



**BLUE PRINT
ON
WEALTH REDISTRIBUTION
AND
POVERTY ERADICATION**

MINISTRY OF POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

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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 3rd Session of the 6th Parliament, 9 February 2016.)

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FOREWORD

The Blue print 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 a 41-percentage point reduction in absolute poverty from high level of 37.9 to 26.9 percent. Severe poverty was reduced in the same period from 23 percent to 15.8 percent thus registering a reduction of 32 percentage points.

Since 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 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.

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 the people. 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 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 1 and 2, 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. That notwithstanding, the MPESW with support from relevant 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 the 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 the Blue print.

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 Blue Print will go a long way in enabling Namibia to position itself for the next National Development Plan (NDP) and for the smooth transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since independence, Namibia has achieved significant progress in reducing poverty, although results have been uneven across its 14 regions. The Namibia's 2015 Poverty Mapping indicates that Namibia recorded a 41 percent reduction in absolute poverty between 2001 and 2011 from high level of 37.9 percent to 26.9 percent with the largest decline of 59 percent under severe poverty being from 23 to 15 percent. A marginal decline in the country's Gini poverty coefficient from 0.6003 in 2003/04 to 0.593 in 2009/10 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 percent of people above 60, up from 91 percent in 2011/12.

Despite the social safety nets and other developmental efforts by the Government, poverty remains stubbornly high in Namibia with about 27 percent of the population under poverty and 15 percent under severe poverty. The unemployment rate, at 29.2 percent in 2013, 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 Namibia. This is also covered in the 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 – 2016/17 (NDP-4), whose target outcome is that by 2017, the proportion of severely poor individuals will drop from 15.8 percent in 2009/10 to below 10 percent (NPC, 2012).

In addition, the domestication of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 1, which addresses the ambitious goal of ending poverty in a holistic manner, will have a positive impact in achieving the other SDGs, including inequality; inclusive and sustainable growth; hunger; health; education; gender equality; sustainable production and consumption; and climate change.

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, and which is reflected in the poor outcomes for examples 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; 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 for all, water, 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 the Blue Print as the longer term policies take effect. This implies that the Government will adopt a dual approach to poverty eradication and make concerted effort to implement appropriate programmes to eradicate severe poverty by 2025 which would also ensure 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 the global practice 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.

The 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 relating to the 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 Implementation, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

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 and 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:

- (a) Enactment of legislation to ensure equality of opportunity for women, to enable them to participate fully in all spheres of Namibian society;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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
- (d) 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 , the laws of racial discrimination based on white supremacy , the denial of appropriate education, 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 non-poor 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, good health care.

Poverty eradication requires (a) political will (b) mobilization of the required resources including human resources and expertise, (c) networking with all the stakeholders, and (d) 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 October 2015.

With committed and unified actions based on the declaration of the War on Poverty, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular SDG(1) on no poverty and SDG(2) on ending hunger as well as other national policies and strategies, Namibia will eradicate poverty by the year 2025. This provides Namibia with an opportune moment 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

21st March 2015, saw the establishment of a new governance structure for the Government of the Republic of Namibia. 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 Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (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 maintain peace, stability, security and democracy and to embark upon a path to prosperity. Thus the Shared Vision underlying poverty eradication is Prosperity for ALL which encompasses the following:

- Restore people's human dignity;
- Equitable redistribution of wealth, through equal opportunities to ensure equality and access to resources;
- Promote a paradigm shift and mindset change that empowers people to help themselves and help each other in the spirit of solidarity;
- Creation of a conducive environment that will enable people to graduate out of poverty towards prosperity;
- Building the Namibia house

This shared vision which will enable Namibia to eradicate poverty and reduce vulnerability, social exclusion, and inequality is based on core values and principles and 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 has a population of 2.2 million and with enormous natural resources and can ensure that Namibians can have a living standard on par with developed countries.

1.5 Principles and values

The principles and values that underpin the Blue print 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 about the destination that should be reached by 2025 and beyond. 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 Blue print will be the roadmap.

1.6 Rationale

Since independence, Namibia has reduced poverty by 41 per cent. However, Namibia is 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 number 1 and 2 goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the light of the above, rationale of poverty eradication can be presented on the basis of the following:

- (a) Since 1990, Namibia achieved and maintains peace, stability, security and democracy which serves 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 standards 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.

- (b) Namibia remains committed and dedicated to human rights for its citizens. However, human rights¹ cannot be secured when a substantial percentage of the citizens are poor or live in poverty. The human rights approach to poverty eradication provides a conceptual framework for the process of sustainable human development which is one corner stone 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.
- (c) Sustainable development (development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations) identified 3 components; namely (a) social development (b) economic development, and (c) 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.
- (d) With respect to the Macroeconomic stability, about 28 percent of the labour force is unemployed and this places a constraint to optimize 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. Concept of inclusive growth (i.e. the poor or unemployed contribute to growth and benefits from growth) is the foundation of poverty eradication.
- (e) 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 lack of proper organization and management of the resources. When the poor

¹¹ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and SDGs are based on human rights

people are integrated in the utilization of natural resources their levels of income increased along with economic development and GDP growth.

- (f) 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 addresses

1.7 Goals and objectives

(a) Goals

The 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.

(b) Objectives

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

- (i) 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;
- (ii) to improve and sustain the food and nutrition status of the children and poor and vulnerable;
- (iii) to enhance the provision of social safety nets;
- (iv) to enhance access to basic social services;
- (v) to achieve sustainable employment creation through skills development and appropriate employment creation strategies;
- (vi) to support gender equality and women empowerment; and

- (vii) 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 reinforcing each other in generating the expected outcomes. Government 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:

- (a) To coordinate the implementation of the overall policies and programmes pertaining to poverty eradication and reducing inequality;
- (b) To monitor and evaluate the level of execution and impact of overall policies and programmes pertaining to poverty eradication and reducing inequality.

Government, especially economic sector Ministries and 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 Harambee Prosperity Plan and empowerment policies and laws, the Public Procurement Act, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and the creation of 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 government'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 the 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, 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 be required the involvement of all the stakeholders. Guided by the shared vision, goals and objectives, the Blueprint will identify interventions which should be implemented by various stakeholders across sectors to generate expected outcomes in a credible and transparent manner for poverty eradication.

1.9 Purpose of the Blue print

Given the above background, this document serves to:-

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

The 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 the 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 hungry to bed 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,

4th 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 cutoff point to differentiate the poor from the non-poor.

Relative poverty refers to the standard of living defined in terms of the expectations within which an individual lives. 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 to be 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 speaks to access to information and assets, education services, access to health services, access to housing and access to portable water, access to sanitation, access to electricity) and access to employment.

Bringing these absolute and relative concepts together, the Blue print 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
- They are isolated from the institutions of kinship and community.
- Food insecurity and the inability to provide sufficient or good quality food for the family is seen as an outcome of poverty.
- 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 Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) a person is said to be in absolute poverty if his/her annual consumption is less than N\$4,535.52. Current statistics indicate that 26.9 per cent of the 2.2 million population live in absolute poverty².

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
- Eliminating the disproportionate advantages acquired in terms of education, access, political power, etc.

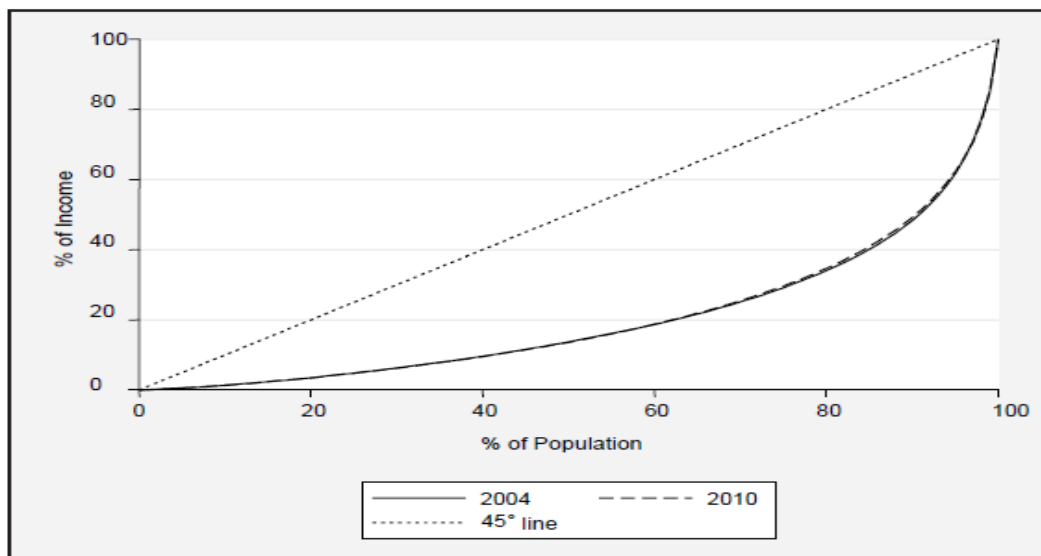
Inequality of income distribution can be explained on the basis of Lorenz Curve that explains the relationship between percentage (%) population and percentage of national income distribution as indicated in Graph 1. The centerline (45 degree line) explains the perfect income distribution or 1=1 relationship. As 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 Namibia Households Income and Expenditure Survey (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.

² 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

According to the Lorenz curves in Graph 1, there is no notable shift of the Lorenz from right to the left or the centre³ line to indicate that Namibia has achieved notable reduction in inequality between the two NHIESs.

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 0.597 in 2014, 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.

³ Any movement of the Lorenz curve from right to the left or to the center line 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 Lorene Curve.

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, the minimal or prevailing consumption level, education, skills and cultural capital, 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 the poor 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 wellbeing and their lack of ability to cope with the consequences of the shocks. Generally women, children, the unemployed, persons with disabilities, the elderly, 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.

The Blue print focuses on the eradication of absolute poverty and its related elements of inequality, social exclusion and vulnerability.

The Blue Print has taken 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 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 THREE: 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 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 economic activities and society. However, such long term goals should 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 UN SDGs such as

SDG 1 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.

SDG 2 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, end all forms of malnutrition amongst other.

3.2. Status of Poverty and Inequality

At the national level, the **Vision 2030** states that poverty and disparity among the people in 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 by 2017, the proportion of severely poor individuals will drop from 15.8 percent in 2009/10 to below 10 percent (NPC, 2012). Namibia is currently developing its 5th National Development Plan.

Since independence, Namibia has achieved significant progress in reducing poverty by 41 per cent and inequality on the basis of Gini Coefficient from 0.7 to 0.597 due to huge investment in social sectors, institutionalized democracy, peace and security, political stability, as well as sustained macroeconomic stability supported by prudent fiscal and monetary policies.

According to the Poverty Mapping Survey, 2015, poverty level in Namibia is estimated at 26.9 per cent, 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 (then) recorded the highest poverty levels of 53 per cent, while Khomas Region, which covers largely Windhoek the capital city, recorded lowest levels in 4.6 per cent. Within the regions, varying levels of poverty are recorded within Constituencies. The highest poverty levels at constituency levels are found in Epupa Constituency in Kunene region at 69 percent while the lowest is Windhoek West at 0.1 percent.

The measure of absolute poverty in the country recorded a reduction from 37.9 to 26.9 per cent between 2001 and 2011 registering a reduction 11 percentage points. Severe poverty (annual per adult equivalent consumption is below N\$3 330.48) recorded a reduction in the same period from 23.0 percent to 15.8 percent.

The poverty incidence is recorded higher among the female headed households at 22 per cent compared with male headed households at 18 per cent (NSA, 2012); because the average incomes in the households headed by women are much lower than the incomes of male headed households. Hence, in addressing poverty, gender balance policies and programmes should have to be intensified.

3.3. National Dialogue

The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare organized Regional consultations on Wealth Re-distribution and Poverty Eradication which were conducted in September and October, 2015 in all 14 regions. Subsequently, a

National Conference on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication was hosted from 26 to 27 October 2015 in Windhoek, whose objective was to validate the findings and recommendations from the regions on what needs to be the priorities in order to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. Participants included all relevant stakeholders such as government officials, groups, communities, religious and traditional leaders, experts and their inputs helped to create an understanding of the concerns and interests of the poor and the nature and extent of poverty and inequality.

The following consolidated issues and recommendations were raised during the regional dialogues and national conference:

- i) Expressed commitment to the eradication of poverty in Namibia by 2025, and urged the Ministry to implement appropriate programs to ensure that Namibia beat the global deadline of poverty eradication, as per SDGs of 2030 by five years.
- ii) Supported 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 SMEs and community development activities.
- iii) Reiterated the need to pursue sustainable interventions, and urged the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to immediately finalize the Blueprint framework on wealth redistribution and poverty eradication, which contains amongst others (a) establishment and functioning of food banks; (b) review and propose sustainable social safety nets targeting the vulnerable persons; (c) multi-sectoral coordination, review and monitoring & evaluation mechanisms.

- iv) 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.
- v) 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.
- vi) 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.
- vii) Agreed that deprivation of communities to basic services fuels poverty, and calls on all government institutions to ensure (a) implementation of their programmes, (b) provision of services in remote areas and (c) uphold professionalism in the delivery of services.
- viii) 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

(a) 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 per cent in 2014. The population is predominantly young, with 30 per cent aged 18-34 years (NSA, 2011). About 57 per cent of the population lives in the rural areas. Between 2001 and 2011, the urban

population grew by 49.7 per cent, whereas the rural population shrank by 1.4 per cent as a result of the rural-to-urban migration (NSA, 2012).

The percentage of those living in urban areas is projected to increase from 42 per cent in 2011 to 67 per cent in 2041. This indicates that Namibia is likely to transit from being mostly rural to a society which 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 and are relevant to the interventions to be proposed:

- Youthful population 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 evenly distribution of services.

(b) 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 2013, about 778,500 people (representing 35% of the total population) were found to be food insecure⁴ and required government social

⁴ Namibian Vulnerability assessment Committee, Namibia Emergency Food Security Assessment 2013, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/RVAC-NAMIBIA-2013.pdf>

assistance. The 2015 Global Hunger Index, also ranks Namibia 87th out of 120 countries assessed, with an index score of 31.8, indicating a 'serious food problem'⁵.

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, 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 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 % of the population in Namibia, a situation that needs to be addressed to mitigate the negative effects of obesity associated health conditions.

Addressing hunger poverty through food safety nets is a necessary first step to eradicate poverty and ensure food security in the longer term such as increasing production and accessibility to food. As for food safety nets, the Government is already providing school feeding programme and is in the process of establishing Food Banks to address the immediate hunger poverty and to help maintain the health and nutrition status of those most vulnerable. A good measure will be to link such school feeding programmes to small holder farmers.

(c) Access to Basic Services

The lack of access of 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.

⁵ Namibia Zero Hunger Strategic Review Report, 2016

i. Water

In Namibia, a naturally arid country and therefore water has become 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 climate gets drier and exacerbate many forms of water pollution.

Supply of portable water remain a challenge especially in rural areas, where people are walk long distances to the nearest the 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 business.

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.

ii. 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 per cent in 2003 to 17 per cent in 2010, whereas the proportion of households in urban areas with access to basic sanitation slightly decreased, from 59 per cent in 2003 to just 57 per cent in 2010 (NPC, 2015).

There are also regional disparities in access to sanitation. For example, 80 percent of households in Khomas region have access to basic sanitation compared to 10 per cent in Ohangwena and Zambezi Regions. Furthermore, it should be noted that 50 per cent of households in Namibia use bush toilets, while 14 per cent in urban areas and 77 per cent 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 other services.

iii. Shelter⁶ & Housing

The provision of housing and suitable shelter remains basic required 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 increase 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 (SDFN), 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

⁶ For the Blue print Housing means living facility people can afford with their incomes. Shelter is temporarily facility (with or without sanitation) until graduation to housing

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.

iv. 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 has increased over time.

Even where the connectivity is availed, consumption is considered very costly and leading poor and vulnerable people & communities into indebtedness, especially with local authorities and utility companies, with consequences of their properties auctioned to recover such debts. However as an immediate solution, the government will lead the process to introduce and install renewable and affordable energy such as solar power equipment in line with SDG 7, especially to cater to the poor and vulnerable people.

v. 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 the pregnant women's lack of access to antenatal care 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 health 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 government has invested in health infrastructure in the country, especially community health programmes and primary health care at community levels.

However, like in education, given the sparsely distributed population, there are people who travel long distances to access the nearest health centers, especially in remote areas.

vi. 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 increases 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 centers to equip young people with technical skills needed in the job market or to encourage entrepreneurship.

(d) 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 document including good policies and strategies but action is still lacking behind

Women are evicted from homesteads when their husbands die and leave them vulnerable and destitute.

Enhancing of gender equality programmes which leads to increasing women's participation in decision-making and ensuring their economic empowerment responds to poverty eradication efforts.

Coupled with gender equality, is the welfare of the children. Children are affected by diseases 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 government has specific programmes aimed at enhancing the welfare of children which include school feeding programmes and social grants for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).

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 on health in particular sexual and reproductive health, education, access to economic opportunities, right to control access to resources and freedom from violence.

(e) Disabilities and special needs

The Government 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 Government 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 government provides funds to NGOs to provide education facilities to persons with mental disability. The Government 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.

(f) Alcohol and drug abuse

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

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.

3.4 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 consumes 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 majority of the population participate in the growth process and benefit from the dividends of the growth process.

The increased income among the local employees will enhance empowerment and possible savings; reduce indebtedness; and improve the pattern of consumption which directly and indirectly contributes to 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.

3.5 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 include 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 includes: fee exemptions for basic services for the poorest households (health, education), free primary and secondary school

education. In addition, social assistance programmes include measures to promote productive activities to build and maintain sustainable livelihoods such as 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 receive emergency food assistance from the government 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 terms development outcomes through schools, clinics, water connectivity, and road infrastructure.

The main challenges in the implementation of social protection programs are

- (a) *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(BIG) in Otjivero documented the positive social as well 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 government's interventions in these areas and leading to more effective service delivery and development of human capital. Such a grant

- (b) *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.

- (c) *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 of 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 Government 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 the workers in the informal sector.

- (d) *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 such as 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 (ICT) 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.

3.6 Unemployment

Namibia has an unemployment rate of around 28 per cent (NPC, 2014), which is more prevalent in rural areas at about 30 per cent, than in urban areas at about 26 per cent. Male unemployment rate is lower, at about 24 per cent, than the female unemployment rate, at 32 per cent. Youth unemployment (15-34 years) is the highest, at 39 per cent. Agriculture accounts for only 29.5 per cent of all employed persons. These figures indicate that efforts to reduce unemployment contribute to poverty eradication.

The small and medium enterprises (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 percent 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.

3.7 Lack of Coordination and Effective Implementation

(a) *Fragmented social safety nets*: Implementation of 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 OMAS together with other stakeholders. This may account for the fact that despite the government'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.

- (b) *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 Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (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 maximum desired impact.

Experience shows that where multi-sectoral and interagency 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).

- (c) *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 are to ensure their effectiveness, efficiency and impact for poverty eradication and to bring government closer to the people. The government 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 of the development outcomes.

- (d) *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

4.1. Introduction

As poverty eradication and reduction of inequality is a complex undertaking which require a myriad of inter-sectoral participation, this Blueprint identifies interventions and strategies to address and resolve this challenge 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 O/M/As and entities which impact is to eradicate poverty. This section focuses on identified priorities and intervention to eradicate poverty by 2025.

4.2. Strengthening Social Safety Nets

(a) 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:-

- i) 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 through the country will receive such documents timely; and
 - Raising public awareness through the print, electronic media; and the regional councils of the renewed effort to issue national documents to all citizens in Namibia.

- ii) Provide publicity to raise awareness of the existing social assistance programmes to all citizens through the print; electronic media; and the regional councils to ensure no-one is left out.
- iii) Liaise 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;
- iv) Institute mechanisms, such as increased outreach programmes, to aim to register the qualified persons for available social assistance.

(b) 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:

- i) 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;

(c) 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, the following interventions will be pursued:

- i) Explore models for graduating people from poverty to sustainable livelihoods

(d) 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:

- i) Establish 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.

(e) Municipal debt and legal transfer cost relief to the poor

Realising 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:

- i) Review policies and/or introduce assistance measures with the intent to reduce the property transfer costs to make them affordable to the poor and vulnerable;
- ii) Develop 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;
- iii) Investigate mechanisms to address and halt the eviction from properties owned by the poor and vulnerable persons due to municipal debts;

4.3. Ending Hunger

(a) Establishment of Food Banks

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

- i) Finalize the development of a concept note on the operationalization of the food banks;
- ii) Operationalize the Food banks through systems and process strengthening and registration of eligible beneficiaries.

(b) Increase food security and nutrition

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

- i) Provide drought and emergency relief as a life saving measure to populations which are affected by natural and man-made disasters;
- ii) Strengthen and expand food safety net programmes that reduce risk and exposure to the negative impact of poverty and natural hazards
- iii) Align food and nutrition security programmes with the Namibian Zero Hunger Strategic Review Road Map;
- iv) Develop 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;
- v) As part of an effective food and nutrition security governance, strengthen food and nutrition security monitoring including building capacity for data collection and analysis and reporting on the progress towards Zero Hunger;

- vi) Strengthen livelihoods and resilience of food and agricultural systems through risk insurance;

(c) Increasing food productivity (for small farmers)

Increasing food security would require the following interventions:

- i) Enhance the support of farmers, with provision of farming inputs, technical assistance, implements and extension services;
- ii) Introduce farming units at selected places in communities, to enhance food security and employment;
- iii) Provide linkages to markets and storage for farming outputs, especially for family farming units;
- iv) Link 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;

4.4. 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.

(a) Provision of Water

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

- i) Raise awareness amongst both the urban and rural communities in water harvesting and storage; and water reusing at household level;
- ii) Accelerate the water supply projects to rural remote areas;
- iii) Explore mechanism to making water affordable commodity by the poor and vulnerable persons

(b) Sanitation

Provision of sanitation is important for the dignity of all the citizens. And proposer sanitation system also contributes to the hygiene of the society in with our people live. The following initiatives would need to be considered:

- i) Accelerate the phasing out of the bucket system;
- ii) Accelerate the provision of environmentally friendly toilet facilities in rural areas, including at rural based government facilities such as school and clinics;
- iii) Accelerate the provision of environmentally friendly toilets facilities in emerging urban settlements.

(c) Shelter/ Housing

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

- i) Investigate the mechanism and viability for the provision of Old Age homes across the country, either by government, private sector or through Public Private Partnerships;
- ii) Investigate and work out mechanisms to construct and provide the poor and vulnerable people with shelter based on assessment;
- iii) Government should continue with the housing provision policies and programmes, and investigate further measures that would accelerate provision of housing to the people.
- iv) In order to safeguard the ownership of houses by the poor and vulnerable, government should investigate debt recovery modalities that

do not lead to auctioning of shelters and houses for the poor and vulnerable persons.

- v) Accelerate the construction of and provision of low cost housing.
- vi) Evaluate 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 (SDFN)

(d) Electricity/ Energy

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

- i) Promote and supply renewable and cheap energy sources such as solar power units and bio-mass energy;
- ii) Continue to provide financing facilities at affordable cost to encourage procurement of solar equipment and connectivity;
- iii) Fast-track rural electrification programmes across all the regions.

(e) Health

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

- i) Strengthen the provision of Primary Health Care to all rural communities in an affordable and sustainable manner;
- ii) Improve the utilization of peripheral health services by bridging the gap between communities and health facilities, through strengthening the Health Extension Workers (HEWs) programme;
- iii) Promote universal health coverage.
- iv) Monitor health facilities to identify number of malnourished children in need of food safety nets.
- v) Support maternity waiting homes.

(f) 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 programmes must be pursued:

- i) Strengthen the school feeding programme, to support learning and enhance the nutritional status of children;
- ii) Given free primary and secondary education, design mechanisms to ensure that all children attend schools, and explore mechanism for track dropouts from educational institutions, and design mechanisms to explore skills enhancements for such citizens;
- iii) Accelerate the introduction of a grant financial assistance system to pay for the qualified and admitted students at tertiary institutions, especially those from poor and vulnerable families;
- iv) Explore the creation of special grants/funds targeting the poor and vulnerable students for tertiary and VET;
- v) Enhance the expansion and development of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Centers in all the regions.
- vi) Implement strategies to encourage the private sector and the public sector to support internship opportunities, work attachments, and work-linked individual project, work attachments and volunteer programmes, work-place visit, and simulated case studies;
- vii) Explore the promotion of local content policy in the mining, agriculture, tourism, and fishery sectors; and
- viii) Increase rural and urban productivity.
- ix) Increase investments in special schools and development centres for learners with disabilities and special needs.

4.5. 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, many citizens particularly the youth, constitute a high proportion of the unemployed. There is need to continue with multi-sectoral strategies to create jobs to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality. These interventions include:-

- i) Enhance the financial and materials support to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs);
- ii) Enhance preferences for local sourcing for government procurement;
- iii) Promote entrepreneurships and community employment generating projects, through suitable support programmes such as family farming and family gardens, and introduce guidelines on project management to ensure community ownership and involvement in project design and implementation.
- iv) Investigate sustainable support to the poor and vulnerable, as a graduation model strategy to reduce dependence on social assistance;
- v) Spearhead the promotion of SMEs in government procurement as preferred service providers.
- vi) Link the procurement of supplies for government programmes (such as school feeding, food bank, etc) to local entrepreneurships;
- vii) Identify and allocate land for agricultural purposes targeting unemployed youth in the regions and provide necessary support covering extension services, farm inputs, training; incentives for self- employment; market access; and community-based animal husbandry.

4.6. Inclusive Growth

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

- i. *Expanding investment in the agricultural sector:* It is noted from the Census Report (2011) that about 57 per cent of the population resides in the rural areas where 80 per cent of the rural population depend on agriculture for their livelihoods (NPC, 2015). Conceptually 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.

- ii. However Namibia continues to be affected by adverse climate conditions in the rural areas where drought is a permanent risk. The government will need to address this challenge through a long term measure such as deepening reforms to get better value from agriculture and extend non-mineral diversification to provide gainful employment and secure livelihoods for the largest portion of the population in order to eradicate.
- iii. *Broadening the revenue base:* The government 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 government will pursue policy measures to introduce efficiency in the fiscal programmes to create fiscal space for poverty eradication programmes.
- iv. *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.
- v. *Maintaining macroeconomic stability:* The government 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 (FDI) for economic growth and generating employment for long term poverty eradication and reducing inequality in Namibia.

- vi. *Private sector growth and industrialization:* Growth in the private sector investment and industrialization are effective means of creating jobs in Namibia. The government 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.

4.7. Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

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

- i) Strengthen capacity to implement the Gender equality and empowerment policies targeting poor and vulnerable women.

SECTION FIVE: COORDINATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING & EVALUATION

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 O/M/As, SOEs, Private sector entities, and civil society organisations are at the centre of eradicating poverty, with the mandate of Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) to streamline the coordination of such activities and ensure consolidation and effective impact assessment.

On the basis of the Blue print, respective O/M/As will be responsible for interventions listed under Section Four. Consequently not only will the O/M/AS be expected to implement their respective policies and the strategies, but they will be entrusted to generate the expected outcomes that are transparent, credible, and accountable for poverty eradication.

5.1 Coordination

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

(a) Establish a Multi-Sectoral and Interagency Coordination Forum

Experience shows that where multi-sectoral and interagency coordination is established and operationalized among O/M/As 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:-

- i) Establish a high level multi-sectoral and interagency 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;

- ii) Formulate guidelines to ensure that clear roles and responsibilities are allocated to each O/M/As;
- iii) O/M/As to establish suitable institutional mechanisms to take responsibilities pertaining to the programmes/interventions allocated to them to generate the expected outcomes;
- iv) Establish data bank to capture, record and store all information relating to poverty eradication.
- v) OMAs to submit quarterly progress reports to the high level committee.

(b) 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

- i) Investigate the feasibility of and acquire a suitable data management system compatible with the functionalities to coordinate the social policies programmes.

(c) Development of the National Social Protection Policy

- i) 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 pensions' grants, such social assistance programmes should be linked to developmental outcomes in health; education; agriculture; public works, community development, skills development; and employment creation.

(d) Development of a Social Policy Framework (SPF)

- i) Develop a comprehensive Social Policy Framework with an implementation and monitoring and evaluation plan

5.2 Advocacy and communication

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

The MPESW will need to ensure that the necessary advocacy and awareness building 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 against poverty to the Namibians and the rest of the world

- i) Develop a communication and advocacy strategy on poverty eradication
- ii) Establish a communication mechanism to facilitate awareness on the causes of poverty and actions required;
- iii) Regularly advocate for financial and technical support to all aspects for poverty eradication.

5.3 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, formulation and adopting organization of management structures for programmes implementation to generate the expected outcomes are prerequisites as the poor and rest of the nation are eagerly waiting for enhancing their welfare.

In the 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 ((a) specific, (b) measurable, (c) achievable, (d) results-focused, and (e) time bound) indicators for both baseline and the target outcomes are of paramount importance to eradicate by 2025.

Monitoring will enable progress to be tracked continuously to ensure all efforts are on trajectory to generate the expected results. Furthermore, when actions are of track to take necessary actions will be the key to assess the expected outcomes have been realized. 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.

(a) Establishment of an Implementation Plan

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

- i) The MPESW, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, will develop a matrix of all interventions and identify responsibilities for each interventions to O/M/As;
- ii) The MPESW, through a coordination forum, will coordinate the implementation of all interventions under this document, and ensure appropriate reporting;
- iii) Each responsible entity should ensure sufficient budgeting to execute the interventions for which it is responsible.

(b) Establishment of an integrated monitoring and evaluation system

- i) Develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to collect data/information as required;
- ii) Each O/M/A will establish monitoring and evaluation units with respect to poverty eradication on the basis of the agreed framework.
- iii) Public regular reports of the State of Poverty and Inequality in Namibia.