

Contribution by Hon. Bernadette M. Jagger, Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism on the Appropriation Bill (Bill 3 of 2019) tabled by the Hon. Minister of Finance, Hon. Calle Schletwein

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Hon. Speaker, thank you.

When a budget speech is delivered and motivated for support, one listens and reads across Sectors whether the budget really addresses the needs of its citizenry and not just that, but one also wants to hear whether such needs were prioritised in order of importance. This then allows the budget recipient to now plan expenditure in such a way that priority areas are addressed. I know each of the Sectors are very important, but there are very, very important Sectors that no country can do without, I suppose, and that is Housing, Education and Healthcare. Again, as in the past years, this budget has given priority in terms of these mentioned Sectors. As the Minister relates in his Budget Speech and I quote: "Investment in the Social Sectors remain central to long-term productive capacity and shielding the social strata vulnerability. As such, amidst limited fiscal space, allocations to social sectors are maintained or scaled up to mitigate against reversals." We are indeed happy that the status quo remains.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members:

Education transforms lives, it boosted job opportunities and fosters economic prosperity. We can actually say that Education is a key way to help us as individuals to escape poverty and prevent poverty from being passed down through the generations. If we can get all our children in schools, left school with basic reading skills, imagine how many people in our country could be lifted out of poverty, e.g if a farmer has good literacy and numeracy skills, they can interpret and respond to new information, making better use of modern technologies to increase productivity of traditional crops and can then produce crops and livestock with higher value. Much more can be said about the benefits of education. I know the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture are doing everything in their powers to make sure that teaching and learning takes place and learners have good qualified teachers, textbooks, stationeries and furniture, but there are still learners who are taught and live in conditions that are not conducive. To overcome this situation, we need to improve the Development budgets of the MoEAC so that we not just build new schools or

classrooms but to renovate classrooms and hostels. I am a teacher by profession and I know what I am talking about. To go and teach in a classroom that is smelling pipi because learners slept in the classroom the previous night, and have wetted their blankets is discouraging for any teacher. To teach under a tree or in a zinc structure where you are exposed to heat in summer, wind and during rainy seasons is even worse. However, we need to hold hands with the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture, to overcome the challenges and to step up towards the improvement of school infrastructure. Our children cannot forever be taught in structures that are not conducive to learning and expect the learners to pass. I know about a school in Kunene, Jakob Basson Combined School which was built in 1974 with a hostel capacity of 150 learners and now house more than 300 learners. That hostel, is not conducive for the hostel dwellers to live there. The hostel floors are filled with water. Learners have to walk in the standing water. You have to roll up your trousers to walk in those hostel blocks. This area is having a lot of mosquitoes and is malaria-prone. Not just malaria but they can contract other waterborne diseases....cholera and others. ^{Knowing} See how learners suffer under those ^{conditions and} mosquitoes. ^{specially under is painful} This situation is not new, it's coming a long way, actually from my time that I worked in the region. I will not be surprised if that hostel will be closed by the Health Inspectors. Maybe they are not visiting our hostels. I ^{remember my} experienced the same situation in Mureti and Okanguati hostels. These hostels were both closed until the hostels were renovated. I begged the then Director of Health to allow us to use the hostel until exams are done. She said: The Ministry of Health is the custodian for health in this country. I had to run up and down with my colleagues between Red Cross and the Churches and of course the Regional Council to help us to accommodate those learners. Imagine, some of them that time were in Grade 10. I had to bring the Grade 10 teachers and learners from Okanguati to Opuwo's Putuavanga ^{School} and made space for the learners in the hostel. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture must work closely together to curb such conditions in our hostels.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members

Healthcare is equally important, Cde Speaker. A sick nation is a dead nation. A nation with physically sick citizens cannot produce in all aspects. A healthy nation is a productive Nation.

^{we have a great number who is} mentally disturbed, HIV positive, ^{communicable and non-}communicable diseases and ^{of course} other diseases.

Levels are very important, Electorates are not well served if parliaments do not have sufficient resources to carry out their functions such as oversight over the executive, financial control, law-making, etc. Capacity building programs for Parliamentarians and their support staff is needed so that a considerable impact is made in our developing democracy. Of course, there are emerging and developing ^{countries} that are supported by international development agencies such as IPU, but that should not be seen as and regarded as a substitute for adequate resourcing.

on an ongoing basis from the national budget.

To effectively carry out its functions (Committees Backbenchers) Parliamentarians should have a well-thought through budget to work in their respective Committees to raise the bar on law quality and improve the legislative processes.

We all know that the last few years' budgets have been hard, but they made it possible for our country to reduce our debts, though a small portion and I am personally confident that, with you and your Team, we move into the direction of real recovery. We are looking forward that this budget and future budgets should keep that recovery strategies and models going while providing relief and better services. We are dreaming for a Namibia shall stand tall among other African countries to be the fastest growing economy. Yes, we can. We have the resources!

Thank you for your kind attention. I support the Bill