



Electoral Commission of Namibia

## **MOTIVATION FOR BUDGET VOTE 28**

ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF NAMIBIA

**2013/2014 FINANCIAL YEAR**

INTRODUCED BY

HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,

HON.DR. THEO BEN GURIRAB

**Honorable Deputy Speaker,**

**Honorable Members,**

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the budget for Vote 28, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) for the 2013/2014 financial year.

A total amount of N\$221,245,000.00 (**two hundred and twenty one million two hundred and forty five thousand Namibian dollars**) is being requested for consideration and approval by Parliament.

The ECN has three main programs under its budget namely (1) Administration of Elections (2) Voter Education and Information Dissemination and (3) Supervision and Support Services. The breakdown of the three programs of the Electoral Commission is as follows:

**1. Administration of Elections**

The purpose of this program is for holding of regular elections as per the Electoral Act, (Act no. 24 of 1992) as amended, to ensure good governance and the consolidation of democracy.

The major activities to be carried out under this program include (1) Registration of Voters, (2) General Elections and By-elections, (3) Computerization, Management and Maintenance of ECN Logistic, (4) Research, Human Resources and Resource Centre, (5) Legal Challenges, (6) Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Registration Kits.

**1.1 Registration of Voters**

An amount of N\$89,089,000.00 (**eighty nine million and eighty nine thousand Namibia dollars**) is being requested for the conduct of the General Registration of Voters (GRV) as provided for under Section 15 of Electoral Act, Act 24 of 1992 as amended. By law, the ECN is required to conduct the GRV every 10 years and the last one took place in 2003. Therefore, the next GRV is scheduled to take place during 2013.

**1.2 General Elections and By-elections**

An amount of N\$ 700,000.00 (**seven hundred thousand Namibia dollars**) is earmarked for General Elections and By-elections, the latter being triggered in the event of the resignation or death of a member of a Regional

Council. Based on past experience, the ECN has learned that the occurrence of such unforeseen eventualities is unpredictable in nature and the ECN must have contingency measures in place ready to conduct at least 3 By-elections during any given financial year.

### **1.3 Computerization, Management and Maintenance of ECN Logistics**

An amount of N\$ 870 000.00 (**eight hundred and seventy thousand Namibia dollars**) has been earmarked for the computerization, management and maintenance of the ECN logistics.

### **1.4 Research, Human Resources and Resource Centre**

Since the inception of the Electoral Commission in 1992, the institution has been inundated with requests from various stakeholders.

The compilation, verification and production of electoral data are obtained from various sources. Apart from general and best practice global electoral information, other often required information include votes cast per polling station, gender participation on polling day, analysis and review of the electoral data before and after elections in relation to planning, organization and personnel as well as public opinion. In order to keep pace with current and latest developments, it is imperative that the ECN continues to review and improve the Electoral law and practice by engaging legal and other experts. In order to achieve this objective, an amount of N\$ 1,450 000.00 (**one million four hundred and fifty thousand Namibia dollars**) has been allocated to Research, Human Resources and Infrastructure Development.

### **1.5 Legal Challenges**

The ECN has faced post-election legal challenges arising from electoral disputes observed during past elections.

There is absolutely no guarantee that the ECN would not encounter such challenges in the future. In the light of the above, and in order to cater for such unforeseen eventualities, an amount of N\$2 000 000 (**two million Namibia dollars**) have been allocated for legal challenges.

### **1.6 Electronic Voting Machine and Registration Kit**

An amount of N\$ 300 000.00 (**three hundred thousand Namibia Dollars**) has been allocated. The 2009 Electoral Amendment Act provides for the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM's) by the ECN. The procurement



process of the EVM have been completed and paid for in full. However, the ECN would still need to purchase consumables and other accessories necessary for the smooth operation of the EVM's and Voter Registration Kits (VRK's). Thus, the ECN must make the necessary provision for the countrywide training and implementation programs of the EVM's and VRK's.

The Commission has also started with preliminary preparatory work for next General Voters Registration process. Similarly, the Commission after consultation with stakeholders, has resolved to introduce a mobile electronic registration of voter's kit to be used for data capturing during voters registration. The most important motivation and justification for the use of an electronic system of voter's registration is efficiency, speed and accuracy of data. The Commission is confident that the introduction of an electronic system of voters' registration will go a long way in perfecting the voters register which is always a contentious issue before every election and often the reason for court cases.

## **2. Voter Education and Information Dissemination**

An amount of N\$ 46,134,000.00 (**forty six million one hundred and thirty four thousand Namibian dollars**) has been allocated for voter education. The purpose of conducting voter education and sharing of voter information is to increase citizens' level of understanding of electoral processes and ensure full and active participation in these processes.

Voter Education is imperative in order to increase participation of eligible voters in the election processes. The conducting of countrywide voter education is in line with the SADC election principles to which Namibia also subscribes.

Furthermore, the ECN has recognized the need for gender and disability mainstreaming in voter and civic education, but most importantly, to make the whole electoral process accessible to people with disabilities. At this point in time ECN cannot afford to exclude any persons from the electoral processes and it took it upon itself to take measures to design operational and communication strategies that ensure access, understanding and active participation for all.

Similarly, ECN has recognized the need for gender and disability mainstreaming in the electoral processes, hence the need to have special activities in the voter and civic education to make the whole electoral process accessible to all genders and people with disabilities.

The main activities to be carried out under this programme include (1) Voter Education Publications, Production and Publicity, (2) Regional Voter Education, (3) Research, Monitoring and Evaluation and (4) Regional Voter Education Capacity Building.

### **3. Supervision and Support Services**

The purpose of this programme is to provide administrative support to all the ECN's programmes to ensure the proper financial management, optimal utilization of the allocated resources and other administrative issues. In this regard, an amount of N\$ 70,845,000.00 (**seventy million eight hundred and forty five thousand Namibia Dollars**) has been allocated to ensure the smooth running of the day by day activities of the Electoral Commission of Namibia.

### **Conclusion**

Honorable Deputy Speaker, Honorable Members, this presentation makes a case for the activities and programs that the ECN wishes to undertake this year, I now wish to entreat this August House to approve the budget for the Electoral Commission of Namibia for the 2013/2014 financial year.

**I THANK YOU**