

Contribution to Budget Debate- 2012/2013

By: Dr. M. Amweelo

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Members of the National Assembly

Allow me to join the other Honorable members who are already congratulated Hon. Minister of Finance, comrade SaaraNandjilaKuugongelwaAmadhila, her deputy comrade CalleSchlettwein and Director General of National Planning Commission (NPC) Comrade Tom Alweendo for a job well done in the preparation of this budget. “Fiscal Sustainability and Job Creating Growth” Jointly Doing More with Less.

Cde. Speaker I would like to focus on ICT in education. In 2010 the ICT Committee visited manyschools in the regions, where we observed that many schools in our country are still not yet introduced to the usage of computers, let alone connection to internet. This has created challenges in terms of service delivery with regard to school activities.

Information and Communication technologies (ICTs) have become an integral part of everyday life for many people of the world and will continue to play an ever-increasing role in social and economic development, as the world move forward. Education should take the lead in this matter.

Therefore I would also like to call upon the schools and the Ministry of Education to speed up the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) training for teachers, in order for them to be able to use ICT equipment. It is encouraging to see teachers using ICTs and passing on these skills to their learners. Access and the usage of ICTs in Education is no longer a privilege of a few, but it should be viewed as a basic human right, especially for the digital citizen (school-going children).

The role of the teacher advisory service in supporting ICTs in schools at regional and cluster level will be enhanced. According to the SWAPO Party Election Manifesto, training institutions across the country will be encouraged and supported to increase ICT training. Teachers with

abilities in ICT will be invited to support the in-service training programmes. Access to ICT facilities in public libraries and multi-purpose youth centres will provide opportunities for teachers to encourage their learners to use the ICT facilities for project work.

The influence of education managers, teacher advisory services and inspectors on the uptake of ICT at school level cannot be underestimated. The needs of these groups will be reviewed and a programme developed to improve their skills base and ability to plan for ICT usage.

The Namibian Government has clearly and positively identified in Vision 2030 that ICT skills and competencies are regarded as core elements of living and participating in the 21st century and in the development of a dynamic. The knowledge society is now more about skills, social networks and leading people to greater economic participation. Education has a key role to play in providing these skills and competencies.

As we move towards a knowledge-based development paradigm, as stipulated in Namibia's Vision 2030 "Integrating ICT education and training into education and training system", issues of access to the local and global pool of knowledge and information become paramount.

Learning can benefit. Developing ICT as a cross-cutting theme will support the creation and distribution of knowledge to communities in a more equitable manner. In doing so, ICT will act as a tool in driving the development of knowledge and innovation, strengthening the quality and relevance of Tertiary Education and Training and providing access to information in a more integrated and comprehensive manner across the sector.

International experience shows that integrating technology effectively into learning systems is extremely complicated. It involves a thorough

analysis of educational objectives and changes, a realistic understanding of the potential of technologies, considering the pre- and co-requisites of successfully implementing ICT for education and the prospects of this process within the dynamics of educational change and reform.

Nowadays the role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), especially internet in the education sector plays an important role, especially in the process of empowering the technology into the educational activities. Education sector can be the most effective sector to anticipate and eliminate the negative impact of ICT. Technology (internet) in another side can be the most effective way to increase the student's knowledge.

Being aware of the significant role of ICT (internet) in our life, especially in the educational activities, education authorities should be wise enough in implementing the strategies to empower ICT in supporting the teaching and learning process in the classroom. ICT is not just the bloom of the educational activities, but also it will be the secondary option to improve the effective and meaningful educational process. I believe that Namibia's greatest opportunity to create employment and reduce poverty (as stated in the 4th areas nr. 16 of the Minister's budget statement) rests on the Education sector. The ICT sector has the potential to create direct and indirect job opportunities through the optimal utilization and application of ICT platforms for socio-economic advancement (SWAPO Party Manifesto 2009). In SWAPO Party Constitution stipulates that the promotion of the country's advancement in scientific knowledge, technological know-how and artistic creativity. Thus, education sector must embrace the usage of ICTs so that growth could come to our economy.

Cde. Speaker, ICT can not only improve education but can also play a role in the battle against the HIV and AIDS pandemic. It is an invaluable tool to enhance disease monitoring, drug distribution systems (for generic ARV's), training of caregivers, patient education and monitoring and facilitation of the development of support networks for people living

with HIV and AIDS and their caregivers. Comprehensive ICT strategies are required where ICT as a cross cutting tool can add real value to prevention, treatment, awareness raising and enhance access to knowledge on treatments.

I would like to call upon all stakeholders in education and ICT sectors to put efforts together so that we succeed in making Namibia an ICT hub in Southern Africa. Our collective contribution through equipment; information sharing; skills and training will make the realization of Vision 2030 possible.

Cde. Speaker let me finally focus on a few issues related to **renewable energy**. Renewable energy is energy which comes from natural resources such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, and geothermal heat, which are renewable (naturally replenished). About 16% of global final energy consumption comes from renewables, with 10% coming from traditional biomass, which is mainly used for heating, and 3.4% from hydroelectricity. New renewables (small hydro, modern biomass, wind, solar and geothermal) accounted for another 3% and are growing very rapidly. The share of renewables in electricity generation is around 19%, with 16% of global electricity coming from hydroelectricity and 3% from new renewables. Minister of Finance said I quote: "Work is progressing on the installation of a fourth unit at Ruacana power station with an increase in power generation capacity from 249 Mega Watts to 341 Mega Watts" end of the quote. I fully support this installation because it is clean energy does not emit any greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere and never polluting the environment.

Studies indicated that wind power is growing at the rate of 30% annually, with a worldwide installed capacity of 238,000 megawatts (MW) at the end of 2011, and is widely used in Europe, Asia, and the United States. At the end of 2011 the photovoltaic (PV) capacity worldwide was 67,000 MW, and PV power stations are popular in Germany and Italy. Solar thermal power stations operate in the USA and

Spain, and the largest of these is the 354 megawatt (MW) SEGS power plant in the Mojave Desert. The world's largest geothermal power installation is the Geysers in California, with a rated capacity of 750 MW. Brazil has one of the largest renewable energy programs in the world, involving production of ethanol fuel from sugarcane, and ethanol now provides 18% of the country's automotive fuel. Ethanol fuel is also widely available in the USA.

While many renewable energy projects are large-scale, renewable technologies are also suited to rural and remote areas, where energy is often crucial in human development.

Climate change concerns, coupled with high oil prices, peak oil, and increasing government support, are driving increasing renewable energy legislation, incentives and commercialization. New government spending, regulation and policies helped the industry weather the global financial crisis better than many other sectors. According to a 2011 projection by the International Energy Agency, solar power generators may produce most of the world's electricity within 50 years, dramatically reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases that harm the environment. Since Namibia has potential sunlight and wind, I strongly recommend renewable energy to be encouraged.

The other area I would like to touch briefly is regard with the Environment and Tourism which I think is very important to support the community-based natural resource management and empower communities to better manage and benefit from the natural resources and I believe TIPEEG dispensation as mentioned by the Minister in her budget statement page 20 will improve the condition of the community based natural resources to manage their wildlife and their community forests much better.

Comrade Speaker, Honourable members of the National Assembly, with these few words I fully support the Appropriation Bill. I thank you.