



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE, Dr. ZEPHANIA
KAMEETA, MP, MINISTER OF POVERTY ERADICATION AND
SOCIAL WELFARE.**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

28 NOVEMBER 2018

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

1. I rise this afternoon to share with this August House some key activities carried out by the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to date.
2. The Ministry started with the implementation and coordination of the Blueprint on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication. I shared the content of the Blueprint with this august House in 2017. The following key strategic priority areas are implemented under the Blueprint:

I. Strengthening of social protection systems

- The Ministry continues to administer the social grants to our pensioners and people with disabilities. This amount stands now at N\$1250.00, an increase from N\$600.00 since 2015. The Government's social cash transfers including grants administered by other Ministries have been proven statistically to have a significant role in the reduction of extreme poverty.
- The Ministry has further embarked on an extensive reform of the Country's social protection systems including the development of a National Social Protection Policy. Although Namibia has one of the best social protection systems in Africa, our systems are fragmented and exclusive. In this regard, the Ministry hosted a number of consultative experts' workshops and seminars, in order to make the social protection systems effective and inclusive.

- Subsequent to this process, I am pleased to share with this august House that the first ever draft Policy on Social Protection is now available. It will be shared with the stakeholders for comments and validations, before tabling to Cabinet and then Parliament respectively.
- The main aim of the Social Protection Policy is to create a comprehensive social protection system that is efficient and effective in addressing risks and vulnerabilities that people face at different stages of their lives.

II. Ending hunger

- The Ministry is providing food to the most needy and vulnerable people in urban and peri-urban areas through the distribution of dry food parcels, as part of its Food Bank Programme.
- To date, the Ministry is distributing food to about 17, 000 beneficiaries in the Khomas, Karas, Hardap, Kavango East and Kavango West regions. By the end of this financial year, the Ministry will cover the Ohangwena, Kunene and the Zambezi regions during this financial year.
- In order to improve the efficiency of the food bank processes, the Ministry in partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme have launched the SCOPE system on Wednesday 21 November 2018. SCOPE is a computer based system that which is used for the registration of beneficiaries, identification of beneficiaries when collecting food parcels, reporting and monitoring and evaluation.

- As part of Namibia's commitment to the implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger; the Ministry is coordinating the country's Zero Hunger Strategy. By coordinating the implementation of the Zero Hunger Strategy, the Ministry ensures that sustainable food provision and food production systems are put in place and are effectively implemented.
 - The implementing stakeholders for the Zero Hunger Strategic Roadmap have submitted their action plans and a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework have been developed. Additional to this, a food and nutrition security draft policy is available and ready for validation. The Policy will assist the implementation of a holistic food and nutrition security and a holistic programme on infant and young child feeding within the existing food safety nets programme.
3. Under the Blueprint, the Ministry is coordinating the implementation of the following Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs); with the relevant Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs), as essential poverty eradication interventions:
 - a. Access to Basic Services;
 - b. Education, Training and Skills Development;
 - c. Employment Creation; and
 - d. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
 4. An Implementation Plan has been developed and all implementing OMA's are expected to provide quarterly reports on the progress made. The Ministry has further developed comprehensive reporting tools for each Strategic Priority Area to be implemented by the each OMA's.

5. Allow me at this juncture to thank all the implementing OMAs for their continuous support and cooperation in the implementation of poverty eradication programmes under their respective mandates. I am equally pleased to announce that significant progress was made in the implementation of activities under these strategic objectives; including the elimination of the bucket system, building of environmental friendly toilets for rural communities; acceleration of rural electrification; upgrading of, and construction of new Vocational Training Centers; and the adoption of the EMPRETEC programme, which aims at providing entrepreneurship training and develop guidelines on project management to the youth. This is to mention but a few and detailed reports on the achievements and challenges are available at the Ministry.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

6. The poverty situation among our people especially in rural areas is critical. Although there are long-term Government policies and interventions that are aimed at ensuring that every Namibian has access to basic social services, such as food, housing, water, sanitation and education; the majority of the rural population and those living in informal settlements of our cities and towns, are deprived of these basics of life, and thus living in extreme poverty.

7. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare has therefore established a Donation Account, where generous organisations and individuals can donate money to address what is often referred to as low hanging fruits. I am pleased to announce that since the establishment of this donation account, the response from the public, including the Embassies, Local and International NGOs, Local Businesses and even individuals, have responded positively to this noble initiative of the Ministry.
8. The Donation Account is linked to the Special Programmes of the Ministry and its aim is two-fold: firstly it is aimed at addressing the immediate needs of those who might find themselves in desperate situations, for example our people in informal settlements who are confronted with losing their belongings due to fires and floods.
9. Secondly the donation account is aimed assisting more long-term sustainable poverty eradication initiatives, with minimum bureaucracy as much as possible. These projects range from agricultural food production projects, income generating projects, water provision, education and provision of decent shelter to those living in extreme poverty.
10. The Ministry has to date assisted the Oshikoto Regional Council with the drilling of two boreholes for impoverished communities and has paid tuition fees for vulnerable students at various Tertiary Institutions, who did not secure any study loans.

11. By the end of this financial year, the Ministry through the donation account, will assist three water provision projects in the Ohangwena, Kunene and Omaheke regions respectively, two agricultural projects in the Kunene region and the construction of a decent shelter for a destitute family in the Khomas region.
12. I therefore want to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed and are still contributing to this fund and to give my assurance that your gestures of goodwill, will contribute to the well-being of those in need. I further want to call upon members of this august House and the public at large to extend a hand of goodwill to your fellow citizens in need.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

13. Allow me to conclude by reiterating that all Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies; and State Own Enterprises, are by law tasked with the promotion and maintenance of the well-being of the Namibian people.
14. Therefore, we are all being called upon to ensure that all Namibians have access to the basic social necessities of life, which is the eradication of extreme poverty. Fellow Namibians, let us all join hands and have faith that indeed together we shall see a Namibia where no one goes to bed hungry; and that each Namibian has access to a decent shelter, clean drinking water and proper sanitation.

**With this I submit Comrade Speaker, Honourable Members
and I wish you all a Blessed Festive Season and Prosperous
2019**