

MEDIA RELEASE

AGRIBANK AND GIZ SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO COOPERATE ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF COMMUNAL AND EMERGING FARMERS

12 September 2019

In line with their developmental mandates and cognisant of the contribution that the broader Agri-food sector makes in improving nutrition and food security, creating jobs and reducing poverty, the Agricultural Bank of Namibia (Agribank) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to inter alia:

- (i) conduct research activities in agriculture and related sectors to support informed strategic interventions by Agribank as well as Government, its agencies, private investors and development partners with a view to achieving sustainable growth in the sector and find future farming models in Namibia
- (ii) cooperate in capacity building of communal farmers, training of trainers in the Farmer Business School (FBS) concept and share information on lessons learnt through advisory services.

The bank will oversee the implementation of the desk study and gap analysis as well as the socio-economic and productivity survey, training farmers in technical skills enhancement and agricultural business development, as well as participate in the roll-out of the GIZ Farmer Business School (FBS) concept in Namibia. On the other hand, GIZ will provide financial support towards the implementation of the MoU.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Agribank chief executive officer, Sakaria Nghikembua, noted that Namibia requires “a modern agricultural sector that can address unemployment, nutrition security and poverty through growth”. Agribank plays a transformational role in agriculture through the provision of affordable financial solutions to farmers and support services through training and mentorship programmes. “As a bank, we continue to advocate for the adoption of climate resilient farming methods and on-farm diversification”.

According to Nghikembua, farmers need to adopt technology and new methods in their farming practices to make farming sustainable. The research to be conducted will assist in identifying the needs of farmers so that concrete, evidence-based solutions can be implemented.

On his part, the GIZ Country Director, Dr. Thomas Kirsch emphasised that as a development partner, GIZ is committed to providing support services earmarked to

improve production efficiency and increase on-farm income and improve livelihoods and nutrition.

Our two institutions have a long history of collaborating since 2010 with the implementation of the Farmers' Support Project (FSP) to the time of establishment of the Agri Advisory Services Division (AASD) within Agribank to capacitate farmers in Namibia.

Dr. Kirsch further noted that Agribank, as a provider of rural credit, plays a very crucial role in positioning the whole Agri-food sector for sustainability.

Both institutions have been discussing deepening collaboration and networking on issues related to the broader Agri-Food sector since early 2017, and signing of this MoU is testimony to progress achieved. GIZ find such collaboration and network very important in view of broadening our support to the Agri-sector with the commitment of EUR 20,000, towards a desk study with the aim of:

- providing an in-depth understanding of the current land scape and dynamics of the overall primary agriculture production (crops, cattle, game, sheep and goats);
- reviewing the level and system of agricultural financing in Namibia; and
- identifying key research gaps and recommend areas for further research to build a solid baseline for farming productivity in Namibia.

In addition, another amount of EUR 120,000 will be allocated to AASD to train farmers and take part in the roll-out of GIZ's Farmer Business Schools (FBS)' concept.



Sakaria Nghikembua, Chief Executive Officer Agribank and Dr Thomas Kirsch, GIZ Country Director



Representatives from Agribank and GIZ at the signing ceremony

End

Issued by:

Regan Mwazi

Executive: Marketing & Customer Strategy

**For enquiries, kindly contact the Marketing and Customer Strategy Department
at:**

Tel.: 061 2074279 / Fax: 061 2074206