



POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

WELCOME REMARKS

BY

PROF TJAMA TJIVIKUA

RECTOR: POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

ON THE OCCASION OF
THE CHEQUE HANDOVER BY THE NATIONAL DISABILITY COUNCIL
OF NAMIBIA TO CED

18 JULY 2013

**POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA (HOTEL SCHOOL)
WINDHOEK**

Director of Ceremonies
Chairperson of the 2nd National Disability Council of Namibia, Honourable
Member of Parliament, Merliherius Haukambe
Director of the National Disability Council of Namibia, Mr Martin Limbo
Representatives of the Different Ministries
Distinguished Stakeholders in the Disability Field
Polytechnic Staff and Students
All Esteemed Invited Guests
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure and honour to welcome you to this important occasion of the Workshop on “Training Needs for Disability Capacity Building Programme.” In May 2012 the Polytechnic of Namibia and the National Disability Council of Namibia (NDCN), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in which both parties committed themselves to the important task of working together on a number of strategies to address the plight and aspirations of people living with disability. This initiative addresses our country’s need to meet the obligations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability, but moreso was driven by the desire to fulfill our constitutional requirements of providing all Namibians equitable opportunities as well as improving the lives of all our people.

We are all aware of the many challenges facing people with disabilities, which also prevent them from enjoying full human rights. Most of these challenges emanate from insufficient education. Eide et al¹ (2003) estimate that about 98 percent of people with disabilities are unemployed and in fact, the majority of

these have never worked before. The same study estimates that 44 percent of children with disabilities of school-going age are not attending primary school. It is therefore not surprising that the key strategic interventions supported by the collaboration between the Polytechnic and NDCN are focusing on capacity building among the people with disability in Namibia. On the side of the Polytechnic, the Centre for Enterprise Development (CED) is the implementing agency.

When the Polytechnic and NDCN signed the MOU we were all excited by the noble ideas we had hatched and wanted to achieve through this project, but at the same time struck by the reality that going forward considerable resources were needed for the implementation of the project. Today, it is with such joy and pride for me to announce that the Polytechnic of Namibia and NDCN have secured initial funding of \$ 240 000 that will help kick-start the capacity building initiatives. To use a cliché, 'we have been staring up the steps for some time, now it's time to step up the stairs.' I would therefore like to express appreciation to our partners, the NDCN for the enormous effort they put in to secure this funding.

However, we are still faced with a challenge of having to source more funds, since without that funding this programme will neither be effective nor sustainable. Therefore, to prevent this we need to continue our consultations with local and international stakeholders in this regard. I take this opportunity to urge all corporate citizens to dig into their pockets and put a smile on the

faces of fellow citizens who may only for the first time enjoy a right taken away by disability.

Finally, I believe the workshop that follows this session is particularly important because it will provide a platform for NDCN and other stakeholders, given the many challenges in capacity building that require attention, to work out what needs to be prioritised, what is urgent and what needs to be achieved on the mid- to long-term horizon. In as much as I'm urging corporate Namibia to support the disability cause, I would urge the various entities responsible for disabilities to cooperate and pool their resources in order to derive more benefits from synergies and economies of scale.

The Polytechnic will be responsive to the needs of stakeholders in providing the necessary expertise. I therefore wish you success in your deliberations and hope that at the end of the workshop a clear picture on what will be implemented with the resources we currently have, will emerge. I have no doubt that as we galvanise more resources for this initiative there will be a greater need for the stakeholders to provide strategic direction to the implementation of the programmes. The Polytechnic and the NDCN will depend on your support for the success of this endeavour.

I remain hopeful for all Namibians and I thank you all.

ENDS.

