



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HON. DR. RICHARD NCHABI KAMWI, MP**

**MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**DURING THE**

**LAUNCH AND NATIONAL SEMINAR OF THE**

**2006/07 NAMIBIA DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY  
(NDHS)**

**STATEMENT BY HONORABLE DR RICHARD NCHABI KAMWI,  
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AT THE LAUNCH  
AND NATIONAL SEMINAR OF THE 2006/07 NAMIBIA  
DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY (NDHS), 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2008,  
Safari Conference Centre**

---

Director of Ceremonies

Honourable Deputy Minister, Ms. Petrina Haingura

Permanent Secretary, Mr. Kahijoro Kahuure

Under – Secretary for Policy Development and Resource Management Mr. P.K. Ndaitwa

Director of USAID in Namibia Mr. Greg Gottlieb

Country Representative of WHO Dr. Magda Robalo

Representative from Embassy of China Mr. Lin Jin

Head of Spanish Cooperation in Namibia Mr. Quinta

All other Development partners

Senior officials from Government Ministries

Directors, Deputy Directors and officials in the Ministry of Health and Social Services

All Invited guests

Members of the media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Many countries in the African Region and in particular Namibia have embarked on health sector reforms in order to improve the health status of their people,

particularly those with the greatest needs and expectations. In this context, health development planning is widely promoted and is usually linked to national development plans, national health policy and global initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the past seven months the Ministry had embarked upon on the health and social services system review which has served as the basis for the ministerial strategic plan which is aimed at setting clear and implementable priorities for the use of available and potential resources in the most appropriate and cost-effective manner.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS) is well aware of the need to provide health services to all the inhabitants in Namibia. In 1998 the MoHSS adopted Policy framework, which is a strategy for the achievement of greater service coverage and equity in the country. Within this framework health and social welfare services research is encompassed.

### **Director of Ceremonies**

Namibia has been developing its National Health Information over the past 18 years through demographic health survey the first conducted in 1992, routine health services statistics and HIV and TB surveillance systems. Considerable efforts have therefore been made to document levels and trends of health indicators with special emphasis on regional inequities. This is due to the fact that health information and evidence play a major role in directing resource flows and health programmes.

In order to continuously monitor and update health information statistics, the Ministry embarked upon on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Namibia Demographic and Health survey

which is the latest in a series of periodic surveys that are conducted in collaboration with various stakeholders.

The main objective of this survey was to measure levels, patterns, and trends in demographic and health indicators in Namibia. Specifically, the 2006-07 NDHS collected information on fertility levels, marriage, sexual activity, fertility preferences, awareness and use of family planning methods, breastfeeding practices, nutritional status of women and young children, childhood and maternal mortality, maternal and child health, and awareness and behaviour regarding HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition, it collected information on the use of mosquito nets, women's empowerment and demographic and health outcomes as well as information on orphans and vulnerable children care and support.

Although the findings of these topics I have mentioned are to be elaborated and discussed upon in the seminar which is scheduled to commence after the opening session, the findings reveal that more Namibians are getting tested for HIV, young people are waiting longer to start sexual activity, and use of condoms has increased. These pleasing results are due not only to the efforts of the Ministry alone but also other players; such as development partners', non-governmental organisations, private sector and government ministries, agencies and offices.

Director of ceremonies

Ladies and gentleman

The Ministry remains concerned with the reversal in gains made in particular to the increase in infant, child and maternal mortality. In order to accelerate the reduction in child mortality and maternal mortality the Ministry has identified strategies and interventions as outlined in the National Road Map which I launched June.

Traditionally, national health development plans have focused on the actions within the public sector, with little attention to the private sector and others that have influence on health. However, national health development plans is intended to cover the whole health system, therefore there is a need to give adequate attention to the actions of both the private sector (including NGOs) and the public. The findings of the survey is therefore important as it will enable communities, health and social workers, relevant line ministries and civil society organisations, regional councils, local authorities as well as our development partners, to make informed decisions with the aim of delivering quality of care that is cost effective and efficient to the Namibian population.

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and gentleman

The Ministry acknowledges the valuable support in raising awareness about the survey and generating cooperation from communities that was provided by all regional councilors, governors, various town and city councils; and the Namibia Agricultural Union and local farmers associations.

Special thanks go to the staff who participated in various aspects of the survey and the respondents, who generously gave their time to provide the information that forms the basis of this report.

Director of Ceremonies

Before I acknowledge the technical and financial support the Government has received in embarking upon this important milestone of finalisation of the 2006 – 07 Demographic Health Survey, I have the honour on behalf of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, to receive donated equipments (10 scanners, 19 printers and their accessories, 2 photocopier machines and 1 projector) from the Chinese Government for the 2006 NDHS project.

These electronic equipment are indeed very valuable to the MoHSS as we are busy reviewing the quality of services delivered within limited resources.

Your Excellency, rest assured that the donated equipment will be put to good use in the next NDHS, as of now, they will be used in ongoing research activities in the Research Unit of the Ministry.

Hence, allow me on behalf of the MoHSS and indeed myself to extend to the people of the Government of the People's Republic of China our most sincere thanks for the immense support to the MoHSS.

Finally, the Ministry is grateful for the financial, technical and other assistance provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Global Fund, the Chinese Government, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Health

Organization (WHO), Macro International Inc., National Planning Commission Secretariat and others.

Sincere thanks are also extended to members of the 2006-07 NDHS Steering Committee and stakeholders who contributed to the successful completion of the survey.

With these few words I hereby launch the 2006/07 Namibia Demographic Health Survey report and the National Seminar officially opened.

I thank you.