



Hopolang Phororo, ILO Country Director for Namibia, officially handing over the EESE assessment report to Tim Parkhouse, Secretary-General of NEF. UN Namibia

New ILO report identifies challenges and areas of growth for Namibian enterprises

Windhoek, 28 June: An absent entrepreneurial culture as well as burdensome regulations to start and formalise businesses are challenges faced by enterprises in Namibia, a new International Labour Organisation (ILO) assessment report on Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises (ESEE) in Namibia has found.

Launched by the ILO Country Office for Zimbabwe and Namibia along with the Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN) and the Namibia Employer's Federation (NEF) on 28 June 2018 in Windhoek, Namibia, the report analyses how Namibia performs in respect to conditions needed for an environment conducive to the promotion of sustainable enterprises. The assessment report was prepared with guidance from the ILO ESEE toolkit using 17 conditions for creating an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises.

The growing recognition of the contribution of sustainable enterprises started in 2007 at the 96th International Labour Conference that adopted the concept of sustainable enterprises and lately as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The report will help guide interventions to adequately address challenges faced by enterprises in their day-to-day operations in an effort to stimulate growth and contribute significantly to employment creation and economic growth. It looks at nine of 17 pillars, namely social dialogue, enabling legal and regulatory environment, fair competition, access to financial services, physical infrastructure, entrepreneurial culture, education, training and lifelong learning and adequate social protection. Specifically, it will help implementation of an action plan, finalised at the end of 2017. Specific interventions will be around promoting an entrepreneurial culture in Namibia through targeting secondary education curriculums and vocational training programmes. Actions will also aim to increase information access and dissemination, including in local languages, about how to start and formalise an enterprise, in an effort to ensure that there is an enabling legal and regulatory environment.

Speaking at the launch, Hopolang Phororo, the Representative for ILO to Namibia, emphasised that, "In partnership, including with the private sector, we can promote the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enterprise efforts that propel development. We can enable enterprises to start, grow and create decent jobs as well as help entrepreneurs, in particular youth, women and vulnerable populations, to start and build successful enterprises”.

The report surveyed enterprises of various sizes across the country, including both employers and employees, and provides an analysis of the needs of this sector. Overall, the assessment found that there is room for improvement in all the areas for an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises.

Highlighting the importance of coordinating with all sectors to capitalise on the development contributions of enterprises, Hon. Erkki Nghimtina, the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation said, “We need more than collaboration, we need to find the most effective mechanism for coordination of sustainable enterprises and employment creation.”

Namibia has committed to promoting a sustainable environment for enterprise development and growth within its development agenda, including the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) and its Vision 2030. Namibia has also committed to international development agendas, namely the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs, which specifically speak to the formalisation and growth of micro-, small and medium sized enterprises as being at the heart of achieving decent work and economic growth, under Goal 8.

Concluding his remarks, Hon. Nghimtina echoed the importance of partnership, “Many players must work together to achieve goals of sustainable enterprise development and employment creation”.