



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

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 will be 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.

“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 several 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 the ones benefiting from the distributed food parcels.