



Joint Media Release

MTC, DWN, AND OTC Open ECD centre in Oshakati

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Oshakati, Namibia – 27 September 2024

MTC Namibia, Development Workshop Namibia (DWN) and Oshakati Town Council are proud to announce the official opening of the MTC Onawa Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centre, at Onawa location in Oshakati.

Inaugurated on Friday (27 September 2024), the centre was constructed at the cost of N\$800 000 funding support from MTC, and boosts amenities such as modern classrooms, a tuck-shop, and an outdoor play area for the purpose of children's physical development. In addition to its educational role, the model centre will also serve as a hub for essential community activities, including educarer training, parental workshops, and ministerial services such as birth registration outreach. The drive is to create a supportive environment that benefits not just children but the entire community.

In his remarks delivered on his behalf, Acting Director in the ministry of gender, Mr. Nichlas Mbingeneeko, welcomes and commends MTC, DWN, and the Oshakati Town Council for collaborating and bringing the ECD centre to the community of Onawa location, adding that when private institutions complement the government in the national development agenda, notable progress will be realized.

MTC's Corporate Affairs Manager, John Ekongo highlighted the importance of investing in early childhood development stating that children who attend ECD centers can stimulate their minds to learn new skills. This includes activities such as reading, writing, and math, which is essential for later success in school and life.

According to DWN Country Director, Jessica Brown, "research points that high-quality early childhood education can have long-term benefits for children, such as better academic performance and reduced likelihood of involvement in the criminal justice system. Children who attend high-quality early childhood development centers are more likely to graduate from high school, tertiary level and have successful careers."

Namibia's government recognizes the critical importance of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Pre-primary Education (PPE) in improving educational outcomes for children. National frameworks such as the Fifth National Development Plan (2017) and the Harambee Prosperity Plan II (2021) emphasize the need for investment in the early years of childhood to maximise developmental impact. However, the country still faces significant challenges. According to 2018 statistics, only 29% of children aged 0-4 attended ECD centres, with even lower numbers following the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, many ECD educators remain untrained and unsupported.

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Co-authored by: MTC and DWN

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