



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY HON.

08 JUNE 2023

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Honourable Speaker;
Honourable Members;

I rise to respond to the questions from Honourable Hon. Van Den Heever of the Popular Democratic Movement (PDM). Firstly, I would like to thank Hon. Van Den Heever for asking these questions. All five questions are on the current status of AGRIBUSDEV and The Green Schemes and I am going to answer them in the order that they presented.

Question 1- When AGRIBUSDEV was operational, important equipment on the farms were broken. What is the status of the much needed equipment on the farms at the moment?

The status of the implements on farms has since improved thanks to the budget allocation of 40 million to the Green Scheme Projects during the MTEF budget review of 2022/203 FY. This budget was used to procure inputs and repair some of the implements on the farms that enabled the Ministry to plant about 776 ha of summer crops across the spectrum.

Question 2- The Ministry has taken over the responsibility of the Green Schemes in Namibia and therefore dissolved AGRIBUSDEV. What will happen to AGRIBUSDEV itself, the state owned company?

The company will be dissolved, and the employees will be integrated into the Ministry's structure. The integration process has already commenced in 2022 and is still ongoing.

Question 3- The employees of AgriBusDev just to go sit around, doing absolutely nothing. Please explain the current role of the company since its initial role has been taken over by the Ministry?

Honourable Speaker;
Honourable Members;

We should take note that what has ceased to exist is the company itself as indicated earlier. At the moment the employees are housed in the Ministry and are currently acting as support team to the Directorate of Agricultural Production, Extension and Engineering Services (DAPEES). This is an interim arrangement that has been put in place while the absorption process is being finalised, and the Ministry has made budgetary provision to cater for their salaries, as we cannot afford to send them in the streets.

Question 4-What will happen to the 20 plus or minus employees of the now dissolved AGRIBUSDEV? Will they be integrated in your Ministry, if yes, How many?

The Ministry is in the process of absorbing/integrating thirty two (32) staff members of Agribusdev, including all staff members of Agronomic and Engineering Services.

Question 5-Will the employees of AGRIBUSDEV receive severance package if the company permanently closes its doors?

Severance pay is normally given to staff members who get retrenched. However, in the case of AGRIBUSDEV's staff members, they will be absorbed by the Ministry, and hence severance pay does not apply to them in this case.

Question 6-How is the ministry currently addressing the plight of the plus minus 500 Green Scheme Workers?

Honourable Speaker;
Honourable Members;

Apart from the 32 Employees of AGRIBUSDEV that I mentioned earlier and who are to be absorbed in the Ministry's structure, there are around two hundred and eight five (285) employees at the green schemes. These staff members will be taken over by the incoming service providers who will take over the green scheme projects.

Question 7-What drastic changes has the Ministry implemented thus far since the dissolving AGRIBUSDEV, to ensure productivity on the Green Schemes?

Following the Cabinet Decision on this matter, the Ministry mobilised funds to put five Green Schemes, namely, (Sikondo GS, Etunda GS, Shadikongoro GS, Vhungu-Vungu GS (Crop Production section), and Ndonga Linena GS) under production. A total of 776 hectares is under irrigation and an average of 7000 tonnes of white maize from the above-mentioned Green Schemes is expected to be harvested. This will double the harvest of last year's maize which was realized from Musese, Mashare and Shitemo Green Schemes.

If all goes according to plan, the expected total harvest of 14 000 metric tonnes of maize, which excludes the small and medium scales farmers produce will exceed the capacity of the National Strategic Food Reserve facilities which currently stands at 11 000 metric tonnes.

White maize local demand from April to December 2022 was 136 204 metric tonnes of which 97, 534 tonnes was locally produced and 38, 670 tonnes import. The current good rain experienced in the country combined with the revival of the Green Scheme projects means that the country is on its way to self- sufficiency when it comes to White Maize; and it is my hope that it is achieved by

2024/2025. I applaud all Namibians in both public and private sectors who contribute to this achievement.

the narrative above follows Cabinet Decision No.: 3rd CCOPP/02.11.22/001 directed MAWLR to put the Green Schemes under production as an interim measure and due to shortage of food commodities in the country, MAWLR through the Directorate of Agricultural Production, Extension and Engineering Services (DAPEES) took an executive decision to put the Schemes under production, while the outsourcing process is being ongoing.

Question 9-Is the Ministry still calling on foreign investors for the Green Schemes? If Yes, what will the modus operandi be of the foreign investors?

**Honourable Speaker;
Honourable Members;**

I can confirm that the Ministry invited expression of interest from both foreign and domestic investors. However, it is important to inform this August House that first priority shall be given to 100% Namibian owned entities or persons and in the absences of 100% Namibian ownership, companies in which Namibian ownership represents 51% while 49% is foreign owned can be considered.

Question 10-What is the current Productivity levels of the Green Schemes since the ministry dissolved AGRIBUSDEV?

The Ministry has put 776 HA under production across the Schemes. As I indicated when answering questions 7, we expect to harvest 7000 tonnes from this hectarage which is currently under irrigation