



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

**HON. LUCIA IIPUMBU MP**

**MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS IMPACT FACILITY (SDGIF) FUNDRAISING GALA DINNER**

**11 NOVEMBER 2021**

**HILTON HOTEL, WINDHOEK**

**Director of Proceedings**

**Mr. Wilmot Reeves, UNDP Acting Resident Representative**

**Mr Benedict Libanda, Chief Executive Officer of the Namibian Environmental Investment Fund**

**The Chief Representative of Standard Bank Namibia present**

**Mr. Jason Kasuto, Chief Executive Officer of Musa Capital Namibia**

**Ms. Nneka, Chief Executive Officer of Blue Travel, the Event Manager**

**All Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade staff present**

**Captains of Industry**

**Partners and Future Partners in the SDIF**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good Evening

1. It gives me great pleasure to be here this evening to launch our Sustainable Development Goals Impact Facility (SDGIF) Fundraising Campaign whilst also introducing the first edition of Namibia SDG Investor Report. In essence, we are here to celebrate and yet lay further foundations of our cumulative and smart partnership approach towards enterprise development in Namibia.
2. I would at the onset like to thank all who made it here today, especially in times like this when the economy is uncertain, businesses under pressure and companies have many other pressing things to worry about and so do individuals. However, despite all of that, it gives me good comfort that you found this a worthy cause to come and spend time on with the hope that we can cement partnership not in the too distant future.

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

3. Micro-SMEs are the roots of the economy and if supported and developed they grow into larger companies with a great contribution to the country's economy. A well skilled and equipped MSME can impact the economy from the bottom up as they contribute to job creation, local value addition and economic growth of a country. Hence this support the MIT's efforts to improve Namibia's business and Investment climate and therefore contribute to economic growth, employment and income generation for all businesses including MSMEs.

4. In addition it is also imperative that our efforts should strive to ensure that we develop enterprises, be it micro or large that can create social impact and are attuned to the Sustainable Development Goals.
5. It is also vital that both the public and private sectors continues to generate market intelligence that can posit our economy towards new avenues and sectors of growth such as those espoused in the Investor Report that we are launching tonight.
6. The development of the SDGIF has its roots in one of our staff member, Dr. Michael Humavindu reaching out to then UNDP employee Dr Martha Naanda on 30 March 2019 to create a socially impact driven funding facility as a collaborative effort.
7. Gracefully the UNDP took on this request with their full might and collaborated with the Ministry to ensure that we arrive at today, whereby we are launching a Fundraising Campaign for it.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

8. The SDGIF is but one of the MIT's facilities or instruments to help ensure the full development of our enterprises across the economy divide. The MIT strives to improve the business environment and conditions for businesses including MSMEs through initiatives covering both policy, legislative, regulatory, institutional and programme specific one. Allow me therefore to deviate and provide some details in terms of our overall approach.
9. -From the **Policy** perspective, the Ministry introduced the **2016 MSME National Policy** which clearly ensured appropriate definition of the sector as well as providing guidance on how the country should support our MSMEs.
10. Furthermore, the Ministry is currently finalising an **Informal Economy and Entrepreneurship National Policy** to cover the uniformalised sections of our entrepreneurs as well as our youthful start-ups and general entrepreneurship. This policy is also included in the Harambee Prosperity Plan and is to be accompanied

by an attendant Act of Parliament later on which provides ample space for ensuring the mainstreaming of incentives and business infrastructure for our MSMEs both formal and informal.

11.-The Ministry has also supported the Ministry of Finance's **directive on local procurement which was released in December 2020**, listing various products and services that must be supported through Public Procurement through our Buy Local Grow Namibia Campaign.

12.-From a **Legal and Regulatory** view, the Ministry is at the final stages of re-tabling the **Namibian Investment Promotion Act (NIPA)** of which a key provision is **Sector Reservation** to ensure that certain sectors are reserved for our MSMEs.

13.The NIPA will thus be accompanied by appropriate regulations thereto. In addition we will introduce the function of business inspectors to ensure that these provisions are adhered to and reduce exploitation of our efforts to attract sustainable investment.

14.-From an **Institutional perspective**, the Ministry has initiated three key interventions - a **StartUp Hub** and **Digital Centre, EMPRETEC Namibia** as well as the **SDG Impact Facility**.

15.The **StartUp Hub** is key to ensure that we promote and develop our Namibian StartUps and we now have over **90 StartUps** being trained at the Hub. The recently launched Digital Centre is within the StartUp Hub and aims to ensure the development of a digital economy and StartUps to help in our structural transformation and industrialisation agenda. This is a collaboration with the German Government. The StartUp Centre also supported the Future Female Entrepreneurs Programme.

16.**EMPRETEC Namibia** is a collaboration with UNDP Namibia and Ghana EMPRETEC with the explicit aim to avert the very low entrepreneurial outcomes of our country. The aim is to train our MSMEs and larger enterprises into appropriate entrepreneurial behaviour to ensure that they can create sustainable business

going forward. So far **we have trained also over 95 entrepreneurs** of which 40 were vulnerable categories (disabled, poverty stricken etc).

17. Under EMPRETEC, we have also collaborated with the Ministry of Higher Education to train more than **20 youth entrepreneurs**. The next phase is to ensure the training of Trainers as well as Certified Business Advisors and Mentors.

18. -The **SDG Impact Facility**, is a collaboration with UNDP Namibia and Standard Bank Namibia as well as the Environmental Investment Fund. The aim is to support and fund sustainable social enterprises as access to finance continue to hamper our efforts at business development. **So far we have funded 96 enterprises** under this facility and aim to grow the fund into an endowment fund with other interested partners. The first window covered agriculture, nutraceuticals, the second window looked at tourism, hospitality and manufacturing whilst the final window focused on Renewable Energy and Information Technology.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

19. Given the outcomes of the First Phase, the MIT has therefore committed N\$2.5 million to create an endowment fund for the SDGIF to ensure permanency and sustainability. This Gala Dinner is therefore a key platform to mobilise additional N\$ 2 million - N\$3 million for (in financial and non-financial pledges) the MSMEs development in Namibia.

20. We do not expect to raise such a target overnight, however tonight's event is mainly to raise awareness amongst you and to invite you to come on board as we planned to continue to have one – on - ones engagement with you all over the period of one year from now.

21. Similarly for the SDG Investor Map Report that identifies 13 potential investment opportunities, the MIT and all interested partners will continue to ensure the realisation of some of these projects to ensure economy resuscitation. The SDG Investor Map report will be uploaded on the SDG Investor Map online platforms as well as MIT and UNDP social media pages by Monday, 15 November 2021.

22. The combination of our work in both the SDGIF and the SDG Investor Map is in essence to mark the promotion for strategic sectors in lieu of what they call the **'Big Sustainability Push'** marking subsectors such as the circular economy, the health and care economy, renewable energy, sustainable tourism and bio economy and ecosystem services amongst many other sectors.

23. So this dinner marks a step forward for the SDGIF. Therefore, we are marching ahead, and I am fully confident, seeing all of you here today, that we have the right spirit, right collaborative partners, right coordinators at the technical level and right supports.

24. I am therefore very much confident that if we keep this momentum, the SDGIF will fly our Namibian enterprise development flag high for many more years to come.

**Thank you very much!**