



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

OPENING STATEMENT

BY HONOURABLE, DOREEN SIOKA

MINISTER OF

**GENDER EQUALITY, POVERTY ERADICATION AND SOCIAL
WELFARE**

ON

**THE OCCASSION OF THE 96TH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATION CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC)**

6-7 MAY 2024

SWITZERLAND, GENEVA

Madam Chairperson,

**Distinguished Members of the
Committee**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I, am Madam Doreen Sioka, Minister
of Gender Equality, Poverty
Eradication and Social Welfare from
the Republic of Namibia. It is a great
honour to address you on behalf of the

Republic of Namibia. I am accompanied by the following delegates from the Namibia who will be in attendance for the duration of the dialogue:

- H.E. Julia Imene-Chanduru, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and

other International Organizations
in Geneva;

- Ms. Helena Andjamba, Director:
Gender Equality, Poverty
Eradication and Social Welfare.
- Ms. Maria Fatima Mendonsa,
Chief Legal Officer, Ministry of
Justice;

- Ms. Rahimisa Kamuingona,
Deputy Director: Child Care and
Protection Services.

Madam Chairperson, thank you for welcoming us and granting us the opportunity to engage with the committee during this two days. Today, we appear before yourselves to hold dialogue about the measures

our country has taken to ensure the effective enjoyment of the rights of children as contained in the Namibian Constitution and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Madam Chairperson, the report was prepared in line with the general guidelines as stipulated by the Committee. The periodic report was drafted in consultation with all

relevant government Ministries, offices and agencies, under the expert guidance of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights as well as the Ministry of Justice. This is Namibia's combined fourth to sixth reports, covering the period (2007-2017) under Article 44 of the Convention.

Namibia is committed to the realisation of the protection of children's rights as prescribed in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other international human rights instruments. Namibia ratified the UNCRC in October 1990. Thereafter, the State party signed the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of

the Child (ACRWC) in 1999 and ratified in 2004. The Government of the Republic of Namibia is committed to ensuring that the rights and welfare of children are promoted and protected in the country.

Madam Chairperson, it is worth noting that the Namibian Government is guided by the rights-based approach in developing its policies

and guidelines for Namibian children.

In fulfilling its obligations under various human rights instruments, parliament passed the Child Care and Protection Act, 2015 (Act No.3 of 2015) which is guided by two principles namely the “best interests of the child” and “child participation”.

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPESW) continues to champion gender equality and the well-being for children through the creation and promotion of sustainable socio-economic development projects. There is no doubt that every society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next

generation. In other words, today's children will become tomorrow's citizens, parents and leaders.

Consequently, if we fail as a nation to care and protect children, we place our prosperity and security at risk.

Madam Chairperson, the MGEPSW is therefore delighted to engage the Committee on the report and also respond to the list of issues

identified. The country is committed to fulfil its obligations towards children in Namibia and this is evident in the interventions undertaken in its efforts to promote and protect children's rights and welfare in the country. The Government has established a number of policies, plans and plans to guide it in the development of its laws to give

effect to its citizens, including children 's human rights as stipulated in the Namibian Constitution.

Madam Chairperson allow me to briefly highlight key achievements aligned to the UNCRC since the submission of the State Party report in 2020.

With regard to the effective implementation of the CCPA

Madam Chairperson, The government through the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPESW) have made tremendous improvement to ensure the effective implementation of the Child Care Protection Act, 2015 (Act no.3 of 2015) since its enforcement in 2019 by embarking on various initiatives: The following activities were carried out:

Training of key stakeholders (social workers, police officers, magistrates, clerk of courts, medical personnel, community members (through the Child Care and Protection Forums) as

well as teachers and other gatekeepers) on key provisions of the Act. Between 2019-2023 a total of 543 key stakeholders has been trained on the Act. In the upcoming financial year, the Ministry intent to continue training key stakeholders on the provision of the Act, and more importantly extend the trainings to include children and young people.

The Ministry with the support of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) developed guidelines for training of professionals and community members on the provision of the Act. The guidelines are

available online and are useful for raising awareness and training on the provision the Act.

The Ministry has completed the development of child friendly materials on specific provisions in the Act, relating to HIV testing, medical consent, child marriage, and harmful practices to ensure that children are not left behind in the implementation of the Act.

To ensure sustainability and training of key stakeholders, the Namibian Police and the University of Namibia in collaboration with the MGEPESW and others have revised their

curriculum to incorporate training for social workers and police officers on the provision of the Child Care and Protection Act.

The training of community members on the provision of the CCPA, is a continuous activity to which the Ministry allocate resources in each financial year.

With regard to the effective coordination of all activities related to the implementation of the Convention across all sectors including at community level, and

the state body with the mandate and authority to fulfil that role.

Madam Chairperson, The MGEPESW, is mandated to provide services that will ensure the wellbeing of all children. In this regard it plays a pivotal role in coordinating the various mandates on children that are vested in various Ministries, Agencies and institutions.

To ensure that this coordination is effective, the Ministry has established various structures from national, regional and constituency levels to deliberate, report and act on children's issues at grassroot level. The representations of key

stakeholders such as those from education, health, home affairs, justice, labour, Children's Advocate, NGO's and children has been streamlined to maximise their participation at all levels. Through this mechanism the implementation of the Convention and other relevant legislation is ensured.

At national level coordination is done through the Permanent Taskforce on Children, established by a Cabinet Directive and which meet every quarter. The same structures are also established at regional level which are known as the Regional Child Care and Protection Forums, while at

constituency level, they are known as Constituency Child Care and Protection Forums.

With regard to ensuring effective and equitable financing that leads to positive outcomes for children

Madam Chairperson, The government ensure equitable financing through various mechanisms that leads to positive outcomes for children:

For example, during the 2023/2024 financial year, the government increased the amount of grant per

child, per month. The increase was as follows:

- Disability grants from N\$250 to N\$ 1600
- State maintenance grants, foster care grants from N\$250 to N\$ 350

To increase coverage, the government also expanded the criteria for qualifying for child grants. This was done through introducing a new criterion for vulnerable children (specifically targeting children of unemployed parents). This process implied that the budget for the Ministry was also increased.

This increase also expanded to include other programs such as the provision of shelters for children living and working on the street, the development of infrastructure to implement rehabilitation and reconstruction programs specifically targeting the same category of children.

The expanded program also targeted the provision of government subsidy to private residential childcare facilities, shelters for survivors of gender based violence (GBV) as well as to Edu-carers who provide

educational services to vulnerable children within community ECD centers.

Other notable increases are reflected in the budgets for Ministry of Health and Social Services as the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

With regard to measure taken to strengthen the collection and analysis of disaggregated data to assess progress achieved in the realization of children's rights and to facilitate analysis of the situation of all children, including children in disadvantaged situations.

Madam Chairperson, The State Party notes the concern on the lack of disaggregated data to assess progress achieved in the realization of children's rights. However, the country has made significant progress in developing comprehensive data systems to collect data that measure the performance of the country in specific areas such as health, education and the social protection sector. The Ministry engaged Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) on this matter and in this regard, developed a Statistics Strategic Plan (SSP) on Child Protection. The aim of the SSP is to improve statistics and their use within Child Protection

Sector programming for improved evidence-based planning, decision-making and performance management.

The MGEPSW have a reliable database under the Office of the Prime Minister contains the number of children receiving child grant by type of grant, region, constituency, sex, age, and the amount being spend on monthly basis.

The Ministry also under the Child Welfare Directorate (now Gender Equality, Child Care and Protection) has introduced the database (DHIS2) which will help the staff members to collect, analyse and use accurate data

related to Child Welfare Directorate programs including cases of Violence against children at different levels i.e National, regional and constituency. The National Agenda for Children 2018-2022 has a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (M&ER) strategy which includes regular data collection, report compilation and dissemination of performance as a vital part of the overall Agenda.

The Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, under the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) program is hosting a database collecting and analysing data on children and Edu- carers in ECD

centres. Recently the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare developed a Statistics Strategic Sector plan for child care and protection sector with the aim to improve statistics and their use for improved evidence-based planning, decision-making and performance management. It is the government continued efforts to improve the quality of our services we are committed to the production and use of statistics for evidence-based planning, policy formulation and decision making for children.

Other governmental institutions including Ministry of Education are continuously collecting sex

disaggregated data on educational indicators at various levels – input and outcome levels. Ministry of Health and Social Services has a dedicated data collection system that capture data on various health outcomes for children in the country.

Information on the measure taken to ensure the implementation of accountability regulations of the business sector, including mining and uranium -producing industries, that negatively affect the enjoyment of children’s rights.

Madam Chairperson, Namibia through the Ministry of

Industrialisation and Trade have developed legal frameworks that protect and safeguard businesses as well as consumers. Amongst those legal frameworks include the Liquor Act, and the Consumer Protection Policy and which have a direct bearing on safeguarding the rights of children.

The Consumer Protection Policy protects consumers against unfair, discriminatory, abusive acts and practices (UDAAP) that they might encounter in the market place and the objectives of the Policy are:

Create market transactions that strive to obtain a fair balance of power between sellers and consumers.

- Protect vulnerable consumers from marketplace conduct that take advantage of unsophisticated, less educated or infirm consumers; provide an incentive for honesty and fair dealings by all sellers.
- Promote consumer participation in decision-making processes concerning the regulation of the marketplace in the interests of consumers.
- Promote efficiency and transparency in the Namibian economy and market; thus increasing economic development.

- Ensure accessible, transparent and efficient redress for consumers.
- The Policy aims to protect consumers from unfair dealings within the market place and this protection will be further strengthened once the Bill is promulgated.

LIQUOR ACT, 1998 (ACT NO. 6 OF 1998) AND LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL, 2016

The Liquor Act aims to protect children from the harmful effects of alcohol consumption. These provisions are designed to regulate the sale, advertising and consumption of alcohol to help safeguard the well-

being of minors. Some of the ways in which the Liquor Act protects children include:

The prohibition of sale of alcohol to individuals under the legal drinking age of 18 years. Vendors and establishments selling alcohol are required to verify the age of customers to ensure that minors do not have access to alcoholic beverages.

The Act supports the initiatives aimed at educating the public about the risks of underage drinking and the importance of preventing access to alcohol by minors.

The Liquor Amendment Bill, 2016 includes provisions regulating the proximity of alcohol outlets to places where children and adolescents congregate, such as schools, playgrounds, and youth centres as well as residential premises and children's home.

By incorporating these measures, the Liquor Act aims to reduce the likelihood of alcohol related harm among children and adolescent, as well to promote responsible alcohol consumption within the country.

The State Party further refers the committee to the response provided in the CRC report on recommendation

26 and 27 on Child rights and the business sector.

With regard to measure to put mechanisms in place to ensure, the participation of children in the development of laws and local policies affecting them, and that the outcome of the Children's Parliament and youth councils are taken into consideration in public decision-making

Madam Chairperson, There are various platforms where children are provided an opportunity to participate in the law-making process. Firstly, through the Children Parliament which is a process spearheaded by the Office of the Speaker of Parliament,

children from all 14 regions in the country are accorded an opportunity to discuss pertinent issues that affect their rights and wellbeing. These issues are then submitted to various offices to take them further.

In addition, when drafting laws, strategies and policies that pertain to children issues, separate consultative processes are held to ensure that there is full participation by children without the influence of adults.

Children also form part of the various coordinating committees such as the Permanent Task Force on children as well as regional platforms.

With regard, to measures taken to achieve universal birth registration and ensure that all children, including stateless children and children whose place of birth cannot be determined, have birth certificates and citizenship.

Madam Chairperson, The government has taken successful measures to achieve universal birth registration and ensure that all children are registered. The measures are as follows:

The Vital Statistics Report (2024) indicates that more than 90% of births occur in health facilities. This is why, in addition to regional and subregional offices countrywide, the Ministry has **registration offices in high volume hospitals**. This takes the birth registration services closer to maternity wards to ensure that mothers do not leave the hospitals without registering the newborn babies.

The government through Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety Secretary (MHAISS), Ministry of Health and Social Services (MOHSS)

and MGEPEWS provides an **integrated service delivery** in communities where birth registration, certification of documents, taking of statements under oath, registration for social grants and immunizations services are provided simultaneously.

There are **targeted outreach programs** to schools and in hard-to-reach places. At the moment, the Ministry has ongoing **national mass registration campaign** (05 February – 30 July 2024) targeting the registration of 50,000 people by 30 July 2024. At the time of reporting (30 April 2024) the Ministry has

registered 33,067 people (representing 66% of the target). This national mass registration campaign is in addition to other routine outreach programmes usually conducted in hard-to-reach places.

In case where the a child is abandoned, the birth registration will be done by a social worker from the Ministry (MGEPESW) after they have determined or assigned a place of birth relative to the place where the child was found abandoned. By the time the birth is registered, the place of birth would be known.

The mandate of civil registration is to register the facts of the events (birth, marriage, death etc). Every birth must be registered with a place of birth. Even if the place of birth that is registered is wrong, it can be corrected later. In cases where this one seeks to register a birth without a place of birth, we investigate and determine a place in order to register. Unless we can ascertain that the birth took place at a particular place in a particular country, we will not be able to determine the type of citizenship according to Article 4 of the Constitution.

Every vital event occurring in the country is registered regardless of the person's nationality in which even we issue a non-Namibian birth certificate until citizenship has been determined. Therefore, even stateless persons are registered.

The enabling legislation for civil registration (Births, Marriages and Deaths Registration Act, 1963) provides for the registration of all vital events with no discrimination. There are no express provisions prohibiting the birth registration of any group of people. Although this is so, not all births occurring in the

country are registered for various reasons.

The Government is aware of the plight of statelessness and is intentional about providing a lasting solution. The Ministry has submitted the *Civil Registration and Identification Bill* (CRIB) to Parliament. The Bill contains comprehensive registration provisions with specific reference to registration of birth for refugee and stateless children.

The CRIB is expressly intended to include stateless persons in the Civil

Register, to ensure comprehensiveness of the register. In addition, it provides for;

- Enactment of relevant time-bound legislation to regularise the status of stateless and undocumented persons;
- Registration of undocumented (including stateless) persons in a functional register to the Population Register; and
- Intensification of mobile birth and ID registration outreach programme to remote areas.

In an effort, to curb the issues of statelessness and undocumented person, the state has drafted the under-mention bills, namely;

- The Statelessness Determination and Protection Bill
- The Regularization of Status of Certain Residents of Namibia and their Descendants Bill
- Namibian Citizenship Amendment Bill
- Namibia Refugees (Recognition and Control) Amendment Bill

Article 15 of the Namibian Constitution provides for the entrenched rights of the child

including the right of every child to have a name and nationality. A birth certificate is usually the first step to secure this right. Therefore, every parent has a duty to register the birth of a child as soon as possible and the system is accessible in all district hospitals.

The national birth registration rate is 87% and 77% for under the age of 5 according to the Namibian Intercensal Demographic 2016 Report. There are large regional disparities. //Karas in the south has birth registration rate of 96.2%, while Kavango West region in the north east has the country's lowest birth registration rate 67.3%. The birth registration has been fully

digitalized and is an integrated part of the e-National Population Registration System, which caters for all vital events from birth to death, including ID registration, 82,9% of all adult Namibians hold an ID card.

With regard, on regulations or safeguarding policies in place to protect the rights, privacy and safety of children in the digital environment, and on any programs to enhance the digital literacy and skills of children, parents and teachers.

Madam Chairperson, The government through the Ministry of Information, Communication and

Technology developed the Cybercrime Strategy and Awareness Raising Plan which aims to sensitise citizens on the dangers of cybercrime and importance of cybersecurity. The primary target group of this Strategy is the children and parents/guardians.

Various cybersecurity awareness sessions have been conducted targeting schools and communities and are still rolled out. The Ministry and Lifeline Childline Namibia are finalising partnership modalities to enhance cybersecurity awareness campaigns for children and parents/guardians. These sessions were also conducted as build up events to the commemoration of the

Day of the African Child as well as the celebration of the Day of the Namibian Child, which theme focussed on children's rights in the digital environment

In addition, the MGEPSW in collaboration with key stakeholders has added the celebration of the Safer Internet Day to the calendar of days to be celebrated. The focus is educating children and their parents on the safe use of the internet.

The MGEPSW in collaboration with key partners established the National Taskforce on Child Online Protection Taskforce (members are MGEPSW, Police Force, MOHSS, Communication Regulator

Authorities, Telecommunication Operators and other industry players, academia) to coordinate the education and awareness raising activities on safe use of the internet and to set up industry standards on how to ensure child safety online.

Namibia University of Science and Technology continue to invest in research that is focussed on identifying innovative approaches to addressing children safety online. This is done through development of apps (applications) for parents and children to ensure their safety online.

The government through the MICT developed the Cybercrime Bill which

tends to criminalise acts committed towards children in the digital environment. The Bill though not enacted yet is at an advanced stage and will be tabled in Parliament soon.

The government is finalising the Data Protection Bill which aims to protect individual privacy rights enshrined in Article 13 of the Namibian Constitution. The proposed law further lays down rules about how individual data may be processed or used by such data controllers and processors.

With regard to circumstances in which marriages under 18 years of

age are permitted, and any plans to prohibit all child marriages, without exception, the status of the Recognition of Customary Marriage Bill and whether it would prohibit customary marriages under 18 years of age and how the findings of the study conducted by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare on child marriages

Madam Chairperson, Marriages of children under the age of 18 years are prohibited and is a punishable offence in terms of the Child Care and Protection Act. The Child Care and Protection Act forbids child marriage by making it a crime to give a child

out in marriage or engagement if the child is below age 18 or does not consent to the marriage or engagement. The prohibition applies to civil, customary and religious marriages. This crime is punishable by a fine of up to N\$50000 or imprisonment for up to ten years, or both.

Cabinet directed that the Ministry of Gender should take forward the recommendation from the Formative study on child marriages in Namibia. To this end the Ministry is now in the process of developing a strategy to end child marriages in the country.

The Ministry also has developed materials to popularise the CCPA provision that prohibit child marriages in the country. The Ministry has committed resources for education and advocacy campaigns to address the issues.

Measures taken to address discrimination against stigmatization of children with albinism

Madam Chairperson, The Namibian Constitution guarantees equal human rights of boys and girls with disabilities under Article 10, a principle which underpins all decisions making with regard to

legislation, policies and programs in Namibia.

The Constitutional provisions are further amplified in the Child Care and Protection Act, with special reference to children with disabilities. Special provisions include;

- protection of children with disabilities from direct and indirect discrimination, special consideration should be given during actions, or decisions in matters concerning a child and these must respond to any special needs that the child may have as a result of a disability.

- Section 9 specifically provides for children with disabilities, requiring all who deal with children with disabilities to treat them with dignity and providing for the right of these children to appropriate care and protection.

The government makes the rights of children with disabilities a priority through the work of different departments and other structures and has designed awareness programmes aimed at addressing issues of discrimination for children with disabilities.

Thus far the approach has been rights based ensuring that society and community understand that children with disabilities are equal citizens. There are no reported cases of discrimination against children with albinism, however at household level there has been cases of child neglect which is adequately dealt with when reported. Other governmental services include:

- Providing grants to organizations which are providing services to children. This includes the children with Learning, Speech and Hearing (CLaSH), Onyose Trust, Parents of children with disabilities and EHAFO Trust.

- Special Schools catering educational services to children disabilities have been established in five regions out 14 regions of Namibia, namely Khomas, Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena, Hardap and one unit in Zambezi region.

Children with albinism are treated as children with disabilities and qualify to receive a monthly child grant of N\$ 1 600 from the state as well as other services. In addition, the MGEPESW provides direct support to children with severe disabilities, particularly those with cerebral palsy and hydrocephalus in terms of diapers,

nappies, PREP, and potable toilets, potable showers and formula milk.

With regard to increasing the number and strengthen the capacities of qualified social workers to address the need of children

Madam Chairperson, Namibia would like to inform the Committee to ensure the best interest of our children the number of social workers have increased from 83 to 217 during 2023. The approval of additional 134 social workers positions was granted by the Public Service Commission to

the MGEPSW to address issues of violence against children as well as Gender Based Violence. The increase in the number of social workers will improve the provision of services.

With regard to combating child poverty, including by increasing the coverage of grants

Madam Chairperson, Namibia is among few African countries that continue to provide direct cash grants to vulnerable people, and these

include the elderly, as well as orphans and vulnerable children. During the 2022/2023 financial year, the government of Namibia increased all the children grants as follows:

- Disability Grant = from N\$ 250 to N\$ 1600 for children below the age of 16. In addition, these children depending on the severity of their disabilities also qualified

for an additional state maintenance grants as per the Child Care and Protection Act.

- State Maintenance Grant = from N\$ 250 to N\$ 350
- Foster care grant = from N\$ 250 to N\$ 350

In addition, the Ministry of Gender allocate an annual budget of N\$ 10 000 per region to be utilised for emergency cases of children who are in need of basic commodities.

With regard in taking measures to ensure that national policies and programs addressing climate change and disaster risk management are implemented in accordance with the Convention and take into account children's needs and views and promote children's awareness of and preparedness for climate change and natural disasters

Madam Chairperson, The Namibian National Policy on Climate Change 2011 incorporates sector-specific strategies devised to address the impacts of climate change adequately. Namibia's vulnerability and adaptation assessment indicates that

Children in rural areas are still very prone to curable diseases and thus more vulnerable to illness, and child and infant mortality. The policy recognizes that both rural and urban communities are vulnerable to climate change effects. Therefore government will:

- Ensure that communities are empowered and both men and women participate meaningfully in the planning, testing and roll out of adaptation and mitigation activities in both rural and urban areas.
- Ensure that climate change response activities are gender and child sensitive.

- Include gender and climate change in the curriculum of education and trainings programs.

2. Furthermore, recognizing that climate change is expected to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups such as people living with disability, people living with HIV, the elderly, orphans and vulnerable children, and marginalised communities, the Namibia government has three provisions to effectively address the challenges posed by climate change to the vulnerable groups. These provisions are:

- Make provisions to ensure that the vulnerable groups are empowered to effectively and adequately adapt to the impacts of climate change;

- Encourage and support vulnerable groups to engage in sustainable adaptations mechanisms to cope with climate change effects and;
- Integrate climate change poverty-related issues into economic policies and action plans

3. Namibia's 2023 update on the National Determined Contributions (NDC) has mainstreamed adaptations activities to climate change impacts that are responsive to gender and children's welfare, especially since women vulnerabilities to climate change are closely linked to the socially and culturally determined gender roles and responsibilities, differentiation in terms of access to

resources, limited voice, participation in decision makings, degree of dependence on rain-fed agriculture.

Madam Chairperson, In terms of Disaster Risk Management Act, 2012 (Act no.10 of 2012), Namibia has designated disaster risk management committees at different levels such as regional constituency, settlement, and local authorities. These committees are tasked with ensuring the establishment of effective and functional disaster risk management at all levels, ensuring that disaster risk reduction is integrated into all development policies, strategies, and programs at national, regional,

constituency, and local levels. With these tasks, vulnerable groups, women and their children are well considered and disaster risk management activities are responsive to their needs. disaster risk reduction is integrated into all development policies, strategies, and program at national, regional, constituency, and local levels. With these tasks, vulnerable groups, women and children are well considered and disaster risk management activities are responsive to their needs. These three national legal frameworks ensure that Namibian children's needs are incorporated and addressed in terms of climate change and natural disaster risk management responsive activities.

With regard to improving the quality of education, prevent school dropouts and address the high repetition rates

Madam Chairperson, The Ministry of Education has taken a pro-active approach in this regard and introduced several strategies to address these issues.

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) was introduced as an assessment tool for early grade reading and Jolly phonics was rolled out as a strategy to teach reading. The exit point was expanded to the 11th year to keep learners longer in

schools. The promotion policy is a blend of grade repetition and social promotion to tap on the advantages each offer.

With regard to ensuring the right of children with disabilities to inclusive education, including any measures to implement the findings of the analysis on inclusive education conducted by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Madam Chairperson, The government through the Ministry of Education has introduced the Education Sector on Inclusive Education. The objectives of the

Sector Policy on Inclusive Education are:

To expand access to and provision of quality education, especially for educationally marginalized learners, and

To support learners with a wide range of individual abilities and needs in compulsory education at ECD, pre-primary, primary and secondary levels.

Currently learners with disabilities receive five times the amount of money allocated per child for the Primary and Secondary Education Grant which is N\$ 1500 for a learner

with special needs in primary school and N\$ 2000 for a learner with special needs in secondary school, while a normal learner without special needs receives, N\$300 for primary education and N\$ 400 for secondary education.

Specialized equipment is procured for learners with special needs in schools.

The Ministry has introduced the Washington Group Questionnaire into the annual education census in order to gather more data on learners with disabilities.

The analysis aimed at determining the barriers faced by children with disabilities (CWD)s in accessing education. It highlighted negative attitudes towards Learners with disabilities (LWD) s which were addressed through trainings, and advocacy through the media.

Schools were equipped with resources to facilitate teaching and learning. Posts for human resources (Education special needs assistants) needed to ensure quality inclusive education are being established

Sensitizing the school community through training programmes is necessary to create a positive

accommodating attitude towards children with disabilities.

With regard, to measure taken to prevent the exploitation of children in labour, including through appropriate safeguards and reporting and referral mechanism for victims

Madam Chairperson, The Ministry of Labour, industrial Relations and Employment promote awareness and enforce compliance, in respect of the Basic Conditions of Employment and Health, Safety and Welfare of Employees. The Ministry is enforcing Section 3 and 4 of the Labour Act,

2007 (Act No. 11 of 2007) on prohibition and Restriction of Child Labour.

To effectively address child labour and force labour, the Labour Inspectors conduct joint inspection in collaboration with the several key Ministries such as gender, justice, home affairs, education and health.

The purpose of the workplace inspection by Labour Inspector is to ensure compliance with labour laws including checking for instances of child labour and forced labour in all sector of the economy. In addition, an Inter-Ministerial committee was established with the mandate to

ensure the prohibition and elimination of any form of child labour extensively, and that child labour victims are protected, have access to education, and are effectively integrated with their families or into society.

It also ensures the prosecution of suspected offenders and coordinates all initiatives relating to child labour in Namibia. All reported cases of child labour are investigated by the Namibian Police and children receive psychosocial support from social workers.

In conclusion **Madam Chairperson,**
we submit our revised response to the
list of issues for your review which
include data on most of the issues that
were raised.

I so submit Madam Chairperson.

I, Thank You.