

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN HELAO NAFIDI

Establishment of the Flexible Land Tenure Schemes in Ombili and Bonya Informal Settlements in Helao Nafidi, Ohangwena Region.

List of triggered activities identified in the EIA Regulations which apply to the proposed project

Activity 5.1 (d) Land Use and Development Activities

The rezoning of land from the use for nature conservation or zoned open space to any other land use.

Activity 5.2 Land Use and Development Activities.

The establishment of land resettlement schemes.

Activity 10.1 (a) Infrastructure

The construction of oil, water, gas and petrochemical and other bulk supply pipelines (The project involves the installation of bulk services)

Activity 10.1 (b) Infrastructure

The construction of Public roads (The proposed project includes the construction of roads)

Activity 10.2 (a) Infrastructure

The route determination of roads and design of associated physical infrastructure where – it is a public road; (The proposed project includes the route determination of roads)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to brief Interested & Affected Parties (I&AP's) about the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) being undertaken for the proposed development activities in Helao Nafidi.

The BID also provides an opportunity for I&APs to register for the EIA process and to submit any initial comments or issues regarding the proposed project.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Helao Nafidi Town Council hereinafter referred to as the proponent intends to undertake the following activities:

- a) **Establishment of the Flexible Land Tenure Schemes in Ombili and Bonya Informal Settlement in Helao Nafidi, Ohangwena Region.**
- a) **Creation of block erven and streets within the Flexible Land Tenure Scheme Boundaries Bonya & Ombili Informal Settlements.**
- b) **Provision of associated bulk services.**

In terms of the Environmental Management Act (No. 7 of 2007) and Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (Government Notice No. 30 of 2012), the listed activities indicated above were triggered by the proposed project.

The proponent commissioned this EIA and appointed Stubenrauch Planning Consultants (SPC) to undertake the necessary activities to enable an application for an Environmental Clearance with the Environmental Commissioner as prescribed by the Environmental Management Act (No. 7 of 2007) and Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (Government Notice No. 30 of 2012). In line with Regulation 21(2) of the

mentioned EIA Regulations, this BID is distributed to potential I&APs as part of the public consultation process for this EIA.

This Environmental Assessment will therefore be undertaken to determine the potential environmental and socio-economic impacts associated with the proposed development activity.

3 DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Locality

Helao Nafidi is a town in Oshana Region located in the far northern Namibia at the border to Angola.

The Ombili Informal Settlement is located south of the Central Business District of Oshana, west of the B1 Road to the Namibia – Angola borders and east of the Oshana Train Station. According to the settlement analysis conducted by GIZ in 2021/2022, the size of the settlement is estimated to be approximately 11ha in extent.

The Bonya Informal Settlement is located south of the Central Business District of Oshana, east of the B1 Road to the Namibia – Angola borders. According to the settlement analysis conducted by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) in 2021/2022, the size of the settlement is estimated to be approximately 11.2ha in extent.

Below is the combined locality map of two settlements as depicted in Figure 2.

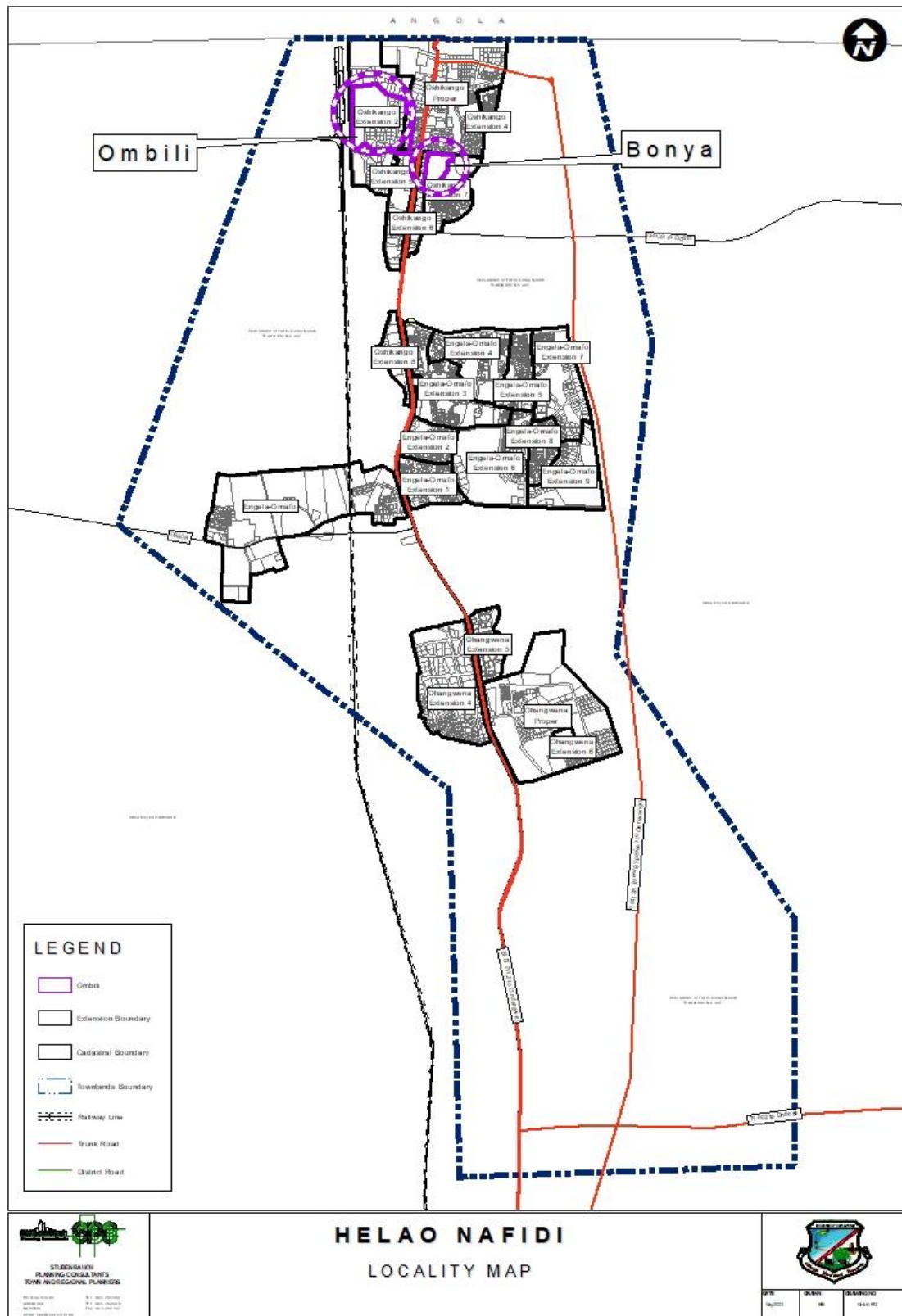


FIGURE 2: COMBINED LOCALITY MAP OF OMBILI AND BONYA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN HELAO NAFIDI

3.2 Zoning

Town and Townlands areas owned by a Local Authority are normally reserved for future town expansion purposes. The HNTC has earmarked the Ombili and Bonya Informal Settlements which are the most densely populated informal residential areas within the Helao Nafidi town for the implementation of the FLTS in terms of the Flexible Land Tenure Act, 2012 (Act 4 of 2012).

3.3 Ownership

The Ombili and Bonya Informal Settlements are located within the urban areas owned by Helao Nafidi and are under the administration of the Helao Nafidi Town Council. Furthermore, the HNTC as the registered owner of the land on which the Bonya and Ombili Informal Settlements are located has legal rights to establish the FLTS on the earmarked settlements and administer any form of development that aim to sustainably uplift the social and economic standards of the area.

3.4 Project Background

Namibia experiences a daunting housing backlog, a situation that calls for accelerated housing development efforts. Namibia is classified as a lower to middle-income country. However, the most recent estimate of income distribution showed that Namibia still is one of the most skewed in the world (as per Gini-coefficient inequality measure) NHP 2009. A large proportion of the population therefore lives in poverty and lacks access to essential services. This is mainly caused by the influx of people to urban areas in search for jobs and better livelihoods. However, as people flock to urban areas, they mostly settle informally on any available piece of land as most of them cannot afford fully serviced urban land, consequently increasing the footprint of the urban informality. This has resulted in many urban dwellers occupying land without having obtained approval from the landowners and without having any form of tenure security, thereby exposing themselves to high chances of being evicted by the relevant authorities.

In terms of poverty and inequality, Namibia is characterized by extremely high, although slightly decreasing, income inequality. It is then noted that Namibia remains at the top of the list in terms of the GINI Index. Furthermore, 88% of households in Namibia have a monthly household income of less than N\$ 10,000, and even employees in Namibia's public service sector who are considered middle income, including nurses, teachers, police officers, and military personnel experience difficulties in accessing adequate housing (NHP 2022).

The Helao Nafidi which is located on the far northern part of Namibia, in Ohangwena Region as depicted in Figure 2 above was proclaimed as a town in 2003, of which was only established as a Town Council in 2004 and has since grown radically. The town of Helao Nafidi is considered as a civic administration centre for the five (5) highly fragmented urban areas of Ohangwena, Engela, Omafo, Oshikango and Onhuno. It is a unique town as it is made up of several urban and rural localities.

The Helao Nafidi urban centres experience organic growth which somehow lays the foundation for the growth of the town. The town of Helao Nafidi comprises of approximately 7221 hectares under the administrative governance of the Helao Nafidi Town Council, while the Ohangwena Regional Council governs the surrounding settlements and villages that fall outside the administrative boundaries of Helao Nafidi Town Council. A communal land tenure system is followed in the Ohangwena Region and determines the access to land and its general administration. The

Oukwanyama Traditional Authority (OTA) and the communal farmers control communal land themselves.

The town of Helao Nafidi accommodates at least four (4) informal settlements as well as another four (4) planned areas that are occupied by informal housing units. The informal areas where no urban planning interventions have been extended to are Ombili, Bonya, Ohangwena Informal, and Ondingwanyama.

3.5 Proposed Development

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) is implementing the Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS) in various Local Authorities around Namibia. The implementation is conducted in line with the provisions of the Flexible Land Tenure Act, 2012 (Act 4 of 2012) (FLTA) and its Regulations of May 2018. The objectives of the FLTA are:

- a) To create alternative forms of land title that are simpler and cheaper to administer than existing forms of land title.
- b) To provide security of title for persons who live in informal settlements or who are provided with low-income housing.
- c) To empower the persons concerned economically by means of these rights.

The Helao Nafidi Town Council in conjunction with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), has commissioned an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the establishment of a Flexible Land Tenure Scheme in Helao Nafidi, Ohangwena Region. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is to be conducted in terms of EMA for the creation of block erven and streets as well as the provision of associated Municipal bulk services within the Flexible Land Tenure Scheme Boundaries of Bonya & Ombili Informal Settlements. The aim is to address the housing deficit and tenure insecurities that the Helao Nafidi town currently faces. This initiative is supported by the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) through their Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Development Project (ISUD) which aims to support the co-creation of functional and resilient neighbourhoods through the upgrading of informal settlements.

3.5.1. Flexible Land Tenure Process

The Helao Nafidi Town Council has earmarked the Ombili and Bonya Informal Settlements which are the most densely populated informal residential areas within the Helao Nafidi town for the implementation of the FLTS in terms of the Flexible Land Tenure Act, 2012 (Act 4 of 2012). The Flexible Land Tenure Act (FLTA) was passed in 2012, and the Regulations were published in 2018. The FLTS was born from a need for a land delivery system that can make security of tenure affordable to those living in informal settlements around the country. Thus, the FLTS is intended to function largely in parallel to existing legislation with the surveying and registration of land administered through a Land Rights Office. The basis for all Flexible Land Tenure Schemes is the creation of a block erf, depicting the outside boundaries of a settlement. Within the block erf the system allows the creation of starter or land hold schemes.

The Flexible Land Tenure Act, 2012 (Act No.4 of 2012), creates new tenure system for land in urban areas by establishing two new forms of land title:

A. Starter Title

B. Land Hold Title

The Helao Nafidi Flexible Land Tenure Schemes

Helao Nafidi Town Council, hereafter referred to as the proponent is of the intention to establish the Flexible Land Tenure Schemes for the following identified areas:

- Bonya Informal Settlement
- Ombili Informal Settlement

Description of Identified Areas

1. Bonya Informal Settlement

- The residents of Bonya do not have any form of ownership to the land they are currently residing on.
- The area is not yet surveyed, nor serviced and it is currently being formalized and registered.
- Has limited to no access to services and facilities that are necessary for the efficient functioning of a settlement.
- The size of the settlement is estimated to be approximately 11.2ha in extent.
- Structures count amounting to approximately 621, of which 535 are being utilized for residential purposes.
- Only 24% of the households in Bonya have access to toilet facilities.
- 76% percent often resort to open defecation, risking the health and wellbeing of the residents as well as on the natural and urban environment of Helao Nafidi.
- The area does not have proper road infrastructure and movement networks.
- Population of Bonya is estimated to be approximately 1495, of which 57% of the residents are females and the remaining 43% are males as depicted in Figure 3 below.

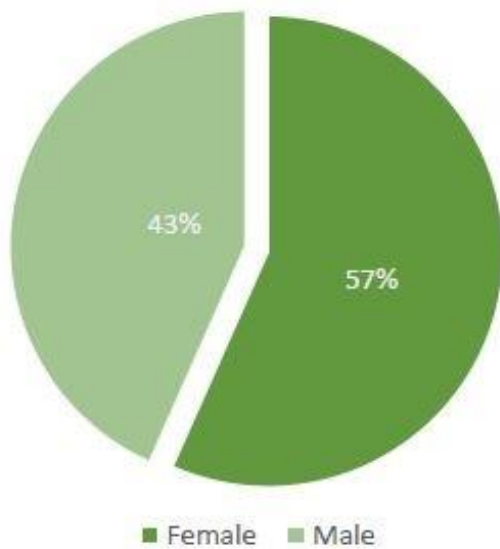


Figure 3: Population of Bonya Informal Settlement.

2. Ombili informal settlement

- The residents of Ombili do not have any form of ownership over the land they are currently residing on.
- The area is not yet surveyed, nor serviced and it is currently being formalized and registered.
- Has limited to no access to services and facilities that are necessary for the efficient functioning of a settlement.
- The size of the settlement is estimated to be approximately 11ha in extent.
- structure count of approximately 1276 structures, of which about 994 are used for residential purposes.
- The settlement is supplied with communal taps, with only a few households in Ombili having individual taps.
- There are only two communal toilets in the entire Ombili Informal settlement, which is unhygienic and exposes the residents to sanitation borne diseases.
- The area does not have proper road infrastructure and movement networks.
- The population of Ombili is estimated to be approximately 3133, of which 51% of the residents are females and the remaining 49% are males as depicted in Figure 4 below.

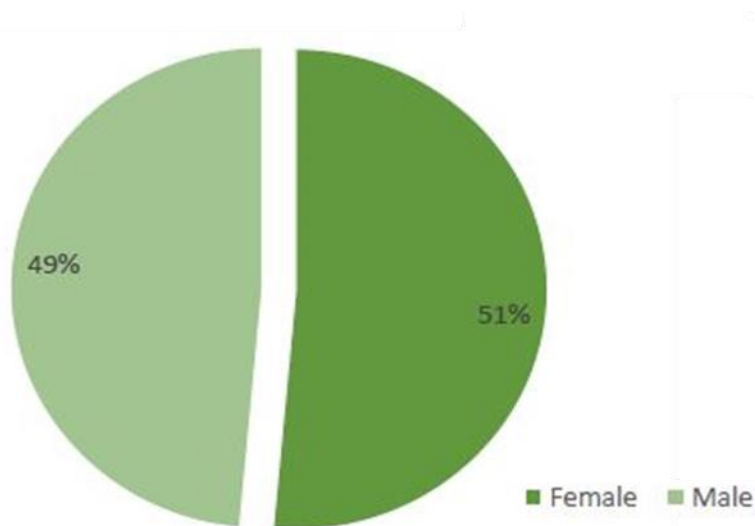


Figure 4: Population of Ombili Informal Settlement.

Infrastructure and amenities

The Bonya Informal Settlement does not have proper roads infrastructure and movement networks. The residents have created informal, yet efficient movement networks that connect them to the other parts of the Helao Nafidi town. The same as Bonya Informal Settlement, the Ombili Informal Settlement does not have proper roads infrastructure, thus, the residents navigate their ways through the settlement via the narrow paths that they have created within the settlement.

The lack of proper movement networks makes it impossible for service vehicles such as the fire trucks and ambulances to navigate efficiently through the settlements in the time of need.

The two subject areas have limited to no access to services and facilities that are necessary for the efficient functioning of a settlement.

The proposed areas are located on higher grounds and developable land, limiting the effect of possible inundations from the natural stormwater drainage lines (iishana) which surround the subject area.

3.5.1 Engineering services

Electricity, water and sewer

The Council is to appoint a civil engineer to attend to the design and installation of the municipal services within the areas. The design for the water and sewer services will be done in accordance and to the satisfaction of the Engineering and Technical Services Department of the Helao Nafidi Town Council. The electricity connection to the two areas will be done in accordance and to the satisfaction of NORED which currently provides electrical power to the town of Helao Nafidi.

Storm Water

Stormwater is drained as per the natural drainage system on the site and additional storm water drainage and management measures will be employed in accordance with the Helao Nafidi Town Council Drainage System.

3.5.2 Access Provision

Access to the two settlements is obtained from the B1 National Road in Oshikango. Access to Ombili Informal Settlement is obtained from the B1 National Road in Oshikango to the west, while access to Bony Informal Settlement is obtained from the B1 National Road in Oshikango to the east.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- Establishing environmental risks of the intended project
- Establishing mitigation protocol
- Preparing the draft Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP)
- Public reviewing of Draft EAR and EMP
- Preparing the final EAR & EMP and submitting to MEFT
- Awaiting decision from Authorities
- Communicating decision to Interested & Affected Parties
- Availing opportunities to Appeal.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE INFORMATION

The environmental and social setting of the proposed project area is briefly described in this section. The detailed description of these environmental features will be fully presented in the environmental scoping report.

4.1 Biophysical Environment

Climatically Ohangwena region is semi-arid, and its natural environment has generally a rather low population carrying capacity. Most of the rural population is practicing traditional subsistence agriculture with livestock husbandry as an important component. A major constraint to human life in the region is lack of perennial surface water resources and high salinity of many groundwater aquifers.

4.1.1 Climate

The climate of the Ohangwena Region is classified as tropical semi-arid with a dry season of 5-6 months. According to the modified Koppen system Ohangwena can be classified as a warm steppe region. Similarities between climatic conditions in northern Namibia and the Sahel region in northern Africa are obvious.

The mean annual rainfall in the Ohangwena Region varies between 450 and 550 mm, increasing from west to east. The rains occur usually between October and May, concentrating mainly on the period January-March. Rainfall is highly variable from year to year and place to place. Most of the rain falling in the region has its origin from moisture transported by trade winds from the Indian Ocean. During their movement across southern Africa these winds lose much of their humidity. Rainfall occurs often during convective thunderstorms and can be very heavy during short periods.

4.1.2 Topography, Geology and Soils

The topography of Ohangwena Region is characterized by an extremely flat plain between 1090 and 1150m above mean sea level. The gradient of the plain is approximately 1:2500 decreasing from north to south.

Geologically, Ohangwena Region is in the Kalahari group geological formation, which is floored by mid-Proterozoic crustal rocks of the Congo craton. The formation contains possibly as much as 8600m of sedimentary rocks of the Proterozoic Damara sequence, some 360m of Karoo rocks and about 130m of cretaceous rocks overlain by a blanket of unconsolidated Kalahari sequence sediments up to 600m thick.

The successive layers of sands, sandy clay, sandstones, and conglomerates of the Kalahari group are up to 500 thick and of Tertiary to Quaternary age (30-40 million years). Kalahari sandstones can be seen everywhere in the bottoms of wells, borrow pits and water reservoirs.

The soils of Ohangwena Region can broadly be classified into four groups:

1. Aeolian sands (arenosols)
2. Solonetz soil
3. Non-solonetz soils
4. Black clays

4.1.3 Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage system

Namibia is an arid country with low rainfall and high evapotranspiration. The only permanent rivers are along the northern and southern borders. Across the country, surface waters are ephemeral after seasonal rainfall, with many of them dammed. However, in Ohangwena Region, there are no permanent rivers or lakes. Groundwater in this region is available throughout the year but saline. The water resources available for the inhabitants and their livestock are the following:

- a) Rainfall during the rainy season. Rainwater can be collected from roofs and surface catchment areas into reservoirs and ponds.
- b) Surface water which flows during the rainy season in ephemeral rivers and oshanas and collects in natural pans. This water can be channeled and stored in ponds and reservoirs.
- c) Groundwater in different types of aquifers. Many of the aquifers in Ohangwena Region contain however saline water, which is unsuitable for human consumption without removal of salts.
- d) River water transported from Kunene River in Angola by means of canals and pipelines to major settlements in Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshana and Oshikoto regions.

Having said that there are no perennial rivers or surface waters in Ohangwena region, the region receives seasonal flood waters from the Cuvelai system. Therefore, the seasonal flood in the Cuvelai system is very important for the rural economy in Ohangwena region in a way that the fresh surface water, naturally or artificially collected in pans and oshanas, provides high quality water for rural households until it evaporates. Furthermore, the floodwaters also recharge groundwater, bring in fish, which is an important source of protein for the inhabitants, and regenerate grazing for livestock.

5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The following potential impacts have been identified so far:

- **Traffic Impacts:** During construction the movement of construction material to and from site may cause additional traffic. Traffic may also be increased in the area once the areas are fully developed.
- **Disturbance:** During construction the surrounding property owners and community members may be disturbed by the construction activities.
- **Waste:** During construction and operation, waste may be generated on site which would have to be disposed of at an approved landfill site.
- **Ground and surface water impacts:** may be experienced during construction due to the use of machinery and chemicals to construct the roads and services infrastructure as well as during operational activities.
- **Dust and noise** may be generated during construction activities.

- **Visual Impact:** The area is currently mostly undeveloped as such there may thus be a change in visual characteristics of the site once it becomes developed.
- **Employment Creation:** During construction temporary jobs may be created for the construction of the associated services.

More potential impacts of the proposed activity will be identified upon consultations with the public and further research on the area.

6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Environmental Impact Assessment process involves interaction with people who are interested in, or who could be affected by the proposed development and/or operational activities of the proposed Helao Nafidi development.

To further obtain inputs into the developments to take place, communication will be sent out to various potential I&APs and Line Ministries in addition to the public notices to be placed in the newspapers, on the sites and around the subject area to obtain comments on the proposed developments.

7 ALL STAKEHOLDER/INTERESTED & AFFECTED PARTIES (I&AP)

Public participation process gives you the opportunity to:

- Obtain information about the proposed project
- Raise any environmental issues relating to the project

How can you be involved?

- By responding to the invitation advertised in the newspapers
- By registering as an I&AP, for your name to be added to our register list
- Submitting your comments or requests in writing.

We are inviting the public to participate by contributing issues and suggestions regarding the proposed projects on or before **01 August 2023**. For further information, or concerns, I&APs can complete the register below:

8 REGISTRATION AND COMMENTS

Participant Name:	Organization/Affiliations:
Position:	Telephone:
Fax:	E-Mail:

Postal Address:
Comments/Suggestions and Questions:

Please fill in particulars and return completed document to be registered as an Interested & Affected Parties (I&AP) to:

Stubenrauch Planning Consultants (SPC) Tel: 061 25 11 89 E-Mail: bronwynn@spc.com.na
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