



Republic of Namibia

# **BLUEPRINT ON WEALTH REDISTRIBUTION AND POVERTY ERADICATION**

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## CALL FOR JUSTICE AND HUMAN DIGNITY

It is imperative to recognize that each and everyone has a role to play to reduce and eradicate poverty and ending hunger and destitution. People should therefore be central to poverty eradication efforts because they experience poverty and can also provide the solutions.

Charity and compassion will always play a significant role in the lives of people who are suffering and will provide adequate responses in helping those in need at the individual and community levels of society.

In the final analysis, the Government should have the responsibility to eradicate poverty because it has the power to initiate structural changes to law, programs and policies that are essential for a successful poverty eradication strategy. In addition, the Government can reallocate the resources of society more equitably through its regulatory and taxing powers and increase its funding of social programs.

People are calling for social justice and human dignity.

## COMMITMENT TO ACTION

“Let us think of our people. Let us think of the poor and pull together as one people in one direction with one goal, prosperity for all.”

(H.E. Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia at the opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the 6<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 9 February 2016.)



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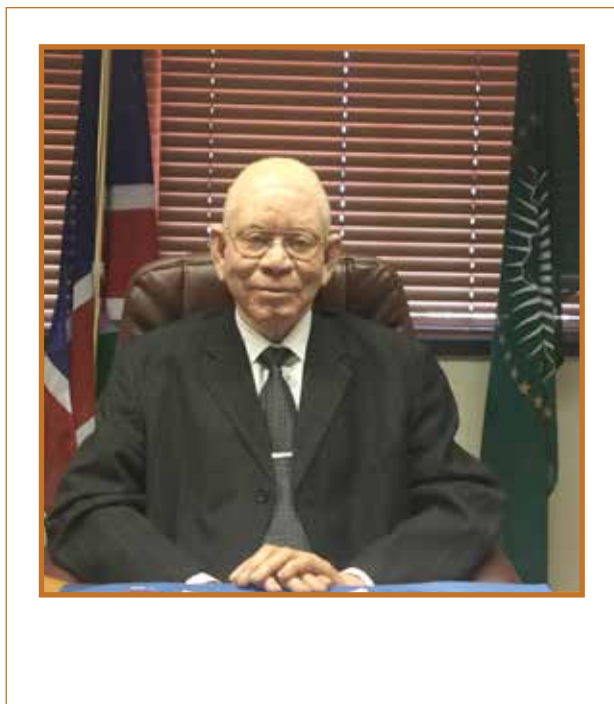
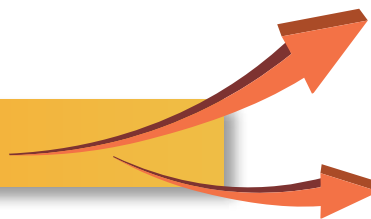
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



BoN	Bank of Namibia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
ILO	International Labour Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MITSD	Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development
MP	Member of Parliament
MPESW	Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
NDP	National Development Plan
NHIES	Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
OMAs	Offices, Ministries and Agencies
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
SDFN	Shack Dwellers Federation
DRC	Disability Resource Centre
HEW	Health Extension Workers
VET	Vocational Education and Training
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
VTC	Vocational Training Centers
COSDEC	Community Skills Development Centre
IP	Implementation Plan
NSFAF	Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund
KAYEC	Katutura Youth Enterprise Centre
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NAMCOL	Namibian College of Open Learning
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MPESW	Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
MURD	Ministry of Rural Development
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

MHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MME	Ministry of Mines and Energy
MWT	Ministry of Works and Transport
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MLR	Ministry of Land Reform
MGECW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
IGA	Income Generating Activity
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
GRBP	Gender Responsive Budgeting and Planning
NWEEP	National Women Economic Empowerment Programme
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPRS	National population registry system
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
BIG	Basic Income Grant
ROR	Remission of Rent
AMTA	Agro-Marketing and Trade Agency
DCP	Dry land crop production
SPA	Strategic Priority Area





such as high levels of unemployment, food insecurity, and inadequate access to basic services such as energy (electricity); water and sanitation; health; and education services especially in rural and very remote areas. In this regard measures should provide people with tools that build resilience and self-sufficiency to break the cycle of poverty. Social safety nets are one of such measures that can help graduate people out of poverty to sustainable livelihoods. This will require adopting a social welfare approach that is human rights based promoting the human rights and dignity of people and achieving social justice.

**T**his Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication is a policy framework aimed at advancing strategies for eradicating poverty and reducing income inequality in Namibia. This follows the declaration by His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, the President of the Republic of Namibia of the war on poverty. Namibia has made considerable progress in reducing poverty through its various National Development Plans (NDPs). Between 2001 and 2011, Namibia has recorded an 11-percentage point reduction in absolute poverty from 37.9% to 26.9%. Severe poverty was reduced in the same period from 23% to 15.8% thus registering a reduction of 7 percentage points.

Since gaining independence in 1990, the country has implemented various policies and strategies resulting in significant economic growth and improvements in social development. Nonetheless, poverty remains a challenge with many people facing other adverse conditions

It is against this background that the President declared war on poverty and established the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) to lead and coordinate national efforts to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality by 2025. The war on poverty is a shared national strategic priority, aiming to uplift the living standard of citizens. Poverty in Namibia is multi-faceted and the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) seeks to address the multiple challenges concurrently. This declaration of the war on poverty is also in line with the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG1 and SDG2, which advocate ending poverty and hunger.

The GRN recognizes that inclusive economic growth is the foundation for poverty eradication and reducing inequality in the long term. Thus, notwithstanding, the MPESW with support from relevant government ministries will concurrently

implement immediate measures to address and resolve the problem of poverty and inequality in the communities in the short term. The target intervention areas will include: ending hunger; expansion of social safety nets; provision of basic services such as water and sanitation, energy (electricity), and shelter; education and skills development; and employment creation. Focus will be on pragmatic interventions that yield positive development outcomes. Eradicating poverty in Namibia will require a purposeful and coherent approach to policy making across sectors and stakeholders, dedicated resources and accountability.

This shared national strategic priority is a call to action which all Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs), civil society, development partners, academia, private sector, and the media should collectively respond to.

ZEPHANIA KAMEETA, MP

**Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



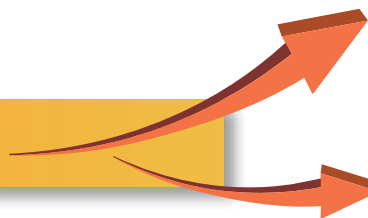
The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) wishes to acknowledge the various stakeholders who participated in the regional consultations and the national conference on poverty eradication and contributed to the production of this Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication. This was made possible through a participatory consultative process involving the officials from the GRN, participants from the regions and constituencies; and agencies of the United Nations (UN).

Special gratitude goes to the Presidency, sectoral ministries and government offices and agencies that cooperated and supported this process. Furthermore, our appreciation goes to Regional Governors who mobilized and organized communities to participate and contribute effectively to the dialogue on poverty eradication during the consultation process. Their inputs resulted in policy recommendations and practical interventions that are contained in

this Blueprint.

Our sincere thanks also go to the UN agencies for the technical assistance during the national dialogue. We in particular would like to thank the UNDP in Namibia for its valuable input into the initial drafting of the Blueprint.

Finally, we would like to thank the representatives of the private sector, civil society organizations, academia and special interest groups for their invaluable contribution. It is our sincere hope that the policy recommendations reflected in this Blueprint will go a long way in enabling Namibia to position itself for the next National Development Plan and for the smooth transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals. We also hope that this document will help Namibia achieve the objective of leaving no one behind by 2025, five years ahead of the global target of poverty eradication.



Since gaining its independence in 1990, Namibia has achieved significant progress in reducing poverty, although results have been uneven across its 14 regions. The Namibia Poverty Mapping Report 2015 indicates that Namibia recorded an 11-percentage point reduction in absolute poverty between 2001 and 2011 from a high level of 37.9% to 26.9% with the largest decline of 7.2 percentage points of people living in severe poverty being from 23% to 15.8%. A marginal decline in the country's Gini poverty coefficient from 0.597 in 2009/10 to 0.572 in 2015/16 suggests a slight improvement in income distribution, largely due to the Government's generous social safety net programme for the elderly, youth, people with disabilities, orphans and vulnerable children, which has been in place since independence. In 2013/14, the grant covered 98% of people above 60 years of age, up from 91% in 2011/12.

Despite the social safety nets and other developmental efforts by the Government, poverty remains stubbornly high in Namibia with about 18% of the population under absolute poverty and 11% under severe poverty according to the 2015/16 Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES). The unemployment rate, at 28.2% in 2014, remains high. This is a reflection of a skills mismatch and a weak education and training system that is not responding to the evolving labour market needs. Several people in the country also face food insecurity and lack sufficient access to basic services.

To tackle poverty head-on, the President of

the Republic of Namibia declared war on poverty and established the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) to lead and coordinate national efforts on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication. The declaration of war on poverty is embraced in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. This is also covered in Vision 2030 which states that by 2030 poverty and disparity among Namibians will be reduced to a minimum while the current pattern of income distribution will be equitable (NPC, 2004). Eradication of poverty is anchored in the Fourth National Development Plan 2012/13 to 2016/17 (NDP-4), whose target outcome is that the proportion of severely poor individuals will drop from 15.8% in 2009/10 to below 10% by 2017 (NPC, 2012).

In addition, the domestication of the first of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which addresses the ambitious goal of ending poverty in a holistic manner, will have a positive impact in achieving the other SDGs, including promoting gender equality; promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth; eradicating hunger; ensuring good health and well-being; ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education; ensuring sustainable production and consumption patterns; and taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) recognizes the multifaceted nature of poverty beyond monetary income, which is caused by the lack of basic services, availability and access to skills, which is reflected in the poor outcomes of education and health indicators.

Further, the GRN recognizes that there is need for a shared vision and that Namibians must adopt the spirit of Harambee<sup>1</sup>: that the fight against poverty should be inclusive, coordinated, holistic, and no Namibian should feel left behind. All Namibians deserve a dignified life, which includes, inter alia, employment, adequate housing, sanitation, education and access to good health care.

To defeat poverty and reduce inequality in Namibia in the long term, the GRN recognizes that Namibia must first and foremost grow the economy sustainably, inclusively, and holistically to create wealth, generate jobs for its citizens, and strengthen their capacities to contribute to economic activities through quality education and skills development. These policy goals will largely be addressed by the NDPs as the GRN mainstreams the SDGs into national, regional and local plans and shape budget allocations and target national resources at priority areas relevant for poverty eradication.

Concurrently, the GRN will implement programmes to address severe poverty and vulnerability in the short term through this Blueprint as the longer-term policies take effect. This implies that the GRN will adopt a dual approach to poverty eradication and make concerted efforts to implement appropriate programmes to eradicate severe poverty by 2025, ensuring that Namibia achieves the SDG1 five years ahead of the global deadline of poverty eradication set by the 2030 Agenda for SDGs. These efforts will be supported by interventions in the focus areas of: inclusive growth; social safety nets including the establishment of food banks for the urban

vulnerable groups; access to basic services; and education and skills development. The GRN will invest in quick-wins interventions that yield rapid and translate to positive long-term development outcomes in the rural areas. In essence, the action taken by the GRN will be in conformity with global practices on poverty eradication, which favour implementation of an integrated approach of long-term policy and short-term policy measures. Effective implementation of poverty eradication strategies will depend on coherency in policies and strategies, effective coordination amongst various stakeholders and regular reviews and impact assessments.

This Blueprint consists of the following (6) sections.

Section 1 introduces the Blueprint and sets out the background, vision and objectives. Section 2 presents the definitional framework on Poverty, Inequality, Social Exclusion and Vulnerability. Section 3 provides the situation analysis based on the related regional consultations and national dialogue. Section 4 identifies Key Strategic Priority Areas and suggests multi-sectoral interventions. Section 5 presents strategies for Coordination and Advocacy and suggests necessary arrangements for cooperation and collaboration across sectors and concludes with Coordination, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the Harambee Prosperity Plan 2016/17 – 2019/20 the Namibian Government's Action Plan towards Prosperity For All.





**SECTION 1:  
BACKGROUND**

## 1.1 Introduction

The overall well-being of the people, maintaining human dignity, equality, and equity are the overarching objectives of economic growth and development. These paramount objectives are embodied in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, which lays the foundation of the society the people want. This is a society that promotes social justice and restores the human dignity of the Namibian people particularly the poor and marginalized.

The Preamble of the Namibian Constitution recognizes the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as indispensable for freedom, justice and peace. Further, Chapter 3 provides for the protection and promotion of the human rights of all people, Chapter 11 contains Principles of State Policy, and in particular Article 95 provides that the State shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, inter alia, policies aimed at the following:

- Enactment of legislation to ensure equality of opportunity for women, to enable them to participate fully in all spheres of Namibian society;
- Ensure that 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;
- Enactment of legislation to ensure that the unemployed, the incapacitated, the indigent and the disadvantaged are accorded such social benefits and amenities as are

determined by Parliament to be just and affordable with due regard to the resources of the State; and

- Consistent planning to raise and maintain an acceptable level of nutrition and standard of living of the Namibian people and to improve public health.

Article 98 Principles of Economic Order also states that the economic order of Namibia shall be based on the principles of a mixed economy with the objective of securing economic growth, prosperity and a life of human dignity for all Namibians.

Whilst the Constitution guarantees a better life for all Namibians, poverty and inequality remain pervasive in the country mainly due to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Many years of foreign domination and oppression, including the laws of racial discrimination based on white supremacy, the denial of appropriate education and the policies of divide and rule, have all contributed to the current state of poverty and inequality. In fact, poverty and inequality have been deep rooted and structured in such a way that the division between poor and well-off or disadvantaged and advantaged is evident in all social and economic spheres. Today many people in Namibia live in deplorable conditions due to poverty and inequality. Unless these are addressed and resolved, people will have no hope for a better future.

Following independence in 1990, Namibia has established peace, stability, security, and democracy, which laid the foundation for the overall well-being of the people, particularly the poor, along with economic growth and



development. Guaranteeing the well-being of the people contains many interrelated aspects which amongst others include poverty reduction and its ultimate eradication, reduction of income inequality, creating employment and empowerment of the marginalized people and communities.

In this regard, Namibia has made efforts in addressing and resolving challenges of food insecurity, high disease burden, malnutrition, shelter and unemployment. These efforts include, among others, provision and increasing access to basic social services. However, addressing the underlying causes of these challenges require multiple actors and interventions as outlined in this Blueprint.

## **1.2 War on Poverty and Sustainable Development Goals**

All Namibians deserve a dignified life, which includes, amongst others, decent employment, adequate food and clothing, suitable shelter/housing for all, clean water, sanitation, education with skills development and good health care.

Poverty eradication requires:

- Political will;
- Mobilization of the required resources including human resources and expertise;
- Networking with all the stakeholders; and
- Formulation and adopting management structures for better programme coordination and implementation to generate the expected outcomes.

These are prerequisites to generate positive outcomes, and to address the aspirations of the people, especially the poor and vulnerable, and to meet the expectations generated from the regional consultation meetings held during September to October 2015 in all 14 regions, and the National Conference on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication held in Windhoek in October 2015.

With committed and unified actions based on the declaration of the War on Poverty, the Sustainable Development Goals in particular SDG1 to end poverty in all its forms and SDG2 to end hunger and achieve food security, as well as other national policies and strategies, Namibia will eradicate poverty by the year 2025. This provides the GRN with an appropriate goal to make life better for all Namibians.

In a broader sense, the War on Poverty means people-centered development, thereby placing greater emphasis on social policies and social protection as part of public policy. More importantly, eradicating poverty will require deciding on key strategic priorities and deliberate, results oriented interventions, including public expenditure and investments in social development to achieve equity, sustainable livelihoods, and human dignity through inclusive growth and development.

In line with the Harambee Prosperity Plan calling for accelerated implementation of programmes, this Blueprint seeks to achieve the implementation of key strategic interventions as outlined herein. This will be achieved through a participatory process of which the ultimate thrust is inclusivity, sustainable economic growth and human development.

### 1.3 Institutional Arrangement

21 March 2015 saw the establishment of a new governance structure for the GRN. New Ministries were established and the existing Ministries were streamlined and in some instances re-aligned to conform to the new strategic thrust that aims at making concerted efforts to realize complete poverty eradication in Namibia. Subsequently, the MPESW was established as a strategic directive to lead and coordinate national efforts on poverty eradication and reduction of inequality.

### 1.4 Shared Vision

Namibia achieved and remains committed to maintaining peace, stability, security and democracy and to embark upon a path to prosperity. The shared vision underlying poverty eradication is prosperity for all. It will be achieved through a mix of well-articulated interventions and a committed people internalizing the shared vision and working together as a united front. Namibia, with a population of 2.2 million and enormous natural resources, can ensure decent living standards for all on par with developed countries.

This shared vision, which will enable Namibia to eradicate poverty and reduce vulnerability, social exclusion, and inequality, is based on core values and principles encompassing the following goals:

- To restore people's human dignity;
- To achieve equitable redistribution of wealth, through equal opportunities to ensure equality and access to resources;
- To promote a paradigm shift and mindset

change that empowers people to help themselves and help each other in the spirit of solidarity;

- To create a conducive environment that will enable people to graduate out of poverty towards prosperity; and
- To build the Namibia house.

### 1.5 Principles and values

The principles and values that underpin the Blueprint include:

- Unity
- Social solidarity
- Human development
- Human dignity
- Inclusivity
- Hard work and commitment to eradicating poverty and reducing inequality
- Effective and efficient use of resources
- Sustainability
- Fighting corruption and wastage

The nation is convinced of the destination that should be reached by 2025. The Shared Vision will serve as the guiding light, the core values will lay the foundation for building a caring and compassionate society and the Blueprint will be the roadmap.

### 1.6 Rationale

Since independence, Namibia has reduced poverty by 41%. Namibia is, however, among the most unequal countries globally in terms of income distribution, with poverty affecting 600,000 Namibians. The need to fulfill the human rights of the poor and vulnerable by

ensuring that they meet their basic needs and attain prosperity similar to any other citizen in the country is at the center of the rationale for the war on poverty, despite stable and sustainable economic growth, poverty remains the greatest global challenge of human development and Namibia is not an exception. Hence ending poverty and ending hunger are the first and second goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In light of the above, the rationale of poverty eradication can be presented on the basis of the following:

- Since 1990, Namibia has achieved and continues to maintain peace, stability, security and democracy which serve as the 4 pillars for economic growth and human development. The nation is therefore committed to promoting prosperity in which all citizens will enjoy a better life and a standard of living on par with developed countries (Vision 2030). Prosperity cannot be promoted and achieved unless poverty is eradicated. Indeed, eradication of poverty is the gateway for promoting prosperity.
- Namibia remains committed and dedicated to human rights for its citizens. However, human rights<sup>2</sup> cannot be secured when a substantial percentage of the citizens live in poverty. The human rights approach to poverty eradication provides a conceptual framework for the process of sustainable human development which is one cornerstone of economic growth and development. When human rights are part of policy making, poverty eradication efforts are people-centered, pro poor-centered and basic-needs centered.
- Sustainable development (development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations) identifies 3 components; namely social development, economic development and environmental sustainability – as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components. It is a generally accepted thesis that sustainable development cannot be achieved without eradicating poverty. This is the reason that assessment of the progress of sustainable development must involve poverty eradication without which the goal of sustainable development is not attainable.
- With respect to the macroeconomic stability, approximately 28% of the labour force is unemployed and this places a constraint to the optimization of economic growth and development. It should be noted that most of the unemployed are young and poor. This explains the fact that Namibia's potential Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is less than one third of the labour force which does not contribute to economic growth. The concept of inclusive growth (i.e. that the poor or unemployed contribute to and benefit from growth) is the foundation of poverty eradication.
- Namibia is endowed with many natural resources and can provide a better life to its people. The challenge is not the lack of natural resources, but rather the lack of proper organization and management of the resources. When the poor people are integrated in the utilization of natural resources their levels of income increases along with economic development and GDP growth.

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<sup>2</sup> The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and SDGs are based on human rights.

- Poverty and inequality are the breeding grounds for social unrest and can have an impact on hard won peace, stability, security and democracy and therefore need to be addressed.
- to enhance access to basic social services;
- to achieve sustainable employment creation through skills development and appropriate employment creation strategies;

## 1.7 Goals and objectives

### Goals

This Blueprint has as its main goal the laying of a foundation for achieving prosperity for all through implementing measures that will eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. This will make Namibia a global partner in the implementation of the SDGs, particularly to end poverty and hunger on the basis of inclusive economic growth and human development.

### Objectives

The President's statements since his inauguration on 21 March 2015 encapsulate the following basic tenets, which form the objectives for eradicating poverty and reducing inequality in Namibia:

- to protect and help the poor, vulnerable people, deprived communities and the unemployed by investing in programmes, sectors and communities where opportunity and equitable inclusion is a reality for all;
- to improve and sustain the food and nutrition status of children and the poor and vulnerable;
- to enhance the provision of social safety nets;

- to support gender equality and women empowerment; and
- to lay the foundation for a stronger, more sustainable economy that distributes benefits more fairly and equitably to all Namibians.

## 1.8 Strategic Approach, Implications and Impact

The approach adopted herein contains strategic interventions that are required to achieve the objectives under this Blueprint. These interventions are cross-cutting, time bound and highly participatory and contributory. Generally, the causes of poverty and inequality are interrelated, and reinforce each other in generating the expected outcomes. The GRN must take the lead in eradicating poverty with the involvement and participation of all stakeholders. All OMAs should ensure the development and effective implementation of all programmes within their mandates, with ultimate outcome being the eradication of poverty.

On the basis of the above, the role of the MPESW will be:

- To coordinate the implementation of the overall policies and programmes pertaining to poverty eradication and reducing inequality;

- To monitor and evaluate the level of execution and impact of overall policies and programmes pertaining to poverty eradication and reducing inequality.

The GRN, especially economic sector Ministries, as well as financial sector institutions, should maintain policies that enhance macroeconomic stability in order to support social development policies that address poverty eradication.

Furthermore, the education reforms including strengthening vocational training to produce labour market driven skills, knowledge and expertise for employment, the pillars of the Harambee Prosperity Plan and empowerment policies and laws, the Public Procurement Act, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and the creation of an inclusive environment for private sector investment are part and parcel of the long term policy measures and strategies for poverty eradication.

This approach will help to understand the nature and extent of short to medium and long term perspectives that support and guarantee the success of the GRN's concerted and dedicated efforts to formulate and implement appropriate policies and strategies to eradicate poverty by 2025. In other words, all the above will ensure that Namibia will achieve SDG1 (end poverty) five years ahead of the global deadline of poverty eradication set by the 2030 Agenda for SDGs.

Another important element of the Blueprint is coordination and cooperation among the main stakeholders. In fact, this is the key element of poverty eradication because if resources and efforts are not coordinated then the expected outcomes cannot be generated. In view of the above and on the basis of priority, the formulation

of policies, strategies and interventions and their implementation will require the involvement of all the stakeholders. Guided by the shared vision, goals and objectives, this Blueprint will identify interventions that should be implemented by various stakeholders across sectors to generate expected outcomes in a credible and transparent manner to eradicate poverty.

## **1.9 Purpose of the Blueprint**

Given the above background, this document serves to:

- Present the main concepts related to poverty eradication and reducing of inequality;
- Succinctly present the data and information related to the situation of poverty and inequality;
- Formulate the priority areas based on the challenges identified and concerns and issues raised during the regional consultations and the national dialogue;
- Propose the required policy interventions necessary to generate the expected outcomes;
- Present a framework for the required coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders and advocacy (i.e. organization and management aspects of poverty eradication); and
- Provide a mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of the results and reporting.

This Blueprint does not replace sectoral plans, programmes and policies but coordination of all these will be essential in the effective implementation of the Blueprint.



**SECTION 2:  
DIMENSIONS OF  
POVERTY AND  
INEQUALITY**

## 2.1 Introduction

In order to develop effective policy interventions, there is a need to gain a common understanding of the meaning of the basic and related elements of poverty eradication. These include an explanation of the following concepts: (a) the nature of poverty (b) inequality, (c) social exclusion and (d) vulnerability. Indeed, the above concepts encapsulate the concerns and interests expressed during the regional consultations and the national dialogue. As poverty is a complex and multifaceted concept, it should be noted that explanations provided below are to serve as guiding the focus of this Blueprint.

“Definitions of poverty should be dynamic and keep up with factors such as inflations, changing economic, political and even environmental conditions.

Therefore, in Namibia you are poor if you:

- go to bed hungry or eat from the dumpsite
- share drinking water from a well with livestock
- cannot afford a decent house
- still rely on nearby bushes when nature calls
- do not have access to decent health services.”

Hon. Minister Bishop (Em.) Z. Kameeta,

4 February 2016 Post Election Seminar of members of the National Council

## 2.2 Poverty

Poverty can be viewed as a state of deprivation and can be defined in absolute and relative terms. Absolute poverty is defined as inability to afford basic goods and services. It thus refers to the number of people living below an income threshold that have been officially designated to be a cut-off point to differentiate the poor from the well off.

Relative poverty refers to the standard of living

defined in terms of the expectations within which an individual life. Thus, this is a comparative measure, measured relative to what the society believed to be the acceptable standard of living. An individual could be defined as poor in terms of deprivation. Deprivation refers to an unmet need resulting from a lack of resources both financial and non-financial.

The common dimensions of deprivation are material, which is a proxy to income, education, health, employment and living environment. These dimensions speak to access to information and assets, education services, health services, housing and portable water, sanitation, electricity and employment.

Bringing these absolute and relative concepts together, this Blueprint departs from an understanding that for poverty eradication to be achieved by 2025, poverty can be defined as the inability of individuals, households or entire communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living. The question remains as to how poor people themselves view poverty? During the regional consultations by the President and the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare the poor characterized their poverty in the following manner:

- Alienation from the community.
- Isolation from the institutions of kinship and community.
- Food insecurity and the inability to provide sufficient or good quality food for the family.
- Crowded homes: the poor are perceived to live in crowded conditions and in homes in need of maintenance.



- Use of basic forms of energy: in rural communities the poor, particularly the women, walk long distances to gather firewood or water, risking physical attack and sexual assault.
- Lack of adequately paid, secure jobs.
- Fragmentation of the family.

According to the 2009/2010 NHIES a person is said to be in absolute poverty if their annual consumption is less than N\$4,535.52. Current statistics indicate that 18% of the 2.2 million population live in absolute poverty<sup>3</sup>.

### 2.3 Inequality

Inequality refers to the unequal benefits or opportunities for individuals or groups within a society. Inequality applies both to economic and social aspects, and to conditions of opportunity and outcome. Social class, gender, ethnicity and locality generally influence inequality. Reducing inequality will require:

- Increasing the relative share of the poor;
- Reducing barriers by improving the progression of the poor and disadvantaged groups; and
- Eliminating the disproportionate advantages acquired in terms of education, access, political power, etc.

Inequality of income distribution can be explained on the basis of the Lorenz Curve that explains the relationship between percentage of the population and percentage of national income distribution as indicated in Graph 1. The centerline (45 degree line) explains the perfect income distribution or 1=1 relationship. As an example, 20% of the population should have 20% of the income which is perfect.

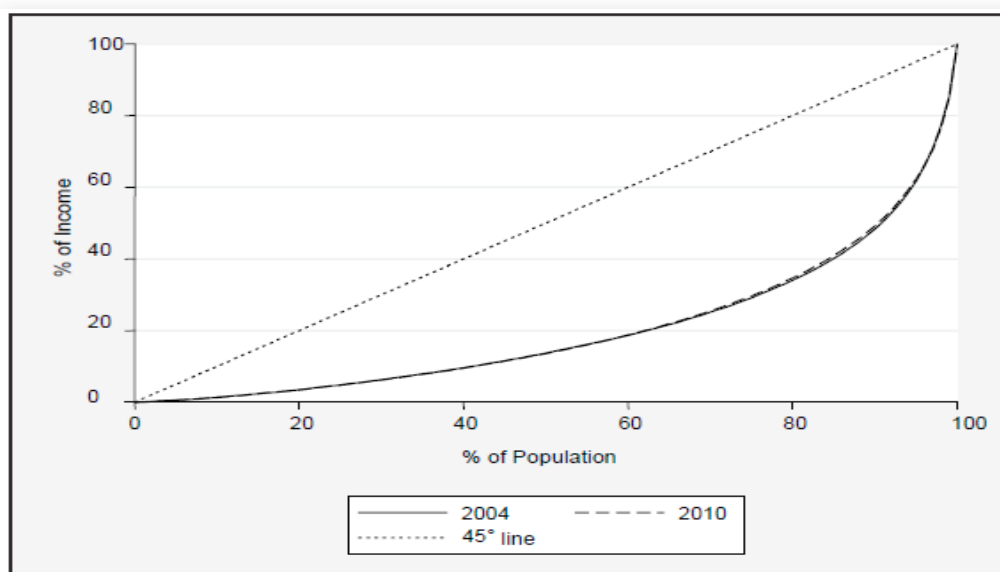
But based on the Lorenz Curves derived (the curve left of the center line) on the basis of the NHIES of 2003/2004 and 2009/2010, 20% of the population received less than 5% of the national income causing distribution of income inequality. We can apply the above to the other percentages of population and income that show inequality of income distribution.

According to the Lorenz Curves in Graph 1, there is no notable shift of the Lorenz from right to the left or the centre<sup>4</sup> line to indicate that Namibia has achieved notable reduction in inequality between the two surveys.

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3 Severe poverty or extreme poor is a sub-element of Absolute Poverty on the basis of the percentage of people whose annual per adult equivalent consumption is below N\$3 330.48.

**Figure 1:**  
**Lorenz curves of 2003/04 and 2009/10 in**  
**Namibia**



**Source: NHIES Summary-June 2012**

Furthermore, Gini-coefficient (mathematical calculation of the relationship between the area of the center 45 degree line and the Lorenz Curve) indicates the degree of inequality of income distribution. If the value of Gini-coefficient is 1 it shows the highest degree of inequality of national income distribution.

Deducing from the Gini coefficient of 0.572 in 2016, it implies that Namibia is viewed as one of the most unequal countries in the world. Hence policies and strategies aimed to address the causes of inequality are important to eradicate poverty.

## 2.4 Social exclusion

Social exclusion is a main source of poverty. It occurs when people are excluded from a

livelihood, sustainable earnings, property, credit, land, housing, education, skills and cultural capital, the minimal or prevailing consumption level, the social benefits provided

by the government, equality before the law, markets, public goods, the family and sociability, humane treatment, respect, personal fulfilment, understanding due to unacceptable attitudes and practices that may be related to low level of income, lack or no education, skills, skin colour, language, sex or religious belief, etc. Basically, any form of exclusion which prohibits full or partial engagement, participation and contribution to activities to optimize the potentials and capabilities of people leads to poverty and its aggravation over time.

## 2.5 Vulnerability

Vulnerability refers to the exposure of a particular individual or a group of people to shocks that can compromise their well-being and their lack of ability to cope with the consequences of the shocks. Generally women, children, the unemployed, persons with disabilities, the

4 Any movement of the Lorenz Curve from right to the left or to the centreline indicates improvement of income distribution. The opposite of the above is worsening income distribution. Generally, policies, strategies and situations will influence and impact on the movements of the Lorenz Curve.

elderly and households and communities with limited assets are the least able to cope because of deprivation and lack of access to services, the high disease burden and the negative consequences of natural disasters (such as floods and drought) and climate change. Therefore, policy interventions that seek to move people out of poverty sustainably need to address the questions of vulnerability. Such an approach requires strategies to help vulnerable individuals or groups build their livelihoods' resilience from shocks and stresses to better cope with future hazards.

This Blueprint focuses on the eradication of absolute poverty and its related elements of inequality, social exclusion and vulnerability. It takes into account the quantitative measures of

poverty as well as people's actual experiences and perceptions of poverty and how these manifest in social exclusion and instability. It also shows that deliberate interventions and an adaptation of the current social safety net system will be needed to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. Ideally, people should be able to earn a living through employment to live independent and self-sufficient lives rather than rely on welfare transfers. Thus the reason for a twin approach that will put the economy onto a sustainable and inclusive growth path that will generate jobs whilst ensuring that those who cannot take care of themselves because of natural dependencies are looked after through the provision of social assistance and welfare.



**SECTION 3:  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

### 3.1 Global Perspective

The global practice on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality in the long term indicates that Namibia must first and foremost grow the economy sustainably, inclusively, and in a holistic manner to create wealth, generate employment opportunities for its citizens and strengthen their capacities through education and skills development to ensure their full participation in society and economic activities. Such long term goals should, however, concurrently be complimented and supported by short term interventions such as social safety nets to address severe poverty and vulnerability among the poor and vulnerable.

Addressing poverty and inequality has a global dimension as evidenced by the adoption of the United Nations SDGs:

- SDG1 advocates for NO poverty in all its forms everywhere through social protection programmes, through substantially expanding coverage for the poor, aged, women, and children and all in vulnerable situations with secure equal rights to economic resources, access to basic services and employment creation.
- SDG2 aims to END hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and to promote sustainable agriculture with enhanced productivity through increasing access by all and availability of sufficient food all year round, and to end all forms of malnutrition.

### 3.2 Status of Poverty and Inequality

At the national level, Vision 2030 states that poverty and disparity among the population of Namibia will be reduced to the minimum while the current pattern of income distribution would be equitable (NPC, 2004). This is anchored by the Fourth National Development Plan 2012/13-2016/17 (NDP-4), whose target outcome is that the proportion of severely poor individuals will drop from 15.8% in 2009/10 to below 10% (NPC, 2012) by 2017. Namibia is currently developing its Fifth National Development Plan.

Since independence, Namibia has achieved significant progress in reducing poverty. Between 2001 and 2011, poverty headcount rate (under bound poverty line) has declined by 11%, from 37.9 to 26.9. Inequality on the basis of Gini coefficient, has also reduced from 0.597 in the year 2009/10 to 0.572 in 2015/16. This was due to huge investments in social sectors, institutionalized democracy, political stability, peace and security, as well as sustained macroeconomic stability supported by prudent fiscal and monetary policies.

According to the Poverty Mapping Survey 2015 the poverty level in Namibia is estimated at 26.9%, with about 568 000 people estimated to be poor. Through ongoing national interventions, between 2001 and 2011, about 125 000 people were lifted out of poverty. Regional profiles of poverty show varying degrees. Kavango Region (split into Kavango East and Kavango West in 2013) recorded the highest poverty levels of 53%, while Khomas Region, which covers largely Windhoek the capital city, recorded lowest levels



- Expressed commitment to the eradication of poverty in Namibia by 2025. MPESW urged to implement appropriate programs to ensure that Namibia beats the global SDG deadline of poverty eradication by five years by supporting the proposed intervention measures aimed to:
  - Enhance social safety nets;
  - Address deprivation from basic social services;
  - Expand training and skills development; and
  - Promote employment creation through small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and community development activities.
- Reiterated the need to pursue sustainable interventions, and urged the MPESW to immediately finalize this Blueprint framework on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication, to contain amongst others the establishment and functioning of food banks, to review and propose sustainable social safety nets targeting the vulnerable persons and to implement multi-sectoral coordination, and establish review, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Supported the introduction of a single register system(s) that contribute to inclusiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness of various social programmes within government and enhance coordination and alignment.
- Recommended that appropriate empowerment programs for the vulnerable members of society be designed to target those with capacity and ability, and to ensure support and mentoring programs are instituted.
- Reiterated that investment in agricultural sector has great potential to create sustainable jobs, which provide lasting solution to poverty. In this vein, the conference reiterated agricultural activities to support the supply to food banks and the agricultural hubs. The conference also supported the call for the allocation of agricultural land to unemployed youth for productive agriculture, and access to clean water by all communities.
- Agreed that deprivation of communities to basic services fuels poverty, and called on all government institutions to ensure implementation of their programmes, provision of services in remote areas and uphold professionalism in the delivery of services.
- Reiterated that programs to be designed must be easy to implement, fiscally sustainable, efficient and must have the ability to restore people's dignity and capability.

These recommendations informed the development of this Blueprint.

### **3.4 Social Development**

#### **Demographic characteristics**

Namibia's current population is 2.2 million people as per 2011 National census. The proportion of female to male is estimated at 51.37% in 2014. The population is predominantly young, with 30% aged 18-34 years (NSA, 2011). The majority of the household population (53%)



lives in rural areas, while 47% in urban areas. Although the difference is not much, the same trend was observed in 2009/10 with 62% in rural and 38% in urban areas (NSA, 2015).

The percentage of those living in urban areas is projected to increase from 42% in 2011 to 67% in 2041. This indicates that Namibia is likely to transit from being mostly rural to a society that is mostly urban. The country has a low population density of 2.6 persons per square kilometre, making the provision of service delivery costly and uneven. Low population density together with increasing population imposes profound challenges in service delivery aimed at poverty eradication. These statistics indicate the following are relevant to the interventions to be proposed:

- Youth with high unemployment and the demographic dividend.
- Women are the majority yet amongst the poorest with many households now headed by women and children.
- Rapid urbanization with increased demands on services.
- Sparsely populated country and the challenges of the even distribution of services.

## **Food security and nutrition**

Food insecurity in Namibia is less a problem of availability and more a question of access and utilization. Although being a structurally food deficit country, Namibia is still able to ensure

availability of food at national level through imports and local production. High dependence on food imports therefore makes the country susceptible to high food prices, a situation that further compromises the ability of poor and most vulnerable households to access adequate food that is available in the country. In 2015, about 370,316 people (representing 16% of the total population) were found to be food insecure<sup>5</sup> and required government social assistance. The 2016 Global Hunger Index also ranks Namibia 108<sup>th</sup> out of 123 countries assessed, with an index score of 31.4, indicating a 'serious food problem'<sup>6</sup>.

The existence of food and nutrition insecurity in Namibia is due, in part, to poverty compounded by unequal incomes, recurrent natural hazards where cyclical drought and floods severely affect people's livelihoods and poor access to sanitation and adequate safe water, to mention but a few. Low-income earners struggle to meet their minimum daily requirements for food intake accessing poor quality foods with low micronutrient quality. This implies that poverty is a major factor limiting access to food among this group. At the other end of the spectrum, high-income earners have problems of over-consumption and as a result obesity affects 25.8%<sup>7</sup> of the population in Namibia, a situation that needs to be addressed to mitigate the negative effects of obesity associated health conditions.

Addressing hunger and poverty through food

5 Namibian Vulnerability assessment Committee, Namibia Emergency Food Security Assessment 2013.

6 Namibia Zero Hunger Strategic Review Report, 2016.

7 Global, regional, and national prevalence of overweight and obesity in children and adults during 1980–2013: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2013.

safety nets is a necessary first step to eradicating poverty and ensuring food security in the long-term by increasing production and access to food. As for food safety nets, the GRN is already providing school feeding programmes and is in the process of establishing food banks to help to maintain a decent health and nutritional status for those most vulnerable. A good measure will be to link such school feeding programmes to small holding farmers.

## **Access to Basic Services**

The lack of access to basic social services causes deprivation and fuels relative poverty among the population. It is thus important that provision of such services is accelerated to ensure social welfare among the people.

### **Water**

Namibia is a naturally arid country and water is a very scarce resource. Higher temperatures and changes in extremes, including floods and droughts, are projected to affect water quality and quantity due to high evaporation, as the climate gets drier, and exacerbate many forms of water pollution.

Supply of portable water remains a challenge especially in rural areas where people walk long distances to the nearest water points. In some instances people resort to unhygienic water sources for daily requirements, or authorities provide mobile water tankers to communities. Apart from household needs, water is required for agricultural activities, livestock farming, micro and small businesses.

Slow implementation of water supply projects aggravates poverty and vulnerability, and where water is provided; especially rural poor communities have expressed concern over high user tariffs for both human and livestock consumption.

### **Sanitation**

Provision of basic sanitation (suitable adequate sewerage disposal) remains a challenge in Namibia particularly in schools and other public places, and in rural areas. Studies shows that the proportion of households in rural areas that have access to basic sanitation increased slightly from 14% in 2003 to 17% in 2010, whereas the proportion of households in urban areas with access to basic sanitation slightly decreased, from 59% in 2003 to just 57% in 2010 (NPC, 2015).

There are also regional disparities in access to sanitation. For example, 80% of households in Khomas region have access to basic sanitation compared to 10% in Ohangwena and Zambezi Regions. Furthermore, it should be noted that 50% of households in Namibia use bush toilets, while 14% in urban areas and 77% in the rural areas use bush toilets exposing them to huge public health problems.

Despite increased access in most urban areas, rapid urbanization also increases the growth of informal settlements putting pressure on increased sanitation facilities. Poor sanitation is contributing to high levels of morbidity and ultimately affects the quality of education and health and the provision of other services.

## Shelter<sup>8</sup> and Housing

The provision of housing and suitable shelter remains a basic requirement ensuring a dignified life for the poor and persons in vulnerable situations throughout society. In particular, the housing challenge is particularly evident in Namibia with the increase in the establishment of informal settlements.

Namibia's rate of urbanization has accelerated over the past two and half decades, and is recorded to be higher than the population growth rate. Despite current housing programmes, there is need for further interventions in the provision of housing and shelter, to match the demand. This increased demand for housing has resulted from low access to serviced land and low incomes that prevent people from buying affordable houses and thereby from becoming homeowners.

There is a need for reforming the housing sector institutions to effectively deliver adequate housing to overcome the deficit, evaluate housing finance mechanisms to encourage expanded lending to the urban poor and the vulnerable, such as demonstrated through the community-based savings work of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia, and provide housing solutions to low-income households through cross-subsidization (Shelter Africa, 2013).

It has been observed that vulnerable persons, particularly poor elders, remain perpetually indebted to regional councils due to accumulated debts and inability to pay for municipal services. In a bid to recover the debt, the local authority has resorted to auctioning their properties thereby

leaving such people homeless and destitute. The major question is how government can protect poor and elderly homeowners from losing their homes due to debts. Another difficulty facing especially the elderly and poor people is the transfer costs they encounter in cases of deaths and the surviving spouse or child has to secure ownership thereafter.

## Energy (electricity)

Access to electricity plays a crucial role in enhancing rural development which creates jobs and also to retain and attract professionals to the rural areas. Energy is also a source for lights and other uses in households. Some rural and remote areas are not connected to the national grid. Household demands for electricity have increased over time.

Even where the connectivity is available, consumption is considered very costly and leading poor and vulnerable people and communities into debt, especially with local authorities and utility companies, with consequences of their properties auctioned to recover such debts. However, as an immediate solution, the GRN will lead the process to introduce and install renewable and affordable energy such as solar power equipment in line with SDG7, especially to cater to the poor and vulnerable people.

## Health

Health status, especially of women and children, is a good indicator of development in a country. Maternal and child mortality remains high in Namibia and causes are mostly due to the lack of access to antenatal care for many pregnant

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<sup>8</sup> For the Blueprint Housing means living facility people can afford with their incomes. Shelter is temporarily facility (with or without sanitation) until graduation to housing

women and late deliveries, and malnutrition amongst children. The establishment of maternal waiting shelters is an attempt to address maternal mortality.

Health interventions are best provided through an integrated healthcare system at the district level based on the primary healthcare approach and universal health coverage.

Universal access to health services is a basic right to all the citizens. And the GRN has invested in health infrastructure in the country, especially community health programmes and primary healthcare at community levels. However, like for education, given the sparsely distributed population, there are people who travel long distances to access the nearest health centers, especially in remote areas.

## Education

Education and skills development are essential for eradicating poverty, increasing productive employment, and reducing inequality.

The government's commitment to education has resulted in the improvement in the literacy rate of women and men aged 15-24 from 76 per cent in 1991 to 96 per cent in 2015 (NPC, 2015). Primary enrolment has increased from 89 per cent in 1992 to 99.6 per cent in 2012 thus registering commendable performance, which is prerequisite to eradicating poverty and reducing inequality.

Government has introduced free primary education in 2014 and free secondary education in 2016, both having led to increased enrolment

at schools. Access to education is also inhibited by some factors such as:

- Dropouts from schools, and non-entry to tertiary education or vocational training due to lack of access to adequate financial support;
- Dilapidated and/or inadequate school infrastructure;
- Teenage pregnancies;
- Lack of food that prevent learners from attending school regularly.

Youth unemployment is also partly due to the relative lack of vocational training centres to equip young people with technical skills needed in the job market or to encourage entrepreneurship.

## Gender inequity and Women Empowerment

Women in Namibia have traditionally suffered discrimination and exclusion from full participation in the political, socio-economic and cultural life of the nation. This is evident in the high proportion of women who are poor relative to male. As a result, women participation in economic activities remains lower, but notable representation of women in legislative process recorded remarkable progress since 2015. Women's vulnerability to gender based violence and diseases such as HIV is well documented and although good policies and strategies exist action is still lacking behind. There are many cases of women being evicted from homesteads when their husbands die, leaving them vulnerable and destitute.

Enhancing of gender equality programmes – which lead to increasing women’s participation in decision-making and ensuring their economic empowerment – supports poverty eradication efforts.

Coupled with gender equality, is the welfare of the children. Children are affected by disease epidemics (such as HIV/AIDS) and are orphaned at early ages, and left to head households. Children from poor families are more than likely to suffer from diseases and malnutrition due to lack of food and living in unhygienic environments, and lack access to basic services such as education and health. The GRN has specific programmes aimed at enhancing the welfare of children, which include school feeding programmes and social grants for orphans and vulnerable children.

As noted before, women’s and children’s health status and level of education are indicators of a country’s development. Hence, focus should be put on health (in particular sexual and reproductive health), education, access to economic opportunities, the right to control access to resources and freedom from violence.

### **Disabilities and Special Needs**

The GRN is strongly committed to the advancement and rights of persons with disabilities, and the Constitution enshrines equal rights and status for every citizen and by signing the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. There are 105 000 people living with disabilities in Namibia, making up 5% of the population.

A National Disability Strategy has been formulated involving all related ministries. The

GRN has implemented programs for enabling and integrating persons with disabilities within the mainstream of society through various programs, including stipend programs for students, subsistence allowance, skill training, and interest free micro credit. In addition to its own initiatives, the GRN provides funds to NGOs to provide education facilities to persons with mental disability. The GRN provides social grants to persons with disabilities, as a means to enhance their income and social welfare.

Despite some progress, access to special education, training and rehabilitation, equal opportunities, creation of employment and income generating opportunities, social security, accessibility to physical facilities, fixation of quota, and prevention of disabilities are not yet fully ensured.

### **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

Alcohol abuse is a major social issue facing Namibia. During the national dialogue, it was confirmed that some people use their income on alcohol, failing to sustain their families and households, thus leading to the deepening of poverty and increase in gender based violence.

A further concern is existence of shebeens that are set up in residential areas that expose children and families to alcohol, drug abuse, noise pollution and violence. Easy access to alcohol was cited as a cause of poverty and violence.

### **3.5 Inclusive Growth and Wealth Redistribution**

Namibia will achieve long lasting poverty eradication by ensuring that growth is inclusive

and sustainable through the creation of employment opportunities, particularly in the sectors with the largest proportion of the poor and vulnerable. Growth is inclusive when it takes place in the sectors where the poor work, such as agriculture, or when it occurs in places where the poor live, such as the rural areas, or when it uses the factors of production that the poor possess, mainly unskilled labour, and when it reduces prices of consumption goods that the poor consume, mainly food, fuel and clothing.

Inclusive growth provides broadly shared opportunities to accumulate productive assets like education, and it allows people to utilize these assets in growth-enhancing activities and to benefit from such activities.

Inclusive growth should imply that growth must be sustained for a long time by cutting across broad-based economic sectors and ensuring that the majority of the population participate in the growth process and benefit from its dividends.

The increased income among local employees will enhance empowerment and possible savings; reduce indebtedness; and improve the pattern of consumption which directly and indirectly contributes to the eradication of poverty. Most importantly, this measure is a powerful instrument to reduce income inequality because the income of the company is now distributed among the employees as well increasing the number of income recipients in the population.

This is attained by focusing on productive employment that ensures that workers reap the benefits of rising productivity and wealth redistribution.

### **3.6 Social Safety Nets**

Namibia has a well-established social protection system, which comprises, social security and social assistance programmes. Social security is contributory and for those in employment and includes retirement pension, social security payments and workmanship compensation.

Social assistance includes grants paid to persons aged 60 years and above, grants to people living with disabilities, subventions for war veterans and grants for orphans and vulnerable children as well as the provision of social welfare services. Other indirect social protection programmes include: fee exemptions for basic services for the poorest households (health, education), and free primary and secondary school education. In addition, social assistance programmes include measures to promote productive activities to build and maintain sustainable livelihoods, for example through the provision of seeds and small livestock.

Food based safety nets such as the School Feeding Programme, the Drought Relief Programme and the San Feeding Programme form an important part of Namibia's social assistance programmes. Food-based safety net programmes guarantee a minimum level of consumption and contribute to assuring livelihoods. They also represent a contribution to household purchasing power by freeing up income that households use to meet their other needs. About 320,000 school learners receive a daily nutritious meal at school every year. For the last 10 years, some 300,000 people on average received emergency food assistance from the GRN to address transitory hunger resulting from the impact of natural hazards

Global practices suggest that social safety nets are mostly effective in reducing poverty, promoting social inclusion of the poor and vulnerable, and improve health and education indicators, if they are implemented as conditional (UNICEF, 2015). There are more benefits of conditional supply of food and cash transfers including reduction of public expenditure. For example, in Brazil such cash transfers are made conditional on sending children to school or to participate in immunization programmes.

Most communities in the regions also lack an emergency support system to assist the vulnerable members of society when confronted with urgent and critical difficulties that require financial or other material resources for instant redress. Furthermore, the communities also lack readily available financial and technical means to support quick wins project interventions that would support long term development outcomes through schools, clinics, water connectivity, and road infrastructure.

## Challenges

The main challenges in the implementation of social protection programs are

- Vulnerable people not covered by existing social grants: The Namibia social safety net system excludes some vulnerable people since they do not meet the criteria under existing programmes. A pilot project on the Basic Income Grant in Oshivelo documented the positive social as well as the economic impact of a universal grant on food security, education, health, crime and local economic activities. The evidence of the pilot project shows that the current high levels of malnutrition amongst children

under the age of five can be effectively tackled through the payment of such a grant. It also helps to reduce the high levels of income inequalities. It has been further shown that economic security for people with low income greatly enhances the efforts in the health and education sector, supporting the government's interventions in these areas and leading to more effective service delivery and development of human capital.

- Limited coverage of existing social grants: Lack of national documents has prevented some eligible poor and vulnerable groups and foreign nationals and their children who are permanently residing in Namibia in obtaining the benefits of social safety nets. Supplying the required national documents will avail an opportunity for them to not only obtain social grants but acquire other means that would contribute to eradicating poverty. In addition, provision of national documents will restore rights of the eligible beneficiaries as citizens. Furthermore, lack of information about the existence of social safety nets deprive otherwise eligible persons from their rights to claim or to seek assistance. The procedures are also very complex especially for those who cannot read or write.
- Lack of coherence: Although Namibia has a comprehensive social safety net system, it does not have a national social protection policy and implementation framework. This may largely account for the lack of coherence due to the high level of fragmentation in policy and programme implementation. Such a policy should be human rights based and its main objective

should be to graduate people out of poverty into sustainable livelihoods. The national social protection policy is vital to harmonize the existing programmes, policies and laws relating to social protection, to provide strategic direction for delivery of social protection services and to include measures that will effectively evaluate the performance of such programmes. It will also outline the links and complementarities between social protection and other government interventions and provide a basis for the development of specific policies, laws and programmes under focus areas for example: direct income support, social insurance and social welfare services. Policy coherence across sectors can also be enhanced through the development and adoption of a social policy framework.

Further efforts should be aimed at making the existing and new programs much better focused on reaching the intended beneficiaries and serving the needs of long term poverty eradication strategies.

While the GRN will continue to give priority to core social protection programs, efforts will also be made to find ways to promote expansion of contributory social protection programs, such as the introduction of the National Pension Scheme and a National Medical Aid Scheme, which can provide coverage to workers in the informal sector.

- Lack of integrated data on beneficiaries: A coherent and integrated national database developed from a comprehensive mapping of existing and emerging vulnerabilities as

well as all the social assistance programmes is a clear necessity. Currently, Namibia does not have such a database to ensure that social safety nets programmes are efficient, effective, systematic, well organised and managed and operated on the basis of an integrated and all-inclusive database of the beneficiaries. This is fundamental to avoid overlapping, duplication and exclusion of some eligible beneficiaries.

Experience from other countries, including Brazil, South Africa, Lesotho and Kenya, shows that this challenge has been resolved by the introduction of a single register system with integrated data registration and management (Bara and Chirchir, 2014). The system allows for integration of data from different schemes into one Information Communication and Technology system, which provides for a comprehensive mapping of the poor and vulnerable in the country and closer monitoring of social protection outcomes, resulting in: (a) cost reduction; (b) increased efficiency and effectiveness; (c) prevention of overlapping, duplication and exclusion; and (d) generates strong synergy as programs become complementary. In the light of the above, a single register is essential for better targeting of social protection programmes which is an important step towards a unified social protection system.

### **3.7 Unemployment**

Namibia has an unemployment rate of around 28% (NPC, 2014), which is more prevalent in rural areas at about 30%, than in urban areas at



about 26%. Male unemployment rate is lower, at about 24%, than the female unemployment rate, at 32%. Youth unemployment (15-34 years) is the highest, at 39%. Agriculture accounts for only 29.5% of all employed persons. These figures indicate that efforts to reduce unemployment contribute to poverty eradication.

SMEs play a key role in fostering job creation and income generation in Namibia. It is estimated that there are over 33,700 SMEs, of which around 15,000 are formally registered, which provide some form of employment and income to 160,000 people (MITSD, 2015). The SMEs account for approximately one-third of the nation's workforce and contribute around 12% of GDP (BoN, 2004). It is recognized that most vulnerable people are not engaging in business in Namibia due to lack of access to finance among other challenges.

### **3.8 Lack of Coordination and Effective Implementation**

This is a major challenge because there are many sectoral interventions and programmes geared toward poverty eradication however these are not properly coordinated. Some of these includes:

- **Fragmented social safety nets:** Implementation of a social safety nets policy and programmes in Namibia is plagued with a high degree of fragmentation in coordination, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, a situation that will eventually militate against the war on poverty. Currently policies, strategies, and resources for eradicating poverty are resorting in different OMA's together with other stakeholders. This may account for the fact that despite

the GRN's sustained investment in welfare improvements for the people since independence, poverty remains an issue. There is need to institute a well-articulated and functional coordination mechanism to avoid duplication, overlapping and waste of resources.

- **Coordination challenges:** Institutional fragmentation and coordination challenges remain as various programmes and strategies are developed and implemented by various government entities without a system of coordination which significantly reduces the impact of such programmes. The creation of the MPESW with a mandate to coordinate sectoral initiatives and programs aimed at eradication of poverty and reducing inequality in Namibia presents this opportunity. This can only be achieved through the setting up of a coordination mechanism that allows for sharing of experiences by different entities, and for creation of synergies and targeting of interventions for the maximum desired impact.
- Experience shows that where multi-sectoral and inter-agency coordination is established and operationalized, coordination of various programmes by different structures in the country is strengthened, which builds synergies, reduces duplication of interventions, and lowers operational and capital costs (ILO, 2014).
- **Decentralization of poverty eradication efforts:** Eradicating poverty would require the active participation of the poor in the development and implementation of policies and programmes that affect them. This includes, amongst others, decentralization

of the implementation of the programmes to ensure their effectiveness, efficiency and impact for poverty eradication and to bring government closer to the people. The GRN is currently pursuing decentralization policies and programmes throughout the 14 regions of the country. This will require the GRN to develop a strategy to accelerate the positioning of programmes for eradicating poverty at the community levels and ensure that the communities regularly receive information to be updated with the development outcomes.

- Lack of impact assessments and review of social assistance program: Namibia inherited a social assistance programme which has improved over the years but still does not take into account a human

rights approach. If not properly defined and a correct approach adopted, social grants can deepen poverty and increase social exclusion and can foster negative stereotypes of dependencies that limit community involvement and opportunities to lift people out of poverty.

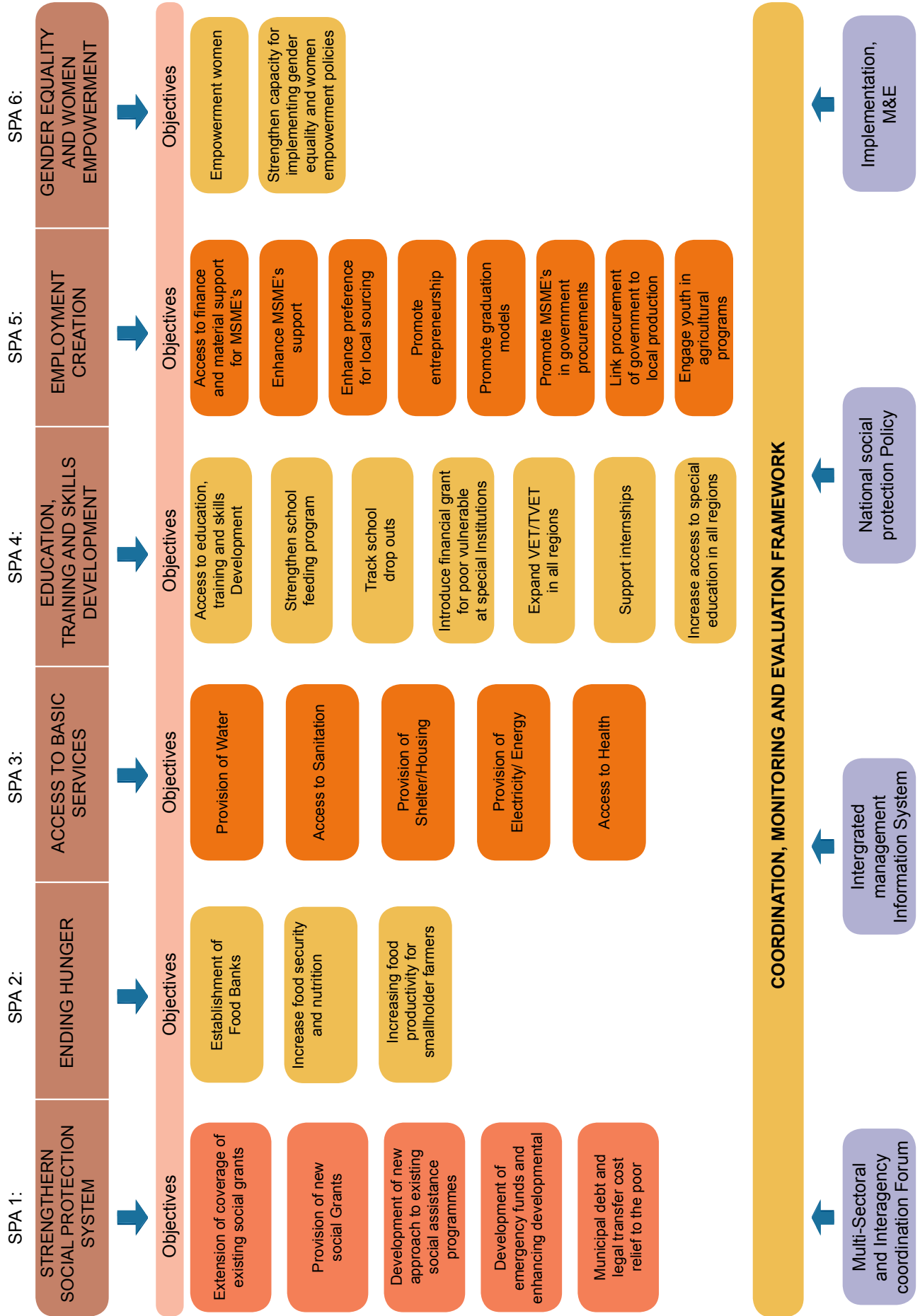
The overarching goal of a review would be to make social assistance relevant and efficient and thereby create a system that helps to achieve a life free of poverty for all in Namibia.

Regular monitoring and evaluation including assessments on the impact of social assistance will also help to refocus the programmes for better targeting and ensuring that eligible beneficiaries are included in the programmes.

**SECTION 4:  
STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY AREAS  
AND INTERVENTIONS**

**Blueprint Structure**

**Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs)**



## 4.1 Introduction

As poverty eradication and reduction of inequality is a complex undertaking that require a myriad of inter-sectoral participation, this Blueprint identifies interventions and strategies to address and resolve these challenges faced by many people. It is noted that there is no one set of solutions that can eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. Strategies and interventions to eradicate poverty are not limited to those identified herein; hence the expectation that in addition to implementing the interventions mentioned herein, there are other strategies pursued by various sectoral OMAs and entities whose impact is to eradicate poverty. This section focuses on Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) and interventions to eradicate poverty by 2025, namely:

- SPA 1: Strengthening Social Protection System
- SPA 2: Ending Hunger
- SPA 3: Access to Basic Services
- SPA 4: Education, Training and Skills Development
- SPA 5: Employment Creation
- SPA 6: Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

### **SPA 1: STRENGTHENING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM**

To pursue the above strategic area, the following strategic interventions are identified for which relevant activities would have to be undertaken.

### **Objective 1: Extension of coverage of existing social grants**

Realising the positive impact of social grants in eradicating poverty, there is a need to pursue the following interventions:

- Ensure that all eligible beneficiaries for all social grants have access to qualifying national documents by:
- Enhancing the establishment of dedicated centres and implement mobile registration for national documents to ensure that all the people who are qualified to receive the required national documents will receive such documents in a timely manner.
- Raising public awareness through the print and electronic media and through the regional councils of the renewed effort to issue national documents to all citizens in Namibia.
- Providing publicity to raise awareness of the existing social assistance programmes to all citizens through the print and electronic media and through the regional councils to ensure no-one is left out.
- Liaising with and obtain information from traditional authorities or local authorities or regional councils, where applicable, to identify poor and vulnerable persons in their localities who are excluded from participating in social safety nets, and take necessary actions to assist such qualified persons to obtain the national identification documents.

- Instituting mechanisms, such as increased outreach programmes, to aim to register the qualified persons for available social assistance.

### **Objective 2: Provision of New Social Grants to those currently excluded**

Realising that the current social assistance does not extend to all the poor and vulnerable persons or those below the poverty income threshold, there will be a need to:

- Develop, introduce and roll out a grant scheme for the unemployed and the poor and vulnerable persons who are not currently participating in social grants.

### **Objective 3: Development of a new approach to existing social assistance programmes**

Realising that the existing social assistance system does not assist and empower the poor and vulnerable to undertake productive and sustainable activities that would help some of them to graduate out of poverty, an intervention will be pursued to:

- Explore models for graduating people from poverty to sustainable livelihoods.

### **Objective 4: Development of emergency funds and enhancing developmental programme support**

Realising the need for financial and non-financial resources to address emergency hardships experienced by the poor and vulnerable persons, interventions will include:

- Establishing a funding mechanism, with a comprehensive programme implementation plan, clear workable guidelines for beneficiary identification and a robust monitoring and evaluation system, to support the poor and vulnerable in emergency situations and in addressing developmental shortcomings affecting communities.

### **Objective 5: Municipal debt and legal transfer cost relief to the poor**

Realizing that citizens lose their properties due to municipal debts or being unable to afford to transfer ownership of properties into their names, interventions will include:

- Reviewing policies and/or introducing assistance measures with the intent to reduce the property transfer costs to make them affordable to the poor and vulnerable.
- Developing policy measures to guide the support to be given to the elderly with accumulated municipal debts and further regulations of tariff rates for utility and municipal services offered to the elderly households.
- Investigate mechanisms to address and halt the eviction from properties owned by the poor and vulnerable persons due to municipal debts.

## **SPA 2: ENDING HUNGER**

In order to realize this strategic priority area, there is a need to undertake activities which includes amongst others:

## Objective 1: Establishment of Food Banks

In support of the strategy to end hunger, the following will be pursued:

- Finalizing the development of a concept note on the operationalization of the food banks.
- Getting the food banks into operation through systems and process strengthening and the registration of eligible beneficiaries.

## Objective 2: Increase food security and nutrition

As a strategy to promote food security, the following will be pursued:

- Provision of drought and emergency relief as a life saving measure to populations that are affected by natural and man-made disasters.
- The strengthening and expansion of food safety net programmes that reduce risk and exposure to the negative impact of poverty and natural hazards.
- Aligning food and nutrition security programmes with the Namibian Zero Hunger Strategic Review Road Map.
- Developing a holistic food and nutrition security policy to provide a framework for the implementation of food and nutrition security actions that contribute to zero hunger in Namibia.
- Strengthening of food and nutrition security monitoring including building capacity for

data collection and analysis and reporting on the progress towards zero hunger.

- Strengthening of livelihoods and resilience of food and agricultural systems through risk insurance.

## Objective 3: Increasing food productivity for small farmers

Increasing food production would require the following interventions:

- Enhancing the support of farmers, with provision of farming inputs, technical assistance, implements and extension services.
- Introducing farming units at selected places in communities, to enhance food security and employment.
- Providing linkages to markets and storage for farming outputs, especially for family farming units.
- Linking the school feeding programme to local production as a means of promoting market access opportunities and providing a reliable source of income for smallholder producers.

## SPA 3: ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

As part of poverty eradication programmes, the following interventions are proposed, including, but not limited to (a) provision of water, (b) provision of sanitation, (c) access to health services, (d) access to education, skills and training, (e) provision of shelter/ housing, and (f) access to electricity.

## Objective 1: Provision of Water

Water is important for the survival of human beings and animals, as well as for the promotion of gardening and agriculture. The following initiatives would need to be considered:

- Raising awareness amongst both the urban and rural communities in water harvesting and storage as well as water reusing at household level.
- Accelerating the water supply projects to rural remote areas.
- Exploring mechanism to making water an affordable commodity for poor and vulnerable persons.

## Objective 2: Access to Sanitation

Provision of sanitation is important for the dignity of all citizens. Proper sanitation systems also contribute to the hygiene of the society in which our people live. The following initiatives would need to be considered:

- Accelerating the phasing out of the bucket system.
- Accelerating the provision of environmentally friendly toilet facilities in rural areas, including at rural based government facilities such as school and clinics.
- Accelerating the provision of environmentally friendly toilet facilities in emerging urban settlements.

## Objective 3: Provision of Shelter/ Housing

In order to promote the provision of access to shelter or housing, the following initiatives would have to be pursued:

- Investigating the mechanism and viability for the provision of Old Age Homes across the country, either by government, private sector or through Public Private Partnerships.
- Investigating and working out mechanisms to construct and provide poor and vulnerable people with shelter based on assessment.
- The GRN should continue with the housing provision policies and programmes, and investigate further measures that would accelerate provision of housing to the people.
- In order to safeguard the ownership of houses by the poor and vulnerable, the GRN should investigate debt recovery modalities that do not lead to auctioning of shelters and houses for the poor and vulnerable persons.
- Accelerating the construction of and provision of low cost housing.
- The valuation of housing finance mechanisms to encourage expanding lending to the urban poor and the vulnerable through community-based savings of the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia.



## **Objective 4: Provision of Electricity/ Energy**

In order to ensure access to affordable electricity, the following initiatives would need to be considered:

- Promotion and supply of renewable and cheap energy sources such as solar power units and bio-mass energy.
- Continued provision of financing facilities at affordable cost to encourage procurement of solar equipment and connectivity.
- Fast-tracking of rural electrification programmes across all the regions.

## **Objective 5: Access to Health**

Access to health services, especially by citizens living in remote areas, saves lives and promotes the well-being of citizens. Hence, the following will need to be considered:

- Strengthening the provision of Primary Health Care to all rural communities in an affordable and sustainable manner.
- Improving the utilization of peripheral health services by bridging the gap between communities and health facilities, through strengthening the Health Extension Workers programme.
- The promotion of universal health coverage.
- Monitoring health facilities to identify number of malnourished children in need of food safety nets.
- Supporting maternity waiting homes.

## **SPA 4: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Objective 1: Access to education, training and skills development**

Access to education, training and skills development opportunity provides a good avenue for poverty eradication. Through education, the families gain sustainable employment and/or sustainable ways of income generation. Thus, the following interventions must be pursued:

- Strengthening the school feeding programmes, to support learning and enhance the nutritional status of children.
- Designing mechanisms to ensure that all children attend schools, given free primary and secondary education, exploring mechanism to track dropouts from educational institutions, and designing mechanisms to explore skills enhancements for such citizens.
- Accelerating the introduction of a financial grant assistance system to pay for qualified and admitted students at tertiary institutions, especially those from poor and vulnerable families.
- Exploring the creation of special grants or funds targeting poor and vulnerable students for tertiary and Vocational Education and Training
- Enhancing the expansion and development of Vocational Education and Training Centres in all the regions.
- Implementing strategies to encourage the private as well as the public sector to support internship opportunities.

- Exploring the promotion of local content policy in the mining, agriculture, tourism, and fishery sectors.
- Increasing investments in special schools and development centres for learners with disabilities and special needs.

## SPA 5: EMPLOYMENT CREATION

Vision 2030 acknowledges the need for wealth creation and employment generation to improve the financial stability of citizens. While all interventions in the NDP-4 are aimed at creating sustainable job opportunities, unemployment is still prevalent, particularly in the youth population.

### Objective 1: Access to finances and material resources

There is need to continue with multi-sectoral strategies to create jobs to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. These interventions include:

- Enhancing the financial and material support to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Enhancing preferences for local sourcing for government procurement.
- Promoting entrepreneurship and community employment generating projects, through suitable support programmes such as family farming and family gardens, and introducing guidelines on project management to ensure community ownership and involvement in project design and implementation.
- Investigating sustainable support to the poor and vulnerable, as a graduation model strategy to reduce dependence on social

assistance.

- Spearheading the promotion of SMEs in government procurement as preferred service providers.
- Linking the procurement of supplies for government programmes (such as school feeding, food bank, etc.) to local entrepreneurship.
- Identifying and allocating land for agricultural purposes targeting unemployed youth in the regions and providing necessary support covering extension services such as farm inputs, training, incentives for self-employment, market access and community-based animal husbandry.

## SPA 6: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

### Objective 1: Empowerment

There is a need to give equal opportunities to all Namibians and also to empower women.

Given that deprivation on account of gender leads to an increase of women in poverty with limited access to resources assets, the following intervention is proposed:

- Strengthening capacity to implement the gender equality and empowerment policies targeting poor and vulnerable women.

### 4.2 Inclusive Growth

As part of measures to reduce inequalities, the GRN will need to adopt policies for inclusive growth but not limited to those appended below:

- Expanding investment in the agricultural

sector: It is noted from the NHIES (2015/16) that about 53% of the population resides in the rural areas. About 80% of the rural population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods (NPC, 2015). Investing in agriculture offers the best potential for inclusive growth in a country, given the capacity to reduce unemployment especially among the youth and women, who make up the largest share of the population in rural areas.

However, Namibia continues to be affected by adverse climate conditions in the rural areas where drought is a permanent risk. The GRN will need to address this challenge through long-term measures such as by deepening reforms to get better value from agriculture and extending non-mineral diversification to provide gainful employment and secure livelihoods for the largest portion of the population in order to eradicate poverty.

- Broadening the revenue base: The GRN is seized with the poverty eradication agenda. Resources will be required and increased to achieve this. Hence, government will have to find additional revenue to support the sustainability of social safety net programmes for poverty eradication, as well as other poverty eradication programmes across all sectors. At the same time, the GRN will pursue policy measures to introduce efficiency in the fiscal programmes to create fiscal space for poverty eradication programmes.

- Expanding local shareholding base and ownership: The GRN will implement policy measures to encourage especially publicly privatized companies to dilute their shareholding for the ownership of local workers, thereby redistributing more of the company income downwards instead of upwards. Most importantly, this measure is a powerful instrument to reduce income inequality.
- Maintaining macroeconomic stability: The GRN will continue to maintain macroeconomic stability in support of sustainable and inclusive growth. These policies are important factors in stimulating and attracting domestic and foreign direct investment for economic growth and generating employment for long term poverty eradication and reducing inequality in Namibia.
- Private sector growth and industrialization: Growth in private sector investment and industrialization are effective means of creating jobs in Namibia. The GRN will support industrialization through diversification into intra-regional trade while protecting infant industries. Other measures will focus on improving the rating and ranking of Namibia in the cost of doing business.



**SECTION 5:  
COORDINATION,  
IMPLEMENTATION,  
MONITORING AND  
EVALUATION**

## 5.1 Introduction

The War on Poverty needs a well-articulated, efficient and effective mechanism to coordinate all efforts and resources to generate the expected outcomes by 2025. All government OMAs, state-owned enterprises, private sector entities, and civil society organisations are at the centre of eradicating poverty, with the mandate of the MPESW to streamline the coordination of such activities and ensure consolidation and effective impact assessment.

On the basis of this Blueprint, the respective OMAs will be responsible for interventions listed under Section Four. Consequently, not only will the OMAs be expected to implement their respective policies and the strategies, but they will also be entrusted to generate expected outcomes that are transparent, credible, and accountable for poverty eradication.

## 5.2 Coordination

The following interventions would be implemented to enhance the coordination and advocacy functions:

### **Establish a Multi-Sectoral and Interagency Coordination Forum**

Experience shows that where multi-sectoral and inter-agency coordination is established and operationalised among OMAs and other stakeholders, it strengthens and builds synergies, reduces duplication of interventions and lowers operational and capital costs (ILO, 2014). This experience is vital for Namibia.

Hence the following actions will be undertaken:

- Establish a high level multi-sectoral and inter-agency coordination forum at the Cabinet (Ministers) and technical levels (Permanent Secretaries) to facilitate and accommodate an effective coordination of all interventions on poverty eradicating on the priority areas;
- Formulate guidelines to ensure that clear roles and responsibilities are allocated to each OMAs;
- OMAs to establish suitable institutional mechanisms to take responsibilities pertaining to the programmes/interventions allocated to them to generate the expected outcomes;
- Establish a data bank to capture, record and store all information relating to poverty eradication; and
- OMAs are to submit quarterly progress reports to the high level committee.

### **Development of an integrated management information system**

In order to streamline and consolidate all information relating to poverty eradication programmes, and facilitate the assessment of impact of such programmes, information management is very crucial. Interventions will include:

- Investigating the feasibility of and acquiring a suitable data management system compatible with the functionalities to coordinate the social policies programmes.

## **Development of the National Social Protection Policy**

- Develop a Social Protection Policy with an implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation framework for all social assistance programmes including cash transfers. With the exception of war veterans and old pension grants, such social assistance programmes should be linked to developmental outcomes in health, education, agriculture, public works, community development, skills development and employment creation.

## **Development of a Social Policy Framework**

- Develop a comprehensive Social Policy Framework with an implementation, monitoring and evaluation plan.

### **5.3 Advocacy and communication**

The MPESW will need to ensure that the necessary advocacy and awareness for eradicating poverty is planned and executed so that poverty eradication is part and parcel of all stakeholders and other interested parties. Furthermore, the MPESW needs to communicate regularly on the outcomes on the War on Poverty to the Namibians and the rest of the world.

Poverty eradication involves many stakeholders and interested parties and securing and sustaining support is a prerequisite to obtaining the expected results. As such the following will be pursued:

- The development of a communication and advocacy strategy on poverty eradication;
- The establishment of a communication mechanism to facilitate awareness on the causes of poverty and actions required; and
- Regular advocacy for financial and technical support to all aspects for poverty eradication.

### **5.4 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Poverty eradication and reduction of inequality are a highly committed, prioritised, and time-bound undertaking by the GRN. Mobilization of the required resources (including human resources and expertise), networking all the stakeholders, and formulating and adopting organization of management structures for programmes implementation to generate the expected outcomes are prerequisites as the poor and the rest of the nation are eagerly anticipating the enhancement of their welfare.

In light of the above, monitoring and evaluation is important to study and analyze the quality and relevance of the goals, objectives, interventions, programmes, decisions and resources to generate the expected outcomes on eradicating poverty. In this respect the use of S.M.A.R.T (Smart; Measurable; Achievable; Results-focused; and Time bound) indicators for both baseline and the target outcomes are of paramount importance to eradicate poverty by 2025.

Monitoring will enable progress to be tracked continuously and to ensure that all efforts are on trajectory to generate the expected results.

Generally, poverty eradication requires a well-articulated and state of art monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that the War on Poverty is won by 2025.

### **Establishment of an Implementation Plan**

In order to ensure a systematic implementation of the interventions contained herein, the following need to be done:

- The MPESW, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, will develop a matrix of all interventions and identify responsibilities for each intervention to OMAs;
- The MPESW, through a coordination forum, will coordinate the implementation of all interventions under this document, and ensure appropriate reporting; and

- Each responsible entity should ensure sufficient budgeting to execute the interventions for which it is responsible.

### **Establishment of an integrated monitoring and evaluation system**

- The MPESW will develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to collect data/information as required;
- Each OMA will establish monitoring and evaluation units with respect to poverty eradication on the basis of the agreed framework; and
- The MPESW to compile regular public reports of the State of Poverty and Inequality in Namibia.









