



2014/2015

BUDGET MOTIVATION SPEECH

APPROPRIATION VOTE 12

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD

WELFARE: 2014/15 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

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31 March 2014

Honourable Chairperson of the whole House Committee

Honourable Members of this August House,

It is my honour and privilege to motivate Vote 12 of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. Let me join this August House in congratulating Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, the Minister of Finance and Hon. Tom Alweendo, the Director General of the National Planning Commission and their teams for crafting an accommodating budget towards inclusiveness of all, including women, men and children. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare appreciate the improved budget allocation this financial year and promise to reach out more citizens in terms of service delivery.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

The Ministry has a mandate to mainstream gender equality and report on international, regional and sub-regional commitment on gender and development.

Recently, the MGECW participated in the 58th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) which serves as the principal global intergovernmental

body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women under the theme: “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for Women and Girls”. At this platform member states including Namibia were requested to accelerate the implementation and achievement of unfinished business of MDGs. Furthermore, member states have supported the call for a STAND-ALONE GOAL on achieving gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment in the post 2015 development agenda with clear transformative targets and indicators for the future sustainable development goals.

Before I proceed to table the Ministry’s budget, I would like to thank His Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia for leading his nation into prayers, for the nation to pause and think deeply as to why violence against women and children is escalating and how will we ensure that our nation is back to its peaceful state. This is a Constitutional and human rights call, which require collective efforts by all of us; government, communities, NGOs, and all stakeholders to devise mechanisms to address these uncalled for social behaviours, in order to protect the lives of the Namibian people as it is stipulated in Article 6, Article (8) (2) b and Article 10 (2) of our Constitution.

I am equally glad to have heard that amongst the Bills that will be tabled to Parliament this year; is our long overdue Child Care and Protection Bill. This Bill replaces the outdated Children's Act No.33 of 1960, and provides an enabling environment for the care and protection of children in Namibia; which will be in line with the international standards which Namibia ratified, thus ensuring a better future for Namibian children.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House committee,
Honourable Members,**

During the tabling of the budget in this August House by the Minister of Finance; in February 2014 under the theme "*Inclusive Growth and Fiscal Sustainability*", the Minister highlighted the following priorities for this budget amongst others as follows: continued expansion of the economic growth in order to create more jobs, develop more skills in the economy as well as to continue provide social safety nets to our people. This is indeed what is required for a growing economy like ours which at the same time also taking care of our people, both women, men, children, young and old, able bodies and disabled. This is an indication that the SWAPO led government's has the interest of the Namibian people close to its heart as huge allocation was given to education, health and other critical sectors of our economy. However, while appreciating the budget allocated to the

Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, my aspiration is that the allocation to this social Ministry be increased in the years to come, taking into account the central and important role of the Ministry; which is ensuring that women and children and other vulnerable members are taken care of.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members**

Let me now take this opportunity to present to this August House the budget allocation of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare for the 2014/2015 financial year and to outline individual programmes for which the funds will be utilised. An amount of **N\$ 721, 101,000 (Seven Hundred and Twenty One Million, One Hundred and One Thousand)** is allocated for 2014/2015 Financial Year. Out of that amount, **N\$ 688,051 000 (Six Hundred and Eighty Eight Million, Fifty One Thousand Namibian Dollars)** is allocated for Operational budget of the Ministry, while **N\$ 33, 050, 000 (Thirty Three Million, Fifty Thousand Namibian Dollars)** is allocated for Developmental programmes of this Ministry. This Year the Ministry, amongst its priorities, will work towards consolidating all the efforts to fight gender based violence through consistent and standardised messages of communications that avoids

duplications of efforts and resources, but at the same time speaking and engaging our communities with one voice. Another area of priority is to ensure that programmes and projects are developed to meaningfully empower women economically, especially through increasing access to strategic resources and investment opportunities in key economic sectors such as mining, fisheries, tourism and land amongst others.

Although the total allocated funds to our Ministry is not adequate to sustain gender equality programmes and to win the war against Gender Based Violence, we are indebted to the support of this August House and other stakeholders including churches, traditional authorities, youth and women organisations and the entire population not to tolerate any form of violence, no matter how small it looks. Let us all say No To Violence, because violence and killing does not solve problems. We must work together and engage all our people to find solution to gender based violence.

During the financial year 2014/2015, the Ministry will use its budget for the following programmes:

PROGRAMME 1. POLICY SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

The purpose of this program is to provide administration support services, ensure efficient and effective service delivery, mainstream HIV and AIDS programs for staff members within the Ministry, strengthen coordination and networking at all levels, promote ICT usage and access, improve staff competence, facilitate the development and acquisition of specialized skilled staff, budget planning, control and construction, renovation and maintenance of offices of the Ministry.

The following are the achievements of this programme during the Financial Year 2013/14:

- Completion of construction of Outapi Craft Centre in Omusati Region
- Completion of the renovation of Ministerial Head Office(Juvenis Building) in Khomas Region;
- Alterations and improvements to the Homes of Safety and Shelters in Khorixas and Opuwo in Kunene Region
- Renovations and improvements to the facilities of Namibia Children' Home and After School Centre in Khomas Region

- Completion of feasibility study for the construction of Omaruru Community Centre in Erongo region and
- Alterations and improvement to the office in Otjinene in Omaheke region

With the improved budget this Financial Year 2014/15, the Ministry will introduce skills development programmes in all previously known women centres/craft centres, currently known as community empowerment centres in all 13 Regions, in order to promote economic empowerment. This improved budget will also be utilised to equip the centres with the necessary tools and equipment sufficient for practical training. The following are earmarked for construction during the coming Financial Year: New constituency offices at Epembe in Ohangwena, Okatjali in Oshana, Omuthiya in Oshikoto, Sesfontein in Kuene and Stampriet in Hardap regions respectively; Construction of Keetmanshoop Recreation Centre; improvements to Homes of Safety and Shelters in Nkurenkuru in Kavango West and Rundu in Kavango East regions respectively; acquisition of Homes of Safety and Shelters in Omaheke region; and renovations and maintenance of facilities at Namibia Children's Home and After School Centre in Khomas region.

A total amount of (N\$ 95, 379, 000) Ninety Five Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars) is allocated for this programme inclusive of capital projects.

PROGRAMME 2. CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN:

This programme will embark upon policy development and planning, implementation of different standards and guidelines, provision of professional services, monitoring and evaluation of the child welfare programs, staff capacity building, social welfare grants to orphans and vulnerable children and providing to subsidies for Residential Child Care Facilities and the Namibian Children's Home and After School Centre. Therefore, I am proud to announce that **one hundred and fifty one, four hundred and twenty nine children (151, 429)** received grants during 2013/2014 financial year which represent 91% of 155 000 recorded orphans in the country. This year 15, 000 orphans and vulnerable children will be added on the grant system and the grant amount has been increased from N\$200-00 to N\$ 250 per month which is very much commendable.

In line with our international, regional and national commitments and obligations, the Ministry adhered to the principles of taking care and protecting children under the age of 18 years. This is to ensure that vulnerability due to conditions such as HIV/AIDS, and poverty are mitigated and that our children develop into productive citizens as they

grow up and that they will realise their full potential as citizens of this beautiful country.

An amount of N\$ 539 305 000 (Five Hundred Thirty nine million, three hundred and five thousand Namibian Dollars) is requested under this programme for the 2014/2015 financial year.

PROGRAMME 3. SUPPORT COMMUNITY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members;**

The purpose of this programme is to facilitate the socio-economic empowerment of poor rural & urban communities through the provision of Income Generating Activities (IGA) start-up grants and micro-entrepreneur support system. The programme mobilizes communities towards self-reliance, encourage them to initiate IGAs as well as other activities that contribute to community upliftment and improved livelihoods. In order to ensure sustainability, communities are equipped with basic business management and production skills through training programmes run and managed at the Community Empowerment Centres

(CECs). The community development programme is crucial as it contributes to the alleviation of poverty and reduction of inequality through economic empowerment activities of poor people especially women. Through this programme, the Ministry encourages community members to set up economically viable and sustainable projects that will improve their livelihood and therefore reducing a financial dependency syndrome of women on their male counterparts. At this juncture, I would like to applaud Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadahila, Minister of Finance for increasing our budget allocation for Income Generating Activities from an amount of N\$1,000.000.000 during the preceding financial year 2013/2014 to an amount of N\$ 7,000.000-00. This improved allocation will assist the Ministry to scale up the mobilization of communities to come up with viable income generating activities. The mobilization during 2013/2014 resulted in the Ministry providing start-up grants in the form of equipment and materials to 78 IGAs projects throughout the country. These start-up grants benefitted 241 women and men and created 322 jobs in all the 13 regions of the country.

This programme includes the sub-programme on Early Childhood Development. ECD programme mobilizes and supports parents and community involvement in early childhood care, education and development issues for children from 0-4 years of age. Early childhood

development lays the foundation for learning, and prepares children to become useful citizens and to lead productive future lives.

During the past Financial Year, the Ministry supported the enrolment of 35, 205 children in ECD Centres, training of 453 ECD caregivers, provided monthly allowance to 350 caregivers and provided teaching and learning materials to many ECD Centres. In addition, ECD programme also contributes to employment creation and poverty alleviation as many of these caregivers (kindergarten teachers) in rural and poor urban areas are now subsidies in the form of monthly allowances from the government. Furthermore, the Ministry has realized that the community empowerment and early childhood programmes have the potential towards national development agenda. For the coming financial year, the Ministry intends to strengthen community and empowerment especially on women economic empowerment support programmes at existing eleven (11) Community Empowerment Centres (CECs) in ten regions (Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Oshana, Omaheke, Kavango East, Omusati, Otjozondjupa, Hardap, Kunene and Zambezi) by introducing skills development activities with potential to help empower and poor people to advance on the socio-economic ladder, while efforts are being made to expand to the remaining regions.

An amount of N\$ 69, 559, 000 (Sixty Nine Million, Five Hundred and Fifty Nine Thousand Namibia Dollars) is allocated for this programme.

PROGRAMME 4. PROMOTION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:

This programme aims at promoting gender equality in all policies, operations and processes to ensure equality and equal opportunities for all, thus empowering women in terms of economical, social and political by creating conducive environment and strengthening national (institutional) capacity to engage in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process that show gender results. The main purpose of this programme is to improve the status of women and girls, men and boys by ensuring equal access to all available resources for sustainable development. This includes the promotion of positive cultural practices and beliefs, gender research, development of gender responsible policies and laws and to ensure that existing ones are reviewed or amended and gender mainstreamed at all levels.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The Ministry is working together with the Ministry of Finance to ensure that the aspect of gender responsive budgeting is taken into account when planning (including budgeting), implementing and monitoring and evaluating programme. All these are aiming at ensuring that men and women are considered equally in the development of our country as well as in benefitting from the development process.

The Ministry fully supports the President's directives to combat gender based violence against women and children. The Ministry is therefore in the process to adopt 365 days of activism against gender based violence instead of the current 16 days of activism and therefore requests all stakeholders to join the Ministry in the implementation of the 365 days by mainstreaming GBV into their activities to ensure that each day in Namibia is a violence free day.

An amount of N\$16,858,000 (Sixteen Million, Eight Hundred and Fifty Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars) is allocated to this programme.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the valuable work and support of our development partners as they continue to commit resources into the course of gender equality and child welfare through various programmes such as capacity building and technical support in

legislation, policy development and monitoring and evaluation. Amongst the partners that supports us are: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN WOMEN and USAID through the President's Emergency Programme for AIDS Reliefs (PEPFAR), Global Fund and others. Their support is very much appreciated.

It is now my humble honour to request this August House to approve the budget allocated to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare under vote 12 amounting to **N\$ 721, 101,000 (Seven Hundred and Twenty One Million, One Hundred and One Thousand) for 2014/2015 Financial Year.** We will definitely continue to do more with less.

Let us all work together to Stop Gender Based Violence and make Namibia a better place for all!

I THANK YOU!