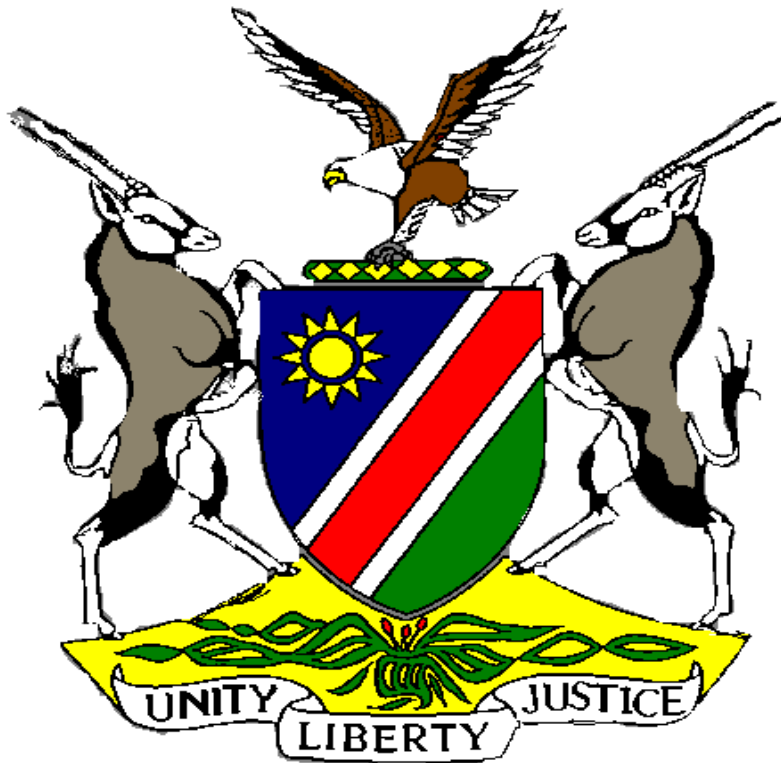




REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT
CREATION**

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER, HON. UTONI
NUJOMA AT THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP
“SETTING THE STAGE FOR A NATIONAL DIAGNOSTIC OF
INFORMALITY IN NAMIBIA”**

SAFARI HOTEL, WINDHOEK

13 SEPTEMBER 2023

Director of Proceedings
Hon. Minister, Lucia Ipumbu
United Nations Resident Coordinator
Governor of the Bank of Namibia,
Invited Guests
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my honour and privilege to welcome you to the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop: "Setting the Stage for a National Diagnostic of Informality in Namibia." We are honoured to have you all here today, representing various sectors and organizations, as we embark on this crucial journey towards understanding and addressing informality in our country.

I'd like to extend a special welcome to our distinguished guests, experts, and partners who have joined us today. Your presence underscores the significance of the issue at hand and the collective commitment to finding solutions.

The informal economy plays a vital role in the livelihoods of many Namibians. It encompasses a diverse range of activities, from street vending to small-scale agriculture, and it touches the lives of countless individuals and families. It is a source of income, employment, and resilience for many, and at the same time, it

presents challenges in terms of labour rights, social protection, and economic stability.

As the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation, we recognize our pivotal role in ensuring effective labour and employment services, as well as social protection for workers in the informal economy. Our commitment to fostering decent work and inclusive economic growth extends to all sectors, formal and informal alike. We understand that informality is not a monolithic concept; it is a complex and multifaceted issue that demands a comprehensive approach.

Today's workshop marks a significant step towards that approach. It brings together stakeholders from academia, government, civil society, and the private sector to collectively explore, analyze, and understand the intricacies of informality in Namibia. By doing so, we aim to lay the foundation for informed policies and practical strategies that can improve the lives and livelihoods of those engaged in the informal economy.

Dear Participants,

Namibia has been designated as a pathfinder country under the UN's Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions and a pilot country for the ILO strategy to reduce inequalities in the world of work. The country is focusing on addressing informality, which is a driver of inequality and an

obstacle to social justice. The development of a National Roadmap for the Global Accelerator in Namibia is underway. By agreement of representatives of Government, employers organisations, trade unions, the private sector and civil society, the Roadmap will include a thematic entry point on developing a national strategy for the transition from informality to formality. In applying for designation as a GA Pathfinder country, Namibia, through our President, committed itself to a whole-of-government approach. This means, among other things, that the strategy for formalisation must ensure coherence and coordination between and among the Ministries that are developing policies and strategies with respect to the informal economy. I am therefore particularly pleased to share this platform with Minister Iipumbu. This signals a commitment on the part of our respective Ministries to work together in formulating policies and implementing programmes in this important area.

Dear Participants

We are here to plan a diagnostic of Namibia's informal economy that will aim to understand its extent, diversity, causes, and consequences, build consensus, and enable stakeholders to discuss priorities and responsibilities for defining evidence-based strategies for reducing informality.

Over the course of this workshop, we will engage in discussions, share insights, and learn from one another. We will examine the

challenges and opportunities presented by informality, and we will seek innovative ways to promote decent work, social protection, and economic empowerment for all Namibians.

I urge all of you to actively participate, collaborate, and contribute your expertise to the discussions ahead. Together, we can shape the future of labour and employment in Namibia, ensuring that it is more equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our diverse workforce.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the organizing committee, our partners, and each one of you for your dedication to this important cause. Let us use this workshop as a platform to set the stage for a comprehensive national diagnostic of informality and take meaningful steps towards a more inclusive and prosperous Namibia.

Thank you, and let's begin our journey toward a brighter future together.

I THANK YOU