

## Kangaroo Mother Care - A unique way to give premature babies a better start in life

**1 March, Oshana Region** - In the maternity ward of Oshakati referral hospital in the Oshana Region, 24 year old Matundu lumue places her tiny baby (who has not been named yet) to her bare chest. Sister Miriam Matheus then ties a wrapper tightly around Matundu to hold the baby firmly into a pouch position and takes the new mother through the steps of Kangaroo Mother Care to support and hasten the growth of her prematurely born baby.



Matundu has had a premature delivery before, but she is still very unnerved at holding her new baby, who was born at 28 weeks gestation, weighing just under 1.2kg. She therefore welcomes the support she gets from Sister Miriam and smiles radiantly at having mastered this new skill with a lot of ease.

“As a mother, you always want to hold and cradle your new born, but when a baby is tiny and fragile, it is difficult,” says Natundu. “I am happy that Sister Miriam has told me about Kangaroo Mother Care, now my baby will be next to me always.”

Unplanned pregnancies, not attending ante natal classes, high alcohol intake by mothers, maternal infections and home deliveries are some of the major contributing factors for low weight or premature births. Without appropriate care, low birth weight babies risk physical or mental delays or impairments in life. They also risk death if specialised care and support lack. Currently neonatal mortality rate for Oshana Region is 13/1000, while the national rate is 20 per 1000 live births.

Full Article: <https://uni.cf/2GgWwmH> **SDG 3 'Good Health and Well-being'**