



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Date: Thursday, 16 November 2023

To: All Members of the Media

'Empowering the San: Legal Capacity building for Human Rights Access' project launched

WINDHOEK – The Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) is pleased to announce the launch of a new EU-funded project 'Empowering the San: Legal Capacity building for Human Rights Access' on 15 November 2023. The project is funded by the European Union with EUR 330,000 (approximately 6.5 million Namibian Dollars), and implemented by the Legal Assistance Centre, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders. The project will run for a period of three years.

The EU Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Ana-Beatriz Martins in her keynote address emphasized the importance of the project and rationale for support. She said, "San people face profound challenges, ranging from land dispossession, discrimination, socio-economic marginalization, loss of cultural heritage, limited access to education, health disparities and environmental pressures." On the project objective, Ambassador Martins explained by saying, "The main aim of the project is to improve the living conditions of the San by fostering an environment that seeks to empower them to access their rights through their own volition." The project will also improve access to basic constitutional and international human rights for San communities.

Ms. Corinna van Wyk, LAC's Project Coordinator and implementing partner for this project, had the following to say, "We seek to empower the San communities with the necessary tools to navigate this complex legal landscape to their advantage." She added, "Central to our approach is the training of paralegals, and individuals within the San communities who will become beacons of hope and agents of change."

The project will deliver activities aimed at increasing awareness and strengthen advocacy capabilities, with specific emphasis on combatting all forms of discrimination on any ground. Another pivotal dimension involves amplifying opportunities for engagement, particularly in

decision-making processes, for San people and vulnerable communities. Lastly, an integral component of this collective effort involves bolstering regulatory capacities and implementing measures that address social services, emphasizing the provision of quality and affordable health services, as well as education.

Concluding, EU Ambassador to Namibia highlighted that, “this project will contribute to improved equality and respect as well as engagement of San communities in spheres of public and private life, and ultimately towards more equality in Namibia.”

-ENDS-

Media Inquiries:

Ms. Ruth Murangi, Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), Tel: +264 (0) 61 22 33 56, Email: rmurangi@lac.org.na

Mr. Twaku Kayofa, Press Officer, EU Delegation to Namibia, Cell: +264 (0) 811 43 8381, Email: Twaku.Kayofa@eeas.europa.eu