



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM

QUESTION NO. 28 and 30

**RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY HON. KENNEDY SHEKUPAKELA OF
THE RALLY FOR DEMOCRACY PROGRESS (RDP) AND HON.
UTAARA MOOTU OF LANDLESS PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT (LPM)**

**04 April 2024
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Honourable Speaker;

Honourable Members;

I rise this afternoon to respond to questions posed by Honourable **Kennedy Shekupakela of the Rally for Democracy Progress**. While at it, I should indicate that the questions posed by Honourable Mootu are to be fully answered by my counterpart minister responsible for urban land, we have re-directed these questions to his team. However, our response to Honourable Shekupakela will also give context to the questions by Honourable Mootu.

I welcome the questions and I would like to address the questions in the order they were listed:

Firstly, allow me to provide this background on the resettlement programme.

Over the years the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform has been confronted and challenged by the question of "Who qualifies to be resettled?" this is because generally, all Namibians do qualify due to historical circumstances regarding land dispossession. It is due to these contestations that the Ministry, naturally, thought of reviewing the National Resettlement Policy of 2001. The legislation is one of the instruments that guide land redistribution and resettlement programme in the country. In addition, there were concerns raised by the public that the Policy should be reviewed since it was not inclusive enough and that some of the issues experienced on the ground were not explicitly covered in the document. Another crucial challenge during the implementation process is that the Ministry found itself in the position of land administrator and

also implementer of some programmes and activities which were supposed to be carried out by other key Government institutions or agencies.

Furthermore, during the implementation of the Policy; the following gaps were identified that led to the policy review:

- a) Mismatch of the policy and criteria for the allocation of acquired land;
- b) Poor agricultural productivity on allocated land;
- c) Absence or inadequate pre- and post-settlement support;
- d) Lack of effective monitoring and evaluation of the resettlement process and;
- e) Poor stakeholder involvement and coordination.

The Revised National Resettlement Policy presents the Government's commitment to address^{ing} the Land Redistribution challenges that our country continues to battle in a more coordinated, inclusive, and transparent manner. The Policy will ensure that the resettlement Programme is fair and transparent. The main goal of the policy is to ensure that the land acquired is fairly and equitably allocated and sustainably utilized to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries.

The revised policy advances three resettlement models, namely: a) High Economic

Value Model (HEVM), b) Moderate Economic Value Model (MEVM), and, c) Low Economic Value Model (LEVM) to address socially, economic, and politically related issues thereby covering all kinds of landless, displaced, and destitute citizens in the country

Now, I answer your questions as posted:

1. **How does the Ministry plan to expedite the resettlement process to alleviate the suffering of those stranded in corridors, given the urgency of their situation?**

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform (MAWLR) is in the process of reviewing resettlement criteria to align it with the approved National Resettlement Policy of 2023. The Criteria target specific groups as guided during the second National Land Conference. These groups among others include dispossessed communities, youth, large communal farmers, generational farm workers, etc. The ministry will continue to allocate land on a 70/30 basis in favor of those heavily dispossessed. In the interim, the ministry continues to engage other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Finance to improve the budget allocation for the Land Acquisition Program. We are also in continuous engagement with the landowners to contribute to the land reform program by requesting them to continue offering agricultural land to the government for resettlement purposes.

Furthermore, this year for the first, the ministry received a N\$50 million ring-fenced for the purchase of purchasing land for Generational Farm Workers and possibly for those stranded in corridors. I must emphasize that although this budget is little, once resources become available, especially funds, more funds could be made available for this purpose. However, I must emphasize that, strict due diligence will be done when allocating land to the said category to ensure that there is no circumvention or abuse of this noble idea. This assistance will not be extended to those voluntarily move into corridors or those who will be chased into corridors by their employers. It must be a support approach for those who genuinely find themselves in such unfortunate situations but not through some sort of orchestration.

2. What specific support packages and immediate interventions will the Ministry provide to address the pressing needs of these vulnerable communities, including access to food, water, and essential resources?

The Ministry, as per the newly approved National Resettlement Policy of 2023 plans to provide the following support packages to the resettlement beneficiaries under the three respective resettlement models, namely the High Economic Value Model (HEVM), The Moderate Economic Value Model (MEVM) and the Low Economic Value Model (LEVM):

Support	Description	Beneficiary Model
<p>a) <i>Establishment and Start-up Grant</i></p>	<p>Effective support and financing programmes are key to farming success. This package is a pre-resettlement or start-up support package aimed at enabling beneficiaries to set up their commercial farming ventures. The grant would, among others, offer start-up means in the form of relocation support, induction training, restocking, tilling, wildlife breeding stock seed capital, and other support required by new beneficiaries to enter and become meaningful in commercial farming ventures. This package should consider the integration of farm management support for increased productivity of resettlement farms</p>	<p>LEVM and MEVM</p>

	allocated to individuals, groups, or legal entities such as Cooperatives.	
Support	Description	Beneficiary Model
b) <i>Infrastructure Development and Rehabilitation Grant</i>	Providing sound farm infrastructure and farm inputs is key to farming success. A bridging grant aimed at ensuring that new beneficiaries are enabled to build on their existing capacities, especially prior to or immediately after (during the 1 st year) of physical resettlement of beneficiaries, would facilitate infrastructure and farm inputs and ultimately support growth in the agricultural sector. Alternatively, cash could be availed to individual farmers, groups, or legal entities such as Cooperatives.	LEVM and MEVM
c) <i>Technical Support Provision</i>	Building the capabilities of beneficiaries through mentorship, training and other capacity-building initiatives is imperative to the success of resettlement beneficiaries. This package presents ongoing support to all resettled farmers, which should be made available, especially during the probation period of the individual beneficiaries, groups, or legal entities such as Cooperatives. The MAWLR shall develop and implement a strategy for linking all resettlement farmers to agricultural extension officers for training and mentoring purposes.	All models

<p>d) <i>Limited Credit Facility Provision</i></p>	<p>Farming is a capital-intensive undertaking, thus a need for readily available, accessible, and sustainable credit facilities to cater for the imminent farming needs of the resettled farmers. The loan grant available at Agribank for resettlement farmers should be expanded to cater to the resettlement farmers' varying farming needs. Resettlement farmers shall not qualify for livestock loans in communal areas. This package shall also consider integrating farm management support for increased productivity of resettlement farms allocated to individuals, groups, or legal entities such as Cooperatives.</p>	<p>HEVM and MEVM</p>
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The Ministry where possibly was always able to accommodate the plight of general farm workers and destitute people. The recent example is the resettlement of 46 families of generational farm workers in farm Duwib situated in Otjozondjupa region. Furthermore, the Ministry has also acquired resettlement farms specifically for the vulnerable communities. The said farms are under the administration of the Division Marginalized Communities under the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPEWSW).

Below is a list of resettlement farms allocated to vulnerable communities:

FARM NAME	CONSTITUENCY / REGION	SIZE	YEAR ACQUIRED	NO. OF HH's	NO. OF BENEFICIARIES
Seringkop No. 454 & Koppies No. 457	Outjo, Kunene	7,967.87	2007 / 2008 2008 / 2009	78	+ - 624
Mooiplass No. 456	Outjo, Kunene	6,538.68	2009 / 2010	7	+ - 56
Bellalaika No. 458	Outjo, Kunene	3,527.64	2009 / 2010	65	+ - 520
Nuchas No. 468	Outjo, Kunene	6,361.42	2010 / 2011	32	+ - 256
Werda No. 469	Outjo, Kunene	6,414.18	2010 / 2011	57	+ - 456
Toevlug No. 461	Outjo, Kunene	6,217.62	2011 / 2012	59	+ - 472
Ondera No. 308 & Kumewa No. 1072	Guinas, Oshikoto	7,147.60	2012 / 2013	450	+ - 1,500
Uitkoms No. 514	Omatako, Otjozondjupa	6,389.11	2006 / 2007	220	+ -

3. ***What strategies are in place to bridge the identified gaps in the current resettlement program, such as limited access to capital, insufficient training, water scarcity, and challenges in obtaining loans from commercial banks?***

The ministry back in 2009 developed Post Resettlement Support Package in partnership with the Agricultural Bank of Namibia where the ministry contributed N\$30 million in the Revolving Fund. Currently there is a support program where the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Land Reform is in collaboration with the Agricultural Bank of Namibia (AgriBank) where a no collateral loan of an amount of N\$ 200 000.00 is available for all resettled farmers who opt to make use of the facility. However, I must indicate that although the intention of the ministry is to capacitate the farmers, the majority of beneficiary who benefitted from this support package not paying back their loans. The current arrears of this Revolving Fund Facility are standing at the staggering figure of 48% of arrears. Despite the arrears, the Ministry is in discussion with Agribank to look into the possibility of increasing the current amount of N\$200,000.00 to N\$500,000.00 without a collateral. In addition to the financial support, the ministry provides Pre and Post training to all resettlement beneficiaries. To address the issue of water scarcity, the ministry has acquired a fleet of drilling rigs to improve water supply by drilling boreholes in the resettlement farms. However, we must understand that the water scarcity in our country is a challenge since Namibia is a semi dessert country. Another challenge is the insufficient budget which limits the ministry to offer all the required support to the resettlement beneficiaries.

4. Could the Ministry elaborate on the implementation strategies outlined in the new resettlement policy, particularly regarding the allocation of farms, land tenure security, and the promotion of productivity on resettlement farms?

The ministry's new implementation strategies are as follows:

a) First of all, I would like to remind the Honorable member that I made a ministerial statement in this August House, this year in February 2024 about the new Resettlement Policy as approved in 2023. It is important for all of us as Honorable members to familiarize ourselves with the new Policy.

The allocation of farmlands will be done targeting first and foremost previously disadvantaged Namibians, with a focus on various groups such as landless, displaced, and destitute people in the country. The revised policy is target oriented approach that intends to promote land productivity while also taking into consideration of social aspects of communities. Therefore, the resettlement allocation will be done in conformity with resettlement models as in the approved Resettlement Policy of 2023 which are a) High Economic Value Model (HEVM), b) Moderate Economic Value Model (MEVM) and c) Low Economic Value Model (LEVM).

b) The policy directs that land must first be allocated on a leasehold basis with the option for a Freehold right being granted to successful beneficiaries upon meeting the conditions of their lease agreements. The duration of the leases should vary from one resettlement model to the other, hence the suggestion to provide tailored pre and post settlement support for each category of beneficiaries for a specific model in the form of support services and starting capital to resettled farmers.

In order to ensure real security of tenure and bankability of land rights allocated through resettlement, successful beneficiaries will be accorded the option to

purchase their allocated farms on a cost-recovery basis to obtain full ownership of the farm by obtaining a freehold land rights of their farming units as this will offer them the opportunity to own their farmland and avoid being perpetual lessees of the State. We believe once beneficiaries own the farm on Freehold it will also clear the current uncertainty regarding the inability of resettlement beneficiaries to use their lease agreements as collateral to access credit from commercial banks.

5. *I urge the Ministry to address reported concerns regarding corruption within resettlement committees, as raised by stakeholders. What measures are being taken to ensure transparency and accountability in the resettlement process?*

All the acquired farms for resettlement program are advertised in print media and placed at Governor's Offices country-wide. There a Regional Resettlement Committees in every region that are chaired by the Governor of that particular region. The committee sits every month to discuss resettlement applications and other resettlement-related issues. The committee recommends suitable candidates for its specific region to the Land Reform Advisory Commission which screens all recommended applications from all the 14 regions. The Land Reform Advisory Commission makes recommendations to the minister for approval.

I hope that I have fully addressed all the questions posed by Honourable **Kennedy Shekupakela**

Thank you for your attention.