

## **MAIDEN SPEECH BY LUCIA IIPUMBU**

While acknowledging the almighty for his mercy, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia for believing in me by trusting me with the responsibility of assisting Comrade Tom Alweendo in Planning the Economy and various developmental programmes of this land of the brave. Equally, this demonstrates the faith he has in the Youth and Women of this country.

I would like to appreciate the rock solid support of my family who have been my source of inspiration over the years. Equally, I will fail in my duty if I do not appreciate my Comrades in the SPYL who identified me amongst many others as a candidate to the Electoral College; My Comrades in the SWAPO Party from the leadership to the entire rank and file for unwavering and overwhelming support throughout the process of democratic elections; The Voters for giving SWAPO another mandate.

*Thank you Mr. President*

We can only pledge to deliver to the best of our abilities on this mammoth task ahead. And deliver we will and we must, because failure is not an option. I pay homage to our heroes and heroines and particularly to H.E. Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, Founding President and Father of the Namibian Nation and his successor H.E. Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba.

Each of us had a prescribed journey that led us here, however our common denominator is to serve the Namibian people without fail. We must therefore resolve while early on our term that all what we say here must mean something to our society. Surely the good English (words and phrases will not feed the hungry, will not employ the unemployed, will not give hope to those in despair and neither will it convenience the electorate. What will make them happy is to craft favourable laws that address their needs and aspirations.



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**Briefing on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Government of the Republic Of Namibia and the Council of Churches in Namibia.**

**Hon. Elma Dienda** asked “whether the MoU between NPC and CCN is still effective and whether it is reaching the necessary beneficiaries and how many have benefited under the MoU thus far?”

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The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) on 9 December 2010.

In terms of the MoU, the Government of the Republic of Namibia is to facilitate support by engaging CCN with relevant Government institutions to respond constructively to the socio-economic needs of the people of Namibia.

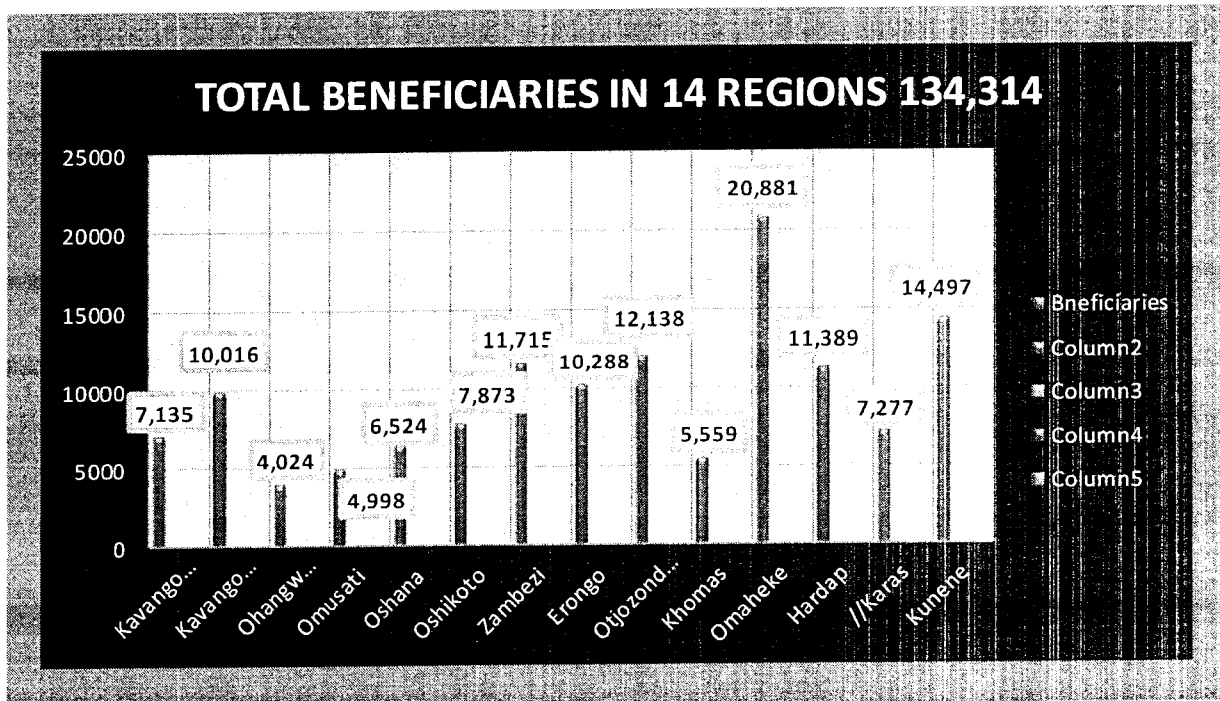
The purpose of this (MoU) is to facilitate the engagement of CCN Member Churches and Organizations in the development agenda of the Government of the Republic of Namibia through development of community projects.

The Government shall, through the relevant Offices/Ministries/Agencies (O/M/As), facilitate that CCN member Churches and Organizations be accorded an opportunity to engage into agreed community development projects in line with the national policies, such as the Vision 2030 and subsequent national development plans, e.g. NDP4

Since the implementation of the MoU falls under the mandate of the National Planning Commission (NPC) in collaboration with the Offices/Ministries/Agencies, NPC had been organizing consultative workshops with various Offices/Ministries and Agencies (OMAs) such as the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM); Ministry of Urban and Rural Development; Ministry of Veteran Affairs; Ministries of Gender, Equality and Welfare and Ministry of Education.

As a result of this MoU, CCN responded constructively to the former Head of State announcement of "*state of emergency*" in May 2013, by establishing soup kitchens project in the regions, to give nutritional soups to the elderly, orphans, the sick and other vulnerable community members.

1. OPM cooperation with CCN: The Emergency Drought Relief Program launched by the Office of the Prime Minister under the Disaster Management Unit had engaged CCN to respond to the situation and granted N\$5million for distribution of soup to elderly, the sick, orphans and vulnerable children under the age of 6 (six), (non-school going children) inclusive of people who are on Antiretroviral Treatment and other treatments. The scope of beneficiaries at some kitchens included unemployed young mothers that are breastfeeding as well as unemployed people that the church sees as being in need of the food provided by Feeding Kitchens.
2. The regions mostly affected were Omaheke, Erongo, Kunene, Otjizonjupa, Karas and Hardap. Others were Caprivi, Kavango, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshana. The drought situation affected nearly 780,000 people translating into about 37% of Namibian population. Consequently, the President of the Republic of Namibia declared a national drought emergency on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2013 calling for assistance.
3. During the implementation process of soup kitchens, CCN observed that the entire feeding kitchens raised high expectations among the community to expect more food after the completion of the scheme. Therefore, as it is recommended almost by every kitchen supervisor, they would like the feeding project to continue as it has rescued many children and elderly people. The biggest concern is with the san communities in Western Zambezi, Kavango East, Omaheke and Kunene region. Some of the concerned communities need further attention as they have not received good harvest.
4. All feeding kitchen staff coordinators, supervisors and general workers/volunteers (cooks) were given an allowance of N\$300 per month. The feeding kitchens were also provided with an N\$300 to secure wood, pay for water in some cases or pay for storage of soup bones and vegetables.
5. The drought response program of CCN took eleven (11) months, when it started in August 2013 to June 2014. The soup kitchens program managed to cater **134,314** people in all the regions. The number includes elderly, orphans, people on treatment and other vulnerable community members. During the verification process which is the part of the monitoring and evaluation of the project, CCN discovered that though much part of the country received good rain, yet there are some part of the country which still facing drought condition. Such communities especially in Kunene, Omaheke, Otjozondjupa, Erongo, Eastern Kavango and Western Zambezi still need drought relief assistance. Supervisors and coordinators recommended to the office of the Prime Minister to consider feeding schemes to continue to the vulnerable community members of the regions mentioned earlier.



- a) *In sum, the Soup Kitchens established by CCN through the significant support from OPM to the tune of N\$5million had put a smile to about 134,314 people nationwide as shown here below:*

Finally, in terms of clause 2.6 of the MoU between the Government of Namibia and CCN, the Government is expected to facilitate entry into Namibia for persons as well as their dependents to be engaged in work related to community development in line with the agreement by Member Churches and organizations of CCN in respect of necessary work visas or temporary work permit as required by the laws and regulations of the Republic of Namibia.

To this end, NPC has been continuously assisting the Dutch Reform Church in Namibia. (a member Church of CCN) with the endorsement of their renewal and new applications for work permits, resulting in the deployment of **13 Pastors and Reverends** all together around the country.

- b) *Of note, is that NPC's role in this case is to facilitate the enabling environment for the civil society (including Faith Based Organizations) engagement in the development agenda. In this vein, we are urging Offices/Ministries/Agencies that have projects falling within the strategic plan of CCN to directly engage CCN in the implementation thereof in order to strengthen national development efforts and implementation of national developments plans.*

*I thank you,*