



Communiqué Towards a Food Secure Nation – within the context of National Development Plan (NDP) 4



A wide range of stakeholders from government, private sector, civil society and development partners met in Windhoek, Namibia, on 22 August 2012 to discuss the importance of food security for development in the Namibian context and the challenges which the country faces in this regard.

The Namibian Government recently launched its fourth development blueprint, the National Development Plan (NDP) 4, which prioritizes the agricultural sector, amongst others, for public investment over the medium term. Namibia is heavily reliant on food imports to meet domestic demand, and since subsistence farming is the main source of income for an estimated 40 per cent of rural households, the country faces severe challenges in terms of food security in the face of an impending global food crisis which is largely driven by drought and a heat wave in the United States of America, the world's largest producer of corn and wheat.

Noting that the Namibian Government has developed and implemented a number of key policies, programmes and projects which guide efforts aimed at achieving national food security.

Noting further that there remain several challenges to achieving national food security, and that in particular there is need for concerted efforts to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Vision 2030 objectives of being a prosperous and industrialized nation, enjoying political stability, with her people living in harmony and peace.

Cognizant of the fact that agricultural production forms an important pillar of the Namibian economy; and has the potential to create employment in urban and rural areas, and if supported by institutional reforms will be most effective in tackling some of the most pressing development challenges of the country vis: poverty, inequality, deprivation and unemployment, and most importantly, ensure food security.

Have today participated in presentations and discussions which highlighted the need for stakeholders, especially Government to focus on the following priority actions:

- ✓ Improve agricultural productivity by bringing yields up sustainably, to increase food production and to generate income and employment on and off the farm.
- ✓ Advance nutrition outcomes through interventions that intercept malnutrition in children and mothers to stop forfeiting the future of families and countries.

- ✓ Enhance the resilience of families and countries by implementing social protection to stabilize food systems.
- ✓ Empower the rural poor and women by providing access to information, markets and knowledge, in order to unleash their transformative power.
- ✓ Consider a re-evaluation and reform of Namibian land and resource tenure to take into account local practices, with a focus on being context specific, and which would allow access to credit thus generating investment in agriculture.
- ✓ Foster strong institutional support structures and incremental changes to existing farming practices.
- ✓ Continue the establishment of production and marketing infrastructures for agricultural produce.
- ✓ Continue agricultural research and participatory agricultural extension with the collaboration of all stakeholders.
- ✓ Continue with the Horticultural Market Share Promotion Action of the Namibian Agronomic Board and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry which is aiming for 65 per cent of all Namibian requirements to be satisfied through own production.
- ✓ Continue the development of local chicken and pork producing and processing industries with an aim towards self sufficiency and export.
- ✓ Initiate the protection of the local dairy industry with the aim of developing this further into a fully fledged industry with the aim towards self sufficiency and export.
- ✓ Take cognizance of the effects of climate change on crop and livestock production in Namibia within the geographic context of Namibia, as well as the effect of climate change on food prices.
- ✓ Undertake scientific research into climate change and its resultant effects on crop and livestock production in Namibia with the aim of developing strategies to mitigate these outcomes. Research into soil management and technologically advanced farming techniques is also necessary in Namibia.
- ✓ Organize and hold a further Development Dialogue Forum on Food Security in Namibia including a wider range of stakeholders such as traditional authorities and farming cooperatives, and also focusing on more specific issues within the subject matter of ensuring food security.

Issued in Windhoek on this 22nd day of August 2012.