



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

NEWSLETTER

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH



VISION

A caring and inclusive society where all Namibians enjoy a dignified life.

MANDATE

To ensure gender equality, poverty eradication and socio-economic development of targeted groups.

MISSION

To create, promote an enabling environment and equal opportunities for sustainable socio-economic development for the wellbeing of targeted groups.

PILLARS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Gender Equality and Related Human Rights Advocacy
2. Accelerate Socio-Economic Development and Integration of women, girls and boys, marginalized communities and persons with disabilities
3. Stakeholder Coordination
4. Institutional Excellence

CORE VALUES

Integrity
Teamwork
Empathy
Inclusivity
Professionalism
Accountability
Accessibility

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

SENIOR MANAGEMENT



Hon. DOREEN SIOKA
Minister



Hon. BERNADETTE JAGGER
Deputy Minister



Hon. ALEXIA MANOMBE-NCUBE
Deputy Minister
Disability Affairs



Hon. ROYAL /Uilo/oo
Deputy Minister
Marginalised Communities



Ms. ESTHER LUSEPANI
Executive Director



Ms. MARTHA MBOMBO
Deputy Executive Director

CHILD CARE AND PROTECTION SERVICES



Ms HELENA ANDJAMBA
Director
Child Welfare Services



Ms AMELIA MUSUKUBILI
Deputy Director
Child Care Facility
and Protection

POLICY, PLANNING AND RESEARCH



Mr WILBARD NASHANDI
Director
Policy, Planning and Research



FILIMON SHIIMI
Deputy Director
Policy and Planning

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



Ms PENOSHINGE SHILILIFA
Deputy Director
Research & Legislation

SOCIAL PROTECTION SERVICES



Ms VALENTINA MULONGENI
Director
Social Protection Services



Ms LOURENCIA TJIHO
Deputy Director
Grant Reconciliation



Mr ALBERT BIWA
Deputy Director
Social Assistance

DISABILITY AFFAIRS AND MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES



Ms NIITA IIPINGE
Director
Disability affairs and
marginalised communities



Ms MERCY KUFUNA
Deputy Director
Disability Affairs



Mr GERSON KAMATUKA
Deputy Director
Maginalised Communities

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION



Ms ROSINA MUBONENWA
Director
Community Development
and Poverty Eradication



Ms LOIDE VELISHAVO
Deputy Director
Early Childhood Development

ADMINISTRATION & GENERAL SERVICES



Mr NICHLAS MBINGENEEKO
Director
Admin & General Services



Ms ALISA KANUTUS
Deputy Director
Finance



Mr SACKARIA SHEEHAMA
Deputy Director
HR Management



Mr JOHANNES K. EMBULA
Deputy Director
General Services

FOREWORD

In keeping with our vision of a caring and inclusive society where all Namibians enjoy a dignified life, the month of March highlights one of the most important days of the year in our calendar, to wit 08 March, International Women's Day (IWD).

The IWD highlights and celebrates women's achievements, raises awareness about gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Day also lobbies for accelerated gender parity and raises awareness about Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Despite the many great achievements, across the world women are still facing a multiplicity of obstacles. These obstacles include female youth experiencing higher unemployment, high levels of poverty especially in rural areas and informal settlements, and GBV with an increase in cases of domestic violence.

This year's IWD was celebrated under the theme: "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world." The theme celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls in Namibia and around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from COVID-19.

The call to help forge a gender-equal world and celebrate women's achievements worldwide is a concerted effort and can only be achieved through dedication and active participation by everyone.

As stated by H.E. Dr Hage G Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, during the official opening of the 3rd Session of the 7th Parliament, GBV is indeed derailing efforts being made by the Government to guarantee the safety of all citizens. The enactment of laws that will vehemently deter these crimes



Esther Lusepani

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

would bring a sigh of relief because the safety of our children and women continues to dwindle. The Government over the years created an enabling environment for women to take up leadership and decision-making positions and it has become a catalyst for continued success in achieving gender parity in education, health, politics and governance.

The commitment to ensuring gender parity can primarily be intensified by the number of women in leadership structures and vigorous empowerment of women in all spheres of human life.

Last but not least, I appreciate the hard work of all staff members of the MGEPSW during the 2020-21 financial year despite the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the same vigour and determination, let us in concert operationalize the Annual Work Plan of the Ministry for 2021-22 financial year.

Similarly, I urge all staff members to realize all the outputs as contained in your respective Performance Agreements for the 2021-22 financial year. Speed and urgency must characterize our work performance at all times.

Together we can always make it.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



A cultural group celebrate the IWD in Opuwo

The main event for the International Women's Day (IWD) was held at Opuwo, Kunene Region. Hon. Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare was the Keynote Speaker. The IWD aims to help forge a gender-equal world and celebrates women's achievements worldwide. "This day is regarded as one of the most important days of the year on our calendar," remarked Hon. Doreen Sioka.

"The day further marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. It is on this day that significant activities are witnessed worldwide as groups of women and men come together to celebrate women achievements or rally for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls", added Hon Sioka.

The IWD is one of the most important days of the year to –

Commemorated annually on March 8th IWD is one of the most important days of the year to:

- Celebrate women's achievements,
- raise awareness about gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls,
- lobby for accelerated gender parity, and
- raise awareness about Gender-Based Violence

This years' IWD was celebrated under the theme: "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world". The theme celebrates the tremendous efforts by women and girls in Namibia and around the world in shaping a more equal future and recovery from COVID-19. The theme is also aligned

with the priority theme of the 65th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Hon Sioka added that Namibia has done well in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment thus far. As such, women have participated in all social economic, cultural and political spheres, and an increase in the number of women in politics and decision-making bodies. "Women have made greater strides and have broken the glass ceiling in the area of employment and are now holding key positions in Government and even in the private sector", said Hon Sioka.

Namibia through the zebra-list philosophy saw improvements in the empowerment of women, albeit with room for improvement. There are 9 females out of 28 representing 32% in Cabinet, 44% in the National Assembly, 14.28% in the National Council, 21% women Governors and more female graduates from institutions of higher learning.

"We need to continue empowering the Namibian women and men, girls and boys so that they can all realize their full potential and contribute to nation-building. Let us continue to uphold women's rights and fully leverage the potential of women's leadership in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic

as well as other social and economic challenges that our country face”, accentuated Hon Sioka. In conclusion, Hon Sioka stressed that “there is still more to be done at regional level to encourage women to take up leadership positions.

In some regions, for example, there is no women representation in political and leadership positions”. As such, Hon Sioka urged all political parties to empower and elect women in politics and leadership positions.

AWOME PROGRAMME TRAINING

The Directorate of Community Empowerment facilitated training on the Accelerating Women Owned Micro-Enterprises (AWOME) Program on the data collection tool. The tool will be used in the study on experiences and realities of micro-entrepreneurs in the COVID-19 context: A case of entrepreneurs supported under AWOME Program. The International University of Management (IUM), with technical support



AWOME programme training on the data collection tool

from UN Women, conducted the training. The Ministry through its women empowerment program has supported communities through Income Generating Activities with specific focus on women in business. The Program focuses on providing women entrepreneurs with knowledge and skills in the areas of marketing, record-keeping, stock management, costing and business planning as well as materials. This Program is implemented in partnership with all Regional Councils.

IDENTIFYING CHILDREN LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS: PROFILING AND SERVICE PROVISION ACTIVITY

In February the After School Centre (ASC) conducted a series of street visits. During the operation, eight (8) women that have fallen on hard times were found begging on streets and at various shopping centres.

In total, fourteen (14) children accompanied the women. As an intervention, the ASC staff members educated the women on the dangers of taking

children with them when they go begging/working on the streets, but many cited that they have nowhere to leave their children when they go out.

The visits included information sessions where people are educated on the Ministry’s programs aimed at empowering and getting them off the streets.

FARM ONDERA



Hon. Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare

On 05 March 2021, Hon. Doreen Sioka, Minister Of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, held a consultative meeting with the Hai//Om San Community at farm Ondera, Oshikoto Region. In her keynote address, Hon. Sioka indicated that she was keen to learn about the progress made in developing the farm and to discuss issues that could be hampering development.

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, through the Division of Marginalized Communities, is mandated to accelerate the integration of marginalized communities through dedicated programs that will augment the integration process and improve their livelihoods.

Various programs and projects have been strategically designed to ensure that this process is positively affecting the integration, which includes education support, access to land and livelihood support.

Hon Sioka stressed that Namibia as a UN Member State is keen on achieving the success of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect and improve the lives and prospects of the most

vulnerable globally. The marginalized communities face many challenges, which includes lack of access to land and secure land tenure, low levels of education, limited access to health services, food insecurity and insufficient livelihood options, especially the deep rural villages are the hardest hit community when it comes to basic needs such as shelter, food, water and sanitation.

Despite the numerous challenges, the Ministry in conjunction with UNICEF has established a technical committee to ensure that all food assistance programs meant to address hunger and malnutrition among the marginalized communities are effectively and timely implemented by the various Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies.

This is further complimented by the implementation of social protection programs, such as the old-age, disability, child maintenance and war veteran grants; School Feeding Programs; Special Feeding Program aimed at Marginalised Communities, Burial Services for Social Grants Recipients and Marginalized Communities, Drought Relief and Housing Provision for the Marginalized Communities.

Hon Sioka is convinced that the efforts by Government to ensure that the community of Farm Ondera sustains themselves is an initiative in the

right direction, the Farm's Agricultural Project is a perfect example and she applauded the Farm community and all stakeholders for that. However, Hon Sioka voiced concern that the development of this project is not moving at the expected trajectory, the required scale and speed.

Hon Sioka urged the community to work hard in keeping with the successes of the farm. She also discouraged in-fights within the community because that affect productivity, resulting in the abandonment of all planned projects. "This is greatly affecting the envisage progress of the strategies of government to ensure self-sufficiency.

People need to feed themselves when they are provided with fertile land", stressed Hon Sioka. Hon Sioka reminded the Ondera community that squabbles within the community, chieftainship and illegal slaughtering of the project's cattle have derailed turning Farm Ondera into a food basket by achieving optimal production.

She further emphasized the importance of consultation, participation and representation as principles that ensure that all citizens are included in every step of the decision-making processes. They are also increasingly perceived as preconditions for successful project planning and implementation.

CHILD CARE AND PROTECTION

An excellent opportunity was accorded the Ministry to create awareness regarding child care and protection on 05 March at the Government Information Centre. Ms. Enjouline Kole, Chief Social Worker within the Directorate of Child Care and Protection, formed part of the panelists.

Discussions focused on popularizing the provisions of the Child Care and Protection Act, 2015 (Act 3 of 2015), hereinafter referred to as the Act. In particular, the Act makes special provisions in terms of requirements for persons working with children.

This includes setting limits to the scope of persons convicted of offences listed under Section 283 (8) to not directly work with children in the public or private sector that offers services to children.

Thus entities should request police clearance certificates from employees or prospective



Ms. Enjouline Kole, Chief Social Worker

candidates to avoid appointing persons convicted of the listed offences and in so doing exposing children to potential abuse or exploitation.

Additional talking points included, sharing information regarding the registration and operations of residential child care facilities and shelters, child online protection, and child abduction.

INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES



Hon. Doreen Sioka hands over solar panels to the Bosveld Project

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare continues to make strides in efforts to empower communities through Income Generating Activities (IGAs). The Program is aimed at improving the quality of life for people by encouraging and assisting them to start businesses and create employment.

On 06 March 2021 Hon Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, handed over Income Generating Activities (IGAs) materials and equipment, at Kamanjab, to beneficiaries supported with grants from the African Union Commission (AUC).

Hon Sioka commended the African Union (AU) for initiating the 'Fund for African Women' as this Fund made it possible for the Ministry to further support

women-owned IGAs to expand their businesses, in particular rural women. Hon Sioka mentioned that Kunene Region is one of the three regions to benefit from AUC funding.

The regional poverty profile was the main criteria used to select the three regions namely, Kunene, Kavango West and Zambezi Region. "The Ministry remains committed to utilize resources at its disposal to eradicate poverty", Hon Sioka remarked.

The specific IGA from Bosveld Project received materials and equipment valued at N\$68,844.75. She urged the beneficiaries to use material and equipment optimally to increase income and create employment for other women. The Ministry will continue to monitor the progress of the AU funded IGAs and provide feedback to the AU.

CAPACITY BUILDING



Staff members of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare and International IDEA

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPESW) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) held capacity building training aimed at enhancing gender equality and women empowerment in Namibia.

The training held at Swakopmund from 6 – 8 March 2021 sought to build on previous capacity building training workshops held in 2017, 2018 and 2019, aimed at enhancing gender parity in political parties in Namibia.

The planned parliamentary training workshop underscores the role of Parliament in the achievement of gender equality in democracy building processes and institutions.

It therefore complements and reinforces the on-going efforts on advancing gender equality in politics and

decision making by various national and global actors in line with the new global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals- SDG 5 which seeks to ‘achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’ and one of its targets: “Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (Target 5.5)”.

The training sessions targeted women parliamentarians, senior women political party leaders, female mayors, young women in political parties, leaders of women wings in political parties and Regional and Local Authority Councilors.

While acknowledging a positive trend in women representation in the National Assembly, participants in previous training workshops lamented low representation of young women in political parties and of women in general at regional levels.

Therefore, one of the key recommendations from previous training was to enhance capacity building initiatives at regional level geared towards strengthening women (including young women) participation and representation.

As the gatekeepers to elected posts in almost all countries, political parties are consistently identified as responsible for women's political under-representation.

While the institutionalization of gender equality objectives and strategies in politics and political parties is a vital step towards attaining equality between women and men in public life and decision-making, it is a deeply contested field.

The dominant masculine model of the exercise of power in political life and within political parties builds on traditional attitudes that sideline women and make it difficult for them to succeed in politics.

Political parties are the primary and most direct conduits through which women can access elected office and political leadership. Therefore, the structures, policies, practices and values of political parties have a profound impact on the level of women's participation and representation in politics generally and in positions of power and decision making at all levels of a country.

Over the past two decades, recognition and the centrality of political parties to the achievement of gender parity in politics and decision-making have increased and are now widely acknowledged by gender equality advocates and policy makers.

Political parties are increasingly becoming an integral part of national and international gender responsive initiatives.

In several African countries, regulations of political parties including procedures for election to leadership and decision-making positions, gender is not adequately integrated.

For example, most political parties use masculine generic language (e.g. 'he/she' or 'chairman') to refer to leadership positions such as President, Chairperson, or Vice Chairperson, Secretary General and Treasurer, thus implicitly equating access to the positions with maleness.

In contrast, 'she' is only used in reference to the leadership of women's leagues within political parties. A 2013 study by International IDEA on political parties' commitments on gender parity in 33 African countries revealed a significant gap between parties' written general commitments to promoting gender equality and specific measures to implement these commitments.

Evidence gathered across political parties in these countries suggests that while many political parties' policy documents contain commitments on gender equality, they do not set out strategic measures for effective enforcement and implementation of the commitments.

In Namibia, women comprise over 50% of the population, were active participants in the struggle for independence and they continue to play an important role in campaigning for gender equality.

Despite all these contributions, they continue to be underrepresented in politics and decision-making at all levels of society, particularly at the sub-national and national level.

A CALL FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPEWSW) held its 2020/2021 Annual Review and 2021/2022 Planning Workshop from 15 - 18 March 2021.

Addressing the Management of the Ministry, Hon. Bernadette Maria Jagger, Deputy Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, said the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic is a call on everyone to come up with robust and resilient plans to guard against any future shocks.



Hon. Bernadette Maria Jagger, Deputy Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare

the multiplicity of challenges, the Ministry contrived to implement significant programs and projects that contributed significantly towards the realization of its mandate. Hon Jagger reminded the Managers that our



Staff members - Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare

call of duty requires, inter alia, unwavering commitment and above all a sense of speed and urgency in the execution of our work. This includes the speedy

The Ministry is entrusted with the key responsibility of maintaining the wellbeing of the most vulnerable members of society, women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities and the marginalised communities for realizing a caring and inclusive society where all Namibians enjoy a dignified life.

Central to the well-being of our people are issues of hunger, poverty, social exclusion and gender-based violence, to mention but just a few. Hon Jagger drew the attention of Management to the multiple challenges that the Ministry went through during the 2020/21 financial year, such as increased incidents of gender-based violence, high loss of income, increased food insecurities, high rates of homelessness and more persons falling into poverty primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite

implementation of policy decisions and to drive a performance culture within the Ministry with the ultimate goal of improving the living standards of all Namibians.

Hon. Jagger stressed that the annual review and planning process should primarily assist the Ministry to reflect on promises and plans, to interrogate ourselves and determine how we will build a performance culture centred on personal accountability, commitment, and results.

“Your plans should be implementable and not just trap you in meetings and workshops,” cautioned Hon Jagger. In conclusion, Hon Jagger declared the annual review and planning meeting officially opened and wished everyone fruitful deliberations.

WHITE RIBBON



Hon. Bernadette Maria Jagger at the White Ribbon Campaign Namibia launch

The White Ribbon Campaign Namibia launched the 'Respect Her & Men's Pledge & Promise Campaign' under the theme: Give Violence a Red Card on 8 March 2021.

Speaking at the launch, Hon. Bernadette Maria Jagger informed the audience that she is impressed by a men's organization and its commitment to actively stand up against men's violence and rape against women and girls.

More so that the organization took a pledge 'never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women in all its forms'. She mentioned that Government made considerable strides to radically change the lives of women, men and children affected by violence against women and gender-based violence to be specific.

The Government has been enhancing women and children's rights to be protected from violence through the establishment of a robust legal framework; the promotion of victim-focused policies with a central role given to the protective role of families and communities; the creation of economic development opportunities for the most vulnerable to help reverse

deep-seated inequities; and, the identification and scaling up of innovative and responsive services as reflected by the GBV Plan of Action as well as on the recommendations of the 2nd National Conference on Gender-Based Violence 2014.

"I am extremely pleased by the White Ribbon Campaign, which is also a member of the GBV and Human Rights Cluster, for the awareness raising on violence against women, your brave actions do not go unnoticed. We hear your voices on radios, with messages targeted to men and boys to stand up and speaking against violence against women and girls.

We acknowledge your bravery to develop such a wide support network of male volunteers across Namibia that will further develop the campaign activities", said Hon Jagger.

Hon Jagger encouraged the organization to work hand-in-hand with the Ministry Community Liaison Officers in all the Regions so as to become one formidable force that speaks with one voice. "As government, we are encouraged when civil society hold hands and work together as partners".

"We know that we cannot develop our nation when we have social evils that impede the right mind of people to focus, especially the youth where this violence is mostly found", added Hon Jagger. "GBV undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims, yet it remains shrouded in a culture of silence.

Victims of violence can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, physical injuries, and even death", stressed Hon Jagger. She called on all men and women to change attitudes, be human and

respect the rights of others. Hon Jagger reminded the gathering of the National GBV Campaign Messages that stipulate that:

- LOVE knows there is no excuse for violence.
- LOVE is finding the courage to seek help.
- LOVE is raising your family not your fist.

- LOVE is building up not breaking down.

In conclusion, Hon Jagger urged the audience to challenge the attitudes of violence in society, which perpetuate inequalities to stop violence against women and children: boys and girls.

DONATION



UNICEF Representative handing over 45 laptops to Mrs Martha Mbombo, Deputy Executive Director as Mrs Helena Andjamba looks on in support of the donation

On 04 February 2021, the Ministry received a donation in the form of 45 laptops from UNICEF. The laptops are to support Social Workers within the Ministry to participate in virtual training on the Child Care and Protection Act, 2015 (Act No. 3 of 2015). The donation was handed over by Mr. Gregor von Medeazza, Deputy Representative, UNICEF, and received by Ms. Martha Mbombo, Deputy Executive Director, MGEPSW.

KARATE



Young Karatekas

Home to 68 children, Namibian Children’s Home (NCH) enlists a variety of extracurricular activities that are important for the overall development of the children. Karate in particular has become popular amongst the children. Karate benefits children in most aspects of their lives, which includes, physical, mental, and emotional strengths. Developing balance, focus, coordination, discipline and self-defense are well-known features of this ancient practice.

RAISING AWARENESS ON CHILDREN LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS



The Social Worker, Ms. Lena Nangombe from the After School Centre (ASC), had a presentation to create awareness on children living and working on the street at the Windhoek International School with the thirty (30) grade 3 learners.

STAFF MOBILITY

No	Types of Mobility	Number of staff members
1	Appointment	8
2	Promotion/Transfers	5
3	Retirements	3
4	Resignations	6
5	Deceased	2



Celebrating **31** years of **Nationhood**

“ONE NAMIBIA, ONE NATION”

21 March 1990 - 21 March 2021





PREVENT THE SPEAD OF COVID-19



Total cases
48,177

Recoved
45,909

Deaths
638

- **Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.**
- **Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.**
- **Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible.**
- **Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.**
- **Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.**
- **Stay home if you feel unwell.**
- **If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.**

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

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