



NATIONAL COUNCIL

6th National Council – 2020-2025

Report of the National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social
Welfare and Labour Affairs on:

**Basic Income Grant (BIG) Motion consultations conducted with
Omitara community and other selected stakeholders on 5th August
2024 and 9th May 2025**

May 2025

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Acknowledgement

The National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs expresses its sincere gratitude to the Basic Income Grant pilot project beneficiaries at Omitara-Otjivero for their participation and contributions during the Committee's visit to the settlement.

The Committee further extend its appreciation to the counterpart committees of the Parliament of Botswana and the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa for taking time to meet and interact with the Committee. This noble action proved that benchmarking as a tool of oversight is welcomed and is a great opportunity for visitors and the host to share ideas learn from each other, while establishing and bolstering relationships between parliaments.

The Committee equally acknowledges and appreciate all stakeholders particularly the Basic Income Grant Namibia Coalition and the Ministry of Finance for provided the necessary information on safety nets, social grants and various programs in place that provides social protection for the poor and vulnerable persons in the Republic of Namibia. All deliberations during the meetings will contribute to the valuable lessons the Committee learned during field and study visits.

1. Establishment of the National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs.

1.1 The National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs was established by Rule 152 of the National Council Standing Rules and Orders.

2. The standing committee has the mandate:

- (a) to scrutinise and report to the Council on matters and questions falling within the ambit of Offices, Ministries, Agencies and Public Enterprises dealing with health, social welfare, gender equality, labour and employment creation;
 - (b) to promote gender balance;
 - (c) to promote health and social welfare;
 - (d) to promote gender equality;
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- (e) to monitor budget implementation of Offices, Ministries and Agencies falling within the Standing Committee's ambit;
 - (f) to monitor the implementation of the decentralization process on matters falling within the ambit of the Standing Committee; and
 - (g) to perform any other function as may be referred to it by the Council.

3. Committee Members and administrative staff

The standing committee comprise of six Members of Parliament and two administrative staff namely:

3.1 Hon. Hans Linekela Nambondi	Chairperson
3.2 Hon. Emma Tangi Muteka	Vice-Chairperson
3.3 Hon. Rocco Nguvauva	Member
3.4 Hon. Laurentius Makana lipinge	Member
3.5 Hon. Johannes Hamba Karondo	Member
3.6 Hon. Mumbali Micky Lukaezi	Member

Administrative Staff

3.7 Ms Hilde Kapuku	Chief Parliamentary Clerk
3.8 Ms Priskilla Kulula	Parliamentary Clerk

4. Terms of Reference (ToR)

A motion on the importance of adopting a universal Basic Income Grant (BIG) as a means of providing social protection for the poor and vulnerable persons in the Republic of Namibia.

5. Methodology

- 5.1 The Committee adopted a desk review method that entailed reviewing reports and existing policies;
- 5.2 The Committee visited BIG pilot project beneficiaries at Otjivero-Omitara, in the Okorukambe Constituency, Omaheke region. The oral submissions and evidence complemented notes taken by the Secretariat;
- 5.3 The Committee further engaged with the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa Portfolio Committee on Social Development, and with the Parliament of Botswana Local Governance and Social Welfare Portfolio Committee
- 5.4 Furthermore, the Committee held consultations with officials of the Ministry of Finance and Basic Income Grant Coalition Namibia (BIG) and incorporated their inputs in the report.

6. Acronyms / Abbreviations

BIG	Basic Income Grant
CBIG	Conditional Basic Income Grant
HPP	Harambee Prosperity Plan II,
OAG	Old Age Grant
PECU	Poverty Eradication Coordination Unit
PEP	Poverty Eradication Programme
SASSA	South Africa Social Security Agency
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRD	Social Relief of Distress
ToR	Terms of Reference
YDF	Youth Development Fund

7. Introduction

- 7.1 According to the Economic Commission for Africa, poverty is a multifaceted issue that is measured by household income and consumption. The poverty status of a household is determined by a combination of microeconomic factors such as a person's employment status, real income and consumption level and macroeconomic factors such as overall economic growth, inflation, sectoral growth and private consumption (the ability to buy goods and services other than basic needs).
- 7.2 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Fifth National Development Plan Indicator Framework, in particular Goal 1, target to end poverty in all its forms and eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030. SDG 1 further target to ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.
- 7.3 Vulnerable people are those who are disadvantaged because of an inherent quality or sociocultural status and those who are marginalised owing to economic, environment, social or cultural characteristics. Vulnerable groups include refugees, employees, minorities, persons with mental health conditions, persons with developmental and other disabilities, children, women and persons living in poverty. Such groups are often at greater risk of being adversely affected by external events.
- 7.4 Understanding the poverty status of vulnerable groups is critical to ensure that they receive the support and protection needed to mitigate risks and reduce poverty. Disaggregation by region has shown that the Erongo, Khomas and Karas region have the lowest poverty headcount ratios whereas the Kavango West, Kavango East and Kunene have the highest. Hence the call for adopting a universal Basic Income Grant (BIG) as a means of providing social protection for the poor and vulnerable persons in the Republic of Namibia.
- 7.5 Furthermore, the Harambee Prosperity Plan II, under the third pillar that deals with Social Progression is regarded as the cornerstone of the HPP. The pillar aims at improving the life quality for all Namibians especially vulnerable members of the society by decreasing hunger poverty, delivering urban land and sanitary housing as well as facilitating access to public healthcare, improving access to quality education, sports and combating gender based violence mainly violence against children.

8. Background on Basic Income Grant Namibia (BIG)

- 8.1 Social protection as an important lever for responding to shocks, mitigating risks and reducing poverty incited the proposal for a Basic Income Grant in Namibia by the Namibian Tax Consortium (NAMTAX), a government appointed commission. The consortium made the proposal for a Basic Income Grant in light of the high poverty levels and the unequal distribution of income (income inequality) in Namibia.
- 8.2 The debate about a Basic Income Grant in Namibia was based on a proposal made in 2005 of a monthly cash grant of not less than N\$100,00 that should be paid to every Namibian as a right. Every Namibian would receive such a grant until pension age from where onwards he/she is eligible to the existing universal State Old Age Pension. The money of people not in need or not in poverty would be recuperated through adjustments in the tax system.
- 8.3 Spearheaded by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN), this proposal was taken up by the Namibian civil society and has evolved into the BIG Coalition, which was formed in April 2005. The Basic Income Grant campaign, which aimed at achieving the introduction of a Basic Income Grant in Namibia, has to date been the biggest civil society project united in fighting poverty. The Coalition consists of the Council of Churches (CCN), the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), the umbrella body of the NGOs (NANGOF), the umbrella body of the AIDS organisations (NANASO), the National Youth Service (NYC), the Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO), the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) and the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI).

9 Implementation of the Basic Income Grant Pilot Project

- 9.1 In 2006, the understanding in the BIG Coalition grew that the BIG campaign needed to be taken a step further by starting a pilot project in Namibia. The belief was that a pilot project might be able to concretely show that a BIG can work and would indeed have the predicted positive effects on poverty alleviation and economic development.
- 9.2 The BIG pilot project started in January 2008 to December 2009 and was the first of its kind to be implemented. The project started at Otjivero - Omitara settlement about 100 km east of Windhoek for a limited period of 2 years and total number of 1000 (One Thousand) beneficiaries benefited from the project. Every person registered as living there in July 2007, whatever their social and economic status received a grant of a N\$100,00 per person per month, without any conditions being attached.

- 9.3 The BIG Pilot Project abided to principles in line with the BIG proposal and advocated for the grant to be universal, cash based entitlement, provide some form of income security and to build on redistributive justice. To set an example of redistributive justice through concrete action to help the poor, and to document what income security means in terms of poverty reduction and economic development, the BIG Coalition raised funds through international support, individuals and congregations.

10. FINDINGS

The National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs undertook a visit to Otjivero-Omitara to engage BIG beneficiaries in an effort to avoid groupthink, where individuals conform to the majority opinion, which hinder independent thinking, the Committee opted to conduct individual door to door interviews to gain deeper understanding of beneficiaries' experiences and opinions on the Basic Income Grant. The individual interviews allowed the Committee the flexibility to foster trust and comfort as well as the ability to clarify misunderstandings and follow up on responses. Beneficiaries were encouraged to share their views freely. During deliberations beneficiaries informed the Committee that:

- 10.1 Before the introduction of the BIG, the main source of income at the settlement was old age pension grant and child grants.
- 10.2 The settlement was characterized by unemployment, hunger and poverty. Most residents that settled there, were former farm workers that were dismissed from employment or simply dumped there by their former employers and had nowhere else to go.
- 10.3 The community established a committee to advise beneficiaries on how to utilize the grant, and to monitor and ensure that the grant was not used for alcohol consumption.
- 10.4 The grant was non-discriminatory and every registered person benefitted irrespective of their social standing or other benefits such as disability, pension or children grants. Each beneficiary received a N\$ 100,00 per person per month.

(For example: If a household had seven (7) occupants, each person will receive a N\$ 100.00. If a household had two pensioners, one person with disability and 3 vulnerable children who all benefit from the social grants, each would still receive the N\$ 100.00 grant.)

- 10.5 The introduction of BIG at Otjivero-Omitara, attracted a significant number of people to the settlement. Impoverished family members moved to Otjivero-

Omitara, in hope of benefiting from the grant. Unfortunately, no new beneficiaries were registered as the grant targeted people that lived there during July 2007.

- 10.6 Beneficiaries claimed that household poverty dropped significantly as families could afford groceries, cosmetics and clothing items.
- 10.7 The grant further came in handy and some residents started backyard gardens to supplement the drought relief food that would take long to reach the beneficiaries.
- 10.8 An increase in economic activity were recorded as some beneficiaries used their combined income to start small business such as brick-making, selling ice, baking of bread, dress-making and shoe repairs.
- 10.9 The rate of those engaged in income-generating activities for profit, family gain as well as self-employment increased significantly.
- 10.10 Many school-going children did not attend school regularly and the number of school dropout were high. With the introduction of the grant parents were able to send back their children to school, buy school uniform and could afford to pay school fees.
- 10.11 Before the introduction of the grant majority if not all residents, were living in plastic made shifts, however with the BIG, families pooled their earnings together, bought corrugated iron sheets and build themselves decent structures.
- 10.12 The residents informed the Committee that the crime rate at the settlement reduced drastically, particularly stock theft at nearby farms.
- 10.13 The residents further informed the Committee that after the BIG ended, their lives have never been the same. There are no longer economic activities happening at the settlement. There is a rise in hunger and sicknesses including malnutrition. Some youngsters resorted to hunting in nearby farms and landed in prison. Petty crimes are being committed at the settlement by young children due to hunger and poverty. Alcohol consumption has increased badly. Some children dropped out of school due to unaffordability of school uniform and hunger when returning home from school.

11. Social Assistance Programs in the Republic of Namibia

- 11.1 Article 95 of the Namibian Constitution provides that the state shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting inter alia policies aimed at:

- 11.1.1 (f) ensurance that senior citizens are entitled to and do receive a regular pension adequate for the maintenance of a decent standard of living and the enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities, and
- 11.1.2 (g) enactment of legislation to ensure that the unemployed, the incapacitated, the indigent and the disadvantaged are accorded such social benefits and amenities as determined by parliament to be just and affordable with due regards to the resources of the state.
- 11.2 Furthermore, there are a number of key factors that determine the impact of social grants, such as the nature of the grant, who the intended beneficiaries are and how they are identified, how the programme is designed, the value of the grant, and how successfully the grant programme is implemented.
- 11.3 In light of promoting and maintaining the welfare of the Namibian people the Government of the Republic of Namibia, though the Ministry of Finance has the following Cash Transfer Programmes in place:
- 11.3.1 Old Age Grant (OAG) that guarantees all Namibians aged 60 years and above a monthly unconditional allowance of N\$ 1 600, 00. The grant contribute to the social and economic development of Namibia by means of measures that maintain and strengthen the coping capacities of individuals and families, especially for people who have needs and those who are poor, disadvantaged or vulnerable. A number of 220,689 OAG beneficiaries were positively verified and are active on the Integrated Social Assistance System (ISAS).
- 11.3.2 Disability Grant aim to ensure the wellbeing of people with disability by providing State Disability Grant of N\$ 1 600. Namibian citizens or Namibian permanent residence aged 16 -59 years and medically diagnosed by a state doctor as being temporarily or permanently disabled benefit from the grant. Currently 53,381 permanent and 6,124 temporary disability grant beneficiaries are active on ISAS.
- 11.3.3 Vulnerable Children's (VC) Grant aim to ensure the wellbeing of vulnerable children, by providing Child State Grants of N\$ 350,00. The aim is to motivate children benefitting from the grant to remain in school and progress and to uplift the livelihood of families who are taking care of these children. Beneficiaries of this grant are children below the age of 18 and who's both parents have no income. The Ministry is in the process to have the child grant reviewed to meet the current economic demand of beneficiaries.

- 11.3.4 Child Disability Grant aim to ensure the wellbeing of children with disability by providing Child State Disability Grant of N\$ 1 600. The grant aims at uplifting the livelihood of families taking care of children with disability. It enables the caretaker to provide care for children with disability better and maintain their livelihoods. Namibian children below the age of 16 or permanent residence that are medically diagnosed by a state doctor as being temporarily or permanently disabled qualifies for the grant.
- 11.3.5 Conditional Basic Income Grant (CBIG) is a monthly cash grant paid to identified vulnerable people in the country who are between the age of 18 and 59 years. The current beneficiaries of the CBIG are those who previously participated in the old Food Bank program. These beneficiaries used to receive food parcels, but the program has now transitioned to monthly cash transfers of N\$ 600 per household. This marks the first step towards phasing in a CBIG program.
- 11.3.6 The Conditional Basic Income Grant program is mainly targeting the urban poor and the Ministry of Finance in consultation with the Office of the Prime Minister is in the process to work out modalities for the rural poor. To date 6,569 recipients are active on ISAS with 32,845 beneficiaries. 26,265 new recipients were added to the ISAS as part of CBIG rollout. The total coverage on ISAS is 32,834 households, with average beneficiaries of 164,170. The Ministry of Finance has identified the Kavango East, Kavango West and Kunene region as priority regions for the current financial year.

11.4 The Ministry of Finance has in kind assistance programs such as:

Namibian School Feeding Programme (NSFP) that address short term hunger through mid-morning cooked meal that is nationwide and administered by the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture;

Drought Relief Programme, that assists affected communities in drought prone areas with livestock and or food provision. Livestock support is given to farmers without alternative grazing while food is provided to households living in rural areas and whose subsistence farming is affected by the drought. The affected households should not be receiving food relief from any source that is equivalent to Government food basket during the same period and targeted beneficiaries residing in one household should not be receiving a combined income of more than N\$ 3 100,00 per month from any source. This program is administered by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).

11.5 Additional to the various cash transfers programmes and in kind assistance the Ministry have Social Care Services, Community Based Programmes, Public Works Programmes and Social Insurance programmes as well.

11.6 The Ministry of Finance who is the custodian of grant administration is faced with multiple challenges such as the need for more resources to increase grant amounts, lack of office space, computer equipment, internet connections, telephone lines and transport. There is shortage of staff including sign language interpreter to serve the particular vulnerable group.

12. Engagement with the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa Portfolio Committee on Social Development

12.1 During engagement with the counterpart committee at the Parliament of South Africa, the Committee learned that social assistance has, by far, proven to be one of the most effective pro-poor programmes that continue to protect vulnerable people against abject poverty.

12.2 The South African government established the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) as an entity of the National Department of Social Development in terms of the SASSA Act 9 of 2004 to ensure the effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social assistance. SASSA performs a prominent role in poverty alleviation through the provision of social assistance. It further contributes to individual social well-being and provides a safety net to the most vulnerable. The work of SASSA continues to be of utmost importance in the fight against poverty and now forming part of South Africa's Government's strategic priority number 2 that deals with reduction of poverty and tackling the high cost of living.

12.3 The Government of South Africa's expenditure for social grants during the financial year 2023/24, was R251 billion, inclusive of the COVID-19 Social Relief Distress (SRD) grant. The COVID-19 SRD grant continues to be administered by SASSA as a temporally measure to cushion individuals aged 18 – 59 who are unemployed as these individuals are not catered for in the social assistance programme. About 9 million individuals benefited from COVID-19 SRD grant and the Department of Social Development is working with other stakeholders to find an alternative permanent solution for this grant.

12.4 SASSA receives the bulk of its revenue from the National Revenue Fund through transfers by the National Department of Social Development, which transfers the funds on a monthly basis. Another portion of the revenue is derived from fines and penalties, sale of capital assets, interest received, sale of wastepaper and parking fees amongst others. Social grants are paid into the beneficiaries' bank accounts either held at commercial banks or South African Post Bank then

accessed through the National Payment System Infrastructure (ATMs and retail stores across the country).

12.5 Some programmes administered by SASSA include:

- 12.5.1 Care dependency grant that is for South African citizen, permanent resident or refugees residing in South Africa and below the age of 18. Applicants submit a medical / assessment report confirming permanent, severe disability and should not be permanently cared for in a State Institution.
- 12.5.2 Child support grant is for primary care givers and it requires that both the applicant and the child reside in South Africa. The child/children must have been born after 31 December 1993.
- 12.5.3 Disability Grant is for applicants between the ages of 18 to 59 with medical / assessment report confirming permanent or severe disability. The applicant must not be in receipt of another social grant in respect of him or herself.
- 12.5.4 Foster Child Grant applies to foster parent/s and it requires that both the applicant and the child reside in South Africa and that the child remain in the care of the foster parent(s).
- 12.5.5 Older Persons Grant is for applicants that are not less than 60 years and that do not receive other social grant.
- 12.5.6 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) is a temporary provision of assistance intended for persons in such dire material need that they are unable to meet their or their families' most basic needs. SRD is paid to South African citizens or permanent residents, who have insufficient means and meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - (a) The applicant is awaiting payment of an approved social grant;
 - (b) The applicant has been found medically unfit to undertake remunerative work for a period of less than 6 months;
 - (c) The bread winner is deceased and application is made within three months of the date of death;
 - (d) No maintenance is received from parent, child or spouse obliged in law to pay maintenance, and proof is furnished that efforts made to obtain maintenance have been unsuccessful;
 - (e) The bread winner of that person's family has been admitted to an institution funded by the state (prison, psychiatric hospital, state

home for older persons, treatment centre for substance abuse or child and youth care centre);

- (f) The applicant has been affected by a disaster; and
- (g) The person is not receiving assistance from any other organization.

12.5.7 Social Relief of Distress is issued monthly for a maximum period of 3 months. An extension a further 3 months may be granted in exceptional cases.

No person who is in receipt of social grant may receive the grant and social relief of distress simultaneously. Any person who receive both social relief and grant at the same time must repay the value of the social relief of distress received. This will be recovered from any social grant payment, including an arrear payment.

12.5.8 War Veterans Grant is paid to South African citizen and permanent residents that are 60 years and above or disabled. The applicant must not be in receipt of another social grant.

13. Engagement with the Parliament of Botswana Local Governance and Social Welfare Portfolio Committee

13.1 The Government of the Republic of Botswana is committed to assuring the well-being of all Batswana, including the less privileged, and who cannot support themselves financially. Destitute persons are those whose monthly income does not exceed BWP120.00 (N\$ 164,00) (without dependants) or BWP150.00 (N\$ 205,00) (with dependants) and are eligible for the destitute allowance.

13.2 Destitute Citizens Old Age Pension is for Botswana citizens only who are 65 years old and above. Eligible pensioners are required to register either with the Pension Officers at the District Commissioners Office, Service Provider or Headquarters (Social Protection Department). Currently, the pension allowance is BWP530.00 (N\$ 725,00) per month. Pensioners have a choice to access their allowance as cash from Service Providers at all pay points or monthly bank transfer to beneficiaries' bank accounts.

13.3 The ex-service men and spouse(s) of a deceased veteran who were involved in World Wars I and II are entitled to an allowance in recognition of their contributions. The allowance is BWP600.00 (N\$821,00)

13.4 The World War II (WW II) Veterans Allowance is payable to Botswana citizens who participated in World War I or World War II. It is further paid to spouse(s) of a deceased veteran and a deceased veteran's child under 21 years of age whose mother is also deceased.

- 13.5 Disaster Relief enhances response and offers relief to households affected by disasters in the form of loaned tents, mobile toilets, water tanks or any other non-perishable supplies, blankets clothing and access to medical services. This relief is offered to all citizens and non-citizens.
- 13.6 The Government revamped its effort and commitment to addressing poverty and came up with Poverty Eradication Programme (PEP) to economically empower and capacitate current and prospective beneficiaries to lead a dignified life. PEP is meant to assist individuals and or groups to graduate from extreme poverty or abject poverty through;
- (a) sustainable income generation and employment initiatives;
 - (b) capacity building and skills development; and
 - (c) provision of funds in order to promote micro and small scale entrepreneurship.
- 13.7 This program is coordinated from the Office of the President through Poverty Eradication Coordination Unit (PECU). PECU was established to accelerate programme uptake particularly those in abject poverty whose dignity has to be restored as a matter of urgency. The program is for Botswana citizens aged 18 years and above and are able to undertake selected projects. Participants earning or living income should not be more than P300.00 (N\$ 410,00) per month. A participant's spouse should not earn a monthly income in excess of P300.00 (N\$ 410,00), unless such income is seasonal, occasional or temporary. Livestock units should not exceed six (6) cows/ or fifteen (15) small stock.
- 13.8 Furthermore, the Youth Development Fund (YDF) is a socio-economic programme for start-ups and expanding businesses. YDF was introduced in the financial year 2009/10 as an economic empowerment programme meant to assist aspiring youth to venture into various economic enterprises funded at 50% loan & 50% grant while collaborating with other stakeholders such as Local Enterprise Authority to build the spirit of entrepreneurship and other government ministries and parastatals who offer technical support. YDF aims to achieve the following:
- (a) Promote active participation of youth in the socio-economic development of the country.
 - (b) Encourage out of school, marginalized, unemployed and underemployed youth to venture into sustainable and viable income generating projects.
 - (c) Promote the development of competitive, sustainable and growth-oriented citizen owned youth enterprises.
 - (d) Reduce rural-urban migration by making it attractive to start growth-oriented enterprises in rural areas.

- (e) Create sustainable employment opportunities for young people through the development of sustainable projects. The development fund is for Botswana citizens aged 18-35 years, out-of-school youth, unemployed youth, underemployed youth earning less than P2 500 (N\$ 3 422,00) per month.

13.9 The Government further has a Women's Economic Empowerment Programme, an initiative to help groups of women obtain seed money to start their own income generating projects. This grant also accommodates groups that include both women and men. This initiative is new and eligibility criteria are still under review.

14. Observations

14.1 The Committee noted the positive impact the Basic Income Grant had on the beneficiaries and the economic state of the settlement. The grant was all inclusive and each registered resident received the grant. The Committee noted the double benefit, as old people and children that benefited from social grants were also benefiting from the Basic Income Grant. Furthermore, no report or feedback on challenges that was brought by the grant was highlighted by any beneficiary during the interviews.

14.2 The Committee observed that the Government of the Republic of Namibia, though the Ministry of Finance has various cash transfer and in kind assistance programs in place including a Conditional Basic Income Grant (CBIG) which is a monthly cash grant paid to vulnerable people in the country. The program transitioned from the old food bank program to a monthly cash transfer program countrywide. This marks the first step towards phasing in a Conditional Basic Income Grant program. The Committee further noted that the unemployed Namibians that are above 18 and below 60 years, and not disabled are not cushioned by any social assistance program. The Conditional Basic Income program is currently targeting the urban poor only.

14.3 The Committee further observed that most of the social assistance programs in the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Botswana are similar to the social assistance programs in Namibia. However, South Africa and Botswana ensures that all age groups are benefitting from various grants and programs.

14.4 The South African government established an agency namely the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) that ensure effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social assistance. The Committee further took note of the various revenue collection initiatives in place and criteria that limit applicants to benefit from multiple grants.

- 14.5 Notably, the Government of Botswana has a Youth Development Fund (YDF) in place that encourages out of school, marginalized, unemployed and underemployed youth to venture into sustainable and viable income generating projects. The program is for start-ups and expansion of youth businesses by assisting with 50% loan & 50% grant.

15. Conclusion

In summary, poverty as a multifaceted issue is measured by household income and consumption. It is critical to understand the poverty status of vulnerable groups to ensure that they receive the support and protection they need. Social protection as an important lever for responding to shocks, mitigating risks and reducing poverty incited the proposal for a Basic Income Grant in Namibia.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia, though the Ministry of Finance has various cash transfer and in kind assistance programs in place to cushion the vulnerable persons. The programs include a Conditional Basic Income Grant (CBIG) which is a monthly cash grant paid to vulnerable people. The program transitioned from the old food bank program to a monthly cash transfer program countrywide as a step towards phasing in a Conditional Basic Income Grant.

16. Recommendations

The Committee recommend that the Ministry of Finance to:

- 16.1 Propose constitutional amendments that introduce new taxes on natural resources and tourism to increase revenue directed towards safety nets.
- 16.2 Establish a one stop Agency to ensure effective and efficient administration, management and payment of social grants.
- 16.3 Enhance visibility and publicity of available grants through various stakeholders and media platforms such as mass texting and broadcasting.
- 16.4 Design and implement programs for vulnerable people in age groups not catered for by current grants.
- 16.5 Strengthen capacity of stakeholders such as regional representatives/regional councillors to enhance program delivery and beneficiary identification.
- 16.6 Strengthen data collection capacity to ensure all vulnerable Namibians are cushioned.

16.7 Synchronise all social grants to eliminate oversubscription.

16.8 Design guidelines and monitoring mechanism on the use of grants and qualification criteria.

17. Adoption of Report.

The report was adopted by the National Council Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs at its meeting held in the Blue Room, National Council Building on the 14 May 2025.



Hon Hans Linekela Nambondi
Chairperson

14/05/2025
Date