



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY HON. BISHOP EMERITUS ZEPHANIA KAMEETA

**MINISTER OF POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL
WELFARE,**

**AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE FOOD BANK SCOPE
SYSTEM**

21 NOVEMBER 2018

KATUTURA YOUTH COMPLEX SPORTS FIELD

Ms. Rosalia Mwashekele-Sibiya, Special Advisor to the Governor of the Khomas Region; representing the Governor

Your Worship Mayor of City of Windhoek, Councilor Muesee Kazapua,

Hon. Aino Kapewangolo, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare,

Hon. Ruben Sheehama, Councilor for the Katutura East Constituency,

All Regional and Local Authority Councilors here present,

Ms. Rachel Odede UN Resident Coordinator,

Ms. Lola Castro, World Food Programme, Southern Regional Director,

Mr. Baimankay Sankoh, World Food Programme Country Representative,

Ms Esther Lusepani, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, also the Director of Ceremonies for this event,

All other Permanent Secretaries here present,

Staff of the United Nations Community here present,

All Senior Government Officials here present,

Distinguished beneficiaries of the Food Bank Programme

Dear street committee members,

Members of the media,

Dear sisters and brothers, **GOOD MORNING**

1. I am happy to be here and to share the joy with all of you, as we together witness the official launching of the Food Bank SCOPE System, a system designed to improve our service delivery to the people.

2. The Government of the Republic of Namibia is committed to the promotion and maintenance of the welfare of the Namibian people as enshrined in Article 95 of the Constitution. In this regard, the Government has been implementing social protection programmes, since the attainment of the country's independence, 28 years ago. These programmes range from social grants such as the old age, disability, child maintenance and war veteran grants; school feeding programmes, drought relief and the recently established food bank programme.

3. Namibia is classified as an upper-middle income country, despite the high income inequality, which depicts the actual poverty situation on the ground. This status often disadvantage the country when it comes to receiving support from the international community. I therefore would like to commend the UN Organisations and other development partners for their unwavering support and commitment to the development agenda of Namibia, including poverty eradication and food security.

Distinguished stakeholders

4. The situation of our people on the ground is desperate and dire. Almost every week you hear and read from the media about the suffering of our people. Therefore, when His Excellency Dr Hage G. Geingob, the President of the Republic of Namibia tasked the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to first and foremost address hunger poverty, he was aware of the plight of the people.

5. The call by the President that no Namibian should go to bed hungry or die from hunger, led to the establishment and launching of the Food Bank Pilot Programme on 30th June 2016; and the subsequent commencement of food distribution to registered beneficiaries in seven Constituencies namely: Tobias Hainyeko, Moses Garoeb, Samora Machel, John Pandeni, Katutura East, Katutura Central, and Khomasdal in Khomas Region.

6. The Food Bank Programme is a short term, immediate intervention meant to address hunger poverty amongst the urban and peri-urban poor. The programme is currently benefiting about 17, 000 beneficiaries in the Khomas, //Karas, Hardap, Kavango East and Kavango West regions. The Ministry plans to cover the Ohangwena, Kunene and Zambezi regions during the current financial year.

7. As part of its long term poverty eradication interventions, the Ministry is coordinating and implementing the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication and the Zero Hunger Road Map together with all Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs) and State Own Enterprises (SOEs). By coordinating these two key policy frameworks, the Ministry is responding to its mandate; which is to ensure that all Government poverty eradication policies, programmes and initiatives implemented by OMAs and SOEs are effectively coordinated and synchronised for the benefits of all Namibians.

Distinguished stakeholders,

8. It is through effective coordination that the Food Bank programme is successfully being implemented. The Ministry is implementing the Food Bank programme with the active participation of our Regional and Local Governments, street committee members, our development partners and the public at large. Therefore, the Ministry appreciates the cooperation and the good spirit in which we have worked together since the introduction of the Food Bank Programme.

9. Since its inception the Food Bank Programme has been run through a paper based manual system, for the registration of beneficiaries and food distribution. This brought a lot of inconveniences regarding registration, distribution, stock control, reporting and accountability processes.
10. Henceforth, the Ministry in collaboration with World Food Programme (WFP) in Namibia, explored the best possible mechanism to improve the Food Bank implementation process. This resulted in the signing of a partnership agreement between the Government of the Republic of Namibia and the World Food Programme in 2017, to introduce the SCOPE digital management system, which we are launching today.
11. After extensive consultations, including a fact finding mission to Zimbabwe, the Ministry officially adopted the SCOPE system to be replicated to Namibia to support capacity development, and enhance efficiency and effectiveness of Food Bank programme.

12. The SCOPE system, is a digital management information system that will aid the Ministry in the registration of Food Bank beneficiaries, the process of the distribution of food parcels, reporting; and monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the SCOPE system is an effective digital based management and information system that can be utilised in other social protection programme, to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. The SCOPE system can be adapted to assist in the streamlining of our fragmented social protection systems.

13. The SCOPE system will further enhance the capacity of one of the key players in the Food Bank programme, our street committee members, as they will now be exposed to digital management of the registration and distribution processes, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the entire Food Bank programme.

14. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare on behalf of the Government would like to applaud the WFP for availing experts to provide training on the SCOPE system to our staff; including their support in setting up of the system in Namibia.

15. The implementation of the SCOPE system pilot phase started at Katutura East Constituency and the beneficiaries have redeemed their first food benefits using the SCOPE system during the month of October 2018. The SCOPE System has now been rolled out to the Moses Garoeb and John Pandeni Constituencies and will then continue to the remainder of the Constituencies and the rest of the Regions where the Food Bank has been introduced.

Director of Ceremonies

16. In conclusion, allow me to congratulate the Ministry and the WFP staff for their dedications to make the implementation of the Food Bank SCOPE system a reality. The Ministry further highly appreciate the support of all our stakeholders including the Regional and Local Authorities, street committee members, and everyone else who contributed in one way or another to the successful launching and subsequent implementation of the SCOPE system, to ensure that the Food Bank programme is efficiently managed for the benefit of the intended beneficiaries.

17. I am therefore pleased to now declare the digitalisation of the Food Bank Programme through the SCOPE System officially launched

I thank you and May God Bless us All.