



UNITED NATIONS  
NAMIBIA

NEWSLETTER  
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## Food Bank Programme goes digital with SCOPE

**21 November, Windhoek:** The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MPESW) in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) launched the Food Bank SCOPE Pilot Project, the first of its kind around the globe, at the Katutura Youth Complex in Windhoek on 21 November 2018.

“We are the first in the whole of Africa and the world. People will come to Namibia to see how we are doing it,” said the Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Hon. Bishop Zephania Kameeta at the launch.

SCOPE is a digital, automated registration and entitlement management system which is being implemented to strengthen Namibia’s food bank system. Through collecting and recording biometric data, SCOPE will enhance efficiency of beneficiary registration, food distribution and reporting and accountability processes. At the same time, it will contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 ‘Zero Hunger’ which aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030.



The UN System in Namibia (UN Namibia) and the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) launching the SCOPE Pilot Project. *UN Namibia*

“Zero hunger means ensuring that the poorest have the means to buy or grow enough food to keep their families well-nourished, and that infrastructure is adequate, and markets are strong enough to get food to where it is needed,” said Lola Castro, the Regional Director for WFP in Southern Africa.

“For this to happen, Namibia will need to implement innovative initiatives, policies, strategies and programmes. We are hopeful that the implementation of SCOPE for Government will address some of those gaps and contribute in laying a foundation towards building a single registry for Namibia’s social protection programmes,” said Castro, further highlighting that Namibia’s use of the technology can be a blueprint and model not only for countries in Africa, but for the entire world.

Namibia has several social protection programmes in place, including social grants for old age, disability, child maintenance and war veterans, school feeding, drought relief and the food bank programme. The food bank programme, launched in 2016, is currently benefiting over 17,000 people in the Khomas, // Karas, Hardap, Kavango East and Kavango West regions. The programme

will be rolled out to other regions over the next months. SCOPE is being piloted in Windhoek before it can be rolled out to other regions.

Hon. Bishop Zephania Kameeta echoed that the SCOPE system has the potential to benefit other social protection programmes, saying, “In this regard, the SCOPE system is an effective digital based management and information system that can be utilised in other social protection programmes, to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. The SCOPE system can be adapted to assist in streamlining of our fragmented social protection systems.”

The event included a testimonial from an elderly beneficiary, who expressed her gratitude as SCOPE has eliminated long queues and she no longer has to worry about someone taking her parcel of food.

Following the official launch of the SCOPE Pilot Project, a demonstration showed the audience how the technology works. With SCOPE, beneficiaries are given a card which is linked to their bio-metric data, their finger print. This ensures that their information is safe and that those in need of food most, are benefiting from the distributed food parcels.

Hon. Bishop Kameeta participating in the demonstration. *MPESW*





## Business leaders engaged to support children's rights

Business leaders have agreed to "go blue for children" by creating a business council aimed at advancing the rights of every child. *UNICEF*

**20 November, Windhoek:** On the 29th celebration of the World Children's Day – the anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) – UNICEF engaged high-profile business leaders in Namibia to "go blue for children" by creating a Business Council, whose aim is to promote the delivery of results for children and advance the rights of every Namibian child.

At an event in Windhoek to celebrate the landmarks of UNCRC in Namibia, business leaders from the banking, agricultural, commerce, mining and fishery sectors were invited to be part of a pool of partner companies who will adhere to a set of principles to respect and support children in their business decisions and operations.

Twenty 28 years on, commendable milestones have been achieved. Most Namibian children are protected from common childhood diseases such as measles and polio through accessible immunisation services which are fully funded by the Government. The total number of deaths of children under 5 has reduced from 4,200 per year in 1990 to less than 3,000 in 2013. At the same time, 96% of babies born to HIV-positive mothers, test negative for HIV because of a well-functioning Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) programme across the country. In education, the country has also celebrated universal access to primary and secondary education, while water is accessible to children for more than 84% of the population.

"If we do not urgently invest in education and skills training, the rapidly growing global population of adolescents and young people – which will reach 2 billion by 2030 – will continue to be unprepared and unskilled for the future workforce," said UNICEF Representative, Rachel Odede. "We therefore need you to join us - to strengthen and deepen partnerships between the public and private sectors, so as to better position Namibia to leverage the rich potential of its young people."

This year's celebration of the World Children's Day comes barely two months after the UN General Assembly launched a global partnership called "Generation Unlimited", which calls on stakeholders, including the private sector, to bring together resources and expertise to ensure that every young person is learning, in training or in employment by 2030.

*"If we do not urgently invest in education and skills training, the rapidly growing global population of adolescents and young people – which will reach 2 billion by 2030 – will continue to be unprepared and unskilled for the future workforce"*

-UNICEF Representative, Rachel Odede

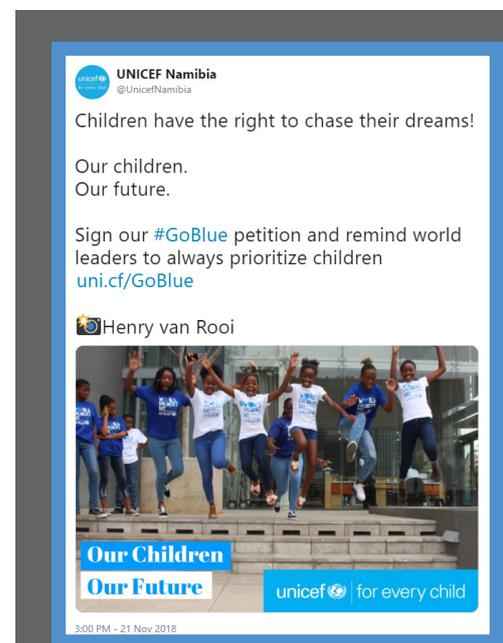


"Because children and young people make up a huge part of our population, the actions and decisions of business will inevitably affect them directly or indirectly as consumers, children of employees and as illicit workers of some employers," said UNICEF Representative, Rachel Odede.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) signed the UNCRC in 1990 as a pledge to improve children's lives through reducing infant mortality, increasing school enrolment and ensuring that services are in place for the protection of children.

However, while celebrating these achievements, the business leaders also had an opportunity to reflect on unmet targets, which have resulted in thousands of children living in poverty and who lack access to basic sanitation services. Many remain unprotected and vulnerable to violence and abuse, and some also fail to access available health services because of geographic distances.

The establishment of a business council is therefore a welcome step, to open up channels for the business community, to support Government efforts towards the full realisation of children's rights.





## National Committee on Migration Management introduced in Namibia

The National Migration Workshop brought together various stakeholders involved in migration management across Namibia. IOM

**21 November, Swakopmund:** The UN Migration Agency (IOM) held a three-day National Migration Workshop from 19-21 November in Swakopmund, Namibia. The workshop was held in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration (MHAI).

The main objective of the workshop was to launch the National Committee on Migration Management (NCBMM), a coordinating body comprised of government institutions, UN agencies, civil society and non-governmental organizations.

The Committee will be responsible for overseeing development of the Namibian Comprehensive National Migration Management Policy and providing a roadmap for its implementation.

This initiative follows the 18-month IOM Development Fund project that aims to strengthen migration management mechanisms of the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN).

Addressing the participants during the opening session, the Minister of Home Affairs and Immigration, Hon. Frans Kapofi, said, "Migration is a topic close to all our hearts." He added that migration will continue for years to come and emphasized the need for government to put in place a strategy for improved migration management.

IOM Namibia's Head of Office, Jeremias Mendes, referred to the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) as one of the key instruments that will guide the

management of migration globally. The GCM will be essential in helping Namibia align its migration management policy to the global standards of migration governance, he said.

Mendes stressed that, "There is a growing need to strengthen the migration management to better protect national borders but also to ensure that migrants' rights are protected."

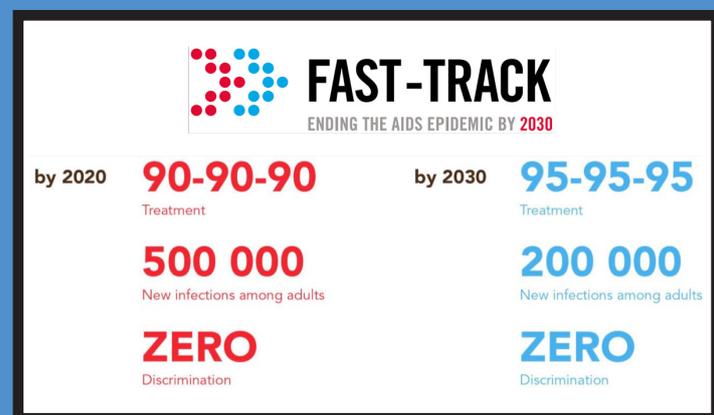
The workshop marks the beginning of a process that will continue through 2019 with the submission of the draft migration policy to the GRN cabinet for final endorsement and implementation.

## National AIDS Executive Committee takes stock of HIV epidemic and response at 2nd Meeting of 2018

**22 November, Windhoek:** On 22 November 2018, the National AIDS Executive Committee (NAEC) held its second meeting of the year with support from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The NAEC has a multisectoral representation, drawn from public and private sectors, civil society and development partners. It has a mandate to provide technical leadership, facilitate programme development and planning, oversee capacity development and technical assistance, partnership strengthening and management of strategic information.

NAEC is critical for accountability to the National AIDS Strategic Framework 2017 – 2022 which aims to reach epidemic control and thus contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 'Good Health'. This meeting also supports the UN's efforts in the UNPAF Social Transformation Pillar.

The meeting focused on updates related to Namibia's accomplishment against the Fast Track Targets, the new pathway



to an elimination of mother-to-child transmission roadmap, next steps of the legal environment assessment, and looking forward to upcoming international conferences on AIDS. As the final NAEC meeting of the year, this was a critical meeting for stakeholders to take stock of the year's progress of the multisectoral HIV response and prepare for the upcoming World AIDS Day commemoration on 30 November 2018 which is to be held in Okongo.



## NAM hosts 1<sup>st</sup> regional World Food Day commemoration

Namibia hosted the first regional commemoration of World Food Day, which celebrates the anniversary of the founding of FAO. *FAO*

**30 October, Kavango West:** The UN System in Namibia, under the leadership of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Namibia and the World Food Programme (WFP), supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) to host the first regional World Food Day (WFD) commemoration on 30 October 2018 in Bunya Village, Kapako Constituency in Kavango West Region.

As the current Southern African Development Community (SADC) chair, Namibia adopted the new regional approach to commemorating WFD observances that was piloted by South Africa, the immediate past chair, and adopted by the SADC Ministers in 2017.

Under the theme, "Our actions are our future: A #ZeroHunger world by 2030 is possible", the commemoration highlighted the crucial role each and every individual across the continent and the globe can play in the fight against hunger, noting that all climate action decisions made today can impact the future.

Hon. Alpheus !Naruseb, the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, speaking on behalf of the Guest of Honour, the Vice President of Namibia, Hon. Nangolo Mbumba, highlighted the importance of farmers having markets to sell their produce and underscored the Government's commitment to enable farmers to earn sustainable livelihoods through agriculture.

During the event, donations of agricultural inputs and foodstuffs were distributed to ten identified beneficiaries. An additional 200 vulnerable households within the region were also identified and later provided with agricultural inputs and foodstuffs. Hon. !Naruseb officially launched the food mountain of donated food items that were distributed. The food mountain is a symbolic gesture of producing more food to feed the nation.

The South African Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Hon. Senzeni Zokwana, was also present and made remarks highlighting the current state of food insecurity in the SADC region and stressed the potential pivotal role

that agriculture could play in the region in poverty alleviation and economic transformation.

The FAO Representative in Namibia, Farayi Zimudzi, delivered remarks on behalf of FAO Director-General (DG), José Graziano da Silva. Highlighting the growing number of food insecure people in the world and calling for action against malnutrition, the DG said, "Governments have the most fundamental role in achieving Zero Hunger by ensuring that vulnerable people have sufficient income to buy the food they need, or the means to produce it for themselves – even in times of conflict."

As part of the proceedings, the FAO Representative and the Head of SADC Food and Natural Resources (FANR) Sector, presented cheques to local farmers in the region to enable them to acquire inputs for improved production. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, also presented vegetable seeds and some garden tools to the traditional leadership in the Constituency.

In addition, several trees were planted in a garden in the Bunya Village by the Deputy Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Hon. Aino Kapewangolo, the WFP Country Director in Namibia, Bai Mankay Sankoh, as well as the Ambassadors of Zimbabwe and Zambia to Namibia, among other key stakeholders.

Participants also had an opportunity to interact with displays showcasing agricultural produce from the host region, information about the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (RVAA) programme, tractors and agricultural implements from MAWF and information about food processing and marketing from the private sector.

Hon. !Naruseb officially launching the food mountain, a symbolic gesture of producing more food to feed the nation. *FAO*





## Exhibition encourages youth to #StandUp4HumanRights

Youth from the University of Namibia (UNAM) and local secondary schools are ready to #StandUp4HumanRights. *UNIC Windhoek*

**20 November, Windhoek:** The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Windhoek launched the #StandUp4HumanRights Photo Exhibition in collaboration with the Human Rights Documentation Centre of the University of Namibia (UNAM) on 20 November 2018.

The exhibition consists of images of the movers and shakers behind the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a milestone document for human rights which came to life in 1948. It sets the fundamental human rights to be universally protected for all people. The 70th Anniversary, being celebrated this year, is a chance for the world to reaffirm the enduring principles and standards this document established.

Open to students and the public for a week at the UNAM Campus in Windhoek, the exhibition allowed visitors to reflect on the context of the Declaration and educate themselves on the extensive research done by the those who championed and formulated the document.

The Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor John Baloro, officially opened the exhibition and delivered remarks on behalf of UNAM. He said, "The event exemplifies the University's commitment to human rights. It also reminds us that the youth are the future and have the responsibility to uphold and ensure the promises as well as the fulfilment of this illustrious document."

The launch of the exhibition provided a platform for teachers, lecturers, librarians and the youth, to discuss the importance of human rights. UNAM students as well as secondary level learners present from several local schools were tested through an engaging quiz that put their understanding of Human Rights and the UDHR to the test. Participants were also encouraged to contribute to a better world, raise human rights concerns and leave a written commitment to keep up the momentum for this anniversary year and the upcoming Human Rights Day.

The exhibition is being showcased in the foyer of the UN House in Namibia from 26 November until 10 December, the commemoration of Human Rights Day.

## Stakeholders to support Tsumkwe Development

**21 November, Windhoek:** A stakeholder meeting hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation (MHETI) took place on 21 November 2018 at the UN House. The main objective of the stakeholder meeting was to raise greater awareness on the vast need for support for the Tsumkwe Community and to rally financial assistance to implement proposed programmes.

The stakeholder meeting was attended by representatives of the Diplomatic Corps in Namibia, the private sector and civil society organizations alongside other implementing partners.

The MHETI and UNESCO had a chance to visit the Tsumkwe constituency this year, to identify the needs of the Tsumkwe communities. These include improving access to Early and Childhood Development (ECD), technical and vocational education and training (TVET), youth and



Hon. Dr. Itah Kandji-Murangi, delivering remarks at the workshop.

women's empowerment programs and accommodation and hostels for learners, among others. Most of these needs are well in line with UNESCO's mandate, hence the support to the MHETI's efforts to mobilise resources to address the needs of the marginalised communities of the Tsumkwe constituency.

During his remarks Dr. Jean Pierre Ilboudo, said, "UNESCO works to create the conditions for dialogues among civilisation, cultures and people, based upon respect of commonly shared values. It is through these dialogues that the world can achieve global visions for sustainable development encompassing observance of human rights, mutual respect and the alleviation of poverty, all of which are at the heart of UNESCO's mission and activities."

The Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Hon. Dr. Itah Kandji-Murangi, during her remarks, highlighted that the major challenges in education include unqualified teachers and students dropping out as a result of the need to travel long distances as a result of a lack of accommodation for learners.

She went on to state that around 30% of the constituency's inhabitants are farming with domestic animals, and more than 70% of the inhabitants are farming with crops. However, crop production is being done at a very low scale. For this reason, Government is assisting 80% of Tsumkwe residents with the San Feeding Programme, and 100% of the residents with Drought Relief Food.



## Enhana youth trained on gender equality and female representation in politics

Participants from across the Ohangwena Region, gained knowledge about gender equality and promoting the rights of women in politics. UNDP

**23 November, Eenhana:** The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Namibia monitored a workshop organized by the Women's Action for Development (WAD) and the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) on 23 November 2018 in Eenhana, Ohangwena Region.

The workshop aimed at creating regional awareness under the theme of promoting the rights of women and political representation in Namibia. Youth from different constituencies in the Ohangwena Region attended the workshop, with 80% of participants being female.

The Project Manager, Bennet Bhebhe, explained that the objective of the workshop was to contribute towards equipping the inhabitants of Ohangwena Region with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to fully participate in the electoral process as candidates representing their respective political parties. The trainers, Peingondjabi Sheya

and Klaudia Nangobe, took the group through various topics such as the need for female participation in political representation, the political overview of Namibia and the basis for gender equality in Namibia. The attendees participated in various exercises and activities that aimed to test their newly gained skills on various topics.

The workshop is in line with the WAD's objectives, as agreed between the UNDEF and the WAD in their two-year agreement, to promote gender equality and equity between men and women in Namibian politics and decision-making positions. This workshop is one of a series that will occur across the country, aiming to target 700 people by having one workshop in each region and targeting to have 50 attendees.

While more women have entered political positions in recent years in Namibia, they still hold a mere 14% of Regional Councils and only 22% of seats in Cabinet in 2014/2015, far short of parity. In order

to achieve gender equality in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 by 2030, urgent action to eliminate the many root causes of discrimination that restrict women's rights in private and public scopes is still required, especially in rural Namibia.

At the end of the workshop, the attendees indicated their interest in representing their constituencies. They also hope to be elected into the 50/50 clubs, which aim to spread awareness to communities about the need for 50/50 gender equality in political representation. Moreover, the 50/50 clubs aim to mobilize support for female candidates in regional elections.

Furthermore, the project aims at creating an environment for political parties to adopt internal policies and legislative frameworks that are conscious of gender equality in nominating party leaders and representatives. The ultimate, long-term goal is to influence the political parties to align their constitutions to achieve a 50/50 gender representation.

## UNAIDS Regional Director visits Namibia

**9 November, Namibia:** From November 6-9, 2018, UNAIDS Regional Director of Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr. Catherine Sozi, visited Namibia alongside the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Health Ministerial Meeting. During the visit, she met with the Speaker of Parliament, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi; the Minister of Health and Social Services, Hon. Dr. Bernard Haufiku; the First Lady of Namibia (FLON), H.E. Monica Geingos; the Mayor of Windhoek, Cllr. Muesee Kazapua; the UN Country Team; and representatives of civil society organizations working in the HIV sector.

Discussions revolved around the progress and challenges that Namibia faces in reaching the last mile of the HIV response, including how best to sustain the gains made as Namibia reaches past epidemic control. Dr. Sozi also congratulated FLON on recently receiving the Award "World Without AIDS". Honourable Dr. Haufiku said that, "The support from UNAIDS to push for these initiatives is critical to building an integrated system for health and truly reaching our 90-90-90 targets."



## Social Media of the Month:

- SADC Ministerial Meeting
- World Toilet Day
- #BeFreeBreakFree Walk
- SCOPE Launch
- WFP RD's Visit to NAM

**UNFPA Namibia**  
@UNFPANamibia

@OdedeRachel @UNNamibia Resident Coordinator a.i.: "The #youth are key in building a brighter & more #sustainableFuture. We must ensure that our future workers and parents have health care, education and employment opportunities." #SADC Ministerial luncheon



9:37 PM - 8 Nov 2018

**UN-Water**  
@UN-Water

Washed your hands today?

900 million schoolchildren have nowhere to wash their hands to stop the spread of deadly diseases. What does the situation look like in your community? Share your stories with us this #WorldToiletDay. [worldtoiletday.org](http://worldtoiletday.org)



1:36 PM - 6 Nov 2018

**UNAIDS NAMIBIA**  
@UNAIDSNamibia

The #BeFreeBreakFree event is off! Starting with the fun walk, @FLON\_Namibia and UN Family start it strong!

@BarihutaT @ongpinp @RachelOdede @WFPNamibia @UNAIDSNamibia @UNNamibia



8:11 AM - 10 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

.@UNNamibia Country Team met with @LolaCastroWFP, the Regional Director for @WFP in Southern Africa, this morning to discuss #partnerships and the @UN's efforts to eradicate hunger and #malnutrition.

Here's why #zerohunger is at the top of our agenda: [www1.wfp.org/zero-hunger](http://www1.wfp.org/zero-hunger)



9:17 AM - 20 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

.@EndPovertyNAM & @WFP launched the FoodBank SCOPE System, the 1st of its kind around the globe. SCOPE allows for real-time data collection & enhances efficiency of beneficiary registration, food distribution & reporting processes. More: [bit.ly/2PI0RDR](http://bit.ly/2PI0RDR) #FoodBankGoesDigital



2:18 PM - 21 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

"#ZeroHunger means ensuring that the poorest have the means to buy or grow enough food to keep their families well-nourished & that infrastructure is adequate & markets are strong enough to get food to where it is needed." - @LolaCastroWFP, Regional Director for Southern Africa



2:53 PM - 21 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

"We are hopeful that the implementation of SCOPE for Government will address some of those gaps and contribute in laying a foundation towards building a single registry for #Namibia's #SocialProtection Programme." - @LolaCastroWFP, Regional Director for Southern Africa #zerohunger



2:58 PM - 21 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

"We will be the 1st in the whole of #Africa and the world. People will come to #Namibia to see how we are doing it," said the Minister of @EndPovertyNAM, Hon. Bishop Zephania Kameeta at the launch of the Food Bank SCOPE System in #partnership with @WFP.



3:12 PM - 21 Nov 2018

**UN Namibia**  
@UNNamibia

.@UNNamibia remains committed to providing support to the Government of the Republic of #Namibia in ensuring a "Food and Nutrition Secured and Healthy 🇳🇦". #zerohunger #FoodBankGoesDigital



3:21 PM - 21 Nov 2018



Health stakeholders launching the study. WHO

## Namibia launches study on prevalence of and interventions for suicide

**25 October, Windhoek:** "Self-directed violence is a serious social, economic and public health concern with devastating impact on individuals, families and communities," said the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), Ben Nangombe, at the launch of a National Study on the Prevalence and Interventions Related to Suicide.

Nangombe further said that the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) is committed to reduce the high rate of attempted suicide and suicide. The study was necessitated by limited empirical data on the prevalence, causes and precipitating factors of suicide in Namibia. It is a first of its kind and was conducted in all fourteen Regions of the country from April until September 2016.

The study focused on the prevalence of fatal suicides and non-fatal suicidal attempts, prevalence of suicidal ideation (idea-forming), causes of suicide, knowledge of suicide prevention and treatment efforts, attitudes towards suicide, as well as the types and effectiveness of suicide prevention and treatment efforts. It also made recommendations for effective preventative and treatment programmes. The study reveals that women are more likely to attempt suicide, while men are significantly more likely to end their lives by suicide. The study results will be used to inform the drafting of the 2nd Five Year National Strategic Plan on the Prevention of Suicide in Namibia for the period 2018/19-2022/23, as well as the development of a policy framework to guide suicide prevention, treatment, management and coordination.

Nangombe informed the meeting that in 2011, Namibia had the eleventh (11th) highest suicide rate in the world and fourth (4th) highest in Africa. He further said that in 2015, the suicide rate in Namibia was 22.1 suicides per 100,000 population compared with 11.4 suicides per 100,000 population worldwide. He concluded by highlighting that the Ministry is implementing a number of preventive and treatment interventions in collaboration with other government Ministries, private sector, civil society organizations and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The study was launched on 25 October at the UN House in Klein Windhoek, Namibia as part of the Ministry's activities in commemoration of the World Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health Day. Other activities included outreaches to different settings with awareness raising messages including schools, churches and workplaces.

## Launch of State of World Population report in Namibia

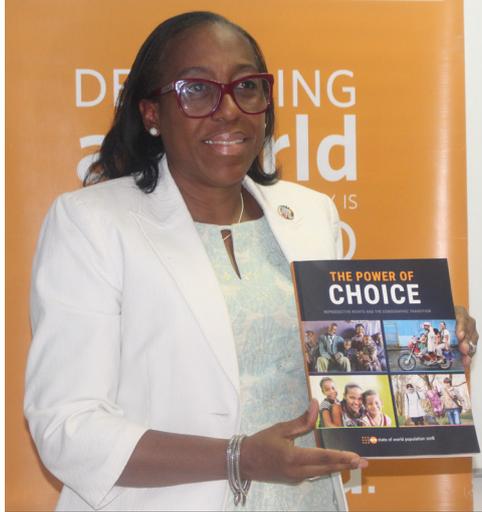
**17 October, Windhoek:** The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on 17 October 2018 launched its flagship State of World Population report titled, "The Power of Choice: Reproductive Rights and the Demographic Transition."

The report highlights the fact that reproductive rights, one of the most fundamental rights inherent to all persons and one of the most intimate choices a person can make, is still not available to all. Evidence shows that the right to make choices remains limited for far too many women.

The extent to which couples and individuals have the power to make their own decisions about whether and when to have children, and how many children to have, directly impacts fertility levels. Fertility levels vary greatly between developed countries and least developed countries. They provide a general indication of the state of reproductive rights.

The State of World Population report calls on countries to confront their demographic challenges not through fewer choices, but rather by enhancing rights and choices.

Speaking at the launch of the publication, UNFPA Country Representative Denna Gayle said there are 214 million women in the developing world who are at risk of unintended pregnancy because their reproductive choices are limited by a lack of access to modern contraception and other compounding factors such as poverty, socio-cultural and gender norms. "As a result, in much of the developing world, women are having more children than they want," she said.



UNFPA Representative to Namibia, Denna Gayle, holding the State of the World Population report. UNFPA

"The high cost of child care or the high opportunity cost of leaving a career to start or expand a family, are just some of the main reasons why women are unable to exercise their right to freely and responsibly make decisions about the timing and frequency of pregnancies," said Gayle.

In an effort to address high or low fertility over the years, some countries have taken actions that restrict choices and violate women's rights, sometimes by cutting off family planning, sometimes through coerced sterilizations," she noted.

"Making sure that childcare is affordable is one action that a low fertility country can take that enhances rights and expands choices," she said, further highlighting that this enables women to start or expand families without giving up their careers.

"Making sure that, for example, a 10- or 15-year-old girl has access to the information and services that will empower her to prevent an early

pregnancy or an HIV infection, will enable that young girl to remain in school, attain her education, join the labour force and contribute to the development of her family, community and country," said Gayle.

In speaking about family planning, Gayle noted that it is not only good for the individual, but also good for any nation's economic development. "Imagine what that would mean for a country like Namibia in the next 12-15 years. Our 10-year-old will be 25 and our 15-year-old will be 30. Therefore, strategic policy investments in their education, employment and empowerment will be crucial to shaping this nation's prosperity when we, along with the rest of the world, will be hailing the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," she said.

Although Namibia has made tremendous progress in reproductive health efforts over the past 27 years, there are still barriers impeding the use of modern contraceptives. Unmet need for contraception remains high (12%) among women in Namibia, while 19% of adolescent girls (15-19 years old) have begun childbearing, with some regions reporting proportions of more than 36%, indicating that more vigorous efforts are needed to understand and to meet the needs of adolescents and young people.

With this in mind, the UNFPA/GRN Country Programme Document will focus on strengthening sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRH&R) services within the health system to enhance its ability or capacity to adequately target eligible vulnerable groups, such as young people and women, underserved locations and deliver targeted interventions. UNFPA will ensure that marginalized populations and geographic locations are not left behind.

Stay updated with  
UN Namibia!

Website:  
[un.org/na](http://un.org/na)

Social Media:  
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Hashtag:  
#UnitedwithUNNamibia

Visit us:  
38-44 Stein Street  
Klein Windhoek,  
Windhoek, Namibia

## Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10 'Reduced Inequalities' is the SDG of the Month!

Too much of the world's wealth is held by a very small group of people. This often leads to financial and social discrimination. In order for nations to flourish, equality and prosperity must be available to everyone - regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs or economic status. When every individual is self sufficient, the entire world prospers.

To reduce inequalities, we all have to take action. Get inspired here:  
<https://www.globalgoals.org/10-reduced-inequalities>

