has not been given to us since independence,” he stated. He said although his department had unveiled the scam involving forged documents, he dismissed allegations that his officials could have been involved in this as his department was not responsible for issuing national documents. “We have no mandate to issue birth certificates, identity cards, passport, citizenship, or emergency travelling certificate or any other national document. However, we have a professional technique, which was acquired, through our professional training, which enable us to detect forged national documents.” He said so far, the ministry has confiscated 40 forged passports after appealing to people who bought illegal documents to submit them to the ministry on proposition that they will not be prosecuted. Mushelenga said in addition to the 40 passports held illegally by foreign nationals, his ministry also roped in 10 forged work permits, one forged student permit, 15 forged permanent residence permits, nine extension work permits, three business visas, four visitor entry

permits, one birth certificate, one fake payment receipt, three temporary residence permits, 51 forged re-entry permits and one Namibian forged passport. He said that 12 Zimbabwean nationals, three South Africans, two Zambians, two Germans and one Belgian involved in illegal acts have also been identified. Mushelenga called on those involved in fraudulent acts to stop or face the music. "This is a very serious consequence of the law and if found guilty, can be taken to court and asked to pay N\$25 000 or face five years' imprisonment or both," he stated.
Source: New Era 1 November 2005

The first question tested their familiarity with Immigration Act 7 of 1993. Three quarters of the officials said they were familiar with the Act. Levels of familiarity varied from place to place. Khomas region had the highest percentage of officials who said they were unfamiliar with the Act (34%) and Caprivi/Kavango the lowest (9%). It is a cause for concern that a fifth of the country's officials say they are unfamiliar with the most basic piece of immigration legislation, in effect for over a decade. The familiarity of officials with the Refugees Act 2 of 1999 was even poorer. Nearly two thirds of the officials (63%) said they were unfamiliar with the legislation.

One reason could be a lack of training and awareness programmes to inform officials on the various policies and regulations guiding the MHAI. This would seem to be confirmed by the fact that more than half (57%) of the officials said they had not attended any training programmes or workshops to learn about the laws and regulations governing the Public Service and/or the Ministry. The Northern Region had the greatest percentage (67%) of untrained officials followed by Caprivi/Kavango (65%), Khomas (54%) and Karas (47%). Of those who had received training, 58% had gone to only one training session. Of the trained officials, 96% stated that the training was useful/very useful in helping them perform their duties.

The third piece of relevant legislation is the Public Service Act 13 of 1995. The Act was familiar to around two-thirds of the officials (67%) and unfamiliar to the rest. The officials were then asked a set of questions on the guiding principles of the Public Services Act. The components include consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, transparency and redress. Although two thirds of the officials said they were acquainted with the Act, the SQS showed that they were actually much less conversant with its basic principles (Table 7). A high number of officials (over 80%) could not identify the Act's principles of consultation, access, courtesy and redress. Most (80%) also left out the general principle of value for money.

Principle	No. who mentioned	% who mentioned
Service standards	53	47
Information	32	28
Openness and transparency	26	23
Consultation	23	20
Value for money	22	20
Access	21	19
Other	20	18
Courtesy	14	12
Redress	6	5
N = 113		

OFFICIALS' FAMILIARITY WITH MHAI POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The MHAI has a Strategic Plan, a Transformation Unit, an IT Plan and an Employment Equity Plan. The SQS questioned officials about their familiarity with each of these elements of the Ministry strategy to improve services. Interestingly, only two thirds (64%) were aware of the Strategic Plan (Table 8). A smaller proportion (57%) were aware of the existence of a Departmental IT Plan but less than half were aware of the other elements. Just 36% said that the Ministry had an employment equity plan and only 30% were aware of the Transformation Unit (30%).

Other elements of the Ministry approach include a publicized complaints procedure, the display of guidelines of standard service and an annual report. In each case, less than half of the officials were aware of these elements, again probably reflecting a lack of information and training on MHAI priorities and functions.

Policy/Structured	No. Who Mentioned	% Mentioned
Strategic Plan	71	64
Information Technology Plan	63	57
Publicized Complaints Procedure	47	43
Displayed Guidelines of Standard of Service	43	39
Employment Equity Plan	39	36
Annual Report	36	32
Transformation Unit	32	30
N = 113		

Official knowledge of the MHAI strategies listed in Table 9 was equally unimpressive, especially since officials are supposed to be familiar with their charter. Less than a third mentioned any of the key components of the strategy. Only a third of the officials (32%) believed staff training was one of the components of the strategy, followed by the acquisition of new staff (24%), disciplinary and grievance procedures (mentioned by only 18%) and improvements in the national ID system (also 18%). New technology was mentioned by 16%, as were anti-corruption measures. The rest of the elements were known to 15% or less of the officials.

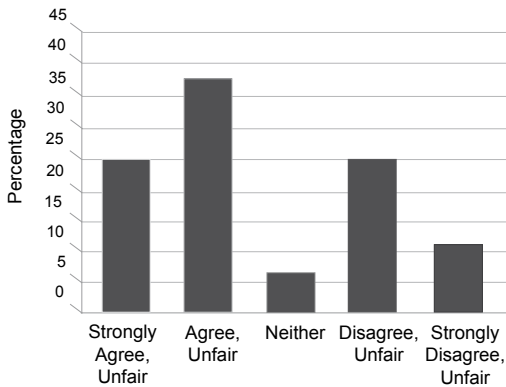
Table 9: Most Important MHAI Strategies		
Issues Mentioned	No. who Mentioned	% who mentioned
Staff training	36	32
Acquiring new staff	27	24
Disciplinary and Grievance procedures	20	18
Improvement in national ID system	20	18
New technology/Technology management	18	16
Anti- Corruption Measures	18	16
New Infrastructure	17	15
Improvements in communications	15	13
Immigration projects	14	12
Management and Leadership	14	12
Succession planning and career management	14	12
Restructuring	11	10
Changes to finance and budgeting	11	10
Legal Services	10	9
Employee Assistance Programme	9	8
Civic Service Projects	9	8
Internal Relations	9	8
“The client is always right” Campaign	8	7
Better Security	8	7
Information Management	7	6
Foreign Offices	7	6
Integrated Government	4	4
Volunteers/Volunteer Campaign	3	3
Transformation	-	-
N = 113. Respondents could give more than one answer.		

WORKING FOR THE MHAI

JOB SATISFACTION

In terms of job satisfaction, over 80% of officials agreed with the following statement: “I enjoy my job very much.” At the same time, officials were skeptical about the fairness of decisions concerning promotions and salary hikes (Figure 1). Nearly 60% felt that they were unfair and had nothing to do with rules and guidelines. On the other hand, a majority thought that promotions and salary increases were independent of political affiliation. Many officials were also skeptical about their career path in the MHIA. While 56% said that they had a strong career path, 39% disagreed. Almost half (47%) agreed that with their credentials it would be easy to get a job in the private sector if the MHAI closed down.

Figure 1: Fairness of Decisions Regarding Promotions and Salary



The officials were asked about possible situations that made their jobs difficult. A number of scenarios were presented ranging from work overload, poor working conditions and a lack of career mobility to racial and gender discrimination. Dissatisfaction with remuneration was the most cited impediment to effective job performance. Nearly 60% of officials said they receive too little pay. Other frequently-cited complaints included work overload (49%), poor working environment (41%), not enough computers (39%), poor management (38%), not enough equipment/stationery (35%) and little or no career mobility (33%). Red tape, gender and racial discrimination were not seen as serious obstacles (4%, 6% and 9% respectively) (Table 10).

Working Conditions	No.	% Yes
Too little pay	67	59
Too much work/overload	55	49
Poor working environment	46	41
Not enough/broken computers	44	39
Poor Management	43	33
Not enough equipment/Stationeries	39	35
Little/No career movement	37	33
Racial discrimination	10	9
Gender discrimination	7	6
N = 113		

Half of the officials thought that inadequate funding was the major difficulty facing the Ministry as a whole (Table 11). Other issues raised included poor infrastructure and facilities (49%), too few staff (43%), pressure from the public (34%), poor management (33%) and low staff morale (31%).

In terms of perceived solutions to the problems facing the Ministry, most officials cited personnel issues including staff training/skills development (mentioned by 56%) and more staff (50%). Other proposed solutions included better computers/equipment (54%), higher salaries (49%), better facilities/offices (39%), more funding from government (39%) and better management (31%).

Problems	No.	%	Suggested solutions/ improvements	No.	%
Not enough funding	56	50	More government funding	44	39
Poor infrastructure/facilities/ offices	55	49	Better facilities/offices	44	39
Too few staff	49	43	More staff	56	50
Pressure from the public/clients	38	34	More staff training/skills development	63	56
Poor management	37	33	Better management	35	31
Staff morale/motivation	35	31	More opportunities for career advancement	27	24
Corruption	26	23	Better computers/equipment	61	54
Difficulty enforcing policy	7	6	Higher salaries	58	51
			Improved working environment	28	25
			A different minister	11	10

CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE DELIVERY

OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF MHAI

Clients were first asked to rate the Ministry's performance in comparison to how it operated before independence. The overall view was that the Ministry was more efficient than it had been during the apartheid era. More than half (55%) felt that it was more efficient today than during the apartheid era. Another 12% saw no change and 19% felt the current Ministry was more inefficient. When asked about corruption, 36% of the clients felt that the MHAI was currently more corrupt compared to years gone by, while 32% felt that the ministry was less corrupt than in the apartheid era. Overall, around half (52%) strongly approved of the way the MHAI had performed its mandate in the previous year. However, a third disapproved of the performance of the Ministry.

Clients were asked whether they felt the efficiency of the MHAI would improve in the future, deteriorate or remain the same. Overall, they were optimistic. Most (63%) felt that the ministry would become more efficient while another quarter thought it would retain its current service levels. Only 6% felt the Ministry would become less competent.

INFRASTRUCTURE AT MHAI OFFICES

The MHAI offices are relatively accessible to those able to make use of their services. A quarter of the clients had taken a taxi to get to the MHAI offices. Similar numbers walked (24%) or drove to the offices in their own car (23%). Smaller numbers used a bus (7%), hiked (7%), were given a lift (6%) or arrived via plane (2%) (i.e., those arriving at Hosea Kutako International airport). Over half (57%) had taken less than an hour to reach the offices, while 15% had taken about an hour. The rest took more than an hour.

An array of questions were asked on the facilities available to clients at MHAI offices (Table 12). The majority (84%) reported that the right forms were available. But only 38% reported that there were posters or brochures describing the services offered by the MHAI. Even fewer (26%) stated that the offices listed the costs of various services.

As regards basic facilities, the offices scored more poorly. For example, only 43% of clients said the offices had seats, 43% that there were working toilets and 26% that there was heat/air conditioning. Only 4% said there was a mother's room.

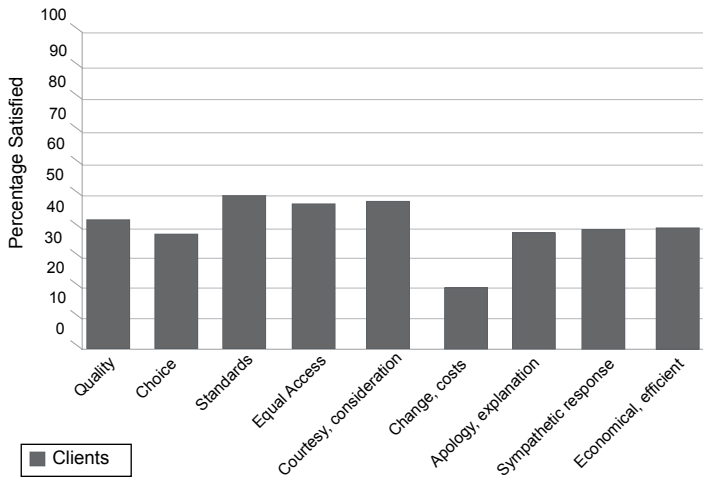
	No.	%
Right forms to complete	263	82
A place nearby to buy food	190	59
Drinking water	165	51
A working public phone	143	44
Working toilets	138	43
Seats for clients	137	43
Posters/brochures describing service offered	118	37
Heat/Air conditioning	82	25
Posters/brochures describing fees	82	25
A mother's room	14	4

QUALITY OF SERVICES AT MHAI OFFICES

When they reached the offices, 56% were asked to fill in forms in order to have their requests processed. A small percentage (14%) requested assistance in filling out the forms. Most (68%) of those who asked for help reported that an official from the ministry provided assistance. Virtually all were satisfied with the help they received.

Clients spent, on average, one hour and thirty minutes at the MHAI from the time they started to queue until they finished or their interview concluded. Around a third (34%) of the respondents said they were satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait, while another 24% said they were very satisfied. Around a quarter (26%) reported that they were not satisfied with the amount of time spent waiting. Overall, two-thirds of the respondents said they were happy or satisfied with the level of service they received at the office on the day of the interview. Thirty-one percent felt that the service was substandard or unsatisfactory. In other words, there is a relatively consistent pattern with two-thirds of clients relatively happy and a third unhappy with MHAI performance including the time spent at the office, the time taken to process requests, the level of service received and their overall experience as a customer of the Ministry.

In terms of overall satisfaction levels, 67% said they were “always satisfied” or “satisfied most of the time” with the service. However, only 46% felt that they were treated fairly by the MHAI most or all of the time. Even fewer (35%) felt that the MHAI delivered fast results. Quality of service was also measured in terms of whether the services are efficient, economical and offer value for money. Clients were asked to rate the Ministry’s services on each of these aspects. Responses were divided. Some 43% of the respondents agreed that the services offered by MHAI were reasonable in terms of cost, efficiency and value while 42% disagreed.

Figure 2: Client Perceptions of the Quality of Service Delivery of the MHA1

Client satisfaction did vary with the measure used (Figure 2). There was greatest satisfaction with standards, staff courtesy, and the accessibility, quality and efficiency of service (with 40-50% satisfied). The greatest level of dissatisfaction was with the cost of services (with only 20% satisfied). In addition, only 35% were satisfied with the speed at which their requests were processed. One reason for this is suggested by a recent press article on delays in the issue of IDs (Box 3).

Box Three: Issuing of ID Cards to be Speeded Up

Thousands of identity cards are awaiting collection from the offices of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Minister Rosalia Nghidinwa told the National Assembly on Wednesday that while the department of civil registration planned to speed up the issuing of identity cards to less than a month, it was also looking at distributing more than 70 000 uncollected IDs to the various constituencies. Of the Ministry's total budget of N\$81 million, the civil registration department will receive N\$29,1 million. It will spend at least N\$6 million on buying a second laser engraver for identity cards. Nghidinwa said officials were still converting manual fingerprint data to the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) it bought last year - a process which would be completed by October. Together, the second engraver and the electronic fingerprint data would speed-up the issuing of identity documents, she said. It currently takes about a year to have one issued. "Our target is to reduce that further to just a few days, as soon as our other efficiency measures are fully implemented

during the NDP 3 period,” said Nghidinwa. Nghidinwa said her Ministry was looking into providing services to banks and insurance companies by linking them to the AFIS database. This, she said, would increase the Ministry’s revenue base, improve institutions’ client verification processes and reduce fraudulent claims. Nghidinwa informed the House that her Ministry was phasing out the use of passports that did not contain machine-readable data. Applicants can expect to pay more for a passport in the near future, so that the Ministry can recover the cost of issuing passports. According to Nghidinwa, Namibia’s charges for passports were among the lowest in the SADC region. The new fees would be gazetted soon, she said. The division of immigration and border control will receive one of the largest chunks of the Ministry’s budget at N\$20,1 million. Nghidinwa said to improve service delivery at entry points, the Ministry needed to invest in computerised systems at border posts. To curb illegal border crossing and to boost tourism, the Minister also outlined plans to open up new entry points at Mata Mata and Sendelingsdrift. Other new border posts identified are Kasamane in the Omusati Region, Okanguati in Kunene and Nkurenkuru in Kavango. *Source: Namibian 17 June 2005.*

Clients were generally more satisfied with the personal treatment they received from officials at Ministry offices. On virtually all measures between 60-70% of clients were satisfied with the officials (Table 13).

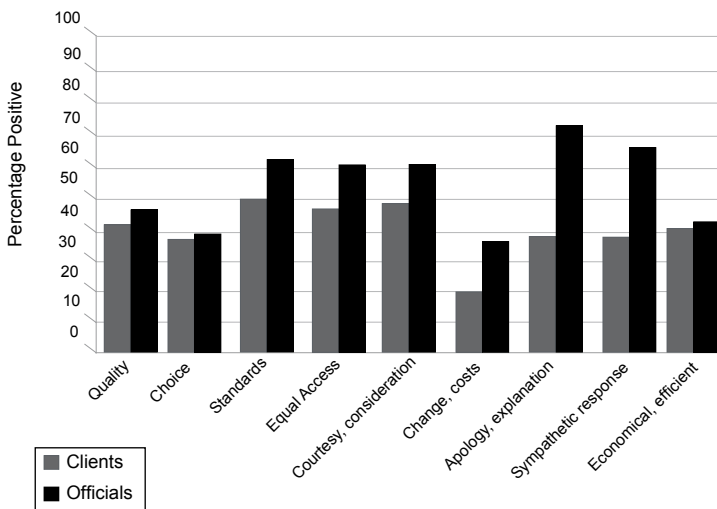
Attitudinal Indicator	No. Satisfied	% Satisfied
Knowledge	227	72
Honesty	214	68
Cooperation	211	68
Attentiveness	210	67
Friendliness	209	67
Anxiety	208	66
Helpfulness	203	65
Patience	197	63
Politeness	197	63
Trust	196	63
Job interest	195	63
Consideration	193	62

In conclusion, around two-thirds of the clients of the MHAI are satisfied with the level and quality of general services received and the attitudes of MHAI officials. However, on some measures (such as speed of service and perception of fair treatment) dissatisfaction levels are much higher. This still leaves at least a third of clients who are not satisfied with the quality and level of services received. At the same time, a high percentage of the clients (83%) reported they had no reason to file a complaint against the MHAI. Poor customer service, delays in service, loss of documents and incorrect or problematic results were the main reasons why clients had filed complaints with the MHAI in the past.

COMPARING CLIENT AND OFFICIAL ATTITUDES

Overall, officials proved to be much more positive about the quality of services on offer than were their clients. On some issues, clients and officials provided very similar responses. For example, 44% of clients and 47% of officials said that the MHAI provided services of a high quality. Or again 43% of clients and 44% of officials thought that MHAI services were economical and efficient. However, there were marked differences of opinion in many other areas between officials and clients. On every measure, officials feel that the Ministry offers a better quality of service than do the clients (Figure 3). The difference is particularly marked with regard to the demeanor of officials (offering explanations, type of response) themselves with officials clearly having a higher opinion of themselves than do clients.

Figure 3: Degree of Agreement on Service Delivery By Clients and Officials



However, when it came to more refined measures of the character of MHAI officials in discharging their duties, the opinions of clients and the self-perception of officials was very similar across a whole range of measures (Table 14). On some measures (such as knowledge, honesty and friendliness), clients had a better opinion of MHAI officials than did the officials themselves. On the other hand, more officials felt that they were cooperative, helpful and polite. On other measures (attentiveness, trust, interest in their jobs and consideration) the responses were almost identical. However, what needs to be stressed here is that the differences in perception, one way or the other, are not large. Attention needs to be given rather to the one-third minority of both clients and officials who hold negative opinions about the service providers of the MHAI.

Table 14: Perceptions of Clients and Officials of Attitudes of Ministry Officials

Attitudinal Indicator	Clients Satisfied		Officials Satisfied	
	No.	%	No.	%
Knowledge	227	72	73	66
Honesty	214	68	66	60
Cooperation	211	68	79	71
Attentiveness	210	67	74	67
Friendliness	209	67	65	59
Helpfulness	203	65	77	69
Patience	197	63	73	66
Politeness	197	63	77	69
Trust	196	63	69	62
Job interest	195	63	69	62
Consideration	193	62	70	63
N = 322				

PERCEPTIONS OF OFFICIAL MISCONDUCT

COMPARATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF MISCONDUCT

The study aimed to pinpoint certain aspects corruption but also to gain insight into how such offences are viewed by clientele and officials. Several scenarios were presented to both officials and clients and they were requested to rate them in terms of whether they were “not wrong”, “wrong but understandable” or “wrong and punishable” (Figure 4)

Scenario One: A government official accepts a gift from a citizen as an appreciation for something he/she has done as part of his/her job.

Only 40% of the clients said such conduct was ‘wrong and punishable.’ One third (33%) of officials felt the same way.

Scenario Two: A government official gives jobs to unqualified friends or family members.

Most of the clients (86%) said such actions were wrong and the official deserved to be punished. Only 4% of the clients felt the behaviour was acceptable. An even higher proportion of the officials (94%) thought such behavior was unacceptable.

Scenario Three: A government official deposits someone’s pension into his/her own account.

A very high percentage of clients (88%) felt that this was wrong and the culprit(s) should be punished. Again, an even higher proportion of officials (96%) said that such behaviour was wrong and deserved to be punished.

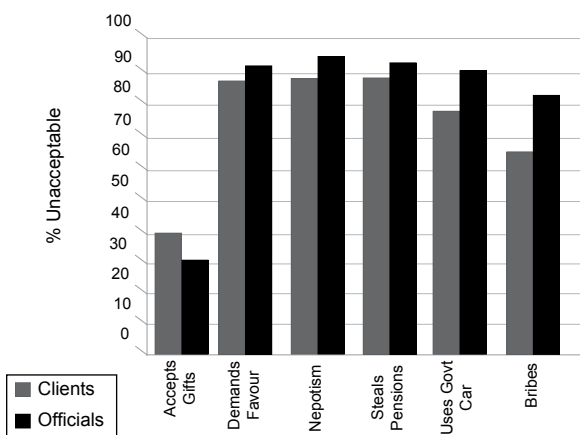
Scenario Four: A government official uses government property for his/her personal business.

Three quarters of the clients (78%) thought that such behaviour was wrong and punishable. Even more officials (92%) said they did not tolerate the use of government property for personal gain.

Scenario Five: A client offers a public official a gift or ‘tip’ (bribe) to make his/her application go a little faster.

Two-thirds of the clients felt that this was wrong and punishable while only 8% did not see anything wrong with the behavior. Again, a significantly higher percentage of officials (84%) felt that the act was ‘wrong and punishable’.

Figure 4: Views Towards Unacceptable Behaviour by Officials



Overall, both clients and officials displayed considerable disapproval of behaviour that could be viewed as inappropriate, discriminatory or corrupt. Officials consistently ranked such behaviour as more deserving of punishment than clients, except on the issue of acceptance of a “gift” in recognition of good work for a service already rendered. The majority in both groups felt this was an acceptable response to good service.

TOLERANCE OF MISCONDUCT

Officials were asked to respond to statements that contained justifications for corrupt behaviour and asked to what extent they found them acceptable.

Statement One: Government officials are so poorly paid that they have no choice but to ask people for extra payments.

Although a relatively high proportion (58%) disagreed with the statement, 22% agreed and another 15% strongly agreed. This suggests not only that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with remuneration but that a significant minority of officials feel it is acceptable to augment poor salaries through demands for extra payments or bribes.

Statement Two: Extra payments or favours make officials work more efficiently.

The vast majority of officials (82%) disagreed with this statement.

Statement Three: The coming of democracy has increased the amount of corruption in our government and society.

Officials were evenly split on this issue with 43% agreeing and the same percentage disagreeing.

Answers to these statements suggest that officials have a low tolerance and negative view of corrupt behaviour, especially bribery. However, there is a popular perception that corruption has become endemic within private and public enterprises in Namibia. Officials and clients were therefore asked about their actual experiences with corruption.

EXPERIENCE OF MISCONDUCT

Clients were first asked: “Have you or anyone in your immediate family ever been asked by a Home Affairs official to pay money for a service that should have been free, or to give them a gift in return for a favour?” The overwhelming majority (90%) said they had never been put in such a position. The remaining 10% who had been involved in such a misdemeanor had paid a bribe to obtain a travel document, to avoid punishment for overstaying a visa, to avoid deportation or repatriation,

to obtain a work permit, to obtain a residence permit or to attain refugee status.

Officials were asked to recount their own experiences of corruption in the year preceding the survey. In contrast to the clients, a majority of officials (71%) reported that they had witnessed a bribe being paid or solicited during the year prior to the survey. In some regions, such as Khomas and Khara, officials had witnessed this more than once. At the same time, most officials (81%) were adamant that they had not personally accepted a bribe.

Most officials (85%) reported that they had not directly witnessed anyone within the MHAI charge fees for free services. A similarly high number of officials (85%) had not observed the theft of public resources. Fewer, though still the majority (58%), had not directly witnessed favouritism/nepotism in the awarding of jobs or contracts. However, this left 42% who had witnessed nepotism or favouritism. In Khomas region, 63% of the officials said they had witnessed favouritism/nepotism, the highest rate in the study.

A few officials reported that they had been silenced by their superiors concerning the reporting of inappropriate or illegal activities and 5% admitted that they had been asked by their superiors to participate in illegal activities.

	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Heard about someone in the MHAI office accepting a bribe or favour in the past year	78	71	32	29
Heard someone in your office accept a bribe/favour in the past year	52	47	59	53
Directly witness nepotism in the past 5 years	47	42	64	58
Seen someone or personally beige offered a bribe or favour in the past year	20	19	87	81
Seen someone in the office accept a bribe/favour in the past year	19	17	90	82
Directly witnessed political patronage in the awarding of jobs/contracts	19	17	90	81
Directly witnessed theft of public resources in the past 5 years	17	15	94	85
Directly witnessed an official charge fees for free services in the past 5 years	16	14	94	85
Asked by a superior to keep quiet about inappropriate or illegal activities	9	8	99	90
Asked by a superior to participate in inappropriate or illegal activities	5	5	104	94

REPORTING MISCONDUCT

Over two-thirds of both clients and officials reported that they would report any misconduct to which they were exposed. Seventy-two percent of officials said they felt comfortable informing the control officer of corruption and 68% said they would inform their immediate supervisor. Officials also said they felt comfortable reporting to colleagues (68%), the Ombudsman (61%), Deputy Director (60%), the Public Relations Officer (53%), Director (52%), The Public Service Commission (51%), Internal Audit Unit (49%), Inspecting Unit (49%), Permanent Secretary (48%), and the Auditor General (46%). In terms of legal action outside the ministry, 64% of officials said that they would feel comfortable reporting misconduct or corruption to the police. While these figures are relatively high, there are still a significant number of officials (at least a third) who would not blow the whistle on corruption, which must be a cause for some concern.

Only half of the officials agreed with the statement: "You should report misconduct/corruption regardless of whether it affects you directly or not." The same percentage was confident that they could report misconduct or corruption without facing intimidation from their colleagues or superiors. This suggests that while most recognize questionable behaviour, many lack the confidence to bring these activities to the attention of their superiors for fear of incriminating themselves or facing intimidation from their co-workers.

SOLUTIONS FOR MISCONDUCT

Officials were asked what they thought to be effective ways of preventing corruption. The great majority (93%) felt that an effective method would be harsher sentences for people found guilty of corruption. Other methods proposed included tighter legislation to enable more criminal prosecutions for corruption (86%) and the creation and promotion of a code of conduct to promote professional ethics (85%). Proposals for government included barring corrupt officials from holding public office (82%) and devoting more resources to monitoring and prosecuting acts of corruption (82%). Other methods which received majority support included an increased commitment by politicians to fight corruption and fraud (75%); increasing legal protection for people who report improper activities (79%); enabling clients to have a greater access to government information (76%); creating special courts for prosecuting cases of corruption (71%); and the setting of moral examples by management (68%).

Table 16: Measures Suggested by Officials to Fight Misconduct/Corruption		
	No.	%
Harsher sentences for people found guilty of corruption	102	93
Tightening up legislation to enable more criminal prosecutions for corruption	97	86
Creating more codes of conduct to promote professional ethics in government	96	85
Barring corrupt officials from holding public officer	93	82
Devoting more resources to investing corruption related cases	93	82
Increased legal protection for people who report improper activities (whistleblowers)	89	79
Creating anti- corruption hotlines	88	78
Requiring ministries to give detailed information about their spending	87	77
Increasing salaries of government employees	86	76
Enabling clients to have greater access to government information	86	76
Regularly rotating government officials to different regions and different positions or offices	85	75
Increased commitment by politicians to fight corruption and fraud	85	75
Creating special court for prosecuting cases of corruption	80	71
Managers should set moral example	77	68

CONCLUSION

The aim of this survey was to provide baseline data on perceptions and the state of service delivery within the Namibian Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration, and to assess the impact of measures that have been initiated to address and reduce acknowledged problems.

By the time of the survey, the Ministry had already designed some strategies to transform and improve service delivery. Its stated aim is to provide the best customer service to ensure clients are happy and employees are satisfied. Ideally, both officials and clients should be familiar with the functions, regulations and principles governing the Ministry. Unfortunately, this survey demonstrates that this is not the case. Neither officials nor clients are acquainted with these principles and guidelines. The danger of this lack of knowledge is incompetence and inefficiency on the part of the service provider and acceptance of poor services by clients.

The survey revealed that both clients and officials lacked knowledge of specific MHAI strategies. The situation is exacerbated by a lack of training programmes for officials performing these services. The survey also indicated that officials were not knowledgeable about individual

pieces of legislation such as the Refugees Act. To rectify this problem there is need for extensive training on several pieces of legislation guiding the mandate of the officials. SAMP therefore recommends that the Ministry consider implementing programmes to educate staff members on existing legislation and inform them when new legislation or policies are introduced. It is particularly important for new recruits to be fully trained and informed of the mandate and policies governing the Ministry when they are first hired and provided with refresher courses.

What was encouraging from the survey was that clients are generally happy with the treatment they receive. Most Ministry staff were seen as polite, friendly and helpful and treated clients with dignity and respect. Such perceptions are important to maintain confidence and trust in the Ministry. However, at least a third of the clients were not very satisfied which indicates that there remains a need to train and assess staff in customer care to ensure vigilance and that staff continue to give warm and friendly service to everyone.

Clients are not well informed about the services offered by MHAI. Education could be provided in a number of ways; for example, through newspapers, radio, posters and leaflets. In addition, clients are not informed about the work of the department within the ministry. No annual report is published and circulated to clients to inform them how resources are used and how much services cost, or to provide information on staffing issues, equipment delivery, services and so on. A report should also include how well the departments are performing, and whether the Ministry has met its own targets within established timelines. Current negative media reporting on the delivery of services may improve if the Ministry implements strategies to inform the public more vigorously on the services offered and the rights of clients to access these services. In other words, the Ministry has to be more proactive in order for it to revive its reputation in the media.

The survey also sought to understand the issue of corruption within the Ministry. Traditionally government officials have been seen as stewards of public resources and guardians of a special trust between citizens and the government. In return for this confidence, they are expected to put public interest above self-interest. However, recent scandals involving public officials have captured media attention and could be behind the scathing media reports on the Ministry (Box 4).

Box Four: Home Affairs Under Fire

“Serious attention is presently being given to a business culture change within the passport division of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Hence the fact that a number of the present redundant civil servants are being redeployed elsewhere.” This public assurance was yesterday given in a hearing to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Accounts by Samuel Gaogoseb, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs. “Though we are experiencing a backlog of 4 000 in the issuing of IDs to the public, we are now in full production for the past two weeks to wipe out the backlog,” Gaogoseb assured the committee. Over the past few months public flak and critique, ranging from corruption, bribery and incompetence in the issuing of official documents such as passports, IDs, birth certificates and residence permits, have been levelled at his ministry by passport agents and the general public. “Presently Namibia, with its relatively small population, is rated fourth in the world regarding the automation in issuing of official documents such as IDs. South Africa, with a population of almost 50 million people, is at least one year behind us in this regard. The same system will also be used for police records and population data. Through automation we are now also able to assist commercial banks to access vital information at a much lower fee,” Gaogoseb told the committee. According to him the new automation can ensure and generate an additional income of between N\$400 million and N\$500 million per year for his ministry. “We are also in the process of streamlining the issuing of IDs country wide through mobile registrations. Negotiations with August 26 Company in this regard are at an advanced stage. Through this system applications can then be immediately transmitted back to the main database to speed up the process,” Gaogoseb, who also informed the committee that the project will cost about N\$12 million, said. Committee member Reggie Diergaardt pointed out to the PS that the biggest problem presently seems to be the reluctance of the public to collect thousands of ID cards from demarcated collection points. “People seem to be opting to apply for passports rather than IDs because many of them don’t even know where to collect the documents from because nothing is being done to encourage the people to do so. The fact that offices are not clearly identified contributes towards this tendency.” Diergaardt alluded to an incident in which an old woman in the North had to walk 40 km to collect her ID, but was sent back to return again for a third time. Diergaardt also complained about the lack of

trained personnel in Home Affairs in rural areas and suggested that the mobile ID-issue venture be re-looked and restructured. "We have not done any scientific research on why people do not collect their IDs from specific collection points. Furthermore, I agree project management in the ministry needs to be improved, but it will take some time." Chairman Johan de Waal urged the ministry to make more use of radio broadcasts to inform the public on where the IDs can be obtained. "We cannot beg people to collect their documents, but something needs to be done to bring the 60 000 or so ID cards to a central point from where they can be collected. It will save a lot of money and time. However, if people are not serious about these documents, they must bear the consequences thereof," De Waal warned the public. He also did not spare the rod against incompetent counter clerks in the ministry serving the public as well as the conditions of some of the offices of the ministry. "At some collection points there are no toilet facilities and many of the ministry offices are dirty, something to be ashamed of," De Waal said. Reggie Diergaardt expressed his profound concern about the conditions at border posts under the ministry. "One out of every 10 toilets do not work or are out of order. It's filthy. Border posts are supposed to be clientele-friendly," Diergaardt said, to which Gaogoseb acknowledged that his ministry experiences problems in repairs of broken toilets. "These repairs fall under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication. We have to wait for ages to have repairs done. We also need much more funding to improve the image of our border posts." Gaogoseb defended his ministry against a barrage of committee member questions. Committee member Elma Dienda had it all against the fact that Grade 11 learners have to sit for hours and wait to be served in applying for IDs and passports, much needed documents for further studies. "This is a big problem. Learners miss out on schoolwork, having to wait for hours. These school children are suffering because of the weaknesses in the system of issuing these documents. The ministry should do something to directly involve schools in the issuing of these documents. With regard to properly serving the Namibian public, surely no training is needed. Common respect and good manners can prevent the public being insulted by some arrogant counter clerks," Dienda said. In response to this the Permanent Secretary told the committee that there exists a willingness among officials to deliver quality services. "We have now acquired six additional cameras to issue documents at schools in close cooperation with school authorities. It will make things

easier because the learners are concentrated in one place. As far as training of officials is concerned, it is a step-by-step process, which needs sequential intervention. I agree supervising needs to be improved on management level," he said, informing the committee that 20 senior staff members have been dispatched to the regions to assist in training of the work force of the ministry. De Waal also seriously advised that the Permanent Secretary inform his staff to beware of and take cognizance of the new anti-corruption law. "They need to know the law to protect themselves against corrupt practices. You must warn them seriously against receiving bribes such as money and diamond rings for favours," to which Gaogoseb reacted: "We cannot stop persons taking and receiving monies from the public or agents. We only deal with systems to detect bribery." Then De Waal asked a question on whether the ministry has ever contemplated installing surveillance cameras in its building. On the issue of agents acting on behalf of the public in the application of official documents, De Waal asked the Permanent Secretary pertinently why his ministry refuses to deal with such agents performing a public service. "The existence of agents was brought about by our own inefficiencies. If we do our work properly, such agents will die a natural death. I don't see the need to negotiate with agents at all," he responded. Jeremia Nambinga was critical of his chairman's ostensible protection and defence of agents. "We should not apply double standards on the one hand protecting agents and on the other hand threatening officials with the anti-corruption commission," Nambinga said. "One doesn't need an agent to corrupt civil servants, but a better system of control," De Waal retorted, to which Gaogoseb responded: "Too much pressure is put on a system, which is not properly functioning, even parliamentary committees going abroad and in urgent need of travelling documents. Isn't that corruption too?" Gaogoseb wanted to know. De Waal immediately responded, dubbing alleged preferential treatment for parliamentarians not as corruption, but as a facilitating process. "I have come to realise that Namibians don't respect and or value their official documents. We easily lose them and they land in the wrong hands. Furthermore, foreigners are also criminally assisted by Namibians to secure such documents. As long as this tendency continues, such documents will have no real value. Such documents need to be safeguarded at all times by the owners," Gaogoseb admonished the public. *Source: New Era 9 November 2005.*

In the SQS, the majority of both costumers and officials said they had not directly experienced corruption of any kind. While this is a promising finding, the image of corruption within the Ministry needs to be addressed. To ensure transparency the government should enable the Anti-Corruption Commission to fully investigate corruption claims in an open manner. Furthermore, anti-corruption messages should be integrated into training materials and procedures to ensure that officials understand all issues related to corruption and how to combat them.

Professionalism in the public service is an overarching value that determines how activities should be carried out. Encompassed within the idea of professionalism are other values that guide the public service -- such as loyalty, neutrality, transparency, diligence, punctuality, effectiveness and impartiality. It is clear from the research that both clients and officials had established ethical viewpoints on corruption as each argued that corruption was inherently wrong and needed to be punished when encountered.

Common suggestions for solving the problem of corruption included prosecuting those found guilty of corruption, increasing salaries of officials to lessen susceptibility to bribes, disciplining or dismissing corrupt workers and better informing the public about the need to report corruption. While it may be difficult to implement all of the suggestions made, the Ministry should operate in a transparent manner in order to keep clients and the general public satisfied and to enhance performance. To assist in this process it is recommended that this survey be repeated every third year to measure progress in the further implementation of policies to better service delivery within the Ministry.

ENDNOTES

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