

Farmers' Voice by Mr. Sylvanus Naunyango
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Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU)

31 July 2025

Groundbreaking Ceremony, Etunda, Omusati Region

Honourable Minister, Honourable Governor, Honourable Councilors, National Planning Commission Director General and his representatives, European Union Representatives, Distinguished Guests, Esteemed Leaders, Fellow Farmers, and Valued Stakeholders,

It is an honour and privilege to stand before you today and deliver the voice of farmers on behalf of the Namibia National Farmers Union (NNFU). I would like to apologize for the absence of our NNFU President due to clashing scheduled hence entrusted me to provide this remark on behalf.

This development marks a significant milestone, one that has been long awaited by farmers in the Northern Communal Areas (NCAs). For many years, communal farmers have faced numerous challenges, particularly with regard to limited market access, poor animal quality and insufficient throughput for abattoir operators. This is not because there is no cattle or livestock at large but the value chain is not well developed. The Northern Communal Areas (NCAs) houses more than half of cattle population (1.7 million as per latest census statistics) of this country, however the contribution to formal number of slaughterable cattle per annum is very

low. Although Meatco NCA did better last financial year, they only slaughtered about 9000 cattle. This shows the offtake percentage is very low, which is less than 5 percent for that matter while average commercial offtake percent should be around 25% at least. Farmers are trying their best but limited by enabling environment and infrastructure.

Today's ground-breaking gives us renewed hope, that this feedlot will not only serve as a critical market linkage point, but also as a demonstration facility where communal farmers can learn, adapt, and adopt the feedlotting system. We imagine this infrastructure not just as a place to fatten cattle, but as a centre of knowledge, empowerment, and economic inclusion. We will like to request the Ministry of Agriculture to open up this place.

By sourcing cattle directly from communal areas, this feedlot can stimulate local market, enhance the quality and value of our livestock, and most importantly, help put real money into the pockets of our farmers. That is the kind of transformation our communities have been yearning for tangible benefits that uplift rural livelihoods and drive sustainable development.

We therefore appeal to all implementing ministries and contractor to expedite the construction process and ensure this facility becomes operational as soon as possible.

We would like to use this opportunity to remind the Ministry of Agriculture to speed up the NCA equalization fund. NCA equalization is the conduit and enabler for these good works the ministry is doing. Let this be the

beginning of many more such inclusive developments that truly unlock the potential of Namibia's communal farming sector.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Ministry of Agriculture and National Planning Commission for the good work. The same two ministries have handed trucks for the NCA about two weeks ago and now the groundbreaking for the feedlot. We are noticing and appreciating all these. As farmers, we would like to assure you that we will bring our part to contribute to the food security of this country. Equally important, we cannot thank enough EU for funding this. We would like to see more funding for tangible national projects like this. I thank all the regional leaderships for supporting farmers and providing enabling environment.

I Thank you all.