



**Remarks by Ms. Kiki Gbeho, UN Resident
Coordinator**

**Official Launching of the Education 2030
Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals
(SDG's) - Goal 4 and the Commemoration of
the Global Action Week**

25th April 2016

Honourable Katrina Hanse-Himarwa, Minister of
Education, Arts and Culture,

Honourable Esther Anna Nghipondoka, Deputy Minister of
Education Arts and Culture,

Mr Jean Pierre Ilboudo Representative of UNESCO

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Arts
and Culture, Ms. Sanet L. Steenkamp,

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to all of you!

On behalf of the UN Family in Namibia and in particular
on behalf of the UN education Agencies UNESCO and

UNCIEF, I am honoured to be here with you at the official launch of the Education 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, and the Commemoration of the Global Action Week.

Allow me to thank the government of Namibia, specifically the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture for inviting us to be part of this memorable event.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The new sustainable development agenda which has the 17 SDGS at its core, is designed to provide development focus over the next 15 years, and calls for global action to eradicate poverty and to save the planet.

The 2030 Agenda recognises that we can be the first generation to succeed in ending poverty; just as we may be the last to have a chance of saving the planet.

Ladies and Gentlemen, for more than half a century the international community has recognized education as a fundamental human right. And therefore, sustainable development cannot be achieved without education.

SDG4 speaks of inclusive, equitable, quality education and promoting lifelong learning for all. SDG4 is the foundation that will anchor global efforts to deliver education for all children, including Namibian girls and boys.

The Education 2030 Framework for Action succeeds the Dakar Framework for Action, better known as 'Education for All'.

The Education 2030 Framework:

- Aims at mobilizing countries and partners around the Education SDG (Goal 4) and its targets;
- Suggests ways of implementing, coordinating, financing and monitoring new commitments; and
- Proposes strategies for planning; taking into account national realities, and respect for national policies and priorities.

With Education Goal 4 and its targets, the world has set an ambitious, and universal education agenda for the period from 2015 to 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia has made incredible progress in primary education enrolment, which currently stands at approximately 99%. Namibia ranks third on the Education for All Development Index.

The Education Ministry must be applauded for efforts towards equitable, quality education for all children through the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 2013 and Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2016. The introduction of UPE and USE will certainly contribute to Namibia attaining the SDGs.

Whilst there are so many great achievements in education, there are challenges that could impact on the

achievement of SDG4. As such, SDG 4 cannot be seen in isolation.

Here in Namibia, His Excellency the President has declared a war against poverty and launched the Harambee Prosperity Plan in an effort to end poverty in Namibia as we know it.

Namibia has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the World with a Gini coefficient of 0.59. The highest rates of poverty can be observed among the youth and women, particularly those living in rural areas¹.

Thirty four percent (34%) of children in Namibia live in poverty compared to 29% of the general population (2012 Child Poverty Report)². Stunting affects 24% of children under 5 in Namibia.

Dropout rates in grade 10 and 12 are of serious concern as is how we prepare young people for the job market and to secure sustainable livelihoods.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Targets of the global education agenda are specific and measurable and aim to transform lives. They include, ensuring that all boys and girls complete free, quality primary and secondary education, early childhood development, quality technical, vocational and tertiary education.

¹ NDP 4 Report

² UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 10 Measuring Child Poverty

The targets also aim to eliminate gender disparities in education. And who better to champion this fight than the four dynamic women appointed to deliver education for Namibians.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We at the UN have been consistently realistic but optimistic in our development messages. We believe that poverty can be eradicated, that this planet can be protected and that we can all be prosperous.

We also believe that key to unlocking this possibility is education.

Therefore and in conclusion, the UN family in Namibia in particular through our education agencies UNESCO and UNICEF is:

- ready to join hands with Government and its development, civil society, private sector, teacher, parent and learner partners to tackle education challenges head on.

- ready to provide support in mobilising resources, including finances from donors and international funding instruments; and

- ready to work to ensure that education and young people are at the centre of implementing, monitoring and evaluating the SDGs.

The UN is committed to our common global agenda to ensure that no one, and least of all no young Namibian is left behind.

I thank you!