

# Ageing, Livelihoods and HIV/AIDS Briefing Notes .....No: 1a

## Methodology

### Key Points:

- The research has used multiple methods combining extensive survey methodologies with in-depth case studies and participatory focus groups.
- The survey provides an extensive profile of an under-researched group - the elderly.
- Case studies and focus groups have provided an in-depth insight into the livelihoods revealed in the survey and the ways they have been affected by HIV/AIDS

This briefing outlines the ways in which the research project has investigated the livelihoods of the elderly, their vulnerabilities and capabilities and the impacts of HIV/AIDS on these. The research team employed a multi-methodological research strategy to address the objectives of the research combining both extensive and intensive research methods.

### Household Survey

A household questionnaire survey was administered to 304 household heads (of all ages) in the region, split between the three constituencies of Outapi (102) Tsandi (101) and Okahao (101) respectively. Within each constituency, households were surveyed in three villages that were selected using pension paypoint data as a) locations where there were a high proportion of elderly residents but also b) because of their position along a transect reflecting distance from the towns of Outapi, Tsandi and Okahao. Within each of the villages, households were sampled by location to include outlying homesteads. The survey, conducted by UNAM research fellows, was administered to household heads. Data gathered from the survey has been used to provide a profile of the villages, household livelihoods and livelihood dynamics and to identify the role of the elderly in livelihoods across households and between the three constituencies.

### Case study interviews with elderly headed households

From the survey, 36 elderly headed households were selected (12 in each constituency) using a purposeful sampling technique to reflect the range of household circumstances revealed in the survey.



Each case study interview was c. 3-4 hours in length, often involving repeat visits and was conducted in and around the homestead. Interviews were semi-structured in nature building on the individual survey returns for that household. Themes explored included changes in livelihoods and capabilities, social capital and household dynamics and where relevant the significance of HIV/AIDS and household deaths to these. The interviews also explored the role of institutions both formal (e.g. Tribal Authorities) and informal (e.g. customary norms and rules) in constraining and enabling livelihoods.



**Case Study Interview**

Interviews were conducted in Oshiwambo, some through a translator. All were recorded, transcribed and then translated into English. Transcripts were then coded and analysed to reveal key themes.

### **Focus Groups**

Building on the case studies, **six focus groups were organised** (two in each constituency) involving separate groups of elderly men and women. Gender had emerged during the case studies as a key marker of difference among the elderly. The aim of the focus groups was twofold: a. to explore collective (community) views on the role of Institutions (formal and informal) in the livelihoods of the elderly; and b. to facilitate collective discussion on the impacts of HIV/AIDS on the livelihoods of the elderly.

The focus groups were facilitated through the use of participatory methodologies.



**Focus Group with Elderly Women**

Institutional diagramming was used to facilitate discussions around key institutions and their importance to the elderly. Flow diagrams were constructed by each group to illustrate the direct and indirect impacts of HIV/AIDS on the livelihoods of the elderly. It was found that the elderly were much more willing to talk personally about HIV/AIDS collectively than on an individual basis.

### **Interviews with local actors, national government representatives and NGO officials.**

To assess the role of policy and to link the everyday experiences of policy interventions to those intended, a series of semi-structured interviews was undertaken with key agents (government, NGO and community) in the field and with Ministry representatives in Windhoek. The agendas for these interviews were informed by earlier stages of the research.

**Population Ageing and Sustainable Livelihoods in regions affected by HIV/AIDS** is funded by the ESRC (RES-000-22-1427). The project runs from August 2005 until November 2006.

#### **Project website:**

<http://www.ageingnamibia.group.shef.ac.uk/>

#### **The Research Team:**

Principal Investigators:

Dr Deborah Sporton (University of Sheffield)

[d.sporton@shef.ac.uk](mailto:d.sporton@shef.ac.uk)

Mt Alfons Mosimane (UNAM)

[amosimane@unam.na](mailto:amosimane@unam.na)

UNAM Research Fellows: Johanna Mbandi,

Samson Mulonda