



**Republic of Namibia**

**MINISTRY OF POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE**

**MOTIVATION FOR VOTE 33**

**ON THE**

**APPROPRIATION BILL, 2017**

Presented by

**BISHOP EMERITUS ZEPHANIA KAMEETA, MP  
MINISTER**

19 April 2017

## ***Vision***

A caring and inclusive nation which ensures access to basic social services and dignity of all Namibians

## ***Mission***

To initiate, implement and coordinate social development programmes to promote the well-being of the poor and the vulnerable in a dignified manner

## ***Core values***

Empathy, Service Oriented, Transparency, Respect and Team Work

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

1. I thank you for this special opportunity to present for consideration to this august House, the budget for the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare for the 2017/18 financial year, which amounts to **Three Billion, Two Hundred Seventy Six Million and Eight Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Namibia Dollars** (N\$3,276,826,000)
2. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare was established and is mandated to initiate, implement and coordinate the national efforts to eradicate poverty and to reduce inequality, by working closely with all relevant Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies, including State Own Enterprises. The mandate within the context of the mission of the Ministry, allows for the implementation of activities and strategies towards the attainment of the Ministry's vision, to transform Namibia into "*A caring and inclusive nation which ensures access to basic social services and dignity for all Namibians.*"
3. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare is therefore given the key responsibility of ensuring that all poverty reduction efforts which the Government has been implementing since the attainment of independence, translate into desirable results to the poor and vulnerable of this country. We are in the same vain cognizant of the multi-faceted nature of poverty and will continuously advocate for the participation of all, including those considered to be poor and vulnerable in the fight against poverty. As we rededicate our efforts to the war on poverty and inequality, we need in the same vain to realize that it is only through concerted efforts and not from operation in silos, that this war can be won.

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

4. Allow me to highlight the main achievements of the Ministry during the 2016/17 financial year.
5. **Social Assistance:** The Ministry is responsible for the administration of social grants for senior citizens and citizens with disabilities, which was increased from N\$1,000 to N\$1,100 during the 2016/17 financial year. The total number of beneficiaries of this social grants stood at 204,025 by March 31, 2017, of which 164,832 are senior citizens and 39,193 are citizens with disabilities. There was an overall improvement in the total coverage of the social grants to beneficiaries, with the coverage of grants to senior citizens improved to reach 99.7% of eligible beneficiaries; and that to citizens with disabilities, although considerably lacking behind the coverage to senior citizens, improved and now stands at 71%.



6. **National Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication:** The Blueprint, which is a policy framework to guide the activities of the Ministry was finalized. The Blueprint contains the views and suggestions of the Namibian people, gathered during the national dialogue on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication. The views and suggestions have been consolidated into six key strategic interventions as follow:

- I. Strengthening of social protection systems;**
- II. Ending hunger poverty;**
- III. Improved access to basic social services;**
- IV. Education, training and skills development;**
- V. Employment creation and inclusive growth; and**
- VI. Gender Equality and women empowerment.**

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

7. The proposed strategic interventions cut across many sectors, therefore the Ministry coordinated the drafting of an Implementation Plan on the Blueprint, with the direct involvement of technical staff from relevant Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies. The implementation plan was then presented to Cabinet Ministers, the Civil Society and Community Based Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, Churches and the Private sectors for inputs and suggestions. The five year Blueprint implementation plan, which has been aligned to the institutional plans of each implementing entity, has been finalized and will be implemented as from the current financial year, 2017/18.
8. The Ministry has further developed a five years Strategic Plan, which will be implemented from 2017/18 to 2021/22 financial years. The Strategic Plan will provide basis upon which annual planning and resource allocation on specified programmes and projects can be undertaken, and specific deliverables can be achieved, towards poverty eradication and reduction of income inequality in the next five years. The Strategic Plan identifies the following pillars:

- I. Eradication of poverty and hunger**
- II. Stakeholder coordination**
- III. Institutional governance; and**
- IV. Institutional capacity.**

9. As part of our task to address hunger poverty, The Ministry has successfully started with the distribution of dry food items to seven Khomas region constituencies, since the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 2016, as part of the a pilot project. The beneficiary constituencies are Tobias Hainyeko, Moses Garoeb, Samora Machel, John Pandeni, Katutura East, Katutura Central and Khomasdal Constituencies. The number of households benefiting from this programme to date, stands at 18,974 (covering 79,910 persons).



10. The distribution of food will continue for the pilot project, while the Ministry is in a process of conducting a comprehensive assessment, which will then inform the road ahead regarding the implementation of food provision programme across the fourteen regions of the country.

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

11. The food provision programme of the Ministry is one of the myriad methods of addressing hunger poverty and should by no means be seen as a panacea for abolishing hunger and eradicating poverty in Namibia. Hunger is the lowest level of poverty and the Ministry will continuously implement programmes in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that no Namibian will go hungry to bed.
12. Furthermore, in support of the food bank activities, the Ministry has adopted the social street committee model from Cuba, and is making use of mainly unemployed youth in the identification of the food bank beneficiaries and the subsequent food distribution to the beneficiaries. The food bank is currently being supported by 305 street committee members. The main idea behind the street committee model, is to empower the youth within their own localities, not to only limit them to the distribution of food, but to also identify and engage them in additional social development programmes within their communities. We have already started receiving positive feedback of street committee members who have enrolled in different training institutions to improve their levels of qualification. I should at this juncture also applaud the Khomas Regional Council and other key partners, for their unwavering support in the implementation of the food bank programme.

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

13. The introduction of the food bank programme has inspired individuals and companies to participate in the war on poverty. In this regard, the Ministry has to date received food items valued at **N\$9.5 million**. These donated food items have been channeled through the food bank to identified charity and community organisations.
14. Furthermore, the “all-out” war against poverty and inequality as declared by His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geigob, President of the Republic Of Namibia two years ago, has opened the hearts of many and has cultivated a spirit of sharing in Namibia. I am therefore pleased to report that after the establishment of a donation account by the Ministry, we have received a total of **N\$2.1 Million** in cash donations. I am equally happy to inform this august House of a certain individual from the Kunene region, who has been contributing N\$500.00 monthly to this donation account, through a bank stop order.



15. The Ministry has developed guidelines, which outlines criteria for the application of the funds under the Account, and formed a special committee, which is tasked to evaluate the requests for use of the funds. The account is operated in accordance with the State Finance Act and Treasury Instructions. Since the Ministry is currently not having budgetary provision to implement special programmes, especially those identified during the national dialogue; the funds in this donation account will be utilized towards the implementation of special community development programmes such as the following:
- I. Payment for the construction of shelter for the poor and marginalized as per the provisions of the Blueprint;
  - II. Financial assistance for funerals and other emergencies especially for the extremely poor persons e.g. persons living in severe poverty;
  - III. Construction and Improvements of sanitation and water supply facilities for the poor and affected communities;
  - IV. Financial assistance for the community projects to alleviate poverty e.g. backyard gardens or community gardens; and
  - V. Financial assistance to provide clothing and blankets for the poor and vulnerable persons and children, to enable them to pursue education.
16. The Ministry has to-date assisted the Oshikoto Regional Council with the drilling of two boreholes to the tune of **Three Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand Namibian Dollars N\$364, 000.00**, from the donation account.

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

17. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare has been tasked with the investigation of the fragmented social protection systems under the Harambee Prosperity Plan. The Ministry has constituted a core team to spearhead the feasibility of consolidating the social safety nets. The core team consists of representatives from the Office of the President, Office of the Vice President, Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Ministry of Health and Social Services, The Social Security Commission, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation and United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). An action plan has been developed to guide the activities of the core team, which includes the development of a social protection policy framework.

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

18. Allow me now to provide motivation for the programmes of the Ministry for the 2017/18 financial year and the corresponding Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period from 2017/18 to 2019/20.

19. The Ministry receives a total allocation of **Three Billion, Two Hundred Seventy Six Million and Eight Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Namibia Dollars** (N\$3, 276, 826,000) for the financial year 2017/18, and an amount of **Nine Billion, Nine Hundred Ninety Two Million** Namibia Dollars (N\$9.992 billion) over the MTEF period.
20. The Programmes of the Ministry for the MTEF period are:
  - I. Policy Supervision and Support Services;
  - II. Provision of Social Protection; and
  - III. Strategy Formulation and Monitoring.

#### **Programme 1: Policy Supervision and Support Services**

21. Under this programme, the Ministry makes provisions for policy supervision and administrative support to other functional activities of the Ministry. Specifically, provisions are made to ensure policy coherence and to ensure that our mandate is executed within the Government policy framework.
22. The Ministry will under this programme, constitute a Coordination Forum as provided for in the Blueprint and as part of our coordination role, to keep track, and to monitor progress of all Government poverty eradication related programmes and initiatives, including those implemented by State Owned Enterprises (SOEs).
23. Under this programme, the Ministry also makes provision for the administration of support services, financial management, human resources administration and other auxiliary services.
24. In order to execute the aforementioned functions, this programme is allocated an amount of **Thirty Eight Million Nine Hundred Thirty Two Thousand Namibia dollars** (N\$38.932 million).

#### **Programme 2: Provision of Social Protection**

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

25. One of the core functions of the Ministry is the administration and effecting of social grants to senior citizens and citizens with disabilities. In order to effectively administer this activity, the Ministry has 34 offices in all fourteen regions, with a total staff compliment of 64. These offices are responsible for the registration of beneficiaries, provision of attestations, and conducting of life certificates.



26. Under this programme, the Ministry will effect increases to social grants from N\$1,100 to N\$1,200 per month during the 2017/18 financial year. This increment is important and is expected to make significant positive impact in the poverty levels of the beneficiaries and their families.
27. Despite the recorded improved coverage of social grants beneficiaries, there is still a considerable number of eligible beneficiaries who lack national documents, especially in the most remote areas of our country. In this respect, the Ministry will increase outreach programmes to remote areas to register eligible beneficiaries, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration.
28. Allow me to extend a word of appreciation and gratitude to the colleagues from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration for their quick response once cases of lack of national documents are brought to their attention. We also invite regional councilors, working with traditional authorities, to notify our Ministry of cases of unregistered potential beneficiaries due to the remoteness of their areas.
29. Another key activity to be undertaken under this programme, in line with the Harambee Prosperity Plan and the Blueprint is the strengthening of the administration of the social protection system, through the implementation of the action plan, which was developed by the social protection core team. The Ministry will develop a national social protection policy framework, based on the outcome of the feasibility study on the consolidation of social safety nets. The Ministry will further explore mechanisms of extending social protection systems to the poor and vulnerable that are currently excluded from these systems.
30. In addition, the Ministry has established a Directorate of Poverty Eradication and Special Programmes Coordination, to initiate, implement and coordinate poverty eradication special programmes as provided for in the Blueprint and subsequent plans of the Ministry. These programmes include skills development to enhance entrepreneurship, provision of shelter to the poor and vulnerable, and support of income generating activities.
31. The Ministry will continue to address hunger poverty in urban and peri-urban areas in all fourteen regions of the country during this financial year and beyond. However, following the implementation of the food bank pilot program in the Khomas region and after thorough assessment of the pilot programme, the Ministry will explore optimum and cost effective ways of addressing hunger poverty.
32. This programme, which caters for social assistance, food provision and special programmes implementation and coordination, is allocated a total amount of **Three Billion, Two Hundred and Thirty Four Million Namibia Dollars** (N\$3.234 billion), which represents 98.7% of the total budgetary allocation to the Ministry.



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

33. It is evident from this budgetary allocation to social protection, of the commitment of Government to socio-economic development. There is therefore great need for us collectively as members of this august House and as representatives of our people, to ensure that these gifts from Government, whether in the form of cash transfers or food, are used to the maximum benefits of the beneficiaries; and to thus guard against the misuse of these social safety nets.

**Programme 3: Strategy Formulation and Monitoring**

34. The last and equally important programme of the Ministry over the MTEF period is Strategy Formulation and Monitoring. The programme is crucial to the Ministry's role of ensuring the coordination and streamlining of all Government poverty eradication strategies and interventions.
35. Under this Programme, the Ministry shall coordinate the implementation of the cross-cutting poverty eradication strategic interventions identified in the Blueprint and its implementing vehicles. These will include the operationalization of the Inter-Sectoral coordination forum, establishment and operationalization of an integrated monitoring and evaluation mechanism and a single registry system to track and monitor implementation of these cross-cutting poverty eradication programmes and interventions.
36. As part of monitoring and evaluation, the Ministry will carry out a comprehensive assessment of the food bank pilot project. This assessment is crucial and is expected to be completed early in the financial year, as it will guide the way in which the food provision programme will be expanded to the other regions of the country.
37. This programme will require an amount of **three million three hundred and seventy five thousand Namibia Dollars** (N\$3.375 million) during this financial year.

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

38. As I conclude, allow me to assure this august House and the entire Namibian nation, that the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare is committed to, and will continue to adhere to prudent financial management and effective governance, because these two aspects are central to, and are absolute pre-requisites for the eradication of poverty and reduction of income inequality.

39. I therefore would like to thank the Hon. Calle Schlettwein, Minister of Finance and Hon. Tom Alweendo, Minister of Economic Planning and Director General of the National Planning Commission; and your teams, for the preparation and presentation of a budget which in the long run will assist in narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor and consequently will result in a poverty free Namibia.
40. Last, but most certainly not the least, I extend my gratitude to my colleagues and the entire staff of the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, for enshrining your commitments to the poor in our core values and for pledging to fight this war against poverty with empathy, transparency, respectfully, as a team and most importantly as servants of the people.

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

41. It is now my honour and privilege to present to this august House, the expenditure request for the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare for the 2017/18 financial year, which amounts to **Three Billion Two Hundred Seventy Six Million and Eight Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Namibia Dollars** (N\$3,276,826,000), for its kind consideration and approval.

**I THANK YOU**