



**Republic of Namibia**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY**

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**MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE  
NATIONAL HOUSING POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION  
ACTION PLAN**

**THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2024**

**WINDHOEK**

- **Director of proceedings;**
- **Hon. Ipumbu Shiimi, Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises, and other Hon. Ministers in attendance**
- **Hon Evelyn !Nawases-Taeyele, my Deputy and other Hon. Deputy Ministers;**
- **Honourable Governors**
- **Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councillors;**
- **Mr Nghidinua Daniel, Executive Director in the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and Chairperson of the National Housing Policy Implementation Steering Committee and the rest of the committee members**
- **Executive Directors of Offices/Ministries and Agencies**
- **Chief Regional Officers**
- **Chief Executive Officers of Local Authority Councils and Public Enterprises**
- **Esteemed Representatives of the business sector, civil society and the media**
- **Development Partners**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am very delighted to be here this morning to officiate at the launch of the revised National Housing Policy and its Implementation Action Plan, which was adopted by Cabinet in November 2023.

The process that gave rise to the revised Policy which I am launching here today was a collaborative and widely consultative one, and consisted of an assessment of the effectiveness and impact of existing policy strategies and interventions in comparison to current and future challenges, dynamics and developmental needs in the country in respect of access to serviced land and housing in both urban and rural areas.

Fellow Namibians, esteemed Ladies and gentlemen

The challenges of rapid urbanisation and rural-urban migration as well as their manifestations among others in the form of informal urban settlements and development which is characterised by a mismatch between demand and supply in terms of urban services and infrastructure and poor conditions, can only be addressed meaningfully and sustainably through collaborative effort and investment by the State and non-State role players and partners.

Indeed, the challenge of provision of and access to serviced land and housing is not becoming easier considering the fact that as per the 2023 Namibia Population and Housing Census, the population of our country is now three million twenty-two thousand four hundred and one (3,022,401). The Census indicates that between 2011 and 2023, urban population increased by sixty-five point five percent (65.5%) while the rural population increased by twenty-six point three percent (26.3%). The challenge which we have address here is both the needs associated with the increase on top of the already existing backlog.

While challenge and task before us may seem daunting it is my firm belief that we can address and achieve it in the words of our departed President Dr Hage Geingob by pulling together in the same direction. Through a collaborative and participatory approach we will achieve efficiency and effectiveness as well as greater and coordinated impact.

In this regard, the Housing Policy provides an overarching framework for integrated human settlement development in the country by recognising and emphasising the principles of inclusivity, partnerships and sustainability as critical requirements for achieving the ultimate Policy goal of broad-based access to *housing opportunities* and *adequate housing* to progressively improve living and socio-economic conditions for urban and rural residents.

More broadly, our approach to housing and human settlement development as articulated in the Housing Policy is premised on the following principles:

- Firstly Partnership and collaboration between public, private and community actors;
- The secondly principles are Quality and affordability, which recognise that houses must be built according to quality standards as well as at prices that home seekers can afford;
- The third principles are Inclusivity and Empowerment whereby members of the community in both urban and rural areas are enabled to actively participate in the process of meeting their housing needs as evident from the commendable work being done by the members of the community individually and/or under the umbrella of community groups such as the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia and NGOs such as Development Workshop Namibia;

- The fourth principle is a Pro-poor orientation whereby a special focus is given to the poor and ultra-low income earners who, if left to the market forces, will not be in a position to help themselves and thus need more assistance in meeting their housing needs;
- The fifth principle is Innovation, which recognises that the complexity of housing crisis in the country requires much more than conventional approaches and the use of out-of-the box thinking and alternative methods in the development and provision of housing to many diverse housing needs in the country; and
- The last principles are sustainability and integration. It is critical that our housing delivery process is politically, economically, socially and fiscally sustainable. This among others requires a balance between end-user affordability, the standards and number of housing units required as well as the required and available resources and capacity. It is equally important that our approach and strategies are holistic and integrated in nature, and that all housing development initiatives in the country are properly coordinated to ensure the desired impact.

Director of proceedings

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen

I agree with Guy Kawasaki that a good idea accounts for ten percent of a successful outcome, while ninety percent depends on effective implementation and hard work. In this regard, the Policy has a detailed Implementation Action Plan setting out the various strategies for each Policy objective as well as an implementation framework and the responsible implementers and role players. I wish to use this opportunity to urge all of us - Offices, Ministries and Agencies at all levels of Government (Central, Regional and local levels), the private sector from financial institutions to actors in the construction and built environment,

the citizens, civil society, the academia and development partners – to familiarise ourselves with the content of the Policy and its Implementation Action Plan in general and to come onboard and make your contributions. The Implementation framework and structures set out in the Policy provide for the active involvement of all key stakeholders. One of such key structures is the National Housing Policy Implementation Steering Committee, which I am told has had its inaugural meeting in June 2024. The overall responsibility of the Committee is to provide strategic direction and ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the overall implementation of the National Housing Policy in general and the specific targets set out in the Action Plan. Let me use this opportunity to welcome the members of Committee and to thank them for accepting to serve. Other implementation structures are in the process of establishment, and I am urging for this process to be expedited.

In conclusion, esteemed ladies and gentlemen, I now have the pleasure of launching the National Housing Policy and its Implementation Action Plan. And I thank you all for your kind attention and attendance of the launch!