

## **2015 RC Annual Report Introductory letter to the Secretary General, reporting work plan progress in Namibia**

### **1. Brief Description**

As part of major political events, Namibia celebrated her Silver Jubilee on 21 March 2015. This occasion coincided with the inauguration of the country's 3rd President, Dr Hage Geingob, which was observed countrywide. The UN SG was represented by Mr. Haile Menkerios, Special Representative to the UN Secretary General (SRSG), who also met with various senior level Government officials, including the outgoing and incoming Presidents. As Namibia continues to enjoy peace, security and political stability as well as steady economic progress, the above cited leadership change occurred without incident, a critical determinant for the continuation of the work of the UN System in the country.

It was thus not surprising that Namibia received global recognition when its former President, Dr Hifikepunye Pohambo, received the 2014 Mo Ibrahim award for excellence in African leadership in early 2015. Youth activism on land and housing issues manifested as a country-wide dispute on access to urban housing led by youth activists and the unemployed. This posed a potential threat to political stability and investor confidence, but was resolved peacefully by a commitment of the President and government to service approximately 200,000 plots in the major urban areas in the country.

During his inauguration on 21 March 2015, the new President dedicated his presidency to the eradication of poverty and hunger. This also led to the creation of the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare which is mandated to coordinate poverty eradication initiatives/interventions. This development change has implications for the ongoing work of the UN Country Team specified in the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF, 2014-2018).

At midyear, there was a change in the UNCT's leadership. The UNCT bade farewell to Mr Musinga Bandora, the former UN RC, and welcomed Ms Kiki A. Gbeho, the new UN RC to Namibia. Ms. Gbeho has served the United Nations for over 20 years in various complex environments including in Cambodia, Angola, Iraq, Sudan and Somalia. She also served at the United Nations Headquarters in New York managing the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHAs) operations in East and Southern Africa.

The drought continues to be a major development challenge for Namibia. This year, the drought was further exacerbated by the "El Nino" weather cycle, resulting in significant parts of the population estimated at 600 000 (especially in rural areas) being unable to cultivate their fields, raise livestock and thus, become dependent on Government food distribution and social safety net programs for their daily subsistence and survival.

### **2. Highlights on progress on joined work, with three most significant achievements in delivering together for development**

- i) Support to the National Government in advancing the achievement of the SDGs and activities related to the 2030 agenda

- a) The Government of Namibia was active in leading and championing the African Common Position in the negotiations which resulted in the adoption of the SDGs. The 2030 timeframe for the SDGs coincides with Namibia's Vision 2030. Government is committed to address the **'unfinished businesses'** under the MDGs through the SDGs. Therefore, and under the leadership of the Government, the UN will support this agenda in 2016 focusing on advocacy and roll-out of the SDGs. While UNDP supported the Government to develop the final 2015 National Millennium Development Goals progress report, the UN family, assisted to review the 'unfinished business' under the MDGs at a MDGs/SDGs Planning retreat and developed a road map for promoting awareness, advocacy about the SDGs and integrating the SDGs into national planning processes. This was done by the SDG Task Force led by the National Planning Commission. Additionally, the 2015 UNCT retreat determined key strategic elements of support the Government to internalize the SDGs and integrate them into NDP 5, other national policies and the UNPAF, using the platform of the UNPAF Mid-term Review planned for early 2016. Through its 2016 work plan, the UNCT envisages the re-alignment of the UNPAF to include the SDGs with dedicated resources, while UNCG Communication Strategy will be revised to include specific SDGs components.
  
- b) The UN's support to the Government of Namibia on the war on poverty has primarily been extended through the newly formed Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare. As such, the UN Country Team provided facilitation capacity for regional dialogues in all 14 regions and also sourced international expertise in preparation for a National Conference on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication held in 2015. This conference aimed at soliciting inputs from stakeholders on their views on poverty eradication strategies for inclusion into a National White Paper on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication. The White Paper is currently being finalized and will serve as the guiding and prioritizing tool of Government on poverty eradication interventions, aimed at eradicating poverty in the country by 2025.
  
- c) Based on the Government's position on the War on Poverty, the 2015 UNCT retreat identified key strategic areas of support to the Government of Namibia in 2016, such as; support the GRN/MPESW in compiling a list of best practices globally in areas to be agreed in Jan related to poverty and reviewing laws and policies that could impede the current development agenda to mention but a few. These will form part of the UNCT collective program of support to the Government through the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare and which will be reflected in the 2016 UNCT Work plan.
  
- ii) Support to the national government in integrating human rights based approach into national development processes:
  - a) The National Human Rights Action Plan (2015-2019) serves as a key reference in the country for the promotion and protection of human rights. In addition, this same instrument supports the integration of human-rights-based approaches into National Development Plans. As part of the UNPAFs implementation, the UNCT continued to support national development initiatives and the mainstreaming of human rights issues including

addresses effective promotion and protection of human rights and Government's compliance with international treaties' ratification, monitoring and reporting obligations.

Equally, Government remains committed to promoting women's empowerment and gender equality, and this has been demonstrated through the ratification of key international, regional and sub-regional agreements such as the Convention of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and others. Under the leadership of the Gender Theme Group, the UNCT collaborated in supporting government to participate in the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) that was held in Switzerland, Geneva. The UNCT supported the production and submission of the UNCT Report on implementation of CEDAW in Namibia and presented this report to the UN High Commission on Human Rights in 2015. The UNCT participated in local campaigns to address Gender Based Violence issues. The capacity of the Ministry of Gender Equality and others such as Ministries of Finance and the Office of the Prime Minister, were strengthened through training and technical expertise provided by the Gender Advisor, funded by UNDP. Evident in 2015/2016, 17/18 National Budgets, the Top 7 Line Ministries budgets had incorporated dedicated budget lines for gender outputs and activities, as per the analysis conducted with support from UNDP, to assess progress of implementation of the 2014 Cabinet Directive on GRB. These ministries are now able to conduct gender response budgeting and analysis of the respective budgets.

In implementing the GBV national plan of action, the National Football Association was selected to implement the male engagement activities to target young players and supporters. The simplified fact sheets and training provided to young men have increased their understanding and awareness of the impact of gender based violence. Positive gender messages are displayed at all Premier League Football matches to further reinforce behaviour change. Research on Gender Based Violence: A Response Driven Approach, funded by UNDP will help Government and stakeholders to find strategic, informed and tangible actions and solutions.

- iii) Progress on preparedness, crisis and Post-crisis transition results achieved in cooperation with UN peacekeeping, peace building, political, and humanitarian actors.
  - a) Namibia experienced one of its worst droughts during 2013/14, which continued into 2015. The Government of the Republic of Namibia (through the Directorate Disaster Risk Management (DDRM) in the Office of the Prime (OPM) together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF)) first responded by introducing an Interim Drought Program for 2015 (April- June 2015). The program consists of five (5) interventions namely: food commodities, logistics, water provision, and livestock and seed provision. The UN continued to assist the Government with upstream activities through the provision of technical support primarily to the Office of the Prime Minister's Directorate of Disaster Risk Management (DDRM), Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the National Planning Commission (NPC). The areas supported include policy development and

preparedness, provision of items such as acquisition of tractors and implements in project sites in the Kavango, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshana and Oshikoto regions, as well as procurement of a multi seed sorter machines to improve grading and procurement of seeds. However, and pending a specific request from the Government the UN's support is likely to remain as it is, primarily at policy level.

### **3. Results of joined up approaches:**

#### **i) Highlight new partnerships formed in 2015**

The UN System in Namibia operates in an Upper Middle Income Country (UMIC) environment which presents financial resource challenges to the UNCT. On the support to the Government on its war against poverty, the UN System, through UNDP, has agreed with Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare to commit funding to UNDP to provide technical support towards the development of the Poverty Eradication Blue Prints and the implementation thereof. Equally, the 2015 UNCT retreat resolved 10 key strategic areas of focus for implementation in 2016.

#### **ii) Highlight innovations in programme and operations to address key development challenges**

- a) The UNCT submitted two proposals for the 2016 UNDAF Design Innovation Facility under the following windows: 1) the Business Operations Innovations and 2) Sustainable Development Planning. Under the former proposal, the UNCT seeks to engage entrepreneurs (especially the youth) who can offer innovative solutions to test and improve water and energy security at domestic and/or corporate scale. The second proposal looks at enhancing greater Government leadership regarding unfinished business under the MDGs; Government leadership in internalizing the SDGs and UNCT buy-in for the implementation of selected SDGs; with targeted resources for national development priorities and where UN Agencies have comparative advantages.

### **4. Upcoming opportunities for 2016**

- a) Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (SDGs): In 2016, the UNCT will support the government of Namibia to develop a strategy for effective and coherent implementation of the SDGs, under the 'Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS), by paying special attention to the cross-cutting elements of partnerships, data and accountability. This will be accomplished by adopting an integrated approach and balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental. The UNCT support will include landing of the new global agenda at the national and local levels, and integrating the SDGs into NDP 5; and advocating for national budgets in support. This will be done by working with the Government and other stakeholders to prioritize the 17 SDGs and 169 targets.
- b) The War on Poverty: The UNCT is positioning itself to support the Government to implement the Poverty Eradication Blueprint and Poverty Eradication Strategy.

- c) UNPAF MTR: The UNCT in Namibia will conduct an UNPAF mid-term review (MTR) of the UNPAF focused on support provided to Namibia in the implementation of NDP4 and its development objectives under Vision 2030. The UNPAF MTR will examine whether the UNCT is on track to achieving its objectives and goals as outlined in the four pillars of UNPAF, namely Institutional Environment, Education and Skills, Health, and Reducing Extreme Poverty. The UNPAF MTR will assess the relevance of the UNPAF to the changes to the current development context and emerging national and global development priorities.
  
- d) UN Communications Group: As recommended by the 2015 UNCT retreat, and in line with the 2016 UNCT Work Plan, the UN Communications Group will advance the strategic agenda namely the War on Poverty, the SDGs and support to the Government with advocacy on NPD5. The UNCG will increase the UN's visibility through direct and ongoing collaboration with media and will showcase the work of the UN to the public.
  
- e) Strengthen Coordination Mechanism with Government and Partners: Re-invigoration of the Coordination Mechanism between the Government and Developments Partners including the UN: The UN is collaborating with the National Planning Commission to re-invigorate and strengthen coordination mechanisms. This will ensure strengthen collaboration among partners and improve the quality of development support in line with Government priorities.

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