

# Assessing The Adequacy Of Communal Land Valuation Methods For Compensation In Okahao, Omusati Region

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## SUMMARY

The expansion of urban areas in Namibia requires the forced purchase of communal land using valuation methods which fail to consider historical and cultural value. Legal frameworks like the Communal Land Reform Act (2002) exist but compensation practices continue to use replacement cost methods which focus on physical improvements instead of recognizing symbolic and ancestral significance.

The study examines both the adequacy and fairness of how communal land in Namibia is valued using Okahao as a case study. The study uses a mixed-methods research approach which includes 107 surveys from impacted landholders and 22 semi-structured interviews along with an analysis of 30 official valuation reports. The study investigates emerging legal standards through an examination of pivotal court rulings such as *Kashela v Katima Mulilo Town Council*.

The government-mandated land compensation remains constant from N\$2,500 to N\$5,000 per hectare with an average of N\$3,750 which falls far short of the market rate for 500 m<sup>2</sup> plots in peri-urban areas that sell between N\$35,000 to N\$38,000. Spiritual and ancestral values along with symbolic loss remained unexamined in all reports even though they play a vital role in customary tenure systems. Analysis using a chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 54.30$ ,  $p = 0.0197$ ) demonstrates that educational attainment creates disparities in compensation information access that negatively affect elderly and female claimants.

To bridge these identified gaps the study introduces the Relational Justice Model and EquiComp Framework which utilizes international examples from South Africa Kenya and Canada to direct inclusive and context-specific reform of Namibia's compensation system.

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