



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE (MoEAC)

BUDGET MOTIVATION STATEMENT

VOTE 10

FY2021/22

TABLED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

BY

HONOURABLE Ester Anna Nghipondoka, MP

Minister of Education, Arts and Culture

22 April 2020

Honorable chairperson of the whole house committee,

Honorable Members of the National Assembly

1. I feel honoured and privileged to once again rise today to present to you the budget of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture for the 2021/22 financial year.
2. I do this against the backdrop of a very difficult year both for the education sector and the Nation at large. The year 2020, was a test of our pliability and tenacity as the education sector.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic placed a huge burden on the Ministry as it exposed some gaps in our education system. Nevertheless, the pandemic has presented us an opportunity for self-introspection resulting in us exploring and identifying resilient interventions necessary to for the fulfilment of our mandate.
4. Such interventions saw us being able to have our learners attend school as per the planned academic calendar year for 2020, even though overall our learners lost almost half of their school year out of the 198 days that they were supposed to attend school.
5. *In order to compensate for the lost time, the Ministry developed the Resilience Plan (2021 -2023) focusing on learning outcomes that may have been missed when schools were closed in 2020. This among other involved–*
 - 5.1 *the streamlining of the curriculum with a focus on delivering core competencies for learners to progress to the next Grade(s).*
 - 5.2 *the development of syllabus overviews per subject in every grade in line with the rationalised curriculum.*
 - 5.3 *in some schools where infrastructure permitted, learners attended face-to-face teaching and learning using either a cohort system, shifts or alternating days, in order to comply with COVID-19 regulations.*
 - 5.4 *introduction of blended learning (using both online and face-to-face teaching).*
 - 5.5 *development and distribution of study materials for learners via print media which ensure that parents kept the learners busy.*
 - 5.6 *down-ward revision of the promotion requirements so as to ensure that there was no excessive bottleneck of learners repeating their Grades,*

Honorable chairperson of the whole house committee,

6. Targeted funding towards the construction and renovation of education infrastructure has gone a long way in addressing the infrastructure challenges of the Ministry.

The Ministry has utilized the **N\$800 million** budget allocation for the COVID-19 Infrastructure Development to construct amongst others;

- One Hundred and forty Two (142) new ablution facilities in all regions, while Two Hundred and Sixteen (216) ablution facilities were renovated;
- The Ministry was able to renovate Sixty Nine (69) Hostel Blocks and 35 new hostel blocks were constructed;
- A total of One Hundred Thirty Eight (138) schools were connected to the water supply system;
- Funding through the African Development Bank (AfDB) Loan to the Education Sector amounting to **N\$1 billion** has seen the ongoing successful construction and renovation of 27 education physical facilities; which are 22 schools, 3 Vocational Training Centers, one Veterinary Hospital and one national Library;
- The Ministry through its annual development budget of N\$295 million has also successfully awarded new projects while ongoing renovations were done at schools and other educational physical facilities.

Honorable chairperson of the whole house committee,

7. Access to Library Resources for research purposes to supplement class teaching is vital.

To this end the Ministry has ensured the continuous capacitation of schools and public libraries to enable the learners and community members at large to access our library services both online and physically through visits to these facilities.

A total number of **eight thousand four hundred and three (8,403)** learners from Primary to Junior Secondary Schools participated in reading programs organized at the School Libraries. This is in line with our drive to create and strengthen the reading habits in children from an early age.

8. The National Literacy Programme of the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture which started in 1992 continues to bear fruits with, **Eight Hundred and Forty-Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Seventy-Seven (843 977)** adults and out-of-school youth having benefited from this initiative since then.

9. Important to mention is also the Family Literacy Programme (FLP) that supports children's educational progress through their parents, targeting families in disadvantaged communities. A total of **One Thousand and Seventeen (1 017)** centres across Namibia were established in these communities and rural schools. This was aimed primarily to equip parents and care givers of grade 1 children with the knowledge and skills needed to support their children's learning at home, focusing on the transition between pre-primary education and primary school, thus cementing the notion of parents being their children's first teachers.

To date, a total number of **Two Hundred and Forty-One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Eighty-Eight (241 888)** parents and care givers of Grade 1 children have benefitted from this initiative since its launch in 2005.

10. In addition to formal basic education efforts, the potential of Arts and Culture needs to be fully unlocked. To this end, the Ministry has not only managed to institutionalise Arts in the curriculum but also through permanently employing and capacitating Arts Extension Officers in all regions.
11. The Ministry also plans to expand access and improve facilities of the College of the Arts in order to unlock and harness the full potential of Arts and Culture for socio economic development.

Budget Allocation to the Ministry for 2021/22 Financial year

Honorable chairperson of the whole house committee,

Honorable members,

Allow me to now highlight the budget allocation to the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture for the 2021/22 financial year and key business priority areas for implementation during the year.

12. The budget allocation to the Ministry of **Thirteen Billion, Seven Hundred Seventy-Seven Million, Eight Hundred and Fifteen Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$13 777 815 000)** is **5.1 percent** lower than the allocation in 2020/21 financial year. Despite the reduction, Basic Education spending in Namibia commendably remains high by international standards, averaging 20% of the National Budget over the past 7 years. This is in line with the Dakar threshold by African Governments to commit at least **20% of their budgets**

towards education. We therefore would like to applaud the Ministry of Finance and the National Planning Commission (NPC) for enabling this noble achievement as it signifies the Government's total commitment to prioritizing the education of the Namibian child.

13. The Operational Budget allocation at **Thirteen Billion, Three Hundred Seventy Four Million, Nine Hundred and Eighty Five Thousand Namibia dollar (N\$13 374 985 000)** takes up a whopping **97 percent** of the Ministry's budget. The Development Budget is thus a mere **3 percent** at **Four Hundred and Two Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Thousand Namibia dollar (N\$402 830 000)** of the total budget allocation to the Ministry.

Honorable chairperson of the whole house committee, despite receiving the largest portion of the National Budget, the Ministry is concerned about the education outcomes which are not congruent to the level of investment being ploughed in the Basic Education Sector. The Ministry is continuously doing thorough analysis of the possible wastages in order to ensure that the funds allocated to the ministry serve a purpose of improving on the quality of actual teaching and learning processes.

14. To continuously address this disequilibrium, the Ministry has been unpacking the high cost drivers and arrive at mitigating approaches.

14.1. Expenditure on hostels

The textbooks and material supplies for quality teaching and learning received N\$35 million in 2020/21 financial year. On the contrary, the catering for government school hostels would in this financial year (2021/22) amount to N\$ 582 million while only serving 65,000 learners in hostels (Including institutional workers who are housed in hostels)

These 65,000 learners that are costing the Ministry more than half a billion to feed makes up only eight percent (8%) of the total learner population of **eight hundred thousand (800,000)**. This in itself depicts a gross in-equity and needs our joint advocacy in considering the implementation of cost recovery measures on food and nutrition of school going children, meaning that parents and guardians may be required to increase their current minimum contributions for the upkeep of their children in hostels as well as towards the hostel development fund. To achieve this, we are embarking

upon hostel reclassification which will inform the determination of hostel fees and hostel development fund adjustments.

14.2. The Wage bill

Eighty-Two percent (82%) percent of the total budget of the Ministry goes to employment cost and accounts for the largest expenditure line across all education levels and tends to crowd out other spending. This is understandably so because the Ministry employs about 40% of the public servants at the current staff establishment of **forty-three thousand, five hundred and seventeen (43,517)** posts. The staff complement of the Ministry as at 31 March 2021 was **thirty-eight thousand, seven hundred and forty-two (38, 742)**, out of which **twenty-six thousand, six hundred and forty (26, 640)** are teaching staff and **twelve thousand, one hundred and two (12, 102)** are unified staff.

The Ministry's focus for 2021/22 financial year will be to strengthen efficiencies in the payroll administration through;

- Monthly pay-sheet controls and conducting annual payroll verification exercises. This will eliminate wasteful expenditure;
- Freezing of none-critical posts on the unified structure of the Ministry: The Ministry has put a moratorium on filling of non-critical posts on the unified structure. This initiative has started already during the 2018/19 financial year and the number of posts mainly on the unified structure of the Ministry has reduced.

14.3. Small non economical schools

The Ministry has observed the existence of small schools with less than 100 learners in some regions with a full staff compliment of a Principal, Head of Department and teachers. Regional Directorates have commenced with the transfer of teachers from these schools, while considering the construction of community hostels in order to consolidate these schools.

14.4. Utilities cost

The payment of utilities has been the largest cost driver of the Ministry. To this end the Ministry has resolved to accelerate its initiative to install pre-paid water and electricity meters at schools and hostels in this financial year. The piloting of this initiative at some schools in various regions has seen a significant reduction of utility expenses after the installation of pre-paid meters. For example, two schools in Otjozondjupa namely, Tsumkwe Primary and Tsumkwe Secondary schools were paying a combined total of about **N\$828 000** per annum and this has since been reduced to a combined total

of about **N\$140,000** per year for both schools after installation of prepaid electricity meters. In Omusati and Ohangwena regions, we have managed to install pre-paid meters at **84 and 91** schools, respectively and they have since also been recording significant cost reductions on electricity charges.

14.5. Renovation and construction

Furthermore, the Ministry has noted that the high expenditure on renovation or construction of new education physical facilities is partly due to the high portion paid for consultancy services at 15% - 17% of the total project cost, coupled with poor capital projects management. In order to streamline our capital projects management, enhance planning and control cost and time of delivery, the Ministry in liaison with key stakeholders (i.e. Department of Works at the Ministry of Works and Transport) is on a pro bono basis working with Direct Design Lab (DDL), through its Friends of Education Namibia Special Initiative (FENSI), to develop an Accelerated Infrastructure Development Plan (AIDeP) that will serve as a blue print in this regard.

We believe that through the above measures, the Ministry will be able to channel more resources to the 21st century skills development and prepare our young ones better for institutions of higher learning and the world of work.

14.6. Repetition and dropouts

Repetition and drop out are threats to efficiency and effectiveness. In only one year more than 125,000 learners repeat and close to 32,000 learners drop out. This means that per annum we lose the investment gains of close to N\$ 2 billion.

- 15.** Honourable Members, as custodian of basic education, I call on our joint efforts to improve education outcomes, by ensuring that resources are availed where they can make a difference. These will include increased focus and investment in infrastructure development, connectivity, ICT deployment, teaching and learning material provision and enhanced teacher in-service training.

16. Budget Allocation per Programme

The Ministry's allocation per programme is as follows:

Programme 1: Pre-primary Education – Four Hundred and Six Million, Three hundred and Fifty Three Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 406, 353, 000).

Programme 2: Primary Education – Eight Billion, Two Hundred Fifty Nine Million, Two Hundred and Eighty Three Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 8, 259, 283, 000).

Programme 3: Secondary Education – Three Billion, Nine Hundred Thirty Two Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Three Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 3, 932, 963, 000).

Programme 4: Information, Adult, Lifelong Learning, Arts and Culture – Four Hundred Forty Eight Million, Six Hundred and Fifty Four Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 448, 654, 000).

Programme 5: HIV/ AIDS Unit – Two Million, One Hundred and Fifty Five Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 2, 155, 000).

Programme 6: Policy Coordination and Support Services – Seven Hundred Twenty Eight Million, Four Hundred and Seven Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$ 728, 407, 000)

Having highlighted the above Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, I ask for support and approval of Vote 10 to the tune of **Thirteen Billion, Seven Hundred Seventy-Seven Million, Eight Hundred and Fifteen Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$13 777 815 000)**.

I Thank You.
