



REMARKS BY MS NILIAN MULEMI, CHAIRPERSON OF THE GIPF BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE GIPF NKURENKURU SATELLITE OFFICE, 10 MARCH 2022.

- **Kavango West Region Governor: Hon. Sirkka Ausiku**
- **Mayor of Nkurenkuru, Your Worship Mr Jafet Markus Muti**
- **Local Authority Councillors present**
- **Chairperson of the Kavango West Regional Council Management Committee: Mr. Joseph Sikongo**
- **Members of the Management Committee of the Town and Regional Councils present**
- **Regional Councillors present**
- **Chief Executive Officer of the Nkurenkuru Town Council: Mr. Sindimba Peter Sikongo**
- **Regional Commander of NAMPOL: Mr. Josephat Abel**
- **Health Regional Director: Ms. Fansiska Hamutenya**
- **Distinguished Stakeholders**
- **Fellow Trustees and Management**
- **Members of the Media**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good morning. I am elated that you could join us this morning to celebrate the opening of the new GIPF satellite office in what is known as the smallest but beautiful town in Namibia, Nkurenkuru. The beaming town of Nkurenkuru is full of potential and is strategically situated on the south-western banks of the Kavango River, which guarantee any traveller the best scenery to indulge in. You are certainly blessed to witness this scenery daily. Allow me to extend a warm welcome to all our guests who have travelled long distances to be with us at this auspicious occasion. I am indeed very honoured to address you on behalf of the GIPF Board, Management and entire staff.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sure you are all wondering why we chose Nkurenkuru the capital of the Kavango West Region to be home to one of our regional satellite offices? In an effort to attain our goal of being member centric, we

made a conscious decision to increase our national footprint to ensure our active members as well as annuitants in this beautiful town and region can access our services conveniently without travelling daunting kilometres of which the nearest GIPF office is 140 kilometres away in Rundu. Additionally, the Fund recently conducted a research study to identify where the members are located which advised this decision.

Our new Nkurenkuru office is equipped to offer the following services:

- Pension enquiries
- Pension advice
- Biometric registration and verification
- Benefit and Income statements
- Submission of supporting documents

The office will be operated by capable client service consultants two weeks per month, starting today. Communication of operational dates will always be communicated to the public. Our office hours will be between 08:00 am to 16:30 pm. We will however be closed during lunch, weekends and on public holidays.

Additionally, GIPF has invested approximately N\$24.5 million in Kavango West, and specifically in Nkurenkuru. As part of the GIPF's shared value creation strategy, the Fund's investment has made the following social economic impact highlighted below;

- Renewable Microfinance loans (Lima Power, Group Micro enterprises, Solar power) valued at N\$13m.
- Housing Financing – N\$11.5million.

The GIPF's Board and Management's commitment to relentlessly improve the Funds administrative capacity is undisputed, as all our efforts are driven towards improving efficiencies and effectiveness in the area of service delivery. With a mission to safeguard and grow the Fund for the benefit of its members, GIPF remains true to it's mandate of being member centric. We are governed by four (4) Strategic Pillars namely:

- Sustainability: The sustainability of The Fund is of paramount importance in order to ensure longevity and create lasting socio-economic impact.
- Excellent Service: The Fund strives to deliver positive and professional interactions with our members and stakeholders in a manner that is right, fast and humane.

- Outcomes Based Governance: The Fund will institutionalize a governance culture that strives to achieve the true and intended outcomes of good governance principles and practices.
- Employer of Choice: The Fund takes pride in fostering an ideal working environment for skilled, engaged professionals.

The GIPF strives to remain committed to achieving service excellence and thus has taken strides through innovation. In 2019, the Fund implemented an ethics management programme. This programme was designed in line with GIPF's philosophy of zero tolerance towards unlawful conduct, or any form of dishonesty, fraud, theft and corruption. In seeking to live up to this philosophy, the Fund has developed a Whistle Blower Policy which is intended to provide an enabling environment for GIPF employees and other stakeholders to blow the whistle safely and anonymously, without fear of reprisal.

The Board of trustees however recognizes that, the key to creating an environment that uproots corruption, fraud, or other illegal conduct, is through providing a safe avenue for its stakeholders to report unethical behaviour. It is therefore one of the key initiatives of the Board of Trustees during 2022/2023 financial year to roll-out the whistle blowing platform, where all our stakeholders will be able to access an online application to report unethical behaviour. The application is called The GIPF Ethics Helpdesk and will offer various methods to our stakeholders to blow the whistle, such as by using an anonymous WhatsApp line, completing an online form, speaking to an artificial intelligence robot or speaking to an agent (an actual person). Through this platform (The GIPF Ethics Helpdesk), a whistle blower will also be able to receive periodic updates on the progress of the report made by using a unique reference number.

We believe that introducing such a platform is essential to encourage our stakeholders to make good faith reports of suspected improper conduct; and will enhance a culture of zero-tolerance towards unlawful and unethical conduct, and ultimately enhance the ethical climate in the Fund.

Honourable Governor, Your Worship the Mayor, dear stakeholders, as Chairperson of the Fund I find great joy in witnessing the opening of this satellite office, as it's the first opening I'm attending in my role as Chairperson. I am pleased to announce that this is indeed the beginning of three (3) office openings. Tomorrow, 11 March 2022 the Fund will be opening another satellite office in Grootfontein and the last one on the 28 March 2022 in Opuwo.

The Opening this morning is a symbol of bringing to fruition our commitment to expanding our footprint and bringing services closer to our members. To further augment our efforts, we have also introduced an outreach programme using our Pension on Wheels Mobile Van and Truck to reach our members especially those residing in the remote areas of Namibia. In fact, the Fund recently embarked on an outreach program in the Kunene and Otjozondjupa region since 28 February to 12 March 2022. This initiative has proven to be very successful as we all know the vastness of our landscape.

If we are to build lasting confidence in our members and stakeholders, we need to address the challenges they face such as access to services at their convenience and in the areas they reside. Our goal is therefore geared towards understanding the priorities and needs of our members.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Fund currently has over 50 000 annuitants ranging from children annuitants, spouses, retirees and members on disability who reside both in Namibia and outside the borders of Namibia who receive monthly annuity payments from the GIPF. While the GIPF has suspended the biometrics verification due to Covid-19 pandemic, I would like to stress that the Fund has and will continue to pay annuitants monthly benefits.

I am excited to share that GIPF has further undertaken to implement a new and modern biometrics enrolment and verification solution for its various annuitants. The new Biometrics Solution will have capabilities to provide enrolment and verification services on different devices and platforms. This will enable our members to verify remotely in the comfort of their homes, without having to physically come to GIPF offices who at times travel very long distances just for verification. With the easing of Covid-19 protocols the Fund aims to roll out the new solution in the new financial year from April 2022. Enrolment dates will be communicated on various media platforms.

Director of Ceremonies let me conclude by thanking and congratulating all those who have worked so hard in contributing to the inauguration of this new office. I want to extend my gratitude to fellow trustees and management of the GIPF for their sustained efforts to enable the Fund to fulfil its mandate.

To our valued members and stakeholders, remember that your needs will always receive our highest priority.

On that note, may I wish all colleagues a very pleasant working environment.
I further wish you all good health and every success.

I thank you