

**FESP Conference on “Social Protection for the Informal Economy in Namibia”, 07-08 November 2018, Windhoek**

Over the past few years, social protection has been debated in many places the world, including Namibia. Discussions have mainly focused on what level of protection should be granted, who should benefit, who should pay and who should manage it amongst others. Current researches and evidence show that the majority of workers are not having adequate social protection, while many others, especially in the Informal Economy and other vulnerable sectors, are deprived of Social Protection “benefits.”

The informal economy is rising rapidly alongside the formal economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, giving rise to the existence of a dual economy. This is due to many contributing factors e.g. contracting economies, rising population, insufficient budget allocations and rising public debts, poor political decision-making, instability, etc. In majority African countries, including Namibia, operational social protection systems are designed for those in formal employment and only a few operators in the informal economy have access to the social protection programmes/schemes/services.

It is against this background that the Forum for Experts on Social Protection in Namibia (FESP) in partnership with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Southern African Social Protection Experts Network (SASPEN), International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Namibia (UNAM) organized the Conference on “Social Protection for the Informal Economy in Namibia”.

The conference was opened by a statement of Hon. Bishop Dr. Zephania Kameeta, Minister of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, and the key opening address of HE Dr. Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia. At this conference, experts from the co-organizing institutions as well as other speakers shared their thoughts on Social Protection for the informal sector, including members of Informal Sector organizations. It closed with a panel discussion on the “Way forward and Recommendations”.