



**LIVELIHOOD CHALLENGES IN A RURAL GROWTH POINT: THE  
CASE OF ONDOBE, NAMIBIA**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Widespread poverty and high levels of inequality are among the biggest challenges facing developing countries. This has led to the migration of numerous people from rural areas to urban centres in a search for better survival opportunities. A number of individuals settle in proximate urbanising areas, where they are susceptible to poverty traps as a result of high demand for services and infrastructure. Government and other development partners persistently support initiatives to uplift the poor and most vulnerable out of poverty through the implementation of programmes and projects. The strategies developed under the auspices of the economic progression pillar of the fifth National Development Plan (NDP 5), which aims to achieve growth that is inclusive, sustainable and equitable, include the identification and advancement of growth points, development centres and sub-centres.

This research explores livelihood challenges in the rural growth point of Ondobe, Namibia, as well as the availability of livelihood capitals that may need to be strengthened. A survey of 50 participants including 10 key informants was carried out with a 100% response rate.

A deep understanding of the underlying issues facing urbanising areas is crucial for evidence-based planning and the effective implementation of responsive measures. The study found that most people in Ondobe are employed in the informal sector, with activities ranging from artisan work to subsistence farming and trading, with a few people being employed in the public sector. It was also observed that the area has been developing over the years, although not at the desired level given that the lives of a considerable segment of the population have not improved. An element of informality in terms of how the area is developing as well as a lack of adequate infrastructure and services is a hindrance to the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

This study concluded that the impediments to sustainable livelihoods are unique to various settlement areas, therefore a consideration of customised responses to each community's needs, especially in rapidly growing areas, is crucial for effective implementation and inclusive development. Relevant stakeholders can build further

on these findings with a comprehensive study that will provide guidance in devising responsive policies and strategies.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GPS	Global Positioning System
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
OSDF	Ondobe Spatial Development Framework
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

An overview of this study on livelihood challenges in the rural growth point of Ondobe, Namibia, is introduced in this chapter. The study area forms part of emerging new settlement patterns that are influenced by the urbanisation process, and has attracted many people, most of whom have migrated from proximate rural areas. Urbanisation signals modernity and industrialisation, and is perceived to be a natural transitioning phase of an economy from low productivity agriculture to higher output industries and services (Nallari & Griffith, 2011:6). This trend is accompanied by various livelihood opportunities, but also introduces a set of new challenges that require attention to ensure that inclusive development is attained.

### **1.1 Introduction to the study**

The improvement of people's living standards through sound policies is a core desired outcome of any development initiative. The focus of this exploratory research was on livelihoods as well as the challenges hindering sustainable livelihoods in an urbanising rural growth point, using Ondobe as a case study. This study assessed the types of livelihoods that people pursue, the ownership of livelihood assets, as well as accessibility to livelihood capitals by individuals, including related challenges. The intention of the researcher was to call attention to the need for a comprehensive study that would create responsive interventions for the prosperity of all. This chapter outlines the problem statement, the study objectives and the relevant concepts, including urbanisation, growth points, as well as the sustainable livelihood framework that has been adopted based on the qualitative and quantitative data collected for this study. The research questions that formed part of the questionnaire, details of the research methodology and the contents of the remaining chapters are also explained.

### **1.2 Context, background and problems in an urbanising growth point**

Poverty and inequality are daunting global challenges that need to be overcome as per the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (Dugarova & Gülasan, 2017:12). Namibia is one such country that is confronted by these challenges, despite its upper middle income status. The country's Gini-coefficient of 0.597 ranks it among the nations with the highest income inequality in the world (Namibia Statistics Agency

[NSA], 2012:40). This disparity in income distribution highlights the scale of poverty in Namibia, where approximately 17.4% of the population live in poverty (NSA, 2016:105). This problem has contributed to the growing level of migration from rural to urban areas amongst Namibians in search of better opportunities, as evidenced by the urban population increase of 49.7% between 2001 and 2011 (NSA, 2012:25).

Some of the migrants settle in surrounding concentration areas known as growth points in order to access services and start generating incomes. A growth point is “a settlement area that local or central government considers as having potential for development and need to be supported further through private and public investment” (Waketwe, 1988, cited in Nhede, 2013:119). The execution of necessary growth point functions contribute to poverty alleviation and reduce pressure on towns to provide services. The movement of people from rural to urban areas has had major implications for access to health and land, as well as other developmental aspects such as challenges relating to informal settlements, poor sanitation, increased demand for services, dependence on income from informal sectors, and health risks due to overcrowding (Olivier, 2016:101).

### **1.2.1 Background of Ondobe**

The levels of poverty and rapid urbanisation in Africa and other parts of the world are similar to those of Namibia, where the number of people living in urban areas increased from 43% to 48% within a period of five years (NSA, 2017a:14). Ondobe is currently urbanising and has been experiencing an influx of people occupying the area, despite being located in a rural set up. Ondobe is situated along the C45 road connecting two major towns, Eenhana and Helao Nafidi, in the Ohangwena region (see Figure 1.1), and is positioned between these towns at approximately 28 km in the East and 32 km in the North, respectively. Eenhana serves as the region’s capital and is one of the fastest growing towns in Northern Namibia, while Helao Nafidi is one of the busiest towns in the country as it borders Angola. The two towns are steadily developing and offer most services to local residents and other neighbouring communities.



The development of Ondobe has been acknowledged by the Ohangwena Regional Council through its decision to declare the area a formalised urban area in the near future. This action is mandatory by law to ensure orderly development and to make provision for the management, regulation, and control of matters relating to the welfare and health of the inhabitants. Preliminary planning and township establishment activities are currently underway. A draft town layout plan and other preliminary activities of the spatial development framework affirm the level of development in Ondobe.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Urbanisation is taking place in many parts of the developing world, leading to new urban patterns when rural areas urbanise. Arimah et al. (2009:xxiii) asserted that “new urban formations are more prominent in numerous poorer cities of developing countries whereby less privileged households secure easily accessible and affordable land in the countryside, in proximity to employment and related livelihood sources”. This trend is also applicable in Namibia, as can be seen by the rapid urbanisation of Ondobe. Ondobe is situated in the Ohangwena region, which is the second most populated region but one of the five poorest regions in Namibia, with a poverty rate of 35% (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2016:35). This is higher than the national rate of 26.9%. While the urbanisation process can be beneficial to communities as it presents opportunities such as increased access to better employment, education and health facilities (Olivier, 2016:102), it also poses challenges related to growing inequality and exclusion, informal settlements and informal employment, and the provision of quality services and housing (Dugarova & Gülasan, 2017:35). Negative socio-economic impacts arising from urbanisation may be more severe in small and medium sized urban centres, as in most instances they do not receive sufficient attention when it comes to planning (Mutua, 2013:4).

Dedicated efforts by government and other development partners are evident in urban centres through diverse capital investments; however more is still required given the current levels of poverty and inequality in Namibia. According to Olivier (2016:101), “not much is known in Namibia whether the migration influx to urban areas is aiding to advance economic growth or contributes to poverty. It is further noted that unplanned and rapid urban expansion may impede urban development

when required infrastructure or policies and strategies are not initiated and well implemented for the benefit of all". Thus far, no study has been conducted on the livelihood dynamics of rapidly urbanising areas in Namibia, specifically growth points, which is the focus of this research. This study also undertook to determine if the living conditions of local inhabitants have been improving, as well as uncover constraints to maintaining livelihoods. Understanding the underlying issues facing urbanising areas is crucial for evidence-based planning and the effective implementation of responsive measures.

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

In response to the prevailing poverty and inequality related challenges facing the country, various mechanisms have been developed through various offices, ministries and organisations to implement sector-specific programmes and projects. The Namibian government has declared its commitment to the provision of opportunities such as entrepreneurial support services, training and skills development aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods for all people, with a focus on lifting the most vulnerable out of poverty through targeted interventions. One of the strategies of the economic progression pillar of NDP 5 is to achieve growth that is inclusive, sustainable and equitable, as well as to identify and advance growth points, development centres as well as sub-centres (NPC, 2017:23). This strategy promotes the development of rural areas by providing essential social and economic services to identified growth points in an effort to slow the rate of rural-urban migration, while simultaneously reducing poverty.

The literature on livelihoods in urbanising growth points is relatively limited, which is why this study aimed to draw attention to these areas which are susceptible to becoming poverty traps. It has been observed that a crucial step in developing efforts to alleviate poverty and ultimately attaining this goal is "to place emphasis on thoroughly understanding various aspects of vulnerabilities as well as deprivations faced by the urban poor" (Olajide, 2015:i). A comprehensive study on livelihoods in urbanising rural growth point areas is thus necessary for the creation of responsive policies and strategies that will significantly uplift the living standards of many people in these communities.

## **1.5 Study objectives**

The realisation of national goals that are founded on the sustainable development principle requires absolute commitment, inclusiveness, and lifting the most vulnerable out of poverty (Dugarova & Gülasan, 2017:11). Opportunities to make a difference in improving lives of the poorest are always apparent while limitations to maximise benefits entirely recline in the implementation approach. This study sought to explore livelihood strategies and associated hindrances to achieving livelihood sustainability, in an effort to contribute information that would be beneficial for the effective implementation of poverty alleviation strategies. Urban areas are presumed to contribute to the betterment of people's lives. The realities in many urban centres do not correlate to the expectations of many people who migrate to such areas.

This study's objectives were to:

- conduct a literature review on poverty alleviation theories and approaches, as well as the challenges obstructing the creation of sustainable livelihoods;
- identify available livelihoods and livelihood assets in Ondobe;
- assess challenges related to livelihoods in Ondobe;
- provide recommendations for a study that could be used in devising a poverty alleviation strategy aimed to accelerate sustainable livelihoods.

## **1.6 Conceptual framework**

Spatial patterns of human settlements have been evolving all over the world, which is predominantly due to urbanisation. The urbanisation process intertwines current development trends in Ondobe. This section clarifies the main concepts used in this study, which include:

### **1.6.1 Urbanisation**

Urbanisation can be defined as a spatial transformation, whereby people relocate from rural to urban areas (Christiaensen & Todo, 2013:43). Urbanisation is a prominent feature in this study given that the area under study is currently going through this process.

### **1.6.2 Growth point**

A growth point is an identified centre that is designated for expansion in size, as well as an increase in the number of facilities, services and infrastructure (Munyanhaire,

Rwafa & Jonga, 2011, cited in Nhede, 2013:119). Drawing from this description, a growth point also denotes an area identified as having potential in accelerating development and may serve as a focal concentration for residential, business, administration, tourism, manufacturing, transportation, and other livelihood improvements of the general population.

### **1.6.3 Livelihood**

A livelihood refers to the “means intended for making a living”, which encompasses a host of various aspects (Aubert & Suzuta, 2015:196). According to Carney’s (1998) definition cited in Riel (2015:8), “a livelihood involves the capabilities, assets (including both material & social resources) and activities necessary for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable once it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets presently and in the future without undermining the natural resource base”.

### **1.6.4 Sustainable Livelihood Framework**

This framework is an analytical tool that is used to enhance the understanding of people’s livelihoods, particularly those experiencing poverty (DFID, 1999:13). The framework was adopted for this study to accumulate more knowledge on livelihoods in Ondobe.

## **1.7 Research questions**

The main research question and sub-questions for this study are highlighted below:

- A. What sorts of livelihoods are accessible in Ondobe?

The sub-questions focus on livelihood dynamics at the household and community levels:

- a) What specific livelihoods do individual households pursue?
- b) What livelihood assets do various households possess?
- c) What hindrances do people encounter that impact the sustainability of their livelihood(s)?
- d) How can the situation be improved?

- e) What measures or contributions have existing institutions created to grow Ondobe?

### **1.8 Conclusion**

This study is divided into five chapters. This first chapter provided an overview of the study, including the conceptual framework. The second chapter provides a literature review on prior research on livelihoods and related challenges in anticipation of resolving poverty issues in urban areas or emerging urban settlements. The subsequent three chapters address the methodology used, the research findings, as well as a conclusion and recommendations.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section encompasses a review of prior work on livelihoods studies that aimed to reduce poverty levels. It also highlights the main concepts under discussion in this study, including urbanisation, growth points, and sustainable livelihoods, which are intertwining development trends in Ondobe. The content in this literature review includes relevant information on livelihoods in urban or urbanising areas, as well as related impediments to sustainability. The literature consulted for this study was mainly sourced from select academic journal articles and books. The chapter commences with a discussion on urbanisation, which is an important concept in this research, as the area under study is undergoing this process.

### **2.2 Urbanisation**

The world's current urbanisation trends show a rapid increase in the number of people living in urban areas. Over half of the world's populace now resides in urban areas, and this number is projected to reach 70% by 2050. Furthermore, the trend is more rapid in the developing countries of Africa and parts of Asia (Arimah et al., 2009:8; Chen et al., 2016:331). The main contributing factors to rapid urbanisation are migrations and natural population increases (Manirakiza & African Finance and Economics Consult, 2014:164). In Namibia, the city of Windhoek has in particular encountered urbanisation growth, with an estimated annual rate of 4.4% (World Health Organization, 2013, cited in Mukando, 2016:2). This situation is inevitable for any other town or locality in the country given the current trends observed even in smaller settlements such as Ondobe. Namibia has a larger proportion of people living in its capital than any other nation in Southern Africa, which is largely due to the abolition of discriminatory apartheid rules that prevented blacks from being allowed to have permanent residency in towns (Tvedten, 2004:402). This kind of movement also occurred in other parts of Southern Africa, for example urban centres in Zimbabwe experienced a sudden influx of people, which was partly due to the relaxation of some repressive laws created under colonial rule (Nhede, 2013:120).

The urbanisation process leads to cities being created which function as economic growth engines, as well as focal areas for the integration of human and entrepreneurial resources for the generation of the new ideas, technologies and innovations required to promote the sustainable and productive utilisation of resources (Songsore, 1977; United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2012, cited in Cobbinah et al., 2015:2). The outcomes may be contrasting in some cases; as Mutua (2013:1) pointed out, “urbanization in Africa is unique in comparison to the rest of the world because it is more rapid and chaotic due to problems related to governance systems, lack of industrialization and low economic growth”. These problems have led to the urbanisation of poverty, evidenced by the widespread growth of slums and informal settlements (Arimah et al., 2009:26). The growth of informal settlements in Windhoek alone was predicted to be 9.5% annually, which is twice the rate of urbanisation (Mukando, 2016). Urban areas in developing countries are overwhelmed by masses living in slums, whereby the number of slum dwellers exceed one third of all urban inhabitants (Arimah et al., 2009:153). Slums are made up of poor and congested houses, where there is insecure land tenure and insufficient sanitation or water.

Most discussions on urbanisation focus on the national level and obscure key analytical features of smaller towns, thus the policy debate on urbanisation issues is mostly directed to large cities. Yet various classifications of urban settlements exist, inter alia, secondary cities, towns, settlements and growth points. The latter is less recognised, which is likely due to their small size. The situation demands policy responses that will address urbanisation to cover the entire continuum from rural to urban centres, including secondary cities (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2017:60). A similar sentiment indicates that urbanisation is a multi-faceted phenomenon, which leads to the concentration of people in urban areas and has the potential to either stimulate or cause redundancy in the growth and development of cities, towns, megacities, metropolises and megalopolises in both developing and developed nations (Cobbinah et al., 2015:1).

### **2.3 Growth points**

The concept of growth points is well documented in Zimbabwe and is interchangeably termed growth point / centre / pole. The term refers to a rural or urban

settlement which has the potential to develop into a town and ultimately a city. The growth point strategy emanated from cognisance of the imminent challenges such as overcrowding in urban centres and pressure on service delivery due to rural-urban migration, as well as the need to slow down the rate of rural-urban migration through rural industrialisation (Nhede 2013:119; Roberts, 2016:4). The concept surfaced in the work of Friedman and Douglas (1975), who focussed on rural urbanisation and the design of policies to foster agropolitan development and growth poles development (Roberts, 2016:4). Additionally, Nhede (2013:127) argued that the growth point strategy is able to transform local communities into dynamic and self-sustaining economic entities if well managed.

It has been observed that urbanisation presents massive potential for the achievement of sustainable development on the African continent, if cities are created that act as agents of sustainable economic, environmental and social transformation (Cobbinah et al., 2015:5). Cobbinah et al. further highlighted that “the World Bank (2009) recognized functional urbanization as having more development potential in Africa than any other region in the world. Functional urbanization entails provision of social and physical infrastructure, human capital, technical support, financial systems, policies that are comprehensive and inclusive, and responsive governance”. Unfortunately, with the way urbanisation is currently taking place in Africa, particularly in Namibia, the notion of sustainable development that Cobbinah described is implausible. The low economic growth that has persisted in recent years is causing financial constraints to the extent that required investments take several years to come to fruition. As a result, interventions to address immediate needs are delayed and a set of new problems emerge.

The growth point model has also been adopted in Namibia, where clusters of small human settlements are gaining government support and private investments for services and infrastructure. These settlements replicate urban centres and are believed to serve as central areas for administration, residential, business, tourism, manufacturing, transportation, and other uses.

## **2.4 Sustainable livelihoods**

An analysis linked to asset-based and sustainable livelihoods under which development interventions are established attempt to strengthen people's potentials and survival mechanisms to ensure that livelihoods are sustainable (Nel, 2015:511). This insight shows that development is synonymous with sustainable livelihoods, yet the process of achieving these desired outcomes and inclusivity requires a thorough understanding of the prevailing conditions in particular areas. Potts (2013:6), cited in Manirakiza and African Finance and Economics Consult (2014: 165), pointed out that "urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa is occurring in a chaotic way and is not accompanied with economic growth. The situation is causing urban livelihoods to remain highly informalized and insecure". The current urbanisation trend and development in Ondobe is facing a similar challenge with informality, which requires attention.

A closer look at livelihood components utilising the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) has proven to be very useful. This approach is centred on securing decent livelihoods that contribute to the quality of people's lives by recognising both a need for enhanced incomes and poor households' abilities to cope with risks and vulnerabilities (Patnaik & Prasad, 2014:353). A livelihood is key in people's lives and a critical tool in poverty alleviation. According to Carney (1998:4, cited in Riel, 2015:8), "it includes the capabilities, assets (including both material & social resources) and activities necessary for a means of living. It is further indicated that a livelihood is sustainable once it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets presently and in the future without undermining the natural resource base".

An augmented understanding of social exclusion, poverty and vulnerability, as well as the detection of constraints that hinder individuals', households' and communities' abilities to access significant assets and services, should guide appropriate policy interventions (Rakodi, 2014:244). The Sustainable Livelihood Approach encourages a deep understanding of various types of livelihood capital (physical, social, financial, natural and human), which require consideration when planning livelihood strategies within wider structures and institutions, also known as policies, institutions and processes (Patnaik & Prasad, 2014:354). Various poverty studies have emphasised

the need for an in-depth understanding of which assets are accessible and available to people. Olajide (2015:8) suggested that “it is vital for studies attempting to eradicate poverty to consider the components such as livelihood assets, vulnerability aspect, and Institutions that intercedes assets and the vulnerability”.

#### **2.4.1 Livelihood assets**

Livelihood assets are known to include labour, productive assets, human capital, social capital and household relations (Moser, 1996, cited in Olajide, 2015:9). Riel (2015:11) observed that a number of authors have divided people’s capital into five categories, i.e. human capital - the skills, knowledge and experience possessed by an individual or population; social capital - a host of social resources like affiliations; physical capital - mainly material resources such as basic infrastructure; financial capital - the reliable financial resources that are needed for people to expand their livelihoods or their household’s ability to collect financial resources; and natural capital - natural resources like water, plants, air and related environmental resources.

#### **2.4.2 The vulnerability aspect**

Vulnerability is related to the well-being sensitivity in an altering environment, insecurity, and the resilience and capability of a household to respond to risks and adverse changes, i.e. environmental, economic, political or social, and also trends, shocks, seasonal cycles and opportunities (Rakodi, 1999:316). DFID (1999:15) identified the vulnerability context as trends, shocks and seasonality from an external environment that involuntarily affect people’s livelihoods. Shocks may destroy assets instantly through civil conflict, floods or storms, for example, as well as alter them due to fluctuating trade and exchange rates. Trends are more predictable and have an influence on the rates of return based on the choice of livelihood strategies, i.e. technological, governance, economic and politics. Seasonality causes shifts in production, employment opportunities and prices, and are among the most enduring sources of hardship facing the poor in developing countries. Some examples of the vulnerability aspect are highlighted in the table below:

<b>Trends</b>	<b>Shocks</b>	<b>Seasonality</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population trends</li> <li>• Resource trends (including conflict)</li> <li>• National/international economic trends</li> <li>• Trends in governance (including politics)</li> <li>• Technological trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human health shocks</li> <li>• Natural shocks</li> <li>• Economic shocks</li> <li>• Conflict</li> <li>• Crop/livestock health shocks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of prices</li> <li>• Of production</li> <li>• Of health</li> <li>• Of employment opportunities</li> </ul>

**Table 2.1: Vulnerability Context**

Source: DFID (2009:15)

Chambers (1989a), cited in Olajide (2015:10), expanded on vulnerability by describing it as having two sides, external and internal. The external side is comprised of stress, risks and the shocks that a person is exposed to, whereas the internal side is about lacking the means to cope with risks, shocks and stress. Aubert and Suzuta (2015:205) explained that livelihoods are susceptible to both predictable and unpredictable risks; however people’s vulnerability depends on how they are able to cope with crises and trends. Furthermore, achieving sustainable livelihoods denotes the development of people’s capabilities and expansions of their options to enable them cope with challenges or crises on their own.

### **2.4.3 Institutions**

Institutions are linked to the “rules, standards, and procedures that shape interactions of people with governments, the environment, as well as markets that influence opportunities and outcomes which poor people encounter. Livelihoods of poor people exist in complex systems integrating economic, environmental, political, and social aspects that needs collective understanding” (Albu, 2009:3, cited in Olajide, 2015:11). Policies and relationships between organisations and individuals directly influence the use of, and access to, assets. The strategies that communities and individuals adopt has a bearing on the livelihood outcomes, which may be less or greater well-being (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:9). The mere existence of livelihood assets is insufficient; accessibility to these assets is key to promoting sustainable livelihoods. For instance, the existence of schools, banking services or

other public assets is irrelevant to individuals who are not able to utilise them because of legal or economic factors (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:44).

#### **2.4.5 Underlying principles of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach**

The sustainable livelihoods approach emerged to address the negative gap left by conventional development approaches to poverty reduction, as well as issues related to the understanding and nature of poverty (Krantz, 2001:10). This move to utilising the SLA for poverty reduction can be mainly attributed to three factors. The first was the realisation that there is not an automatic relationship between economic growth and poverty reduction, although the former is essential in the process of the latter. Hence a crucial point to understand the constraints affecting the poor from improving and design appropriate support activities. The second factor was the insight that poverty is not only about low incomes, but also other dimensions such as illiteracy, poor health, a lack of social services, a state of vulnerability and a general sense of powerlessness. Third was the recognition that poor people mostly know their needs and situations best, which necessitates their active involvement in the design and implementation of policies and projects that numerous international development agencies are applying in their practical work (Krantz, *ibid*).

According to Olajide (2015:84), a number of international development institutions, including the Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) and Oxfam, as well as other international development researchers, created an approach that expanded the thinking on poverty and intervention strategies. Various livelihood frameworks have also been developed over time to operationalise the SLA to address poverty-related issues. Krantz (2001:2) pointed out that the agencies use the approach slightly differently, although all aim to address poverty. For the UNDP, the SLA mainly serves as a programming framework to plan identified integrated support activities that aim to improve the sustainability of livelihoods among vulnerable and poor groups, by strengthening the resilience of their adaptive and coping strategies. CARE, meanwhile, focuses on development programmes or relief work to help the most vulnerable and poorest people, and uses the Household Livelihood Security framework for programme design, analysis, monitoring and evaluation. The

approach by DFID involves the SLF, which is an analytical structure that facilitates a wide and systematic understanding of a host of factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities, and shows the relationships between these. The SLF is people-centred, and its goal is to assist various stakeholders to engage in rational and structured debate concerning the factors that affect livelihoods, their relative importance, and the manner in which they interact. By using this framework, appropriate entry points in support of livelihoods can be identified (DFID, 1999:1).

The SLF is highly significant as it provides more depth in understanding poverty origins. It also holistically covers a wide spectrum of poverty-related aspects and presents an opportunity to develop new strategies compared to other frameworks. The framework's core emphasis, as Carney (1998) cited in Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:9) indicated, is on the assets that individuals or households use to build their livelihoods. The framework is also able to define the extent of issues and provide the analytical basis necessary for an analysis of livelihoods by identifying the major factors that are affecting livelihoods, including the relationships between them. It can also assist implementers to understand and manage complex conditions of the poor. The framework can also serve as a shared point whereby everyone who are concerned with supporting livelihoods can share their contributions. Lastly, provision in the SLF is made for identifying appropriate interventions and objectives to support livelihoods.

## **2.5 Perspectives on urban livelihoods**

Dimanin (2012:76) observed that urban life in Kampala, Uganda, and the rural context alike is driven by the five capitals of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework. Additionally, it was discovered that people in urban areas placed greater emphasis on financial capital because of the dependence aspect on income and expenditure. Natural capital is not considered as important in urban areas, i.e. urban farming to strengthen food security is not prominent in slums due to limited space, opportunity and crime. In addition, water sources are generally dependent on two rainfall seasons and is likely to be contaminated, which may pose or result in health hazards. Similarly, it has been observed that in some instances, direct access to, and the utilisation of, natural capital is less important to the poor in urban areas, although security of land tenure is a major concern (Rakodi, 1999:316).

A number of case studies in developing nations show that investment in human resources, social safety, and infrastructure is crucial for developing sustainable livelihoods. Human capital plays a more important role than land in shaping rural livelihoods in some rapidly urbanising areas. Some countries have experienced the abandonment of farmland by peasants or farmers to take up more lucrative non-farming jobs in highly developed urban areas (Hua et al., 2017:63). Thus although research shows that human capital is most crucial in shaping livelihoods, other types of livelihood capital are also essential. It is argued that investments in human capital are highly critical but not sufficient in terms of poor people's ability to compete and benefit on their own within a market economy. The biggest dividends can be achieved when human capital investments are in a secure environment while aligned with parallel investments in physical, financial, natural, and social assets (Moser & Dani, 2008:13).

Individuals try endlessly to improve their situation, with a considerable number of people moving to urban areas as they have high expectations of abundant opportunities that are life changing. Some of these people turn to small and intermediate towns, which are perceived as stepping stones in their pursuit of securing new skills, a reliable income, and improved access to education and health facilities (Roberts, 2016:3). Similar observations have argued that urban areas are generally linked to greater productivity given the incidences of agglomeration of economies, increased opportunities in terms of employment, and a better quality of life (Dugarova & Gülasan, 2017:34).

Research shows that this is not always the case however, i.e. the urbanisation rate in cities does not necessarily correlate to economic growth. An inverse relationship does exist depending on a country's level of urbanisation (Fay & Opal 2000, cited in Keivani, 2010:5). Atkinson (2004), cited in Keivani (2010), also observed that only about 10% of individuals have been entering the formal labour force in urban areas of countries in the South, particularly in Africa. Furthermore, a large number of people in the urban areas of these countries mostly earn a living by means of informal employment, and in most instances secure and well-paid jobs are fewer. Similarly, Chen et al. (2016:332) argued that a large segment of workers in the urban

areas of low-income countries mostly earn their income in the informal economy. This prevalence of informal employment, which mostly occurs in informal settlements or public spaces, is among critical issues for the urban development agenda. The proliferation of human settlements through urbanisation is extensive in the global South, and the conditions are very similar in most places.

The effective implementation of programmes or projects to create decent employment and improved standards of living is very possible when employing livelihood-based approaches. These techniques provide guidance when analysing the problems encountered by the urban poor, as well as when developing appropriate interventions. It is advisable to commence the analysis with vulnerable households and understand their livelihood strategies in terms of the assets that they build, the means through which they secure a living, the resources that they need and utilise, and importantly, existing control measures when accessing resources (Sanderson & Hedley, 2002:247).

Some countries have made tremendous progress in addressing the incidences of rapid urbanisation and poverty. A classic inference where best practices can be drawn from in terms of urbanisation and addressing poverty issues is China. The country has an explicit government policy on urbanisation, which has accelerated economic growth and is lifting millions of poor peasants who reside in rural areas out of poverty. China is one of the countries that has gone through rapid urbanisation and transformed gradually out of an agricultural society to an emerging industrial power. Additionally, the country's social structure underwent a drastic transformation, which contributed to its achievement of being the only country to reach the Millennium Development's anti-poverty goals in advance (Keivani, 2010:6; Peilin, 2014:12). Related statistics indicate that China's urbanisation rate went from 36.2% to 45.7% between 2000 and 2008, while the growth product of cities that experienced a rapid population increase accounted for 62% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), highlighting the crucial role of cities in economic development. Rapid urbanisation in China has also resulted in some unsustainable outcomes, such as insufficient natural resources for the development of urban areas, as well as a reduced quality of life of urban residents due to the fragile urban environment (Dongfeng et al., 2013:394). This study observed that rapid

urbanisation puts more pressure on already scarce resources in urban areas, and as a result it becomes very difficult for local authorities to effectively address the problems that many poor people are encountering.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Insights gained into urbanising settlement areas indicate that the expansion of these areas does not necessarily benefit all individuals. A common idea from the literature emphasises the importance of understanding poverty origins to enable the design and development of responsive policy interventions that are sustainable. An appropriate framework is thus essential to capture the necessary data and information for inclusive development. The mode that was employed in order to satisfy all the research components is explained in the next chapter.

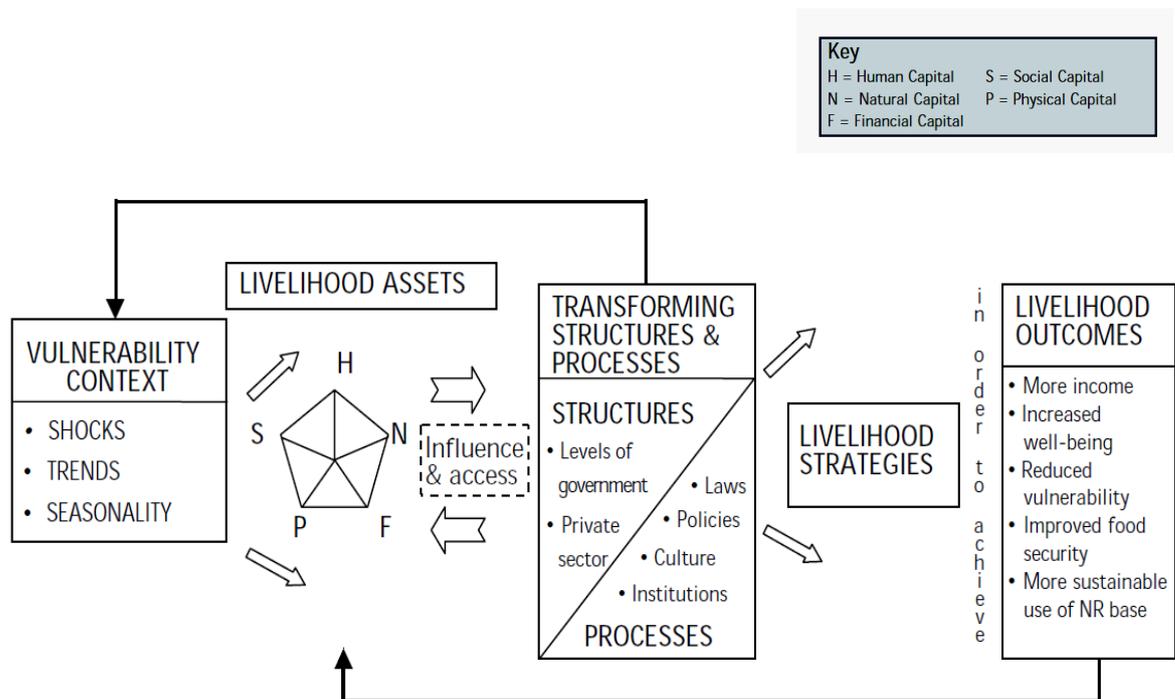
## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The research design and methodology allowed for the objectives of this study to be fully realised. The former is known to provide a guiding structure under which the research method and analysis of subsequent data can be executed (Bryman, 2012:45). This chapter made provision for a structure to gain insight into the livelihoods that are available in Ondobe, the challenges encountered by locals, as well as the prospects of creating inclusive development. This study assumed that the impediments to sustainable livelihoods are unique to the various settlement areas. Hence customised responses to individual community needs, especially in rapidly developing areas, has the potential to improve the living standards of local communities. An outline of the design used in this exploratory study will be highlighted, including the processes that were followed to fulfil the aim and objectives of the study.

### **3.2 Research design**

A case study approach was undertaken using the single case of Ondobe, which is a rural growth point and study area that is limited to the earmarked future township development. This area is currently undergoing an urbanisation process, which is attracting a number of people who are moving there to build and diversify their livelihoods. Given the background of this study and quest for a comprehensive insight into livelihoods in Ondobe, the sustainable livelihood framework (SLF) was adopted. This framework, as Carney (1998) cited in Olajide (2015:93) explained, “is used as an analytical tool for understanding the way individuals and communities build, sustain and enhance their livelihoods, and also create a basis in identifying objectives and policies that are appropriate in terms of supporting livelihoods”. Furthermore, the SLF implicitly recognises that an individual’s livelihood is advanced or limited according to their access to a range of assets (Brown & Smith, 2016:2). Components of the SLF are depicted in Figure 3.1 below:



**Figure 3.1: Sustainable Livelihood Framework**

**Source: DFID (1999:13)**

### 3.3 Methodology

The researcher conducted an in-depth review of relevant literature by various researchers, as well the core information obtained from quantitative and qualitative field data. A mixed method research methodology was used to produce a constructive and concise view on livelihoods in Ondobe.

#### 3.3.1 Data collection

The data collected provided information at both the individual household level and the community level. It is important to note the contribution of the participants to this study, which may indirectly contribute to the creation of collective poverty alleviation efforts.

Structured and semi-structured interviews were held to uncover data on the livelihood assets (physical, financial, human, natural and social) component, the context of vulnerability and the institutions. The last two components directly influence the choice and attainment of assets. The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was comprised of three sections: Section A covered households' socio-economic backgrounds, Section B examined livelihood assets, and Section C looked at the

vulnerability of household livelihoods or assets and influencing factors. The design of the questionnaire was similar to one used in Olajide's (2015) study on understanding complex factors that influence the livelihoods of the poor in urban informal settlements in Lagos.

This study considered the most commonly identified assets and largely focused on physical, human, social and financial assets for the survey, however natural capital was also detected through the researcher's observations. The use of qualitative and quantitative methodology allowed for a uniform questionnaire with closed-ended questions as well as unrestricted questions that allowed the researcher to probe for further details regarding livelihood challenges. The researcher obtained data through interviews with key informants, household surveys and secondary data, as highlighted in the sections below.

### **3.3.2 Interviews with key informants**

Key informants from different backgrounds and institutions were interviewed to obtain relevant information for the study. Ten informants who had valuable information to share on the delivery of services, developmental projects/programmes, planning, and possible interventions were identified, all of whom participated in the study. These included officials from the Ondobe Constituency Office; the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare; the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry; the Ministry of Health and Social Services; the Ministry of Safety and Security; the Evangelical Church of Namibia (ELCIN); the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture; Namibia Post Ltd; the SWAPO Party Office, and the Oukwanyama Traditional Authority.

### **3.3.3 Use of relevant documents / reports**

All relevant documents pertaining to development in Ondobe, as well as reports on official statistics, were sought from various sources. Some documents were received from the Ohangwena Regional Council, while reports on official statistics and related information were accessed from the website of the Namibia Statistics Agency and the National Planning Commission. The data collection process also involved direct observations of Ondobe, also known as a situation analysis, to create a better understanding of the physical area.

### **3.3.4 Household surveys**

A total of 40 respondents were interviewed to cover the asset component, context of vulnerability and institutions aspect. The number of respondents was influenced by sampling strategy used in this study, as well as consideration of the researcher's limited time and resources. The data collection activities were conducted in a systematic way and followed a strict schedule. The first stage before the actual survey was conducted was a meeting between the researcher and the constituency Councillor, so that the researcher could introduce the study and its accompanying fieldwork, which was followed by a familiarisation visit to the study area and verification of the sampled area using the Global Positioning System (GPS). The targeted participants were preferably heads of households or people above the age of 18 years old, which is the legal age for an adult in Namibia. This population formed part of the age group considered to be productive and economically active (NSA, 2017b:28).

### **3.4 Sampling design**

Purposive sampling and simple random sampling methods were adopted for this study. A purposive sampling method was adopted using a homogeneous sample approach to select the study area of interest, i.e. an urbanising rural growth point, and other cases were studied that possessed similar characteristics. The method was considered to be appropriate given Matthews and Ross' (2010:167) explanation that "in a homogenous sample all cases are part of the same group or their characteristic is the same, which enables a detailed and in-depth investigation of a specific phenomenon". Ondobe met the prerequisites of this research in terms of the data the researcher anticipated would be collected, as well as its convenient location and accessibility.

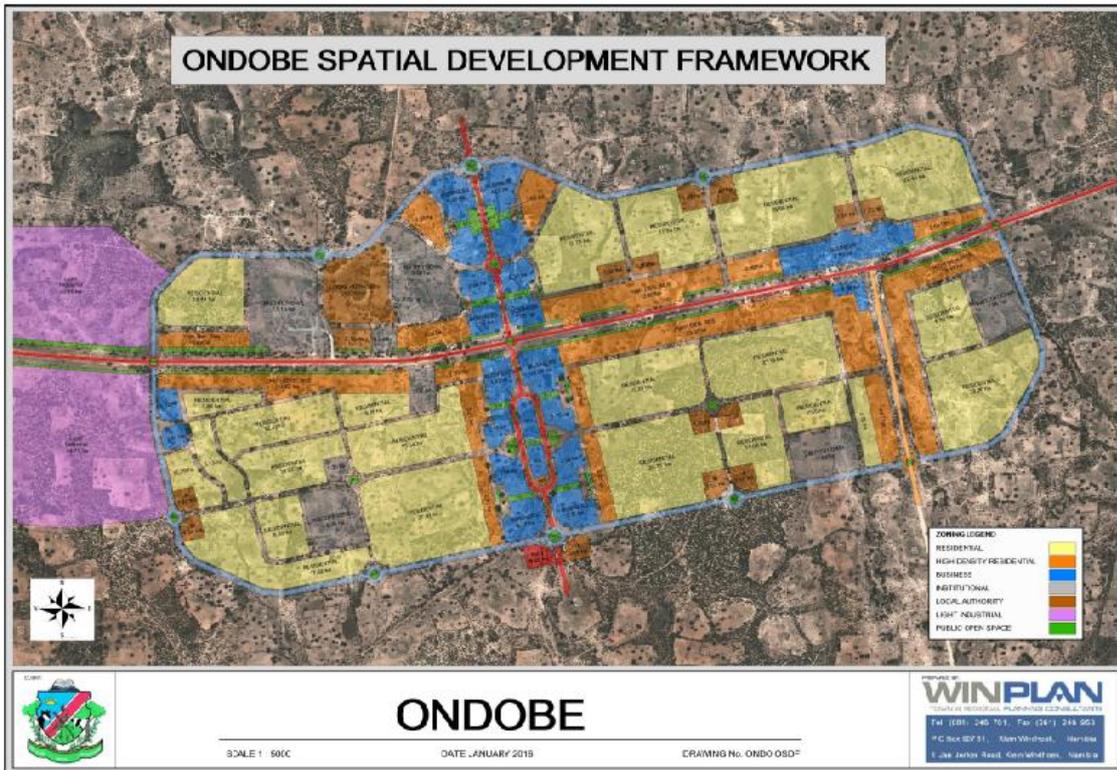
The subjects considered for the survey included a wide range of inhabitants within Ondobe, who were selected through a simple random sampling method using the Random Number Generator application. This technique enables each unit within the population to have equal probability of being included in the sample (Bryman, 2012:190). This ensures a fair representation of the area based on the defined input. Information on the Ondobe Spatial Development Framework (OSDF) obtained from Win Plan Town & Regional Planners, as well as information on the 186 registered

land parcels with owners' details sourced from the Ministry of Land Reform, was used to determine the sample size of 40 participants. This number was considered to be sufficient given the population size, and afforded the researcher the opportunity to get more surveys/respondents. The remaining selection of 146 candidates was used to create a back-up list in case the initial participants refused to be interviewed or were unavailable. The sample selection came exclusively from within the proposed Ondobe Spatial Development Framework (see Figures 3.2 and 3.3).



**Figure 3.2: Sampled Land Parcels**

Source: Ministry of Land Reform, Eenhana (2018)



**Figure 3.3: Proposed Ondobe Spatial Development Framework**

Source: Win Plan Town and Regional Planners (2016)

### 3.5 Study approach

The success of this study depended on the researcher obtaining the necessary data to answer the research questions. It is widely known that the practice of conducting social research involves the participation of people and the collection of information related to them. The best practice involves the due consideration of ethics, as this ultimately impacts the research quality in a positive way (Matthews & Ross, 2010:13). This research is unequivocally socially oriented, which necessitated the use of a survey so that questions on livelihoods and related challenges in Ondobe growth point could be responded to in a satisfactory manner.

The participants were thoroughly informed about the survey and the importance of their involvement. They were asked to participate willingly, and were assured that their identities and personal information would not be published or disclosed. The purpose of the research was also made clear so as to avoid false expectations. Empathy and alertness were exercised in consideration of the varying living conditions of the participants.

As it is normal for some community members to consult with their local leaders regarding survey-related undertakings to ensure that they are legitimate, prior to the fieldwork, the Honourable Councillor responsible for Ondobe constituency was provided with clear information on the process, after which a public announcement was made to inform and advise the community members accordingly.

### **3.6 Study limitations**

Few notable limitations can be attributed to this research. The first is the imminent declaration of Ondobe as a settlement area by the Ohangwena Regional Council. A settlement is declared by a Regional Council when the prevailing circumstances necessitate the management, regulation and control of the inhabitants' lives as they relate to welfare and health in terms of local authority procedures. The process is still in the initial phase of preliminary planning and township layout design, and the affected communities are being sensitised through public meetings. However, some community members are sceptical of the benefits that the envisaged town may bring and are resisting the development. Given that this research mainly focused on livelihoods and livelihood assets, it could have been associated with the imminent establishment of the township by some residents. This could have created hesitation on their part when it came to providing information. Such a situation would have had an influence on the results and distorted the findings. The actions that were effected to prevent undesirable encounters included:

- meeting with the Councillor to explain the objectives of the research;
- providing a thorough introduction and explanation of the aim and objectives of the study; and
- providing clear survey questions to the participants.

As the literature on livelihoods in growth points is scant, the views gathered from the literature review may not be entirely representative of the actual status quo due to disparities in settlement types.

Conducting a survey is costly, thus sound planning in terms of the scope of the work was necessary to ensure that the researcher's limited funds produced the requisite data. Additionally, delays in collecting data due to work commitments were likely as

the researcher was employed on a full-time basis. The need for leave days was communicated in advance to the researcher's supervisor, which enabled her to adhere to the schedule of research deliverables.

### **3.7 Data analysis**

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was applied to aid with the analysis of data related to livelihood assets. The process began by defining variables and coding them for easier analysis. Qualitative data, mostly from the unrestricted/open-ended survey questions, were analysed by grouping together themes, which were then interpreted and transcribed according to the relative responses. The available qualitative data substantiated the statistics and findings from various sources.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The research method that was employed for this study made it possible to successfully capture both qualitative and quantitative data on livelihoods in Ondobe. The response rate was 100%, with a total of 40 sampled households being surveyed. A comprehensive understanding of the prevailing situation captured the challenges that the community members face. The results from the field data are presented in the next section under research findings.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Comprehensive details about the study area that were obtained from the study participants and the researcher's physical observations are presented in this chapter to provide insights into the general outlook of Ondobe. Later sections highlight the findings on livelihoods, livelihood capital, challenges and vulnerabilities that people are exposed as highlighted from the household survey. A total of 50 questionnaires were administered, which included ten forms that were answered by the key informants. The results, which are mainly a product of the primary data that were analysed for this research, are set out in this chapter by means of tables of frequencies, graphs and charts, before being discussed.

### **4.2 PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS**

#### **4.2.1 Features of Ondobe Growth Point**

Ondobe growth point is located in the Ondobe constituency of the Ohangwena region. The locality lies along both sides of the B52 national road (depicted in Figure 4.1 below) which is linked to the Trans-Caprivi highway, a major road artery and trade route linking land-locked Zambia as well as other neighbouring countries to Walvis Bay Port on the Atlantic Ocean.



**Figure 4.1: B52 Main Road in Ondobe**

Source: Researcher's own (2018)

High concentrations of people in Ondobe constituency are found in this area, which is approximately 28km from Eenhana and 32km from Helao Nafidi. The area began to expand and urbanise rapidly in 2005 due to inward migration from the surrounding rural communities. It was during this period that the Ohangwena Regional Council commenced with the process of proclaiming Ondobe a settlement area (Ohangwena Regional Council, 2018). The idea was that the proclamation of Ondobe would (a) enable Council to manage, guide and control development of the area in such a way that the area advances within the framework of the vision of the Ohangwena region; (b) create the opportunity for security of tenure and property ownership; (c) stimulate regional development and economic growth and diversity; and (d) provide quality urban services to the population of Ondobe. The characteristics of household demographics of the sampled area are illustrated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

**Table 4.1: Household populations**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of household members	230	1	16	7.47	3.585
Valid N (listwise)	230				

**Table 4.2: Household composition**

Household composition	Sex of HH member	Cases						Age		Respondent Age	
		Valid		Missing		Total					
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent				
female		102	100.0%	0	0.0%	102	100.0%	Under 15	50	19 – 57	35
								15 – 60	168	63 -102	5
								60+	12		
male		128	100.0%	0	0.0%	128	100.0%				

The population from the sample of 40 households in the Ondobe growth point was 230, with a mean household size of 7.47. This mean was slightly higher than the 6.1 average number of private households in Ondobe constituency, as indicated in the Ohangwena 2011 Census Regional Profile (NSA, 2014:40). Further analysis on demography in Table 4.3 reveals that the largest age group in this community consists of 15 to 60 year olds. The age of the youngest respondent was 19 while the oldest was 102; only 5 out of the 40 respondents were over 60. This is an indication

that the majority of inhabitants are still of working age and likely economically active. Males accounted for 56% of the sample. It has been observed that in most cases males migrate to towns first, and once they secure employment their spouses follow. The number of household members ranged from between 1 and 16 people, which can be attributed to the household type as some form part of traditional homesteads and others are urban-oriented. Households in rural areas tend to have large populations due to extended family members and big families living together, compared to homes in urban areas. Another contributing factor to the high number of household members is the fact that Ohangwena has the second largest population in Namibia.

The existing developmental infrastructure in Ondobe is characterised by mixed land uses, including residential (both traditional and town houses), commercial, institutional, agricultural, and services infrastructure such as electricity, transportation networks, telecommunications, and water. The set-up observed in Ondobe is more of an informal settlement or unplanned development in terms of town planning procedures (see Figure 4.2 below). There are no designated streets and various land uses are mixed up.



**Figure 4.2: Structural set-up of Ondobe growth point**

Source: Researcher's own (2018)

The classification of informal settlements in Namibia is strictly confined to those that are located in an urban area or town. Ondobe is situated in a rural area and is not recognised as an informal settlement locally, despite having some informal characteristics. In other countries an informal settlement is referred to as any human establishment or land use that does not conform to the standards and regulations of an urban area, including those settlements developed on town or city peripheries. Vincent (2009), cited in Mukando (2016:18) explained that one should “consider the region’s urbanization diversity for adequate terming of informal settlements particularly in developing countries”.

#### 4.2.2 Livelihoods and household asset assortments

The questions on the specific livelihoods that individual households pursue as well as which livelihood assets the households in Ondobe growth point possess are discussed under this section. This was achieved by using the adopted SLF. Livelihoods and the accumulation of assets plays a pivotal role in the changing circumstances associated with poverty, however the adequacy of these elements is important for reducing poverty and ensuring inclusive development. “As nations advance in meeting the basic necessities of their citizens, the attention shifts to the remaining segment of poor people, to the accessibility of opportunities and capabilities, as well as to the sustainability of overall living conditions” (Aubert & Suzuta, 2015:200). A presentation of the four types of livelihood capital below was based on empirical information from answers to the questions illustrated in Table 4.3. Natural capital was also covered through the researcher’s physical observations of the area.

**Table 4.3: Analysis framework of Livelihood Capitals**

Households’ Livelihood Capitals	Human Capital	Household demographics Skills and education level Occupation and employment Health status
	Physical Capital	Land tenure / home ownership Services infrastructure Household items / equipment
	Financial Capital	Income and expenditure Access to credit / sources Savings
	Social Capital	Organisation membership Access to information

#### 4.2.2.1 Livelihoods pursued by individual households

**Table 4.4: Occupations of Household Members**

	Frequency	Percent
Civil service	29	12.6
Farming	36	15.7
Artisan	39	17.0
Valid Trading	24	10.4
Learner/Student	102	44.3
Total	230	100.0

Information on the occupations of household members aided in the process of understanding which livelihoods are prominent in the area. Apart from the high number of learners or students as depicted in Table 4.4, there were four main livelihood strategies that people pursue in Ondobe. The most common is artisan work (17%), which involves various trades such as carpentry, plumbing, hairdressing and mechanics, followed by farming and trading at 15.7% and 10.4% respectively. Some of the inhabitants are employed in the public service, which is the most secure or formal type of employment of the four. Most elderly and unemployed people engage in agricultural activities for the purpose of mainly subsistence. A large number of people who are employed as artisans and those in the trading sector indicated that their employment is informal; the majority are self-employed and their businesses are not registered.

#### 4.2.2.2 Possession of Livelihood Assets

The key determinant of livelihood outcomes is human capital. This asset is characterised by the skills, knowledge, and ability to command labour, which goes hand in hand with the good health necessary for people to pursue livelihood strategies and consequently realise their livelihood objectives (DFID, 1999:19, Krantz, 2001:9). Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:10) asserted that “the households’ ability to manage their labour assets so as to take advantage of available economic activity opportunities is constrained by two main aspects, number one is the education levels and skills, as well as health of household members, and number two are the demands related to household maintenance”.

Education is a valuable resource and one of the most emphasised aspects of human development. The absence of human capital in terms of skills and education has a huge influence on the quality of life in urban areas, and also affects the ability of individuals to secure a livelihood in urban labour markets more directly than in rural areas (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:10. Information that was collected to assess levels of education and literacy considered the views of the respondents as well as the household members.

**Table 4.5: Households' education levels**

Respondents' highest education level		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
none	1	2.5%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	
primary	8	20%	0	0.0%	8	100.0%	
secondary	25	62.5%	0	0.0%	25	100.0%	
tertiary	6	15%	0	0.0%	6	100.0%	

Household members' education level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
none	14	6.1	6.1	6.1
primary	85	37.0	37.0	43.0
Valid secondary	95	41.3	41.3	84.3
tertiary	36	15.7	15.7	100.0
Total	230	100.0	100.0	

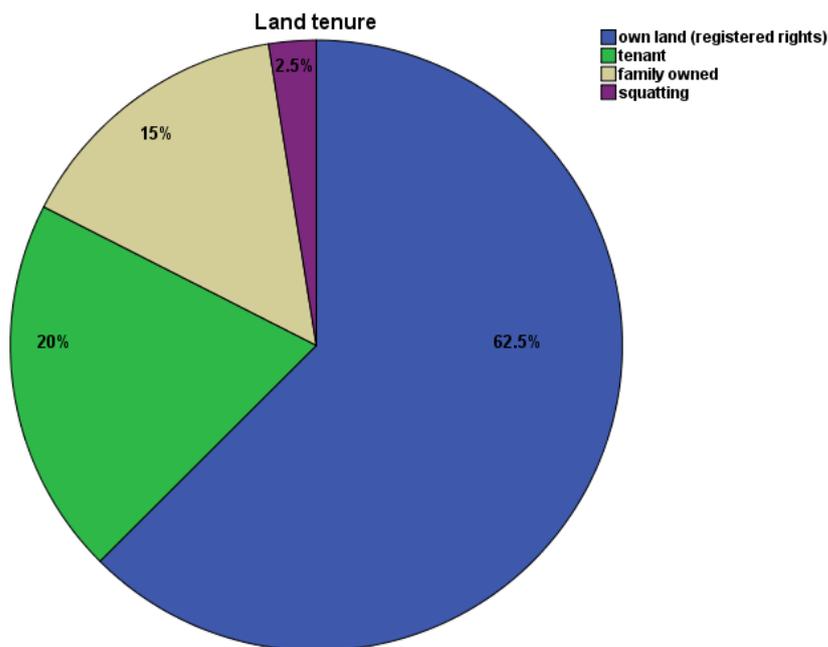
As per the results above, the community of Ondobe values education highly. Only one respondent out of 40 had not received any form of education, while the same indicator shows that 14 out of 230 household occupants had not received education. People with secondary education made up the largest group, followed by those who had only attended primary school. Approximately 15% had attained higher education through tertiary institutions. The prospects of finding formal employment are better for those with secondary and tertiary education qualifications.

**Table 4.6: Inability to work due to illness**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	5	2.2	12.5	12.5
Valid no	35	15.2	87.5	100.0
Total	40	17.4	100.0	

Health also plays a key role in a person's ability to work. The participants were asked if there was ever a time when they were not able to work as a result of illness, with only 12.5% indicating 'yes'. Additional information gained from probing revealed that the most common diseases that people experience include seasonal flu and coughs, malaria, and diarrhoea. All these diseases are manageable and can be cured through treatment from health services. The general condition pertaining to illnesses in this community points to good health, which is important for those pursuing various livelihood strategies.

People possess physical assets at an individual or community level. These assets enhance the capabilities of people to live and also to make a living. Additionally, access to a wide range of assets is fundamental to achieve livelihood sustainability at both levels (Olajide, 2015:200). The main physical assets observed for the purpose of this study covered land tenure / house ownership, household equipment, and availability of and access to services infrastructure.



**Figure 4.3: Land tenure and housing ownership**

Security of land tenure and housing ownership has a huge influence on maintaining livelihoods and is crucial in the lives of both the poor and rich. A large proportion (62.5%) of the respondents, as per Figure 4.3, were land owners, while 15% indicated their ownership as family owned. The high ownership rate is a positive sign for people’s livelihoods.

Land allocation in Ondobe is administered by the traditional authority as it falls under communal land/state land. Parcels of land are allocated to individuals by the local Headman, and it is the responsibility of each beneficiary to apply for registration of occupational communal land rights to acquire a land registration certificate. Ownership of land in communal areas of Namibia is secured by means of a renewable 99 year lease agreement. The land registration process in communal areas is facilitated by the Ministry of Land Reform. This process includes verification of ownership / allocation by the traditional authority, mapping of land parcels using a Global Positioning System, and the issuing of registration certificates.

Other findings related to physical capital were based on information received from the participants, as they were asked to indicate which items they owned from a list of common household goods as well as services they access, as highlighted in Tables 4.7 and 4.8 below.

**Table 4.7: Household Equipment**

Household Equipment	Yes	No	Percentage
Own vehicle	12	28	30%
Own refrigerator	15	25	37.5%
Own television	14	26	35%
Own internet	5	35	12.5%
Own computer	5	35	12.5%
Own radio	35	5	87.5%
Own telephone/cell	39	1	97.5%
Own generator	8	32	20%
Own stove (gas/electric)	18	22	45%

The amount of equipment and other household items that individuals or households possess enhances people's quality of life and their prestige. The information highlighted in Table 4.7 above shows that almost all the respondents owned basic household items, particularly telephones / cellular phones and radios at 97.5% and 87.5% respectively. Based on this, it is apparent that the majority of people in this area have good access to telecommunications services. The ownership of household equipment such as vehicles, fridges, televisions, computers, the internet, generators and stoves was below 50%, which is relatively low and an indication of the unaffordability of these items.

The information on accessible services and infrastructure in Ondobe highlighted in the initial section of this chapter described the livelihood capital that exists at the community level. Assets such as roads, electricity, schools, clinics, Information and Communication Technology networks, and water infrastructure are available in the area. The table below shows households' ownership of, or access to, services and facilities.

**Table 4.8: Access to services infrastructure and facilities**

Services infrastructure	Value Label	N	Percentage	
Access to electricity	yes	29	73%	
	no	11		
Access to water	yes	30	75%	
	no	10		
Access to toilet/bathroom	yes	21	53%	
	no	19		
Access to drainage system	yes	9	23%	
	no	31		
Access to kitchen	yes	26	65%	
	no	14		

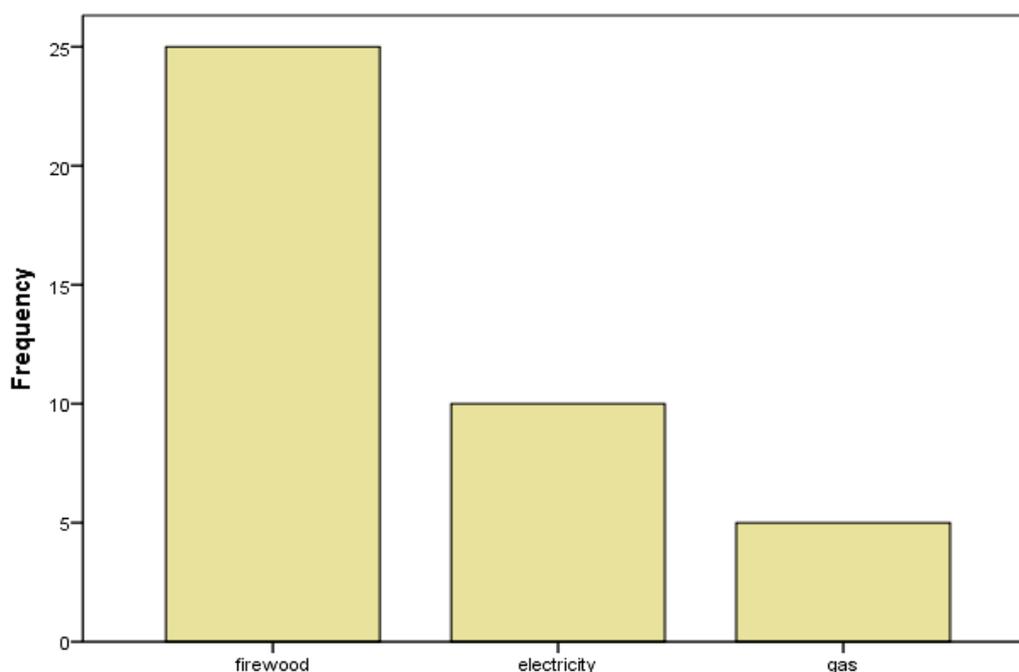
**Sufficient access to health facilities**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
yes	36	90.0	90.0	90.0	
Valid no	4	10.0	10.0	100.0	
Total	40	100.0	100.0		

**Sufficient access to education facilities**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid yes	40	100.0	100.0	100.0	

The statistics regarding residents' access to water (75%) and electricity (73%) indicate that a considerable number of households have private water and electricity connections on their premises. Similarly, a large number of people mentioned that their assets such as water taps, kitchens, and bathrooms / showers are not shared, i.e. they are owned by individual households. Access to drainage is extremely low with only 9 out of 40 households having that facility, although approximately 53% had a toilet or bathroom. Most of these households with toilets use pit latrines constructed outside but within the yard. It is worth noting that all households have sufficient access to education facilities, while a 90% access to health facilities is also very good.

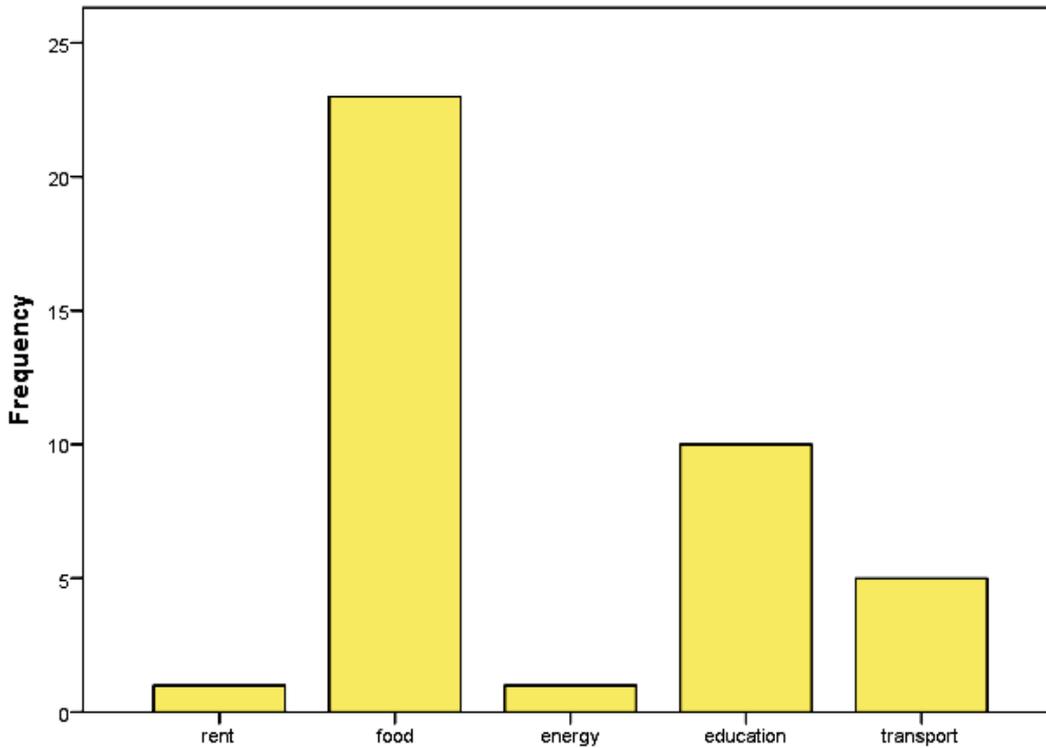


**Fig 4.4: Main source of energy for cooking**

The image above, regarding the source of energy that households use shows that firewood is the most preferred source at 62.5%, followed by electricity at 25% and lastly gas at 12.5%. The residents of Ondobe only have access to one major tarred road - there are no well-developed access roads and streets in the area.

The accumulation and source of financial resources, i.e. salaries, remittances, grants and so forth, as well as how such money is spent, varies for every individual. This section explored the information gathered regarding the average income that households earn, their expenditure, their access to borrowing and their saving abilities. The lowest average income for a household is N\$ 500.00 while the highest is N\$ 58 000.00, and there is a mean of N\$ 6 027.50. The disparity in incomes is thus large.

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Household average income	40	500	58000	6027.50	10184.855
Valid N (listwise)	40				



**Fig 4.5: Household Income and expenditure on commodity**

According to Figure 4.5 above, approximately 57.5% of the respondents' spending goes on food. The second largest household expenditure is education at 25%, followed by transportation at 12.5%. Education is one of the most valued resources in the country. The lowest expenditures for households in Ondobe growth point are rent and energy at 2.5% each.

**Table 4.9: Sufficient access to credit or loan**

Sufficient access to credit/loan	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	19	47.5	47.5	47.5
Valid no	21	52.5	52.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	
Source of loan	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
cash loans	2	5.0	5.0	5.0
relatives/friends	24	60.0	60.0	65.0
Valid bank	5	12.5	12.5	77.5
other	9	22.5	22.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

The table above depicts the borrowing habits and ability of households to access credit and/or loans. Approximately 47.5% of households have sufficient access to credit or loans in times of hardship or when they need to borrow money. The majority prefer borrowing from relatives or friends. Other common sources of borrowing that were indicated, despite being less popular, included cash loans, banks, and alternatives such as micro-finance and related loans offered through government services.

**Table 4.10: Basic needs satisfaction and savings**

Difficulty satisfying basic needs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	26	65.0	65.0	65.0
Valid no	14	35.0	35.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

**Availability of monthly savings**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	31	77.5	77.5	77.5
Valid no	9	22.5	22.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.10 highlights the difficulties households face when trying to satisfy their basic needs, including clothing, food and water. Just over a third (35%) of households were struggling to meet their basic needs, which is an indication of a substantial number of people living in poverty. It is interesting to note that even though people struggle with satisfying their basic needs, 77.5% of households still manage to save monthly from the little they receive.

Relationships and how individuals interact with each other or the institutions in their communities is significant in the process of building livelihoods. These social assets include group memberships; social networks and relationships based on trust; reciprocity between associations and affiliations; as well as exchanges (Pretty & Ward, 2001; Vincent, 2007, cited in Masud et al., 2015:778). The participants were

asked if they have sufficient access to information on national policies, with a follow-up question on the modes that they commonly obtain that information through. Sufficient access to social networks and information on memberships to any associations or organisations that they are part of was also explored. The results of these questions are shown in Tables 4.11 and 4.12, as well as Figure 4.5.

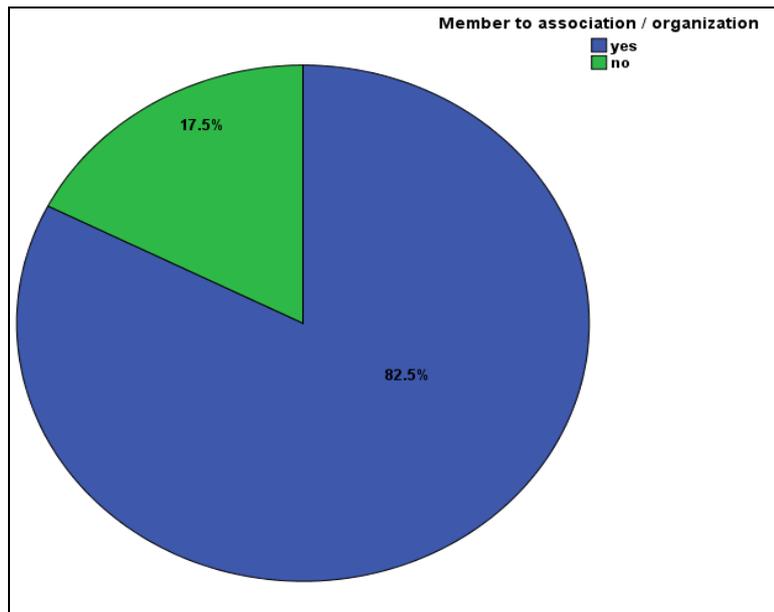
**Table 4.11: Sufficient access to information on national policies**

Access to info. on national policies	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	30	75.0	75.0	75.0
Valid no	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4.12: Sufficient access to social network**

Social network access	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
yes	39	97.5	97.5	97.5
Valid no	1	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

A significant number of households (75%) indicated that they have access to information on national policies. This information is mostly transmitted through the radio, friends / relatives, and notice boards of various public offices / buildings. The households also have a surprising amount of access to social networks, as per the rate of 97.5% seen in Table 4.12. Memberships of various organisations and associations such as churches, political parties and unions are also very high (82.5%). The respondents gave various reasons for joining such associations; some mentioned that they need to be part of the development process to influence the decisions that affect their lives, while others want to maintain the cultural norms and practices that their ancestors established. The sense of belonging to a society when one is part of an organisation and keeping up-to-date were also mentioned.



**Figure 4.6: Memberships of associations or organisations**

Ondobe forms part of the Ohangwena region, which is situated on flat plains at about 1100 metres above sea level, where the climate is mostly semi-arid. There are no water bodies such as rivers or dams in the area, however plenty of underground water exists. Households with traditional homesteads (see Figure 4.7 below) have large land parcels which the owners take advantage of to carry out subsistence farming and small livestock rearing. The area is enrich with abundant trees and plants from surrounding forests. The land in Ondobe, particularly within the OSDF area, has all been allocated and there are no open spaces to develop recreational facilities. The air is not particularly polluted, largely due to the absence of industrial activities, however the slight degree of air pollution that occurs can be attributed to the burning of household waste materials as no refuse removal service is available to the community.



**Fig 4.7: Scenery of the Ondobe environment**

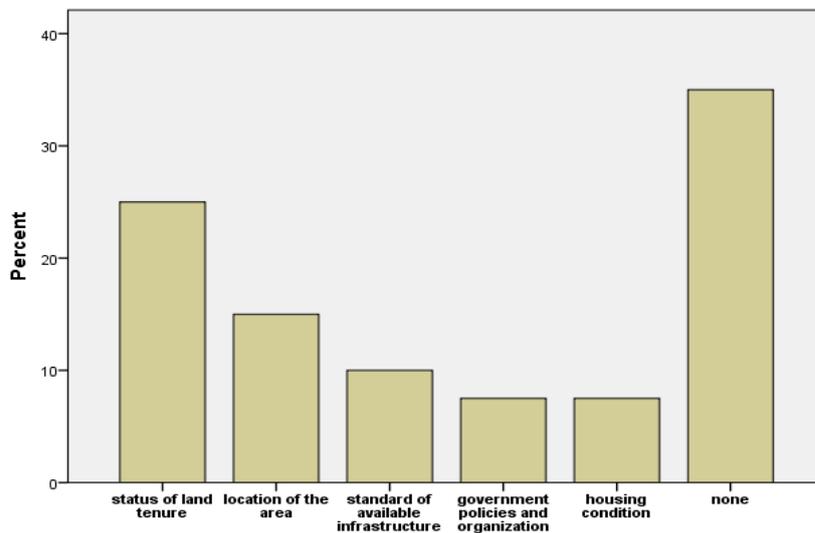
Source: Researcher's own (2018)

The second image in Figure 4.7 highlights the lack of refuse dumping management and the resultant environmental pollution. The random dumping of rubbish is visible in many spots, which may lead to health problems among the inhabitants and a generally unappealing environment.

#### **4.2.3 Obstacles affecting livelihoods**

Households and individuals are exposed to countless threats that may limit their ability to maintain their livelihoods or assets. A set of open-ended questions were

presented to the participants in order to understand the threats that people from this community are facing. The results displayed in Figure 4.8 and Table 4.13 below were substantiated by input from the key informants. These findings on the threats that individuals or communities encounter are related to the three categories of the vulnerability context, i.e. shocks, trends and seasonality.



**Fig 4.8: Threat to livelihoods / assets**

The identified threats from the highest prevalence to the least, as indicated by the people in Ondobe, include: status of land tenure, whereby households fear losing their land to new development or land encroachment by new occupants who are in need of more space; location in terms of the area’s inability to attract enough customers; and insecurity, especially for traders. The standard of available infrastructure and services was also one of the concerns raised, as these are inadequate and at times unreliable. There are no banks and electricity blackouts are very common, often lasting several hours. The other challenge is housing / buildings; some respondents indicated that most buildings have not been constructed according to required standards and they are dilapidated. Some of the respondents were also worried about unpredictable rainfall due to changing climatic patterns.

**Table 4.13: Vulnerability of household**

	N	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Experienced employment loss	40	11	27.5	27.5
Experienced eviction	40	5	12.5	12.5
Experienced social network loss	40	11	27.5	27.5
Experienced crime	40	13	32.5	32.5
Experienced illness / health problems	40	16	40	40
Experienced loss of property	40	11	27.5	27.5
Experienced flooding	40	5	12.5	12.5
Valid N (listwise)	40			

Based on the information displayed in Table 4.13, all the households indicated that they were exposed to vulnerabilities of some sort. Households representing 40% have experienced health issues, followed by crime at 32.5%. A loss of employment, property and social network were all at the same rate of 27.5%, thus it is probable that these three are inter-linked or influence each other.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
poor	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
fair	13	32.5	32.5	57.5
Valid good	16	40.0	40.0	97.5
very good	1	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4.14: Rating of Ondobe in terms of facilities / infrastructure**

The respondents were further asked to rate Ondobe growth point when it comes to facilities and available infrastructure. Over 50% felt that the standard of accessible services and infrastructure in the area is poor or fair, while 40% rated it as good. Only 2.5%, i.e. one household, perceived Ondobe to be very good in this regard.

A lack of funding is a major hindrance to attaining the targets of most development projects and programmes in the area. Poor participation in crucial public and

consultative meetings on government programmes by community members was also highlighted as a serious concern. Such tendencies have been attributed to social ills such as alcohol abuse, as well as a high number of households being largely occupied by old or illiterate people. Community resistance to new development, particularly the proclamation of Ondobe growth point as a settlement, is impeding the area from advancing. Two of the concerns raised were that there will be a scarcity of agricultural land as the area transforms to an urban set-up, as well as an inability for locals to pay for municipal services, rates and taxes. Some people still have a strong desire to maintain their farming activities, and assume that once the area becomes a recognised town many residents may become poorer because they will need to adapt to urban life and be compelled to pay for municipal services.

#### **4.2.4 Actions taken by existing institutions to grow Ondobe**

The community of Ondobe has access to various services through public and private investments. Public infrastructure includes one clinic, a police station and three schools, of which one is a combined school and the other two are senior secondary schools. A circuit office for education, two Early Childhood Development Centres catering for 0 - 4 year old children, a Marula oil factory, and the office of the Traditional Authority are also available. There is also an office with living quarters and a demonstration plot for the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, which has, among other programmes, implemented a dry land crop production programme in the area and provides subsidised fertilisers, seeds, as well as ploughing and weeding services. This occasionally generates temporary employment for tractor and draft animal owners. The Agriculture Extension office also undertakes promotional activities on livestock production and marketing, disseminates information on sanitation, and promotes the conservation of agriculture by establishing community gardens. Ondobe has bulk water supply infrastructure from NAMWATER as well as a bulk water pipeline that runs from Omafo to Eenhana through Ondobe. Other investments or services include a service station; Namibia Post Limited, which offers banking services and the promotion of investments; two grocery stores; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN); and a SWAPO office. The Northern Regions Electricity Distribution Company (NORED) also has an electricity network in the area.

The Ohangwena Regional Council, through the constituency office, coordinates the implementation of socio-economic and physical developmental initiatives, and oversees the planning and township establishment process. The traditional authority deals with land allocation and educating communities on land tenure-related matters. The area is presumably safe as functions of maintaining public order and educating communities to guard public infrastructure are in existence through the Ministry of Safety and Security. The community of Ondobe is usually motivated to participate in the implementation process of government programmes and is educated through public meetings on issues such as exercising their democratic rights, moral values, health, education and many other social issues.

### **4.3 DISCUSSION**

This section further explores the findings of the study in order to interpret the data that were provided regarding how residents in Ondobe growth point make a living, as well as the challenges that are common in the area. The discussion will focus on the results pertaining to development in Ondobe, livelihoods and livelihood capital, as well as aspects of the vulnerability context.

#### **4.3.1 Development in Ondobe growth point**

A shift in settlement patterns has seen more people moving to urban areas with the hope of experiencing improved living conditions. The area of Ondobe growth point has thus been expanding over the years as a result of the migration of rural communities. The study findings showed that the mean household size in Ondobe growth point is 7.47, which is slightly higher than the household mean average of 6.1 in Ondobe constituency. This is an indication that more people probably reside in this area than in any other place in Ondobe constituency. Various public and private investments have been made into schools, a clinic, roads, electricity and water infrastructure, telecommunication networks, a service station, supermarkets and many other facilities in the area.

#### **4.3.2 Livelihood capital**

This study considered the five main livelihood assets that are essential for sustainable livelihoods and development, i.e. human, physical, social, financial, and

natural capitals, and adopted the SLF to create a basis for understanding the livelihoods and related challenges of people living in Ondobe.

#### **4.3.2.1 Human capital**

Basic services such as education and health are believed to have improved the well-being of many communities. In principle, universal access to education has now turned into a global phenomenon that is causing literacy rates to rise; the global rate increased from just under 20% in 1820 to approximately 80% in the 2000s (Aubert & Suzuta, 2015:196). The education level attainments of household members in Ondobe of approximately 20% for primary school, 62.5% for secondary school and 15% for tertiary justify how human capital is valued. Education and health, according to Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:25), “provide another angle or perspective on development and standards of living”. Most importantly, numerous low-income countries that are experiencing slow economic growth have managed to improve in terms of well-being indicators, i.e. primary school enrolment, adult literacy, life expectancy, infant mortality and gender disparities.

According to this study’s findings, people in Ondobe pursue various livelihood strategies, including farming, artisan jobs, civil service work, and trading. Most individuals who are capable of working are engaged in one of the abovementioned livelihoods, and among all these people, 87.5% indicated that they have not been unable to work due to illness. This result, as well as the level of education, is a good indicator of people’s abilities to successfully pursue various livelihood strategies in Ondobe. It is important to note that the majority of people in Ondobe are employed in the informal sector; only 12.6% have secure employment in public services. The issue of informal sectors / insecure and highly informalised livelihoods in Africa’s urban centres has been observed to be very common. Similarly, most people who reside in the urbanising rural areas of developing countries are employed in the informal sector (Cobbinah et al., 2015:7; Manirakiza & African Finance and Economics Consult, 2014:165; Keivani, 2010:5; Roberts, 2016:4). This situation is concerning because the cycle of poverty will continue given the ongoing lack of decent jobs and economic empowerment.

#### **4.3.2.2 Physical capital**

DFID (1999:25) lists secure shelter and buildings, affordable transport, access to information or communication, adequate sanitation and water supply, and clean and affordable energy to be the basic infrastructure and goods that are necessary to support livelihoods. A lack of specific infrastructure is considered to be a major dimension of poverty. A reasonable amount of infrastructure exists in Ondobe growth point; there is one main tarred road in the area which connects residents to the major transportation network and services that are available to everyone in the region and the country at large. The community's access to information is also fairly good, as a telecommunications infrastructure has been installed within the locality, which has increased people's ownership of household equipment like telephones / cell phones (97.5%) and radios (87.5%). The chances of people becoming better informed about available opportunities and other development prospects are thus high.

Over three-quarters (77.5%) of residents have secure land tenure, either individually or in families. Given that the area is still technically rural, most people who engage in agricultural activities or subsistence farming use their own land for such purposes. This research observed that the ownership of land in urbanising rural areas does not necessarily aid in maintaining livelihoods. For instance, farmers have been experiencing spells of drought and unpredictable rainfall patterns associated with climate change.

A substantial number of households have access to services infrastructure including schools, a clinic and roads, however access to drainage is very poor (23%). This is a health hazard and a potential threat to livelihoods because of poor sanitation and hygiene. One of the most common health issues in Ondobe is diarrhoea, which may be linked to a lack of adequate sanitation. The researcher's findings with regard to access to electricity were also remarkable, as 73% of households have electricity, only 25% use it as their main source of energy for cooking. Most households (62.5%) depend on firewood for cooking. Affordability is the key reason for this. As per Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones (2002:9), the mere availability of livelihood assets is not sufficient; access is key in promoting livelihoods.

#### **4.3.2.3 Financial capital**

This livelihood asset is one of the most influential resources, and most importantly, its availability adds value to other livelihood assets such as human, physical and social capital. The average household income per month in Ondobe growth point ranges between N\$ 500 and N\$ 58,000. This is an indication of high inequality and an important reminder that “although urban areas are associated with economic growth, not all residents benefit” (Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:29). The data gathered on expenditure shows that 22.5% of households in Ondobe spend less than N\$ 500 per month.

Poverty lines	2003/2004 N\$	2009/2010 N\$	2015/2016 N\$
FPL (Food poverty line)	127.15	204.05	293.1
LBPL (Lower bound poverty line)	184.56	277.54	389.3
UBPL (Upper bound poverty line)	262.45	377.96	520.8

Fig 4.9: Namibia’s Poverty Lines (NSA, 2017b)

The statistics depicted in Figure 4.9 shows the poverty lines in Namibia. In 2015/2016, someone who was unable to spend at least N\$ 389.30 per month on basic necessities was considered to be severely poor, and someone who could not spend at least N\$ 520.80 was considered to be poor. Using the measurement of the upper poverty line of N\$ 520.80, approximately 22.5% classify as poor in Ondobe. In addition, 35% of households experience difficulties satisfying their basic needs, which is a clear indication that the level of poverty is high in the area.

The statistics on commodity expenditure reveal that 57.5% of people’s income is spent on food. The price of food has been escalating due to high inflation, as the country is experiencing a slump in the economy. More poor people are now exposed to vulnerabilities as a result of economic shocks. Further analysis shows that approximately 52.5% do not have sufficient access to credit. The majority of households (60%) prefer to source a loan or credit from friends or relatives, which is common amongst poor people, especially those without collateral or a reliable income. Similarly, another study revealed that there is limited access amongst informal settlement residents to formal credit sources such as banks, hence the

option of borrowing from relatives and friends being more common (Olajide, 2015:238).

#### **4.3.2.4 Social capital**

The results regarding sufficient access to information on national policies showed a 75% satisfaction rate. The contributing factors to this include high ownership of household equipment such as telephones / cellular phones and radios, as discussed under physical capital. Much of the information on the government's undertakings is aired on radio and television. Access by 95.5% of households to social networks within the area and beyond also helps to spread information. The existing government structures and offices are also a good source of information; many people confirmed that they had accessed information on the notice boards of various public offices and the Regional Councilor's office. In addition, the Councilor usually makes frequent announcements on the radio to inform communities about development initiatives, as well as information on survey undertakings and research being conducted in the area. It is further common practice for community members to verify any activities taking place within the vicinity with their community leaders.

Memberships of associations and organisations are high in this community, as evidenced by 82.5% of the respondents who are members of either a church or political organisations. The main reasons given by the respondents for joining political parties were to be informed on democratic processes, to be part of the development discourse, and to contribute to decisions that affect their lives. Members of religious organisations mentioned reasons such as the maintenance of ancient practices, to learn about their faith, and to access moral education. Respondents affiliated to both types of organisations / associations strongly emphasised benefits such as a sense of belonging in society and strengthening social relations.

#### **4.3.2.5 Natural capital**

A significant aspect of the natural capital observed in this area was livelihoods derived from agricultural activities. Individuals who engage in such activities live mostly in traditional homesteads and have access to sufficient land for farming. A

high number of households use firewood as a primary source of energy for cooking, which shows the abundance of natural capital in the form of forests.

Another notable issue in the area is environmental pollution, and to a degree air pollution. Households manage their own refuse because there is no waste collection service available. A very high number (77%) of households do not have access to the drainage system, thus the poor environment, particularly ground water, is likely to compromise the health of residents.

#### **4.3.2.6 Vulnerability context**

A perspective on vulnerabilities that people residing in Ondobe growth point face has been established. These are specific issues prevailing in the area which have a direct impact on assets and livelihoods. The results are summarised following DFID's (1999:66) identification of components of the vulnerability context, as outlined below:

##### **(a) Trends**

Trends in governance are a concern for some residents. The fact that this area is urbanising and that formalisation of the settlement is imminent has been causing tension. Resistance to change is delaying progress in terms of planning and the establishment of Ondobe growth point, which is expected to formalise the area and attract more investment.

##### **(b) Shocks**

Factors affecting the economy and crop / livestock and human health have led to observed shocks in the area. Rapid changes in terms of exchange rates have been taken place in the country, and the effects are more severe on less developed communities. This poor economic performance is causing high inflation, which most affects traders and artisans. Persistent occurrences of drought have been making it difficult for people who rely on agriculture to maintain their livelihoods.

##### **(c) Seasonality**

Low economic growth has caused sectors such as construction to perform poorly. Many unskilled workers or those who seek employment in the informal sector are experiencing fewer job opportunities. An escalation in prices is also making basic

commodities very expensive, and as a result, the availability of food has become a major obstacle. A lack of sufficient food and poor health affects people's ability to work effectively, and consequently productivity is reduced.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

The research findings that were presented in this chapter are based on the SLF. This analytical framework made it possible for the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the livelihood challenges in Ondobe growth point. All the pertinent information related to the livelihoods and obstacles faced by people in this area was gathered based on the analysed categories of five types of livelihood capital and the vulnerability context, as suggested in the adopted SLF.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This final chapter of the research provides detailed information on the key findings. A brief introduction opens the chapter, while the following sections focus on conclusions and recommendations.

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The findings of this exploratory study on livelihood challenges in the rural growth point of Ondobe are based on empirical information that was largely sourced from primary data, applicable literature, and reports. This study was guided by a set of systematic questions anchored on the research objectives highlighted below:

- Conduct a literature review on poverty alleviation theories and approaches.
- Provide a literature review on factors obstructing sustainable livelihoods.
- Identify available livelihoods and livelihood assets in Ondobe.
- Assess livelihood challenges in Ondobe.
- Provide recommendations for a study that could create a poverty alleviation strategy aimed at increasing the number of sustainable livelihoods.

A core question considered was what type of livelihoods are accessible in Ondobe. This was followed up with sub-questions that provided the necessary information for the study. The questions examined: (a) specific livelihoods that individual households pursue; (b) livelihood assets that various households possess; (c) hindrances which people encounter that impede the ability to maintain livelihoods; (d) how the situation can be improved; and (e) measures that existing institutions take to grow Ondobe growth point.

### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The information presented in this section briefly covers the insights gained from the various literature related to poverty alleviation measures, as well as the findings of empirical cases observed in Ondobe growth point.

#### **5.2.1 Poverty alleviation theories and approaches**

It has been observed that common trends of rapid urbanisation in many developing nations of the global South, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, are high incidences of

poverty and growing inequalities. The well-being of people is key to the development agenda of Namibia and many other nations that are striving for inclusive growth. In order to better address the extant poverty challenges, various authors suggest the use of the SLF to conduct in-depth analyses of the underlying issues that prevent poor people from achieving sustainable livelihoods. This framework proved to be highly useful for this study as it aided the researcher to achieve the study's objectives. The process made it possible to unearth crucial information on livelihoods and impediments which could be essential in devising policies that yield greater impacts.

Research reveals that even if economic growth is taking place, it does not mean that everyone is benefiting; there are still communities experiencing various deprivations, especially in developing countries. Evidence gathered from the case of Ondobe supports the claim and disregards a notion by some scholars that urbanisation in Africa has high potential for sustainable development. Urbanisation in Africa is accompanied by a growing informal sector, which is a contributing factor to low economic growth and uneven development.

Human capital has been proven to be highly significant in shaping rural livelihoods, especially in rapidly urbanising areas, as it influences the ability of individuals to secure a livelihood in the labour markets of urban settings (Hua et al., 2017:63; Rakodi & Lloyd-Jones, 2002:10). A number of scholars share similar sentiments, yet others argue that parallel investments in other types of livelihood capital, such as physical, social, natural, and social capital, are also necessary to alleviate poverty.

### **5.2.2 Observations from Ondobe Growth Point**

The area has been experiencing both public and private investment since 2005 when the urbanisation trend began. Investments in infrastructure and facilities have contributed towards better access to livelihood assets and the accumulation of livelihood capital for households.

### **5.2.3 Accessible livelihoods and livelihood capital**

#### **5.2.3.1 Livelihoods pursued by individual households**

Numerous people have migrated to Ondobe for various reasons, however their common desires include improved living conditions, better access to services, and better employment opportunities. The results indicate that people mostly engage in farming activities, artisan services and trading, while some are employed in the public service.

#### **5.2.3.2 Accessible capital and ownership of livelihood assets**

All the common five types of livelihood capital, i.e. physical, human, financial, social and natural capital, are available in Ondobe growth point. The notable public and private investments include schools, a clinic, a police station, a tarred road, telecommunications, piped water, electricity, a church, as well as government offices for the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry; Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture/Education circuit office; and the traditional authority. Furthermore, supermarkets, Namibia Post Limited, and a service station are also in existence. Institutions operating in the area have been contributing towards advancing Ondobe by ensuring access to health services, education, potable water, and electricity, as well as information on government policies and opportunities to improve livelihoods. Human capital, followed by physical and social capital, are the most important and accessible to individuals in Ondobe. These assets present a better chance for living conditions to improve in this area.

#### **5.2.3.3 Livelihood challenges**

The impediments to creating sustainable livelihoods were assessed, with the findings indicating that the rapidly urbanising growth point of Ondobe has a set of unique challenges that require customised interventions. The pressing issues which were uncovered that hinder people's ability to effectively maintain their livelihoods are: (a) urban informality, whereby development in the area is uncontrolled or unplanned. The traditional authority was given the mandate to manage the allocation of land parcels, but they do not have required capacity to direct the course of development; (b) the growing informal sector, in which the majority of people make a living, is also a hindrance, as the informality has contributed to poor perceptions of the area and

limits people's ability to attract investors and customers; (c) the poor standard of some available infrastructure, e.g. an unreliable electricity supply and inadequate drainage and sanitation; (d) the lack of job opportunities and adequate skills among traders and some artisans inhibits growth because of low returns; (e) the resistance to new development by some community members affects the implementation of planned activities and consequently slows the rate of growth as well as the availability of new opportunities; and (f) the unpredictable and diminished rainfall.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Livelihoods are very significant in people's lives and are a key tool for alleviating poverty. As government and other development partners, including local communities, work towards ensuring an improved quality of life, it is critical to thoroughly understand the prevailing situations and core challenges that poor people face. Desirable impacts can only be achieved once available or in most cases scarce resources are invested in responsive measures. The creation of programmes and projects should focus on addressing issues to best accommodate the needs of local people. Roberts (2016:19) argued that "pressures of urbanization in small and intermediate towns of regional or rural areas should consider creative solutions, and put emphasis on collaborative governance and production arrangements that are innovative to maintain the area's competitiveness, retention and human capital development, employment creation, and also supply of required services".

Yet while these solutions are relevant for the situation in Ondobe, specific interventions must also be included in a poverty alleviation strategy:

(a) Urban informality: there is a need to accelerate the process of upgrading the growth point to a settlement, as this would ensure the orderly and sustainable development of Ondobe. An alternative to this formalisation could be capacitating the traditional authorities with the necessary knowledge and skills for orderly development and the management of urbanising areas.

(b) The growing informal sector: this problem would also be solved by formalisation of the area, as it would attract more investors and contribute to economic growth.

(c) The poor standard of some available infrastructure: the provision of adequate infrastructure services and the upgrading of existing services is necessary to ensure the delivery of quality services and increased productivity.

(d) A lack of job opportunities and a lack of adequate skills: the establishment of an institution for technical courses in the area would help to develop people's skills.

People who are engaged in the informal sector may also upgrade their skills and gain more knowledge. (e) Resistance to new development by some people: the OSDF could integrate any existing activities that are considered viable and valued by local people in order to increase the settlement's competitiveness. The involvement and consideration of local people's inputs in the development process, from inception to implementation, is crucial for increasing the understanding and value of proposed interventions, as well as acceptance / ownership of the outcomes.

(f) Unpredictable or diminished rainfall: this challenge is inevitable but local people could be assisted to develop new skills and diversify their livelihoods. A crucial finding revealed that human capital is available and largely accessible at both the community and household levels in Ondobe, hence a focus on policy implementation could aim at strengthening this asset further, as highlighted in point (d) above. This resource is the most valuable and influences people's abilities to secure decent livelihoods.

Financial and human resources would be needed to accomplish the above. These interventions would be beneficial to the entire community and government because the efforts to advance the growth point and uplift the living conditions of the poor would yield desired impacts.

### **5.3.1 Considerations for further research**

This research concludes with recommendations on areas of focus for further research. The first is to develop the relationships between institutions and local communities in order to ease tensions during the implementation of any new policies. Another area of focus could be on those sectors with high potential to strengthen the competitiveness of urbanising rural areas, which would stimulate economic growth and the creation of decent jobs. Finally, there is a need to further explore the root causes of poverty, as well as the underlying factors that prevent some people from advancing.

## **5.4 CONCLUSION**

It is widely understood that effective planning and the development of sound policies is dependent on reliable information supported by statistics. This exploratory study aimed to stimulate interest in what research must be performed in order to devise policies that will address high levels of poverty, especially in urbanising rural areas since they do not receive much attention. The conclusion of this research suggests that although Ondobe growth point has been gradually advancing, some of the residents are not experiencing improved standards of living. A considerable number (22.5%) of the sampled households live in poverty, while the level of income disparities is another indicator of the level of deprivation and growing inequality. This study asserts that it is important to develop a thorough understanding of the prevailing conditions in each settlement type, because each urbanising area is characterised by unique opportunities and challenges. This study's insights into Ondobe's livelihood challenges informed the researcher's recommendation to relevant stakeholders to consider further research that would assist to devise policies and responsive interventions.

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## APPENDIX 1: SCHEDULED HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Masters of Development Studies  
University of the Free State  
Centre for Development Support

**“Livelihood challenges in a rural growth point: The case of Ondobe, Namibia”.**

**Declaration:** The information provided in this survey is solely for academic purposes and will be handled with utmost confidentiality.

QUESTIONNAIRE NO: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE:      August 2018

### SECTION A: HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

1. Gender of respondent:	Male [1]	Female [2]	
2. Age:			
3. Marital Status:	Single [1] Married [2] Divorced / Separated [3] Widow / Widower [4]		
4. Education Level:	None [1] Secondary [3] Other [5]	Primary [2] Tertiary [4]	
5. Occupation:	Civil Service [1] Artisan [3] Other [5]	Farming [2] Trading [4]	
6. Nature of your occupation:	Formal [1]	Informal [2]	
7. Duty Station:	Within Ondobe [1] Outside Ondobe [2]		
8. Distance to Place of work:	<½ km [1] >3km [3]	½ – 3km [2]	

**SECTION B: LIVELIHOOD ASSETS** (Resources needed for basic needs provision and building a sustainable livelihood)

**1. HUMAN CAPITAL**

1.1	How many members form part of this household?					
	<b>No.</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Marital status</b>
	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
1.2	How many of your household members have working capability?					
1.3	How many members of your household are employed?					
1.4	Has any of your household members been disturbed from work due to illness?					Yes [1] No [2]
1.5	What are the common health problems experienced in your household?					

**2. FINANCIAL CAPITAL**

2.1	How much is your household's average income per month?	
2.2	What is your household's total monthly expenditure per month?	
2.3	What commodity takes much of your spending?	Rent [1] Food [2] Energy [3] Education [4] Transport [5]
2.4	Do you manage to satisfy the basic food need for your household?	Yes [1] No [2]
2.5	Do you find any difficulties in satisfying other basic needs?	Yes [1] No [2]
2.6	Is there money available that your household save after the monthly spending on basic needs?	Yes [1] No [2]
2.7	Where do you prefer sourcing a loan / credit and why?	Cash loan [1] Relative/Friend [2] Bank [3] Other [4]....specify

2.8	Have you ever borrowed money from the bank?	Yes [1] No [2]
2.9	If yes, for what purpose did you use the money?	Education Invest.[1] Home improvement [2] Business [3] Other [4]....specify

### 3. PHYSICAL CAPITAL

3.1	What type of land tenure do you have?	Own land [1] ( <i>registered Rights</i> ) Tenant [2] Family owned [3] Squatting [4]															
3.2	Is your access to the following sufficient?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Services infrastructure (Water, drainage, electricity)</td> <td></td> <td rowspan="7">Yes [1] No [2]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health facilities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Education facilities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employment opportunities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Information on national policies</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social network</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loan/credit</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Services infrastructure (Water, drainage, electricity)		Yes [1] No [2]	Health facilities		Education facilities		Employment opportunities		Information on national policies		Social network		Loan/credit	
Services infrastructure (Water, drainage, electricity)		Yes [1] No [2]															
Health facilities																	
Education facilities																	
Employment opportunities																	
Information on national policies																	
Social network																	
Loan/credit																	
3.3	Does this plot have a formal registration title?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Yes [1]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>No [2]</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Not sure [3]</td> </tr> </table>		Yes [1]		No [2]		Not sure [3]									
	Yes [1]																
	No [2]																
	Not sure [3]																
3.4	What do you consider the main land use activities for this plot?	Residential [1] Agriculture[2] Commercial [3] Other [4]...specify															
3.5	<i>Type of building?</i>	Stand-alone [1] Flat [2] Duplex [3]															

			Traditional house [4]
3.6	Type of building materials?		Brick [1] Corrugated iron [2] Mud [3] Other [4].....specify
3.7	Do you have access to?	Electricity	Yes [1] No [2]
		Water	
		Toilet & bathroom	
		Drainage system	
		Kitchen	
3.8	Are the following facilities inside or outside?	Water	Inside [1] Outside [2]
		Toilet & bathroom	
		Kitchen	
3.9	Are any of these facilities shared?	Water	Yes [1] No [2]
		Toilet & bathroom	
		Kitchen	
3.10	What is the main source of water supply?	Well [1] Tap [2] Borehole [3]	
3.11	Type of drainage system?	Closed drainage [1] Open drainage [2] None [3]	
3.12	Type of toilet facility?	Flushing/water [1] Pit latrine [2] Open /bush [3]	
3.13	What is the main source of energy for cooking?	Fire wood [1] Electricity [2] Gas [3]	
3.14	What is the condition of your building?	Very poor [1]	Good [4]
		Poor [2]	Very good [5]

		Fair [3]		
3.15	How have you financed your home improvements, if any?	Savings [1] Bank loan [2] Borrowed from relatives/friends [3] Other [4]....specify		
3.16	Do you own any of these household items?	Vehicle	Yes [1] No [2]	
		Refrigerator		
		Television		
		Internet		
		Computer		
		Radio		
		Telephone/cell phone		
		Generator		
3.17	Do you possess any of these domestic animals?		Yes [1] No [2]	Quantity
		Chickens		
		Goats		
		Cattle		
		Donkey		
3.18	How do you rate Ondobe growth point in terms of facilities, i.e. access to health / education facilities / water/ sanitation/ employment opportunities?	Very poor [1] Poor [2] Fair [3]	Good [4] Very good [5]	

#### 4. SOCIAL CAPITAL

4.1	How long have you been living in this community (Number of years)?	
4.2	What influenced your decision to settle in this area?	Access services [1] Native land [2] Employment [3] Affordable land [4] Other?.....Specify

4.3	Do you or any household members belong to any of these associations or organisations?	Co-operative		Yes [1] No [2]
		Union		
		Constituency Development Committee		
		Religious org.		
		Political party		
		Other? specify		
4.4	What was the reason for becoming a member of the association?			
4.5	How do you mainly get information on employment offers and other opportunities?			

|

**SECTION C: VULNERABILITY OF HOUSEHOLD LIVELIHOOD/ASSETS AND INFLUENCING FACTORS**

1.	Have you at any time experienced the following?	Yes [1]	
		No [2]	
		Loss of employment	
		Eviction / related threat	
		Social network loss	
		Crime	
		Illness / health problems	
		Loss of property	
2.	Which of the following put your livelihood or assets at risk <i>(Threat to maintaining your livelihood / assets)</i>  Yes[1] No[2]	Please explain	
		Status of land tenure	
		Location of the area	
		Standard of available infrastructure	
		Government policies and organisations	
		Housing condition	
3.	How can the above factors improve your livelihood?		

## APPENDIX 2: SCHEDULED INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

Masters of Development Studies  
University of the Free State  
Centre for Development Support

**“Livelihood challenges in a rural growth point: The case of Ondobe, Namibia”.**

**Declaration:** The information provided in this survey is solely for academic purposes and will be handled with utmost confidentiality.

QUESTIONNAIRE NO: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: August 2018

1. When was Ondobe recognised as a growth point / a period the urbanisation trend started in Ondobe.....?

2. What public services are available in Ondobe?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. What are the main livelihood strategies in Ondobe?

.....  
.....

4. What hindrances do people encounter that impact their ability to maintain livelihood(s)?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Which livelihood assets are perceived significant?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

6. Which legal provisions / laws are used in terms of land allocation and development?

.....  
.....

7. What major public or private investment programmes have you undertaken within Ondobe growth point in the last five years?

.....  
.....  
.....

8. How do you perceive the rate of development?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. What are the main challenges in terms of projects and programmes implementation?

.....  
.....  
.....

10. What measures or contributions has your institution availed towards advancing Ondobe growth point?

.....  
.....  
.....

11. What planning priorities would you recommend for the future development of Ondobe growth point?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....