

Cabinet approves the Zero Hunger Road Map



Prime Minister of Namibia, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila

The Government of Namibia recently approved the Zero Hunger Road Map during the first Cabinet session of 2017 which took place on 21 February 2017. The approval comes at the most opportune time when Namibia's food security status is under threat due to harsh climatic conditions and cyclical natural disasters, especially droughts and floods. For example as a result of the El Niño-induced drought, thousands of livestock succumbed while crop production have been devastated, leaving more than 700,000 people food-insecure. A total 596,000 people are currently receiving food assistance from the government with more funding needed to meet increasing food and nutrition needs until March 2017. Currently, 42 percent of the population is undernourished.

The approval of the Zero Hunger Road Map comes after government validated the Zero Hunger Strategic Review in last year, which provided a deeper analysis of the food security situation in

the country. In addition, the strategic review outlined strategies to strengthen coordination and implementation of national activities to support Namibia's fight to end hunger and malnutrition. WFP supported the National Planning Commission in the coordination of the Zero Hunger Strategic Review validation meeting process and.

WFP supported the Office of the Prime Minister to undertake the Zero Hunger Strategic Review. Following the review, a Zero Hunger Road Map was developed by government, private sector and civil society, with the participation of UN agencies (FAO, WHO and UNDP). The Zero Hunger Review provided a comprehensive analysis on the underlying drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition in Namibia. Through the Road Map a set of actions that will guide the development and implementation of Zero Hunger strategies are provided. As part of the Road Map initiative, WFP contributed to the development of advocacy tools including the production of two Zero Hunger Newsletters. The Blue Print on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication has adopted Zero Hunger and calls for the implementation of the Zero Hunger Road Map.

Through the Zero Hunger Road Map, the government intends to strengthen its social safety nets and enhance monitoring and evaluation systems to contribute on the improvement of the current food security situation. "The Road Map will compliment effort by the Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare in its commitments on devising strategies that enhance wealth redistribution and household incomes; national and household food security and increasing food production through expansion of irrigation schemes," said the Prime Minister Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila.

Cabinet has proposed the mainstreaming of the Zero Hunger Roadmap in the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5). The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare was indorsed as a coordinating Ministry that will oversee the implementation of the Roadmap and integrate it into the Blue Print on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication.

Cabinet authorized the Office of the Prime Minister to appoint and chair an inter-agency steering committee to finalize the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy and revive the National Food Security and Nutrition Council to ensure it is mainstreamed in the Harambee Prosperity Plan.