



Namibia Zero Hunger

Republic of Namibia

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Newsletter

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Dear Reader

Welcome to the second volume of the Zero Hunger Newsletter, a key resource for understanding the evolving food and nutrition security situation in Namibia.

Plan, the Sustainable Development Agenda – particularly SDG2 and the Fifth National Development Plan.

In this issue of the Zero Hunger Newsletter the Hon Katrina Hanse Himarwa, speaks about her Ministry's role within the zero hunger agenda and calls for the consolidation of multi sectoral coordination between line ministries and various stakeholders where hunger solutions need to be discussed.

In addition, the National Planning Commission, Office of the Prime Minister and Ministries of Education, Environment and Tourism, Fisheries, Poverty, and Gender have also contributed, by highlighting their ministries activities that contribute towards SDG2.

We would like to commend the commitment demonstrated by contributors whose articles reflect the intensity of the fight for a Namibia free of hunger. We hope you too will be encouraged by their passion to end hunger and share with us your story.

Moreover, the newsletter stems from the Zero Hunger Roadmap, which puts forward a common vision around a set of actions that need to be undertaken to end hunger in Namibia and its alignment to the goals of the Harambee Prosperity

Have Your Say, Email:
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National Planning Commission

Front page pic: Hon. Ruben Sheehama, Councillor of Katutura with some of the Food Bank beneficiaries.

ZERO HUNGER





A Message from Hon. Katrina Hanse Himarwa

Namibia envisions itself as a hunger free nation by 2025. This aspiration is substantiated by the Vision 2030 which projects a prosperous and industrialized country, developed by its human resources, enjoying peace, harmony and political stability. As we half the Year of Rededication towards the implementation of the Harambee Prosperity Plan, the Government has made tremendous progress in the fight against hunger and extreme poverty.

With a strong governance architecture, we have created a conducive environment by putting in place several policy frameworks such as the recently launched Fifth National Development Plan (NDP 5), and the Blue Print on Poverty Reduction and Wealth Redistribution to address the underlying factors contributing to food insecurity in our country, which includes: high unemployment levels, fragmented social programmes, inequalities and the country's exposure to recurrent climate hazards such as droughts and floods. Addressing these challenges calls for multi-sectoral coordination.

Therefore, deliberate collaboration among various line ministries, civil society, the private sector, UN agencies, and other stakeholder groups is inevitable as we strive to eradicate hunger and achieve food and nutrition security in Namibia.

Through the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture (MoEAC), the Government aims to eliminate hunger, improve health and nutrition of school going children and reducing income inequality, especially for learners from vulnerable communities. The MoEAC is mandated to work towards the production of an educated and skilled workforce needed for a productive and competitive nation by striving for continuous improvement in quality inclusive education, teaching, and improved learning outcomes.

To this end, the Ministry has set core policies and strategies such as the Education for All Act (EFA, 2002 – 2015), the Friends of Education and School Garden initiatives, the Public-Private Partnership for the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) and the



upcoming School Feeding Policy, which all seek to end hunger in schools. The Education for All Act (2002 – 2015) allowed us to achieve some of our key educational objectives. The Act contributed to improved enrolment at the primary level, exceeding 98 percent for both girls and boys, with a 95 percent survival rate to the last grade of primary education and gender parity at all levels. As a result, more Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) are likely to be in schools today.

The Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP), which is fully coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Education with technical assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP) is one of the country's most efficient food – based safety nets, providing mid-morning meals to nearly 330 000 learners as a way of fighting hunger countrywide. The programme has significantly contributed to improved access, attendance, and retention and in reducing dropout rates among school-age children.

Despite its remarkable progress in reducing hunger, the quality of the school feeding programme was compromised due to its rapid expansion and the mismatch in resource mobilization. To address this challenge, the MoEAC is embarking on a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with the private sector, including the business community, non-governmental and not-for-gain organizations to attract support to enhance the reach and effectiveness of the School Feeding Programme. Through the PPP initiative, School Feeding Programme has the potential to contribute to socioeconomic outcomes as it provides opportunities for companies to meet public needs, strengthen and penetrate new markets.

In addition to that, the MoEAC has developed the draft policy for the Namibian School Feeding which is fully aligned to the internationally agreed standards of good practice for efficient school feeding. The draft policy establishes the principles governing the planning, implementation, and management of the Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) and sets out the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in government, the private sector, civil society, and the local communities.



Hon Katrina Hanse Himarwa, feeding a learner of Hillside Primary School during the Africa Day of School Feeding Celebration on 3rd March 2017

The ultimate objective of the draft policy is to strengthen the coordination and implementation management of the National School Feeding programme. Part of the MoEAC strategies to provide hunger solutions is the introduction of the gardening initiative in schools. Since June 2015, the Ministry of Education reiterated the importance of gardening in schools as an element to address the national objectives of reducing poverty, ensure food security, and teaching school learners to appreciate food production for the improvement of the health status of children.

The Ministry also plays a pivotal role by providing data that allows the government to provide social protection. This is achieved through the Namibian Education Management Information System (EMIS) and the Namibian School Feeding Information System (NASIS) which were designed to enhance monitoring and evaluation of programme being implemented.

The Ministry is looking at the possibility of linking school feeding to smallholder farmers to enable them have increased incomes and improved food and nutrition security. By procuring from smallholder producers, the school feeding will guarantee a stable market for these farmers.





Enhancing Social Protection Systems and Social Safety Nets through NDP 5

Launch of the NDP5 on 30th May 2017 by the President, his Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob

Fillemon Nangonya

Social protection systems and safety net programmes contribute to fostering both economic and social development in the short and long term by ensuring that people enjoy income security, have access to social services, and are empowered to take advantage of economic opportunities. Social protection systems and safety nets play a key role in boosting domestic demand, supporting the structural transformation of national economies and fostering inclusive and sustainable growth.

As UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated in his message for the World Day of Social Justice in 2014, "The gap between the poorest and the wealthiest around the world is wide and growing. We must do more to empower individuals through decent work, support people through social protection, and ensure the voices of the poor and marginalized are heard."

Whilst the Namibian Constitution guarantees a better life for all, poverty and inequality remain pervasive in the country. However, Namibia's growing economy is creating economic opportunities and improving the living standards of many. Social protection and in particular social safety nets play a well-recognized redistributive role. In Namibia, social safety nets have expanded remarkably and now reach over 400 000 beneficiaries.

Without social protection programmes, such as social grants, poverty levels in Namibia could have been 35% and severe poverty could have been 22% compared to 29% and 15% in 2009/10 respectively. Though there have been successes so far, reaching more people will be challenging, due to the limited fiscal space resulting from slow GDP growth and low revenues.



As such, in 2015, as a percentage of GDP and total expenditure, social grants accounted for 2.2% and 5.5% respectively. Despite this constraint, the Government is committed to protecting social spending to reduce the vulnerability of the poor and low-income earners. This commitment is reflected in the recently launched Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) where more than N\$ 8.4 billion is earmarked for social protection during NDP5 implementation. The NDP5 was launched on 30th May 2017 by the President, his Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob. This plan outlines Namibia's development priorities for the next five years, ending the year 2022.

At the launch of the NDP 5, Hon Tom Alweendo Minister of Economic Planning said that the country has been forward looking, and will continue this trend. This will involve modernizing and upscale our production sectors and systems including agriculture, manufacturing, fisheries, mining, and tourism. By focusing on these sectors, we should be able to create more jobs to absorb new entrants in the labor market. This will allow Namibians to purchase higher quality, more nutritious food.

One of the NDP5 goals is to not only grow the economy but to also ensure that this growth creates jobs and reduce poverty and inequalities in the society in addition to building a skilled nation. This will be achieved through pro-poor strategies, some of which includes food and nutrition security interventions that will promote well-being for Namibians through the NDP5, social transformation pillar, in particular, the proportion of severely poor individuals is expected to reduce from 11% in 2016 to 5% by 2022. This will be achieved by implementing strategies that will strengthen the social protection system and social safety nets.

This will involve designing and implementing appropriate projects related to poverty eradication and social welfare and focusing on the Blue print on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication. NDP5 further aims to strengthen the coverage of social grants and develop new approaches for the

social and economic upliftment of poor and vulnerable people in the country. Amongst other priority focus areas, NDP5 flagged social protection covering two major programmes; provision of social protection programmes such as, Food Bank Programme, Old age pension Grants, and Disability Grants; as well as the Disaster Risk Management Programmes that includes the Drought relief assistance programme and the San feeding programme.

As part of strengthening social protection, NDP5 prioritises the following strategies:

Strengthening Social Safety Nets (SSN) – This strategy aims to expand social safety nets by reaching out to all vulnerable people. This will be fulfilled through ensuring that all eligible beneficiaries have access to the grant and that all Namibians especially children have Namibian identification documents. Additionally, through this strategy, food provision will be expanded to reach out to a mass of vulnerable people. This expansion will increase the number of operational food banks across all regions.

Strengthen social protection systems - Through this strategy, a social protection framework will be developed to guide the implementation of all SSNs, in order to improve the coordination and efficiency in the delivery of programmes thereby serving beneficiaries more effectively.

Enhance disaster risk governance - Through this strategy, government and partners will improve knowledge on disaster risk reductions. This will be implemented through various activities to prevent disaster from happening, and strengthen resilience and reduce social as well economic losses.

Along with other strategies in the NDP5, the prioritised strategies will be instrumental to ensure the inclusion of all groups in development and society as a means to combat inequality, vulnerability, and poverty. This commitment will go a long way in improving and creating opportunities for vulnerable Namibians, thereby contributing to breaking intergenerational poverty cycles.





Government Partners with WFP to Achieve Zero Hunger

Hon. Lucia Lipumbu, Deputy Minister of Economic Planning meeting the World Food Programme Executive Director David Beasley, during the Executive Board meeting in Rome. Photo credit:WFP-Rein Skulander

Caitlin Fowler and Victoria Kamara

Though Namibia has many strengths as a country, it still faces key developmental challenges such as high rates of malnutrition, stunting, HIV/AIDS and unemployment. Currently, 18% of people live below the poverty line. Many Namibians rely on external markets, which are subject to price fluctuations, which affect the predictability of food. This coupled with years of drought has stretched resources very thin. Furthermore, the most recent year showed a slowing economy, meaning even fewer resources may be available in the future.

These issues were highlighted in the Government's Zero Hunger Strategic Review. It also showed that despite strong government commitment and allocation of funds, progress towards ending food insecurity in Namibia has been hampered by key programmatic challenges, such as fragmented social programmes and inadequacies in monitoring and evaluation.

However, the Government remains committed to ending hunger which has been declared a key priority in the

Harambee Prosperity Plan and recently launched Fifth National Development Plan. Zero Hunger features prominently in the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication and the Zero Hunger Roadmap. These documents have outlined how the Government will seek to ensure food security for all Namibians. This commitment includes working with partners to do so, one of which is the World Food Programme (WFP).

During WFP's Executive Board meeting in June 2017, the Deputy Minister of Economic Planning and National Planning Commission discussed Namibia's priorities and called on partners to provide support. She said that it is for this reason that Namibia has been working with WFP, a key partner in food security, on a plan for WFP to provide targeted technical assistance in Namibia's priority areas that are related to ending hunger. The approach agreed upon by both the Government and WFP is consolidated in the recently launched Country Strategic Plan (CSP).



In addition, the Deputy Minister said: "the CSP was developed through a consultative process in which we were highly involved and it reflects our government priorities." She called WFP a partner of choice in food security saying that "with technical assistance from WFP we have expanded our scope of work and collectively made a significant achievement." She added that Namibia seeks WFP's skills in knowledge brokering and capacity development as well as systems and institutional strengthening to enable the government to improve and expand its social assistance programmes that target the most vulnerable.

The Minister, highlighting Namibia's commitment to the SDGs, noted that "Namibia was one of the ten member states of the AU high-level committee that was instrumental in the formulation of the common African position that contributed to the continental inputs on the 2030 sustainable development agenda." However, she mentioned that the role of partnerships should not be underestimated stating "Namibia cannot do it alone, hence the need for partnerships to fill in the gap where existing." It is only through all entities working together that it will be possible to achieve the SDGs as a whole.

The CSP outlines WFP's role in Namibia over the next five years (2017-2022) to support the Government in implementing programmes that will help Namibia achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. Presenting the CSP WFP Representative and Country Director in Namibia, Ms. Jennifer Bitonde highlighted the commitment and strong political will of the government to address hunger. This commitment is reflected in strong policies and significant budget allocation to the social sector. Although the return on investments in food security and child nutrition have not been proportionate, she said that Namibia has the right conditions to eliminate hunger and WFP can play a supporting role in helping Namibia achieve this goal.

The CSP has two strategic outcomes. The first one states that vulnerable populations in Namibia are enabled to meet their food and nutrition needs throughout the year; while the second states that Government policy dialogue and programme design in Namibia is informed by evidence and enhanced knowledge of hunger issues throughout the NDP5 period.

Under these outcomes, WFP will provide evidence, expertise, and knowledge through school feeding, urban safety net programme, and emergency response as well as support the government in assessing and responding to food security and nutrition needs, with both a nutrition-sensitive and gender lens applied across all activities.

By providing technical assistance, WFP will promote evidence-based interventions and help deepen knowledge of hunger issues for informed programming and ensure that the government can do more with fewer resources. Furthermore, a mid-term review of the CSP will take place in 2019 and a final review in 2022 to fully unpack what has been achieved and identify opportunities for further improvement which include the adjustment of targets, resource needs, and forecasts if necessary.



Hon. Lucia Lipumbu, Deputy Minister of Economic Planning giving her statement after the approval of the CSP at the Executive Board meeting in Rome. photo credit: WFP-Giulio_Napolitano

WFP has shown its commitment to support the Government of Namibia to accelerate the achievement of Zero Hunger while also contributing to an early achievement of other SDGs (Poverty 1; Health 3; Education; 4; Gender Equality 5; Water and Sanitation 6; Climate Change 13; and 17 on Partnership.) With the approval of the CSP, the Government and WFP now have a clear outline on how they will work together over the next five years to ensure that there is Zero Hunger in Namibia.





Developing a comprehensive integrated Social Protection System in Namibia

Distinguished Guest singing the Namibian National Anthem during the opening ceremony of the Social Protection seminar. In the photo, Special advisor to the Minister, Bience Gawanas , UN Resident Coordinator MS Kiki Gbeho, Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare Hon Bishop Kameeta , UNICEF Country Representative Micaela Marques de Sousa, Finnish and EU Representatives

Lot Ndamanomhata

The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) in collaboration with international partners such as United Nations Children's Fund , Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, European Union and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) successfully held a three-day seminar from 31 May - 2 June 2017, aimed at developing a comprehensive integrated social protection system in Namibia that cuts across the different requirements and needs of all societal spheres.

A social protection system consists of policies and programmes designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by enhancing people's capacity to manage economic and social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, disability and old age. Namibia has a strong social assistance framework that includes old age pensions, veteran's grants, disability grants, as well as five child-specific grants. The Harambee Prosperity Plan and the NDP5 address poverty and social protection as one of the focus areas addressing inequities in the country. However, the challenge is to put in place a

comprehensive social protection system that is inclusive of social assistance programmes, social insurance, and social services. The Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Hon Bishop Emeritus Kameeta, delivered the keynote address at the seminar where he challenged experts to urgently formulate Namibia's course towards a universal social protection policy for the country.

The Minister also stated that a comprehensive Social Protection System (SPS) is one that recognises every Namibians right to a dignified life and enables those who can, to be able to develop themselves and advance from abject poverty. This comprehensive SPS must be committed to advancing a social development agenda that promotes human rights, social justice, integrity and look at special protection with a human rights development approach. The participants' present discussed topics such as the African Union Social Policy Framework: the right to social protection across Africa, establishing a single registry systems, with focus on lesson learnt from other countries. Regional developments in social protection policy and systems,





Experts who participated at the Social Protection seminar, which took place at the Windhoek Country Club from 31 May - 2 June 2017

and towards social protection reform in Namibia. Speaking at the seminar, the Special Advisor to the Minister, Bience Gawanas said the seminar looked at special protection with a human rights development approach.

Social experts at the seminar were drawn from Malawi, Ghana, Finland and other sectors of the Namibian economy, these experts all agreed that social protection should be regarded as a human right, not an assistance mechanism. Experts also conceded that Namibia has some of the best social protection mechanisms in Africa, equal to none but that they were too fragmented. Hon Bishop Kameeta echoed similar sentiments, saying "the key challenge that prompted the government of Namibia to review the social protection landscape is that these programmes are scattered across various ministries and agencies, which in turn undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of the system."

Participants acknowledged that while Namibia had committed to ensuring access to social protection programmes to all its vulnerable citizens, many of the poorest are still missing out and are faced with

indirect barriers that prevent them from benefiting from these services. Evidence presented at the seminar indicated that cash transfers and care approaches to social protection greatly benefit children and the most vulnerable communities. It is an investment that will, in the long run, pay for itself and have great returns on the social and economic development of a country. Failing to invest (especially in early years) is wasteful and costly in the long run. Protection against child poverty is the best evidence of the success or failure of government.

In order to strengthen social protection systems, a national social protection policy to define social protection components and mandates will be developed. This policy will be costed and funded, linked to other social and economic policies and more importantly be coordinated through a Social Protection Coordination Structure. Furthermore, a Roadmap to address knowledge gaps in the institutional framework, inclusion & exclusion, cost effectiveness, impact and financing of social protection interventions in Namibia will be developed as a set of actions that need to be undertaken to get to a comprehensive and integrated social protection systems in Namibia.





School Feeding promoted as a strategy in addressing hunger in Africa

School learners receiving mid-morning meal of fortified maize blend porridge provided by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Johanna Absalom

Namibia joined fifty-five African countries to advocate for school feeding during the Africa Day of School Feeding in early March 2017. It was an important celebration throughout the African continent as it recognised school feeding as the world's most widely-used safety net and its vital role in ending hunger and supporting education.

The significance of African countries coming together to commit to school feeding as a whole shows that governments are working together to share knowledge and expertise as a whole to end hunger and achieve SDG 2, and Namibia's contribution to the regional effort is clear, given strong government investment in the programme. The Africa Day of School Feeding was instituted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government during the 26th African Union Summit in January 2016 and has grown in support and commitment since then. In Namibia, the celebration, which is normally commemorated on March 1st alongside other African countries, was celebrated on March 3rd, 2017 at Hillside Primary School, situated in the mountainous

area of Goreangab Dam, Windhoek. This year's theme: "Home Grown School Feeding: Investment in Youth and Children to Harnessing the Demographic Dividend," recognised the role that Home Grown School Feeding plays in enhancing retention and performance of children in school, and in boosting income generation in local communities. Home-Grown School Feeding is becoming a very popular strategy across the globe that involves supporting local farmers by purchasing the food they produce for use in school meals.

The theme emphasized the importance of school feeding, stating that school feeding is an investment in national resources and not merely an expense. Instead, it provides a return on investment in four areas, which are education, skills development, youth employment, health, and well-being. Therefore, school feeding has short, medium and long-term dividends for Africa's children by helping them improve their economic status over time. Furthermore, the youth will be productively engaged in local food production for school feeding, thus reducing unemployment while increasing





Feeding dreams: Beneficiaries Learners of Hillside Primary School benefitting from the school feeding programme

disposable incomes in the community. Strategically managed Home Grown School Feeding will spawn value chains for local agriculture, catalyzing innovation and entrepreneurship. These directly contribute to Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want. The strength of Namibia's school feeding programme makes it a key contributor to reducing poverty and hunger amongst children. Speaking at the celebration, the Minister of Education, Arts, and Culture (MoEAC), Hon Katrina Hanse-Himarwa said: "school feeding contributes to improving the learning capacity of boys and girls and facilitating inclusive quality education that empowers Namibian children, and makes them more productive citizens." Currently, over 330,000 school learners in pre-primary and primary school benefit from the Namibia School Feeding Programme.

To improve Namibia's School Feeding programme, the MoEAC is currently assessing the possibility of diversifying school meals to include locally produced foods purchased from smallholder farmers. Should this happen, the benefit would be two-fold: "It will diversify the school meals and increase the nutrition intake of food by learners and it will also increase

the income of small holder farmers," said Hon. Hanse-Himarwa. In addition, MoEAC is seeking to engage the Namibian private sector in a partnership for School Feeding to strengthen and contribute to the programme's nutritional and educational outcomes and to support the proposed Home Grown School Feeding Programme.

School feeding programmes serve as incentives for poor and/or marginalized learners, or those affected by HIV and AIDS to attend school more regularly and consistently perform better. This is especially relevant in Namibia, where the impact of the HIV pandemic, droughts, floods and the rising prices of food have meant that the programme acts as a safety net or means of social protection. Today it is one of the cornerstones of the drought-prone country's food-based safety net agenda.

In light of the current financial crisis that the country is facing, budgets have been cut across all sectors, including education. However, despite this challenge, the MoEAC is looking at the possibility of expanding the programme to secondary school, which will serve as an opportunity for improvement to reach a larger group of children who tend to drop out at larger rates.





Government assists vulnerable rural households affected by floods

A pensioner been carried across a flooded river in one of the villages in Ohangwena, Northern region of Namibia.
Photo credit: New Era - Nuusita Ashipala

Rhingo Mutambo

In Namibia, events like droughts and floods occur more frequently due to the increase in temperature which is predicted in the whole country. Between late November - April 2017, a large amount of rainfall occurred in a short period time of the raining season, due to the predicted increase in late summer convective rainfall over Namibia. This had implications on the frequency of floods in the northern regions bordering Angola., mainly Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana and a small portion of Oshikoto Region and Zambezi.

Due to the flooding in these areas, the regional authorities of Kavango East, Kavango West, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana, and Zambezi are providing support to several households displaced by the floods. Flooding limits some communities' from being able to access basic facilities of education and health.

Displaced communities in relocation camps have limited access to proper accommodation, sanitation facilities, access to safe clean water, and lack of preventative items

including mosquito nets to prevent malaria disease outbreaks which also increased due to stagnant water. Due to the flood, there has been a sharp rise in Malaria cases with almost 12,000 cases and 18 deaths reported in the first three months of 2017. To respond to the outbreak, the Government deployed teams to actively search for cases and provide immediate treatment.

On 09 March 2017, the Hydrological Services Namibia (HSN) in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) in collaboration with the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), and Meteorological Services issued a joint statement on the looming floods saying that the flooding situation in the Cuvelai River Basin in Angola and in Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, and Omusati is comparable to that of 2011, which caused major damages to houses and infrastructure, and requested for contingency preparedness and activation. The OPM Directorate of Disaster Risk and Management (DDRM) urged all emergency response institutions and





A house under construction flooded near Outapi in the Omusati region. Photo credit: The Namibian - Marx Itamalo

agencies from national to regional levels to activate their contingency plans and ensured that immediate response to the disaster was provided.

During the flooding period, the Government and the local town councils provided tents and food items to the affected families at the relocation camps. About 1,500 people were affected by the floods and nearly 810 people relocated to higher grounds and are currently receiving government assistance. The road maintenance team were deployed by the government to monitor the affected road segments and to repair repairable segments to make the roads accessible again to people living in the flood affected communities.

The damage to roads and bridges hindered the delivery of essential services, such as health outreach services and the delivery of food to affected populations, which forced the government to resort to the use of helicopters and boats where possible. The flood situation led to limited access to basic health and education facilities for some of the affected communities. Health workers were been deployed in flood - affected regions to

address the ongoing malaria outbreak and preventing potential water borne diseases such as cholera to emerge. The flood also disrupted education for more than 27 000 pupils from 102 schools. To address the situation of children not being able to attend classes, the government, through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture assessed the situation in the three regions and conducted classes during the May holiday to circumvent the current flood situation that led to the closure of several schools. To this end, the Ministry of Education developed regional contingency plans that helped to lobby funds within the ministry budget to buy tents which were used to shelter learners and teachers during periods of flooding.

Given the past and current experience of flood and drought, the Government will continue to implement a set of measures to counteract the effects of climate change (flood and Drought) and rising food prices on the national food security situation of the country. Moreover, the OPM is working on developing an Information Management System for disaster risk management. The system will strengthen how information on DDRM is organised and coordinated to ensure efficiency in responding to the crisis like the flood.





Fisheries sustainably contributes to Food and Nutrition Security

Hon Bernhard Esau Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources pictured with a Representative from Hangana, a Himba woman and member from Kunene Regional Council during drought relief donation

De Wet Siluka

Fisheries and aquaculture play an important role in food and nutrition security by providing nutrient-rich food as well as an income for the Namibian population. This way it offers opportunities to reduce hunger and improve nutritional intake, alleviate poverty, generate economic growth, improve rural livelihoods and increase investment.

How Fisheries Contribute to food and nutrition security?
Namibia's ocean, seas, and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Namibian economy and therefore are critical to national development, including the elimination of hunger. It is especially important to be able to rely on these resources in a country where droughts have limited the agricultural production.

Improving stunting and malnutrition

Under Pillar one of the Zero Hunger Road Map, which calls for 100 per cent access to adequate food all year round for all Namibians, the Ministry of Fisheries

and Marine Resources (MFMR) is tasked with the implementation of aquaculture programmes such as the Zambezi Inland Aquaculture Center. This could help in improving malnutrition and addressing child stunting rates in the country which currently stand at 24 percent. The Ministry of Fisheries has established a fish consumption promotion trust to raise awareness on the importance of eating fish and teaching the public how to prepare and cook fish in order for the body to attain the most nutritional value from it. This has the potential of contributing to improved nutrition due to the high levels of protein and essential nutrients that fish contains.

Employment creation

The fisheries sector continues to be a significant source of income for many Namibian families. As of February 2017, the fisheries sector had employed up to 16, 300 (updated from NDP 5) people, in addition to secondary jobs such as stevedoring services, handling fishery-related supplies and logistics. Through job creation



and the effort to promote the consumption of fish by Namibians by subsidizing the cost of fish or donating fish to schools or other such institutions as a means to diversity dietary and nutrient intake, the industry contributes to the livelihood of many Namibians hence strengthening household food security by ensuring access to food and other basic family needs.

In addition, fisheries maintain a sustainable stream of economic benefits in the community, and in some cases can operate as a safety net when needed. For example in February 2017, about N\$25 million was contributed by various members of the fishing industry, these contributions were made towards activities such as drought relief in several parts of the country that have been affected by hunger, as well as the building of schools, hospitals, and police facilities.

In addition, the Osona Fishing Co. (Pty) Ltd pledged N\$90,000 to Berseba Village Council to help mitigate the negative effects of a thunderstorm in May 2017, which had destroyed housing and killed small stock animals. This donation will provide food and livelihood support to the 430 people who lost their homes.

Farmers' Empowerment

Another fundamental contribution of fisheries to food security and nutrition derives from its cash crop function for fish-dependent communities. In Namibia, very few fishers and fish-farmers consume their entire harvest, instead, fish are traded as commodities, and most fish workers rely on money from the sale of their share of the catch to use for other essentials.

In addition, the MFMR has embarked on efforts to address unemployment, particularly among the youth by developing a scorecard that aims at evaluating the number of jobs created by using a fishing quota allocated to individual and companies that have a permit to harvest fish within Namibia. Sustainable food security needs to rely on a predictable source of income.

Additionally through the Zambezi Inland Aquaculture Center fingerling production (Tilapia and Catfish), and extension of farmers in the field of freshwater aquaculture has been undertaken. So far during the financial year of 2016/ 2017 which is under review a

total of 79 000 Tilapia and 50 00 Catfish were produced of which only 10% have been distributed to small scale fish farmers. This production of fish contributes to the improved food security in the country. Furthermore, awareness campaign was conducted in the Zambezi region on sustainable utilisation of inland fish resources for the benefit of the communities in the region.

Sustainable contribution to food security

Moving forward, the fisheries industry will continue to promote aquaculture and Inland fisheries to ensure sustainable utilisation and conservation of living inland aquatic resource and also monitor and control all illegal fishing activities within the Zambezi region which are currently a challenge.

In the light of the many ways that the fishing industry will contribute to ending hunger and improving nutritional outcomes, the fisheries sector is a central contributor in Namibia's goal to achieve Zero Hunger, especially when it benefits those who are most vulnerable.

However, because the fisheries sector covers many cross-cutting issues, strengthening coordination mechanisms are needed. One clear solution is embedding these coordination mechanisms in development policy and implementation plans. As these challenges are solved, it will only strengthen what the MFMR can offer to support food security in Namibia.



Official handover of tinned fish donated by Kumwe Fishing (pty) LTD to Otjiwarongo Old Age and Kalkfeld community in Otjiwarongo





State Grants Support the well-being of Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Various centres, including eight multi-purpose centres and several recreation and after-school centre were established to serve as recreational and educational activities for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

Charlie Matengu

In the fight against hunger and poverty, social safety net programmes such as state grants are increasingly becoming more widely used as important tools to protect improve the health and education of children as well as strengthen food and nutrition security.

In Namibia, social protection is in line with the Namibian Constitution Article 95 of Chapter 11, which states that "the state shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, inter-alia policies aimed at promoting the welfare of the people." More specifically, the Government is implementing comprehensive legally grounded social protection systems to provide every citizen, particularly children, an opportunity for a productive and healthy life.

To ensure the well-being of all Namibian children, the Directorate of Child Welfare Services in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) is mandated to promote and protect the rights of children and provide financial support through state grants. In addition, the Directorate empowers communities to take care of

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC); strengthen the implementation of child welfare services/programmes; improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and strengthen coordination and networking at all levels.

To date, the focus on social protection has been predominantly on providing cash grants to the vulnerable population, including OVCs. Grants for OVCs includes Maintenance Grants, Special Maintenance Grants, Foster Care Grants, Place of Safety allowance and Vulnerable Child Grant. Significant progress has been made in expanding the child welfare grant system for orphans and vulnerable children.

The graph above shows that OVC beneficiaries have increased in the last six months. It shows that between December 2016 to June 2017 about forty-four thousand children accessed the OVC grants. At the end of June 2017, two hundred and eighty-six thousand, one hundred and fifty-seven children were benefitting from the state grants, at N\$ 250.00 per child, per month country wide.



OVC Beneficiaries

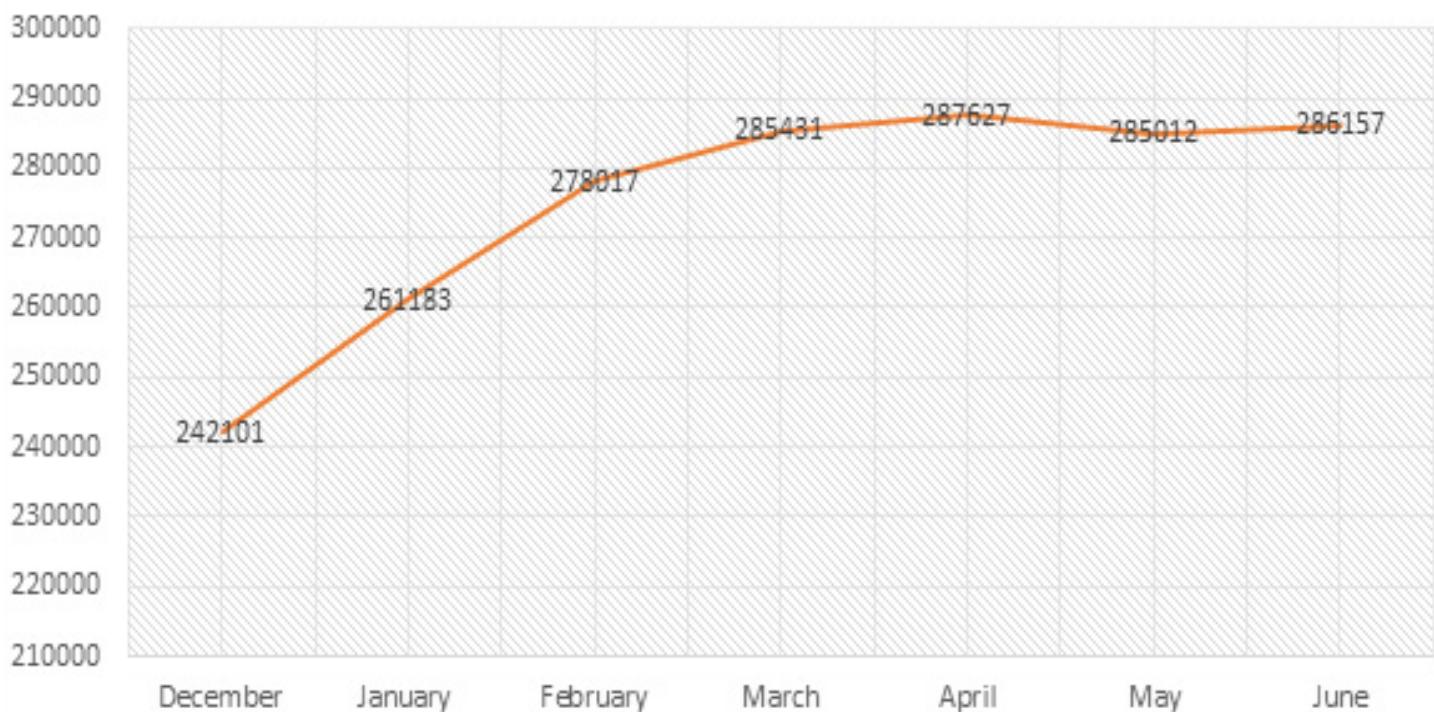


Figure 1: Number of beneficiaries at National level for the OVC grants

"These grants have improved the lives of many children, and allow parents to plan better for their children's in future said the Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare during the Day of the African Child held on 16 June 2017 at Tsumeb. The Minister further said in the absence of these grants, children would have been victims of food insecurity and malnutrition, and as a result be subject to long-term consequences that can be more severe, such as increased health risks and impaired cognitive development. Even though coverage is increasing, there still exist a number of barriers to accessing these grants.

Most notably of these are the lack of national documents such as birth and death certificates which is essential for accessing grants, the long distances that people have to travel to obtain the required documentation and the bureaucracy involved in the grants application process particularly for the special maintenance grant and the foster care grant are cumbersome and challenging. Insufficient of social workers in the country also add to the barriers of accessing the grant.

These challenges result in a large proportion of vulnerable children slipping through the social protection net. In response to the gaps, the MGEWC in partnership with

other key stakeholders is raising awareness on these grants through public information campaigns in all regional offices and constituencies. The MGEWC has designated staff members in regional and constituency offices to carry out ongoing community sensitisation, involving the councilors, to raise awareness of the state grants available for vulnerable children and how they can access these grants. Community sensitisation activities include radio talk shows through the national radio (NBC) which is aired in different local languages.

In addition, to solve the issue of long distance travel, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MoHAI) in partnership with MGEWC have decentralised the issuing of national documents and grant registration to constituency offices. In addition, to improve the ease of obtaining national documentation for children and their caregivers, these two ministries have undertaken joint outreach activities for registration of beneficiaries by scaling up mobile registration to make national documents and grant application process more accessible.

A study titled: The Effectiveness of Child Welfare Grant in Namibia, conducted by the MGEWC in 2013 found that



although the OVC grants value may be small, they play a significant role in ensuring that households that have OVCs have access to food. Due to improved access to food that these grants facilitate, detrimental effects of malnutrition in children are mitigated to a certain extent. In addition, the study found that caregivers use the grants they receive to pay for health related expenses, for instance, covering costs directly associated with accessing health care (including transportation, medical fees etc).

The benefits of OVC grants are being felt on the ground as most regional stakeholders indicated that the child grants are a positive thing, "I think it's a good policy that the government is supporting the children. Because if there was nothing like these grants, life will be really tough for those parents. So I think the government is helping them out.

"Those kids are the future of our country" said a social worker volunteer in Khomas region. In addition to the OVC grants, the Ministry established multi purpose centres to accommodate community members who are engaged in income generation activities, and serve as venue for recreational and educational activities for OVCs varying from after-school centres offer support for children in the form of help with homework, soup kitchens, sport activities and training in computer skills.

In conclusion, these grants form part of a relatively comprehensive, entirely government-funded social protection system in Namibia. Cash combined with care, in other words, access to grants in combination with access to quality education, social welfare, nutrition and health care make the greatest difference in children's lives.



Children in the Kunene watching a community sensitization on the child grants presented by Ministry of Gender and Child Welfare





Alleviating Hunger through Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme

Torra Conservancy, farmers carrying drought relief food. Photo credit: NACSO/WWF in Namibia

Romeo Muyunda

Alleviating poverty and hunger means improving lives and empowering people to diversify incomes from farming to include economic opportunities based on tourism and wildlife conservation.

Traditionally, wildlife has not played a leading role in poverty alleviation. Yet, knowledge of the ecological functions and processes can be applied to improve the lives of thousands of people, suffering from hunger. Returns from wildlife generated through community conservation have proven to be substantial, including direct income to conservancies from tourism and conservation hunting, jobs created, and benefits including the distribution of game meat. New opportunities for rural job creation have risen, especially through the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme where people are employed in a range of activities.

Namibia gained a worldwide reputation for its innovative approaches to linking conservation to poverty alleviation through its CBNRM programme. The CBNRM programme

espouses sound environmental management and promotes the sustainable use of natural resources in a manner that empowers local communities who share the responsibilities and benefits of such management. In essence, it is a management approach that generates economic benefits through conservation and promotes the development or strengthening of local institutions, supported by national institutions, to promote rural development.

Since independence and in keeping with Namibia's Constitution, which has a strong provision on environmental management, the CBNRM programme has contributed considerably to meeting National conservation and development goals. It has helped not only to conserve Namibia's wildlife but also to support the economies of rural communities through employment creation, cash transfers, social projects and in-kind benefits.





Game Guard in George Mukoyo Conservancy doing book keeping in the field. Photo credit: NACSO/WWF in Namibia

These will, in turn, allow communities to buy additional food while promoting the growth of local products. Diversification of income is a significant contribution to peoples' livelihoods and the CBNRM programme support community resilience against episodic events such as drought and floods.

In May 2017, the CBNRM programme received an amount of N\$ 150 million from the Green Climate Fund through the Environmental Investment Fund. The N\$150 million will be used as grants making to support CBNRM in Namibia. The overall goal is to ensure that local communities within CBNRM areas have reduced vulnerability and increased resilience to the anticipated negative impacts of climate change especially, the Conservancies.

This will ensure that assets, livelihoods, and ecosystem services are protected from climate-induced risks associated with expected droughts, seasonal shifts, and other climate disaster events. It is envisaged to benefit in excess of 62,000 people. Announcing the grant, Environment and Tourism Minister Pohamba Shifeta applauded the Environmental Investment Fund for the preparation and hard work it has undertaken to bring these projects to fruition. He further expressed confidence that will make an impact and improve the livelihoods of communities on the ground.

In addition to the CBNRM project, another N\$150 million was also received for conservation agriculture. The N\$150 million conservation agriculture project will be implemented in Zambezi, Kavango East, and Kavango West as part of food security and self-reliance. Its aim is

to reduce the country's food insecurity and vulnerability to climate risks and threats while increasing the adaptive capacity, well-being, and resilience of vulnerable small-scale farming communities threatened by climate variability and change. The project will, directly and indirectly, benefit 16,000 farmers and will be executed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry. Both projects are expected to last for five years, starting on the 1st February 2017 and operating through to 2021.

To date, the CBNRM programme is widely regarded as an innovative and successful people-oriented approach to conservation. The programme has restored the link between conservation and rural development by enabling communal areas farmers to derive a direct income from the sustainable use of wildlife and tourism activities.

Currently, Namibia's efforts towards poverty through conservation is a global success story that echoes across the continent and is seen as an example of how, through commitment, dedication and community empowerment, a nation and its level of biodiversity can be transformed, improving the livelihood and living conditions of its people. These conservation efforts will continue to expand as called for in the fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), which will help ensure a sustainable environment and enhance resilience by employing a number of strategies that will promote conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as environmental management and climate smart activities.



One of the quarterly Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation meetings at Orupembe, Kunene Region. Where communal conservancies met to discuss game quotas and other issues. Credit: Steve Felton, WWF



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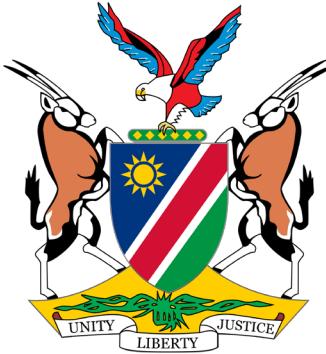


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Republic of Namibia



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2017/18 - 2021/22

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