



**PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE  
OF THE  
HONOURABLE PATIENCE MASUA, MP**

Parliamentary Contribution

on

**BUDGET DEBATE: GOVERNMENT'S  
THREE-PRONGED APPROACH TO  
ECONOMIC RESURGENCE**

in the

National Assembly

12 March 2024

Mr Speaker,

In the recent budget announcement, Minister Shiimi adopts a three-pronged approach:

1. Prioritising the most economically vulnerable,
2. Truly empowering young people,
3. Implementing tax breaks, putting money directly into taxpayers pockets.

→ GYRB — explain

This budget demonstrates a commitment to gender and youth responsiveness by systematically applying a gender and youth lens to each budget line, ensuring that allocations and expenditures actively address the distinct needs and challenges of these demographics.

This budget, Mr. Speaker serves as a strategic initiative to forge a brighter future for Namibians, particularly during a crucial time when the masses needed it the most.

In shaping our budgetary priorities, it is imperative to recognise the profound impact that gender and youth considerations wield on the trajectory of our nation. By deliberately integrating these perspectives into the budget process, we empower not only the present but also the future of our society. A budget that champions gender and youth

responsiveness is not merely a fiscal document; **it is a declaration of our commitment to a more just, vibrant, and sustainable future for all.** — *This budget is that declaration!*

The UN's theme for the year, "*Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress*," resonates profoundly with our commitment to shaping a more inclusive and equitable society through the budgetary process.

*Therefore* The principles of GYRB transform financial planning, ensuring that allocations consider the unique needs of women and young people. This means that we look at every line of our budget through a lens that considers the diverse needs of different genders, but most importantly, those of young people.

This approach is indispensable for creating inclusive policies that promote education, employment, and healthcare opportunities for young men and women, fostering their holistic development. We must ensure that the policies we champion echo through generations, leaving an indelible mark on the fabric of our society.

Namibia's economic and social landscape, characterised by steady GDP growth and positive indicators, presents an opportune moment to implement GYRB effectively.

## **Unveiling Namibia's Transformative Budget - Key Figures and Implications**

- 1. Doubling of the income tax threshold for individuals from N\$50,000 to N\$100,000 and reduction in non-mining company tax rates.***

The income tax threshold doubling and lower tax rates provides direct financial relief to low-income earners, stimulating domestic demand and fostering a more conducive environment for private sector growth and investment.

- 2. 23.2% increase in social spending, notably for the Ministry of Gender, Poverty Eradication, and Social Welfare.***

The substantial increase in social spending, particularly for vulnerable groups, demonstrates a commitment to addressing poverty and inequality, enhancing social safety nets, and ensuring access to essential services.

- 3. N\$58.9 billion allocated for capital spending over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework.***

The surge in capital spending signals a strategic effort to bridge infrastructure gaps, stimulate economic growth, and create jobs,

particularly through investments in critical sectors like transport, agriculture, and energy - THIS TRICKLES DOWN TO MANY OTHER SECTORS

***4. Over N\$2.2 billion allocated to youth-focused initiatives, including skills development, entrepreneurship support, and sports promotion.***

The significant allocation to youth-focused initiatives reflects a commitment to nurturing a dynamic and empowered generation through investments in education, skills development, entrepreneurship, and sports promotion.

***5. N\$2.5 billion commitment for the development of railway infrastructure.***

The surge in capital spending signals a strategic effort to bridge infrastructure gaps, stimulate economic growth, and create jobs, particularly through investments in critical sectors like transport, agriculture, and energy.

***6. N\$700 million dedicated to informal settlement upgrading.***

The commitment to upgrading informal settlements underscores a dedication to improving living standards, enhancing educational facilities, and providing housing opportunities for Namibians.

### ***7. Civil Service Wage Adjustment:***

An 8.8% increase in the operational budget, addressing inflationary pressures. A 5.0% adjustment in the civil service wage bill at the value of N\$1.7 billion. This wage increase is a clear reflection of the appreciation for civil servants' patience; it benefits the majority of young people employed in the civil service.

### ***8. VAT Registration Threshold Increase:***

The VAT threshold raised from N\$500,000 to N\$1,000,000 will benefit approximately 23,000 SMEs, freeing capacity at NamRA thereby supporting youth running small businesses and focusing on core activities.

### ***9. Internship Tax Incentive Programme:***

The introduction of the Corporate Tax deduction for employers enrolling interns up to the value of N\$126 million financial implication for the Government encourages employers to accommodate more interns, helping students find opportunities and aiding employability among young people.

### ***10. Housing Access Support:***

The adjustment of transfer duties and stamp duties brackets for

inflation, exempt level being lifted from N\$600,000 to N\$1.1 million. targets youth, facilitating improved access to housing; commendable gesture.

The budget sets the stage for sustainable growth and prosperity, aligning with the commitment to "leave no one behind."

**While charting the way forward, our key priorities must be clear. It is of paramount importance that we:**

**Enhance Data Collection and Analysis** by strengthening mechanisms to ensure a comprehensive understanding of gender and youth-specific needs and challenges before and during our budgeting process.

**Capacity Building and Awareness** as a result of investment in capacity building for officials, policymakers, and budget planners to enhance their understanding of Gender-Responsive Budgeting principles.

**Establishing Clear Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms** in order to assess the impact of budgetary allocations on gender equality. The experiences of countries like Tanzania and Rwanda, which have made significant strides in gender equality in their

parliaments, provide valuable lessons and a benchmark for us as we strive to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

This budget stands as a testament to our government's profound commitment to fostering the well-being and future prospects of the Namibian youth. By strategically allocating funds, the budget addresses critical areas directly impacting young individuals, reflecting a genuine concern for their welfare.

In conclusion, this budget is a significant stride towards a more inclusive and equitable society. However, our work is not done. We must remain vigilant in our commitment to Gender and Youth Responsive Budgeting, ensuring that every Namibian, regardless of gender or age, has equal access to opportunities and a chance for a prosperous future. I call upon each of us to lend their unwavering support to these initiatives, as we strive to build a nation where gender and age do not determine one's destiny.