



## GOVERNOR REACHES OUT TO KAVANGO EAST

The Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Mr. lipumbu Shiimi recently concluded a tour of the Kavango regions as part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan of the Bank that seeks to promote strong relations and mutual cooperation with the Bank's valued stakeholders.

As an accountable institution deriving its integral mandate from the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, the Bank is duty-bound to engage with stakeholders in order to facilitate a better understanding of the operations and actions of the Bank. Furthermore, in support of its mandate in relation to the economy, the Bank from time to time, consults extensively with targeted stakeholders at various levels to gain a better appreciation for the prevailing economic conditions and prospects.

With this in mind, the Governor, accompanied by Dr. Emma Haiyambo, Director of Strategic Communications and Financial Sector Development and Mr. Kazembire Zemburuka, responsible for Corporate Communications undertook a visit to the Kavango regions.

The first stop was Kavango East, where the Governor, paid a courtesy call on the Regional Governor, Hon. Dr. Samuel Mbambo at his offices in Rundu. The two leaders exchanged candid views on the success of *Operation Werengendje*, a project spearheaded by the Regional Governor to promote food security in his region. Dr. Mbambo bemoaned the fact that the region relies on central government to provide food to residents during times of drought

while households in his region are in an enviable position to produce food on a subsistence basis for themselves. The surplus can feed other parts of the country, he said matter-of-factly. Dr. Mbambo promised that *Operation Werengendje* will change these state of affairs.

On his part, Mr. Shiimi congratulated the regional leadership for taking this first step towards self-reliance, adding that the region has vast potential for agricultural and agro-processing activities that needs to be fully exploited for the enhancement of socioeconomic conditions in the region.

On the same day, the Bank Governor addressed a Stakeholder Engagement Event at Omashare Lodge, where a group of regional and town councilors, political party representatives, business and community leaders had gathered for a working lunch. Mr. Shiimi facilitated a discussion on the operations of the Bank and the economic outlook.

The Governor informed stakeholders that although economic growth slowed to 1.1% in 2016, conditions for 2017 looks much more promising.

The Bank forecasts improved growth of 1.5% for 2017 and 3.6% for 2018 driven by a recovery in the agricultural sector due to good rains. The mining industry is also on an upswing as a result of better prospects for commodity prices. However, risks to this outlook remain low mineral prices for uranium, slow growth amongst Namibia's major trading partners namely Angola and South Africa and uncertainty about rainfall beyond 2017.

After the presentation, a robust discussion on economic conditions in the region as well as the general state of government finances followed.

The stakeholders thanked the Governor for the frank discussions that helped them understand the dynamics of the Namibian economy.

