



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION

BUDGET SPEECH

FINANCIAL YEAR 2019/20

[VOTE 32]



Honourable Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, MP

Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members,

It is with distinct honor and pleasure that I rise to motivate and seek approval from this august house, for the Budget Vote 32 of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation (MHETI), for the Financial Year 2019/20.

Before delving into our Ministry's Vote and Programmes, I would like to remind us of the salient features of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation's (MHETI) mandate. The MHETI is mandated to:

- 1) Facilitate knowledge creation (Higher Education Institutions);
- 2) Drive skills development (TVET Institutions)
- 3) Promote access to tertiary education and training through equitable student funding (NSFAF);
- 4) Develop standards, maintain quality and register private tertiary institutions (NQA, NTA and NCHE);
- 5) Harness and leverage research, science, modern technology and innovation, to unleash the human potential and talent, to drive and expand the country's economic growth and competitiveness (NCRST) and
- 6) Develop policies to safeguard and ascertain the execution of the aforesaid primary functions (MHETI).

The Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation is pivotal in the production of the country's qualified workforce, for the diverse sectors of the economy. Four years ago, we were a new Ministry that needed to unpack the three pillars that anchor the Ministry. The scoping mission which was conducted in collaboration with UNESCO, made us realize many factors that underpin countries' effective Higher Education and Training Systems, a few of those we consider critical are,

1. The existence of a properly benchmarked and articulated tertiary education system;
2. Academic programs aligned to the country's development agenda;
3. Academic programs aligned to local industry's present and future needs and demands;
4. A robust funding system to make education and training accessible to deserving students, particularly, the needy;
5. A robust work based learning system; and
6. Clarify institutional mandates to avoid resource wastage through duplication.

Today, I am pleased to inform this august house that the following are notable achievements for the 2018/19 Financial Year:

1. Implementation of a comprehensive TVET Transformation and Expansion Strategy, with a 15-year implementation timeframe, is on course.

It is anticipated that trainees in the TVET system will increase from **32,000** (Thirty-two thousand) using the (2017/18 figures as baseline) to over 40000 (Forty Thousand) at the end of the NDP 5 period.

2. The Ministry's five-year Strategic Plan was revised and aligned to national priorities and currently key projects are being implemented.
3. Furthermore, we hosted - a very successful National *Innovation Conference in early February, 2019* with the Theme ***"Forging a Namibian Consensus on Innovation"***.

The Conference brought together local and international experts in the field of innovation to Namibia. Although I am not discussing the recommendations of the conference exhaustively here, suffice to say: experts were in agreement that developing and nurturing students and learners creative minds through innovation platforms, is important for the 4th Industrial Revolution. The conference also served as a platform for our local innovators from different institutions and regions to display their

inventions and products. Grassroots innovation featured as an important aspect that needs to be protected and allowed to be further developed.

I am convinced that without an effective National Innovation System, a country cannot achieve sustainable development, economic competitiveness, and neither address its own-specific challenges, properly. I therefore would like to thank all our partners and stakeholders in this regard.

4. The 4th industrial revolution, is a reality that our higher education institutions and the TVET institutions have to address and deal with, through relevant programs' development. As a country, it is increasingly becoming more important to develop and have a truly functional national innovation ecosystem. The broad recommendations of this conference will help finalize the STI Policy.
5. The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) awarded its first-ever doctoral degrees, making history in the process. Also, NUST is offering programs in cyber-security at undergraduate and post graduate levels. Through the efforts of His Excellency, President Hage Geingob, NUST will soon have a Center of Excellence in Information Technology, as a result of the Indian Government commitment.
6. Consolidation of research work is being done at the University of Namibia's (UNAM) different campuses, as they are working towards making campuses Centers of Excellence - biodiversity management, animal health, and in terms of education: pedagogy and content: school leadership, teaching strategies, indigenous knowledge in teaching physical science concepts, counselling in schools, mother-tongue instruction in schools and its implications.
7. The Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) product listing was successfully published in the Government Gazette. Genetic modification is a reality that countries have to deal with, thus the listing forms part of the process to regulate the import, and use of these materials. To enhance local capacity a Biosafety laboratory was established under the National Commission for Research, Science and Technology. Currently, various

applications are being reviewed to ensure that only GMOs and GMO products that are approved for use in Namibia are indeed the only ones in the market.

8. In an effort to ensure quality of higher education programmes, a total of **175** qualifications, of which **125** were reviewed and re-registered on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) were finalized. Additionally, 50 qualifications were registered on the NQF for the first time.
9. In the Vocational Education and Training sector, besides introduction of new relevant trades to the TVET curriculum (agriculture, fashion design that includes jewelers and leather works) exposure to National and International World Skills competition has put our trainees at another level.

Also, a total of **256** unit standards for the were finalized and are as follows:

- Eighty-Six (**86**) new unit standards were registered on the NQF in the fields of Fire Fighting and Rescue Operations and Solar Installation;
- Seventy (**70**) unit standards were re-registered on the NQF in the fields of Office Administration, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, Bricklaying and Plastering, Joinery and Cabinet Making, and Clothing Production.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members,

Allow me now to introduce Vote 32, whose total budgetary requirements for the financial year 2019/20 is **N\$3,137,381,000** (Three Billion, One-Hundred and Thirty Seven Million, Three Hundred and Eighty-One Thousand Namibia Dollars).

From this amount, **N\$ 3,111,395,000** (Three Billion, One-Hundred and Eleven Million, Three Hundred and Ninety-Five Thousand Namibia Dollars) is earmarked for operational activities, while **N\$25,986,000** (Twenty Five Million Nine Hundred and Eighty Six Thousand Namibia Dollars) is earmarked for development projects.

This requested funding will support the Higher Education Sector Programmes as follows:

PROGRAMME 1: COORDINATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

This programme provides general administrative support and policy direction to all programmes of the Ministry, as well as operational expenses for the Office of the Minister.

The key challenge under this programme is the non-alignment to contemporary developments in institutional governance, and thus laws and policies governing the operations of the Public Enterprises under this Ministry, such as: Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF), Namibia Training Authority (NTA), National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA), and National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) and others, should be revisited.

An amount of **N\$39,407,000** (Thirty-Nine Million, Four Hundred and Seven Thousand Namibia Dollars) is requested for this programme.

PROGRAMME 2: HIGHER EDUCATION

The programme focuses on the delivery of higher education in pursuit of a knowledge-based society. Its purpose is to provide mid-and high level skilled human resources.

Our target is to increase the number of enrolments on all diploma, degree and postgraduate levels in key human resource categories such as Agriculture, Natural Resources and Tourism, Education and Teacher Training, Veterinary Medicine, Engineering and Cyber-security, Artificial Intelligence and Basic Science and Geology) from **61%** in 2018/19 – **70%** by 2021/22.

A second element is the Tuition Fees Adjustment Policy that is central to the adjustment of the tuition fees so as to ensure access to higher education as well as to ensure fair sharing of the burden of covering higher education costs between the Government, and the parents and/or students is maintained.

The Tuition Policy is premised on the principles of equity and affordability, thus the total tuition should not exceed **25%** of GDP per capita in a given year.

In light of the ongoing demands by students to abolish tertiary education fees, the Tuition Fee Adjustment Policy is pivotal in determining what is a fair distribution of responsibility in paying for tertiary education.

The tuition policy will assist the Ministry to keep the cost of tertiary education at an affordable level.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members,

The main challenge in higher education is that the funding allocation to this sector has not been commensurate with the significant growth of programme offerings, student numbers and infrastructural expansion needed at higher education institutions. In fact, this year marks a drop of over **N\$ 700,000,000** (Seven Hundred Million Namibia Dollars) in the allocation to tertiary education.

This might impact negatively on the numerous critical skills development initiatives courses such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Veterinary Sciences, Engineering, Land studies, Logistics and Computing that are key drivers for Namibia socio-economic development and stability.

With a reduction of study opportunities in the region, in particularly in South Africa, Namibia has to develop programmes in areas critical to her development, and this will require investment in infrastructure, laboratories,

research facilities and the increase in the production of highly qualified human resources.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee
Honourable Members,

The programme requires **N\$2,601,574,000** (Two-Billion, Six-Hundred and One Million, Five Hundred and Seventy-Four Thousand Namibia Dollars) for 2019/20 and is broken down amongst the implementing institutions and coordinating agencies as follows:

- a. **National Council for Higher Education's** allocation will be **N\$2,600,000** (Two Million Six Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars) for Capital Development and no allocation for Operational Expenses.
- b. **University of Namibia's** total allocation will be **N\$911,909,000** (Nine-Hundred and Eleven Million, Nine Hundred and Nine Thousand Namibia Dollars).
- c. **Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST)'s** allocation will be **N\$500,000,000** (Five Hundred Million Namibia Dollars)
- d. **Namibia Qualifications Authority's:** allocation will be **N\$30,303,000** (Thirty Million, Three hundred and Three Thousand Namibia Dollars) for operational expenses;
- e. **Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund's** allocation will be **N\$1,138,360,000** (One Billion, One-Hundred and Thirty-Eight Million, Three Hundred and Sixty Thousand Namibia Dollars). This allocation is N\$ 500 000 000 (Five Hundred Million) below last year's allocation.
- f. **Namibia National Student Organisation's** allocation will be **N\$500,000** (Five Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars).

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members,

The following is a summary of activities and major challenges for each of the institutions.

National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

The publication on Namibia Higher Education Statistical Yearbook (NHESY) provides valuable information on the comparison and structure of the higher education system. It is a useful resource for researchers, policy makers and all stakeholders in education.

Main challenges that continue to hamper success in Namibia's higher education system include:

- Under-preparedness of students to undertake qualifications in the Science, Technological, Engineering and Mathematical fields.
- Lack of funds to attract and retain academic staff; meet increasing infrastructural costs; fund the necessary research and innovation hubs, and enhance marketing and institutional culture.
- Although the average lecturer to student ratio may seem manageable (an average of 1:17 in public institutions and 1:16 in private institutions), actual situations in public institutions are worse in some cases, to the extent that in some classes there are more than 200 students per lecturer. This situation is compounded by the growing student population and limited facilities to provide conducive academic learning activities.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members,

Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST)

The University successfully placed **1,230** students in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programmes, in addition to signing an unprecedented number of WIL agreements during the past year. According to the 2017 graduate survey report prepared by the National Council for Higher Education, the employment situation of graduates in Namibia, three to four years after completion of their studies, is impressive. Four out of five (**81%**) graduates were employed and an additional **2%** were self-employed while only **17%** were not employed.

University of Namibia (UNAM)

A higher percentage of students were in public Higher Education Institutions (**71.9%**). Almost half (**46.2%**) of all students were enrolled at UNAM. The extent of higher education access is generally measured by Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee
Honourable Members,

Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA).

In its statutory mandate as a forum for all matters pertaining to qualifications, the NQA serves as the sector regulator for training and education in Namibia – and tasked with the monumental responsibility of safeguarding the integrity of the country's education system through the process of quality assurance.

Quality assurance is at the core of developing a responsive education system that harnesses the full potential of learners, and to ensure that programmes are relevant in addressing the needs of the labour market and the country at large.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee
Honourable Members,

Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF)

The main purpose of the Fund is to assist with the development of Namibia's Human Capital by providing Namibian citizens financial assistance to further their careers through approved higher educational institutions. Such financial assistance is provided through loans, grants and scholarships.

The Fund is equally mandated with the responsibility of recovering loans advanced to beneficiaries upon completion of their studies and have secured employment. Recovery is pursued in order to have a revolving Fund that is sustainable in future.

The key challenges in providing financial support to needy students include the fact that the total need for student funding at all levels of post-secondary education and training remains vast and outstrips the available means provided in the national budget. Furthermore, student financial assistance remains a challenge in many instances, as partial funding, which is to be topped up by parents and families, remains unattended to. For many students the inadequate financial support means the end of their studies.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members

PROGRAMME 3: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) is the national port of call for TVET skills. Thus, the NTA has adopted a five-year rolling Strategic Plan that is aligned to National Development Plan 5 (NDP5); Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP); Strategy Plan of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation (MHETI); UNESCO Policy Review on TVET, Higher Education and Innovation; as well as AU Agenda 63 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The following challenges are currently encountered:

- Limited access for potential trainees to TVET provision;
- Lack of uniformity/consistency of curricula and standards across VTCs and training institutions;
- Relatively poor completion rates within the CBET system;
- Lack of mechanisms to attract and retain quality skills (incl. trainers/instructors);
- Poor and outdated quality of infrastructure at some VTCs; and
- Lack of job attachment opportunities for trainees.

This programme requires **N\$453,004,000** (Four Hundred and Fifty-Three Million and Four Thousand Namibia Dollars). From this figure, the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) will receive **N\$421,393,000** (Four Hundred and Twenty-One Million Three Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand Namibia Dollars) for operational and **N\$3,686,000** (Three Million Six Hundred and Eighty-Six Thousand Namibia Dollars) for development purposes.

PROGRAMME 4: RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

Our success in developing a responsive National System of Innovation will depend on how well we address challenges related to low investment in Research and Development. It was found that there is a direct correlation between investment in R&D and the level of development of states. No African Country has reached the commitment of 1% of GDP that was made by the African Union members in 1980.

Other challenges include the unavailability of centralized information system on STI related activities including the full introduction of Research and Development (R&D) Indicators; and Innovation Indicators. This is due to low level of investments, in particular research funding.

Central to science-based industrialization, there is a need to develop major scientific facilities such as national laboratories housing critical scientific equipment and research infrastructure such as high speed National Research Network.

This programme requires **N\$43,396,000** (Forty-Three Million Three Hundred and Ninety-Six Thousand Namibia Dollars) from which the National Commission of Research, Science and Technology will receive **N\$34,000,000** (Thirty-Four Million Dollars) for operations and **N\$4,700,000** (Four Million Seven Hundred Thousand Namibian Dollars) for development).

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee
Honourable Members,

In conclusion, I must say that the achievements made by our public higher education, training and research institutions are indeed significant steps towards realizing industrialization. We resolve to consolidate these achievements through harmonized policy interventions.

I now humbly request this August House to support and approve the total budget of **N\$3,137,381,000** (Three Billion, One-Hundred and Thirty Seven Million, Three Hundred and Eighty-One Thousand Namibia Dollars) for Vote 32 of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation for 2019/20 financial year.

I thank you