

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

STATEMENT

BY

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PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

AT THE OCCASION OF

**THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
TRAINING ON GENDER ANALYSIS
AND GENDER RESPONSIVE
BUDGETING WORKSHOP**

MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2018

NIPAM, WINDHOEK

- Director of Proceedings
- Your Excellency Anita Kiki Gbeho, Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Namibia
- Honourable Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
- Esteemed Facilitators and Participants
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning!

Let me start by expressing gratitude to the United Nations system for their assistance to us to build capacity in Gender Analysis and Gender Responsive Budgeting in Namibia.

I also wish to welcome our facilitators from abroad. We truly appreciate your presence in Namibia and the wealth of information and intelligence that you will share with us over the next five days.

The world has changed in dramatic and sometimes unexpected ways. Plenty of positive changes have been observed, such as improvements in technology or medicine. However, we still face daunting challenges with inequality and the environment. The evolving situation of women at work remains an important policy issue. It is one area where there has been tremendous progress, yet not nearly enough. Therefore, as a matter of principle, embracing gender equality is the right thing to do. There is plenty of research that shows that gender balance is critical for the effectiveness of our work and our economies. Madam Christine Lagarde, IMF managing director aptly put it when she said: *“We cannot afford to leave half our resources, half our talent, and half our ideas untapped”*.

So, we must turn the current lose-lose scenario into a win-win solution. This we can achieve by adopting, amongst others, gender-smart fiscal policies.

It is for this precise reason that we are gathered here today to hone our gender analytical and budgeting skills, knowledge and execution. This is

part of a much broader agenda, namely gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy towards realising gender equality. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality. There is sufficient evidence on the channels through which women's development and the reduction of gender inequality lead to more rapid economic growth, improved labour productivity, healthier children, and more responsive government.

The concept of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of society was clearly established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality in the Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing (China) in 1995. It highlighted the necessity to ensure that gender equality is a primary goal in all areas of social and economic development.

Director of Proceedings,

Let me turn to the Workshop background and objective. Gender analysis and gender responsive budgeting are critical analytical tools that would enhance the capacity of the Office of the Prime Minister to fulfil its mandate of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery by maintaining good governance and accountability.

Gender analysis improves gender sensitive planning, auditing, monitoring and evaluation, gender impact assessments, accountability and transparency. It enhances equity in budget allocation, gender specific budget prioritization, economic efficiency and value for money. These efforts will help us to address a number of challenges, including identifying activities and resources across Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs), and within the limited resource envelope and specific mandates, to address gender inequality through a multi-sectoral approach. Since we have declared war on poverty, gender analysis will help us to clearly highlight gender inequalities, and to accurately design specific interventions in reviewing policy, plans and budget priorities to address gender imbalances.

Gender responsive budgeting (GRB), on the other hand, aims at integrating a clear gender perspective within the overall context of the budgetary process through special processes and analytical tools, with a view to promoting gender-responsive policies. GRB contributes towards realising gender equity through the recognition that the needs, preferences and interests of women and men often differ. It is also a catalyst to the achievement of good governance through improving the delivery of goods and service to women, men, girls and boys in a fair, just and responsible way. GRB further enhances accountability and transparency by tracking how allocated funds are spent by the availability of gender-disaggregated data.

Director of Proceedings,

I have to add, however, that we have to improve significantly in adopting GRB in Namibia, although I give credit to the Ministry of Gender Equity and Child Welfare for keeping the agenda alive and for initiating numerous interventions to further the GRB advocacy and to come up with a GRB Road Map.

Through this Training Workshop, we will heighten the capacity of senior government officials to enable them acquire requisite knowledge, attitudes and skills to effectively conduct a gender analysis into budget and planning process using GRB tools. This, we trust, will develop a positive attitude towards gender analysis and GRB to a point that they will advocate for gender equality and create a network of gender responsive officers. The Training Workshop will also be dedicated to the drafting of an action plan to institutionalize gender analysis and GRB among participants and to pave the way for national rollout. This will ensure that GRB will become embedded within the normal annual routines of budgeting and policy-making, based on the analytical tools gained from the Workshop.

Director of Proceedings,

Before concluding, I am aware that Her Excellency Anita Kiki Gbeho, Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Namibia will

be leaving Namibia soon to be transferred to another country. During her tenure Anita Kiki Gbeho has crept into the hearts of many Namibians. Her interest in and dedication to development in Namibia was boundless. She has made a huge impact on development thinking and methodologies among many policymakers in our country. We will certainly miss this walking development encyclopaedia. Let's give her a hearty round of applause.

In conclusion, let me stress that GRB is not about creating separate budgets for women, or solely increasing spending on women's programmes. Rather, GRB seeks to ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources is carried out in ways that are effective and contribute to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. We must remove obstacles and create opportunities that will allow women to achieve their full potential and, in doing so, help lift us all to a higher economic growth trajectory.

Director of Proceedings, distinguished Workshop participants,

Let me once more express my sincere gratitude to UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa and UNDP Namibia Country Office for availing the facilitators for the Workshop.

On that note, it is now my honour to declare this Training Workshop officially open and I wish you all successful capacity building for remainder of this week.

I thank you.
