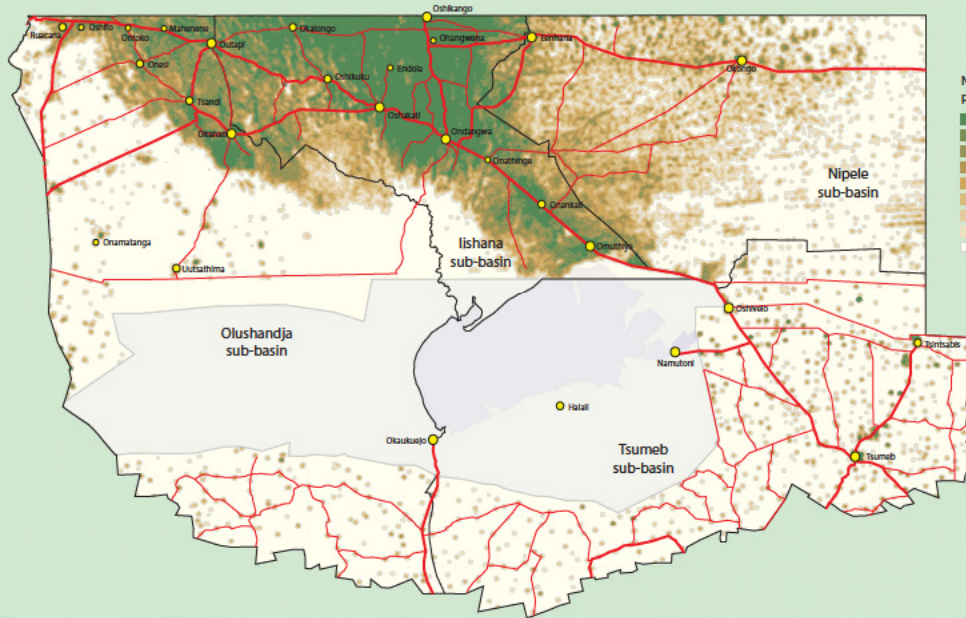


People of the Cuvelai-Etoshia Basin



Number of people per square kilometre

- More than 40
- 31 - 40
- 21 - 30
- 15 - 20
- 10 - 14
- 6 - 9
- 3 - 5
- 1 - 2
- 0

The great majority of people in the Basin live in a broad zone between Omuthiya, Okahao, Ruacana and Eenhana. Outside this zone, densities are lower and people live in more scattered places.

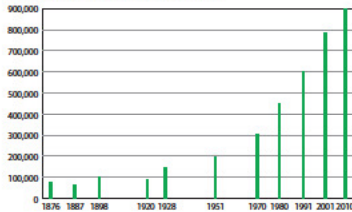
The density of people in rural areas is a consequence of several factors, in particular: the fertility of soils, availability of higher ground that will not be flooded, and access to fresh water, public services and towns.

Throughout the network of *iishana* channels, homes are spread quite evenly, each household being several hundred metres from its neighbours.

In eastern Ohangwena and Oshikoto, as well as in southern Omusati, all households are clustered into villages around old pans where water is available and there are soils suited to some crops.

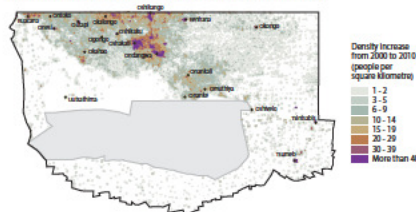
On the farms south of Etosha and in southern Oshikoto, most people live at farmsteads which are widely separated from their neighbours.

Population growth since 1876



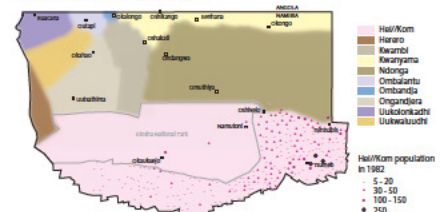
The total population of the Basin was estimated to be about 900,000 people in 2010, having grown from less than 100,000 in the early 20th Century. Over the past 30 years, the population has grown by about 2.2% each year.

Population growth between 2000 and 2010



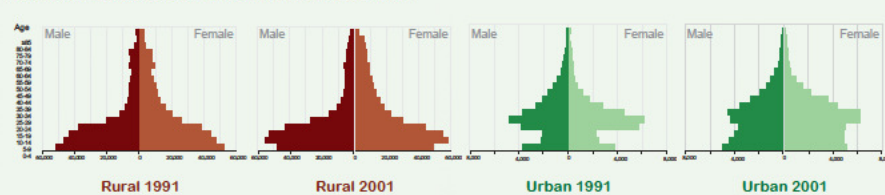
Most growth over the past 10 years has been around Oshakati, Ondangwa and Oshikongo and also in the emerging towns of Okongo, Eenhana, Oshikuku, Outapi, Okahao, Tsandi and Onesi. Further from towns, significant numbers of new homesteads have been established south of Okahao, near Ruacana and around Onankali and Omuthiya.

Traditional authority areas



Most residents live in one of eight major Owambo tribal authority areas: Kwanyama, Ndonga, Ombalantu, Ombandja, Ongandjera, Uukolonkadhi, Uukwaluudhi and Uukwambi. Many Zemba people live close to the Kunene River, while a mix of people live south of Etosha and in southern Oshikoto which was traditionally a Heil/Kom area.

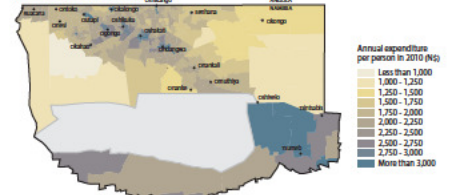
The different structures of rural and urban populations



Rural populations consist of large numbers of people younger than 20 years, and rather few people of working ages in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s. Above the age of 25, there are many more women than men in rural areas.

By contrast, urban areas have great numbers of working-aged people but fewer children and people over 60. In 1991 there were relatively few teenagers but they made up a significant proportion of urban dwellers in 2001.

Wealth and poverty



Levels of wealth vary widely, the wealthiest people being in the freehold farms and in towns. Most people living in the densely populated zone between Omuthiya, Okahao, Ruacana and Oshikongo are significantly wealthier than those in more remote areas.

Fertility

Even though the number of people grew between 1991 and 2001, there were considerably fewer young children in the population in 2001 than in 1991. This was due to a significant decline in fertility.

The average number of children born to each woman:

Region	1991	2001
Ohangwena	7.7	5.3
Omusati	5.7	4.0
Oshana	5.6	3.7
Oshikoto	6.7	4.6



The Basin has a history of 'boom and bust'. During times of plenty, surplus food is harvested and stored in large *iigandhi* baskets. However, at other times droughts and plagues of locusts and army worms have caused terrible famines.

The worst recorded famines occurred in 1877/1879, 1907/1908, 1915, 1920 and 1929-1931. Some of those famines caused the death of 30-40% of the population.

This image is of people building dams during the 1929-1931 'Famine of the dams'.

