



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON. DR. ESPERANCE LUVINDAO
(MP), MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL PARENTING
AND CAREGIVER HANDBOOK AND FACILITATOR GUIDE**

04 MARCH 2026

**HILTON HOTEL
WINDHOEK**

**Check Against Delivery.*

- **Director of Proceedings, Mr. Penda Ithindi, Executive Director, Ministry of Health and Services;**
- **Hon. Dr. Emma Kantema, Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare;**
- **Hon. Dr. Sanet Steenkamp, Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture;**
- **Mr. Samuel Kweku, Oran UNICEF Country Representative;**
- **Dr. Richard Banda, WHO Country Representative;**
- **Mr. Ian Dupont, Representative of the EU Ambassador, H.E. Ana-Beatriz Martins;**
- **Ms. Edda Bohn, Deputy Executive Director in the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture;**
- **Ms. Nicolette Bessinger, Director Lifeline/Childline;**
- **Dr. Johanna Nashandi. Social Work Lecturer UNAM;**
- **Esteemed Representatives from UN agencies; Non-governmental and Civil Society Organizations;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning,

1. There is an old African proverb that has echoed through the valleys and plains of our continent for generations: *“It takes a village to raise a child.”* For a long time, we have spoken these words. Today, in this room, we are not just speaking them, we are building that village.
2. I stand before you with a sense of profound duty and optimism. We are gathered here to officially launch a toolkit for the future of Namibia: The National Parent and Caregiver Handbook and Facilitator Guide. We are also here to honor the soldiers of this cause, our Master Trainers, who will carry this torch into our communities.
3. The theme of our gathering asks a simple yet profound question: *“Who is a Parent?”* The Latin root of the word, *“parere,”* means *“to bring forth.”* But as we know, parenting is far more than biology. It is a lifelong vow to protect, to nurture, and to guide. Whether you are a biological mother, a father, a grandparent, a foster carer, or a guardian, if you are shaping a young life, you are holding the future of Namibia in your hands.

Director of Ceremony,

4. The Government of Namibia recognizes that the family unit is the bedrock of our national development. If the family is weak, the nation is weak. But if the family is strong, supported, and nurtured, our potential is limitless. This is why investing in parenting is not just a social nicety; it is a strategic economic imperative under our Sixth National Development Plan.
5. We know the science. Evidence proves that positive parenting is the single most effective intervention we have. It improves child health, boosts cognitive development, and increases future productivity. Conversely, it is our best weapon against violence, substance abuse, and intergenerational poverty.
6. However, we must be honest about the reality our parents face. Parenting today is an act of courage. Our parents are navigating a storm. They are battling the pressures of the modern economy, the intrusion of screen time, the scourge of substance abuse, and the delicate challenge of work-life balance. Many are doing this while carrying their own unhealed traumas.
7. To every parent struggling in silence, wondering if you are doing enough: You are not alone. The Handbook we launch today is your companion. It is not just a book; it is a bridge. It is designed to replace frustration with communication, and confusion with clarity. It teaches that discipline is not about fear, but about guidance. It reminds us that before we can regulate a child's emotions, we must understand our own.
8. To our partners: UNICEF, the European Union, the University of Namibia, Lifeline/Childline, and the many stakeholders here, I thank you. Your collaboration proves that the "village" is alive and well.
9. To the Media: You are the window through which our children see the world. I challenge you today to use your platforms to uplift positive parenting narratives. Help us guide young minds through the complex information landscape they inhabit.
10. And to the Master Trainers receiving their certification today: You are the catalysts. You are the ones who will take these concepts off the page and into the homes of our people. Go forth with confidence, knowing you have the full support of the Ministry behind you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. We envision a Namibia where there is zero tolerance for violence against children. A Namibia where every home is a sanctuary of safety, emotional intelligence, and love. This is our "Vision 2030" in action, a prosperous, industrialized nation built not just on infrastructure, but on the strength of its human spirit.

12. Let us leave here today with a renewed vow. Let us be the village that doesn't just watch, but acts. Because what we do for our children TODAY will define the Namibia of TOMORROW.
13. It is now my distinct honor and privilege to declare the National Parent and Caregiver Handbook and Facilitator Guide officially LAUNCHED.

I thank you.