

ABSTRACT

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Child Poverty in Namibia: Contexts, Structures and Strategies for ELCRN in Expanding Financial Support

Child poverty in Namibia is still prevalent in a country that is classified as an upper middle income country. This research entails looking at child poverty in Namibia especially in terms of the context, structure and strategies the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN). The research is based on the following assumptions that:

- Current social grants for children paid by the MGECW are not adequate
- The Church is a social conscience and therefore has a responsibility to advocate for the restoration of human dignity and basic rights for children.
- If a universal child grant is developed or introduced, it will reduce child poverty in Namibia

The ELCRN has a role to play in the alleviation of child poverty in Namibia. In order to determine this role and find new strategies, different stakeholders were considered and identified that is currently working in assisting poor and vulnerable children in Namibia. These include the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, UNICEF Namibia, Basic Income Grant Coalition, ELCRN leadership and families currently receiving child grants. The voice of the Church is quiet while Namibian children are suffering and deprived of their basic needs. A paradigm shift is thus needed in order to revitalise the advocacy role of the EELCRN as well as finding ways to expand financial support to children. In order to expand ELCRN financial support to children, an action plan for introducing "*BIG for Children*" – a universal child grant, concludes the research and emphasises the way forward for the ELCRN to become an active player in the alleviation of child poverty in Namibia.