



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**INTRODUCTION OF VOTE 29,
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY**

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5 April 2013

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly,**

Before I introduce Vote 29 of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) to this august House, allow me to congratulate the Minister of Finance and the Director General of the National Planning Commission for the comprehensive 2013/14 pro-development and pro-poor budget.

The ICT sector plays an important role, notably by contributing to rapid technological progress, productivity and growth. The evolution of ICT in our country in recent years has transformed the nation into an increasingly interconnected network of individuals, organizations, schools and government communicating and interacting with each other through a diversity of channels, thanks to Telecom Namibia.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly,**

Allow me now to highlight our achievements during the previous financial year and motivate our budget request for the 2013/14 financial year.

During the 2012/13 financial year, Parliament endorsed a budget of **Three Hundred and Five Million, Four Hundred and Twenty-Seven Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 305,427.000)** for the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT).

As per our mandate and in line with our National Development goals and Vision 2030, MICT continues to implement its various programmes and projects to make ICT sector one of the main enabling pillars of the Namibian economy.

Programme 1: Enhance the free flow of information and to ensure that the media is accessible to all Namibians.

The Ministry continued to disseminate Cabinet Decisions to the media with the aim to inform and educate the public about the Government programmes, projects and activities as well as progress and achievements thereof.

During the period under review, 50 press releases, media releases on Cabinet Decisions and advertisements on the commemoration and celebrations of national events were disseminated to the public through the media. The Ministry further assisted government institutions to disseminate speeches, statements and media invitations to the media in our efforts to share government information with the public.

MICT in collaboration with communities inaugurated a total of 6 new Multi-Purpose Community Centers (MPCCs) in Oshana, Oshikoto and Hardap regions during the past financial year, which brings to a total of 24 MPCCs established in the country since 2007. These centers are already equipped with ICT equipment including plasma screens, computers, printers and digital cameras.

Programme 2: Improving the understanding of Government Programmes and Policies

Under this programme, the Ministry printed 3000 copies of books on the Speeches of His Excellency, President Hifikepunye Pohamba's first term in Office. The books which were printed at a cost of **Three Hundred and Fifty Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$350 000)** are available at MICT. Some of these books will be sent to state libraries and national archives while others will be sent to all the 13 regions of the country as well as to our Embassies and High Commissions around the world for free distribution.

MICT also published six (6) editions of the Namibia Review, a publication that focuses on the review of government policies, programmes and development in the country. Four (4) editions of the Government Information Bulletin and two (2) editions of the Ministry's in-house newsletter, MICT Update, were also published and distributed to the public.

Programme 3: Ensure access to Information, Education and Communication through national campaigns.

As the Honourable Members may recall, MICT was mandated by Cabinet to implement the Nationhood and National Pride campaign which was launched in

2011. The campaign is aimed to enhance the sense of nationhood and national pride in all Namibian citizens; to shun tribalism and further cultivate and consolidate peace, unity, stability, work ethics and desire to provide service delivery. It further aims to instill the spirit of belonging by guarding against acts of vandalism of public properties, violence against women and children, alcohol abuse, and to encourage the protection of our natural environment, just to mention but a few.

I am happy to report to this august House that the “Nationhood and National Pride” campaign has now been launched in all the regions countrywide, and the manual that will guide the campaign activities has been finalized.

Programme 4: Ensure that the Media Sector Benefit the National Economy

The Ministry through the Namibia Film Commission supports, encourages and promotes the local film industry to ensure that it benefits our national economy.

During the 2012/13 financial year, seven (7) short films were marketed at International festivals and seven (7) local projects were funded, which created 200 temporary jobs in Khomas and Erongo regions. The production of the major international film in Namibia, Mad Max, has created over 500 temporary jobs to local people and contributed over **N\$ 374 million** to the national economy. Recent media reports about the non-rehabilitation of the sites where the film was shot has been proven to be false and therefore, I wish to call on all Namibians to support such like Projects.

Programme 5: Increase the beneficial Use of Information and Communication Technologies

I indicated to this august House during the budget motivation last year that the West Africa Cable System (WACS) has landed at Swakopmund. I am happy to report that WACS has been successfully operationalized in May 2012. In addition to WACS, the national ICT back-bone infrastructure now also includes leased fibre-optical capacity from Namibia Power Corporation (NamPower), following the successful facilitation by my Ministry between NamPower, Telecom Namibia and MTC.

A Technical Network Infrastructure Design for the upgrading of government ICT infrastructure and expansion of intranet to the regions have been designed to accommodate the WACS capacity. Such infrastructure will make it possible for the implementation of the e-government project.

The Universal Service and Access Policy that provides for strategies and funding to roll-out ICT infrastructure and services to rural Namibia was passed by Parliament during the past financial year.

The Use of Electronic Transactions and Communications Bill was updated to include data protection and cyber security chapters as per the recently adopted model laws and guidelines from the African Union and SADC.

Following the low rating of Namibia on ICT by the World Economic Forum last year, my Ministry entered into a technical cooperation agreement with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to establish a national mechanism for ICT measurement and statistics. This will ensure that accurate, reliable and up-to-date national ICT statistics are available and provided to these international bodies.

Namibia is being assisted by the African Union Economic Commission to set up its own internet exchange point in the country. This will facilitate local internet exchange, provide speedy local internet traffic flow within the country so that information circulated will no longer go through the World Wide Web (www) but will be received straight away. It will further increase the network capacity and allow local content providers to create more locally hosted web sites.

PROGRESS MADE BY SOEs AND AGENCIES UNDER MICT

NAMIBIA PRESS AGENCY (NAMPA)

Honourable Chairperson,

Honourable Members of this august House,

In its efforts to increase news coverage countrywide, NAMPA opened another regional office in Otjiwarongo during the past financial year in order to cover Otjozondjupa and Oshikoto regions.

The news Agency has ventured into the provision of audiovisual news services and is now producing news video clips and documentaries for online viewers and local and international television stations, as well as audio clips for the local radio stations. This has increased the local news content produced to over 300 stories per month. The Agency is also offering IT services to local public institutions and to SADC regional news agencies, mainly on acquisition of modern news and information processing systems to disseminate and exchange news in the SADC region.

NEW ERA

During the past financial year, New Era established a Regional Bureau for Karas and Hardap regions with an office in Keetmanshoop, in order to increase news coverage for those specific regions.

New Era Editorial Policy has been reviewed to improve in informing and educating the citizenry on government Policies and programmes. To this effect, New Era's local content has increased to a minimum of 250 stories per month.

With regard to the distribution of the newspaper, the number of copies circulated and sold per day has increased by 21% while the market share in advertising has increased by 18 %.

NAMZIM (PTY) Ltd t/a THE SOUTHERN TIMES

In pursuance of its mandate, Namzim has established distribution points in Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa covering a wider readership in these countries and beyond. Cost cutting measures were introduced by shifting the printing of the newspaper to Johannesburg, South Africa to double the print run at 75% of the local cost previously paid. The Newspaper has also introduced Portuguese pages to cater for Angolan/Portuguese readers.

NAMIBIA BROADCASTING CORPORATION (NBC)

Our National Broadcaster, NBC remains one of the important platforms to promote government agenda, the democratic culture and nation building as it continued to inform and educate the citizens on issues of national importance.

NBC successfully launched the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) migration from analogue to digital television in December last year as per the SADC deadline. The country should therefore expect to embrace the benefits of DTT migration which includes better quality television images, freed up radio frequencies and more television channels for more choice.

On news and current affairs, NBC continued to improve its news content to inform the nation on what is happening around the country and beyond. NBC has replaced its ageing news editing system with a state of the art digital news editing system.

With regard to entertainment and news, the national public broadcaster has acquired programmes through agreements with South Africa's **eNews Channel Africa (eNCA)**, **China Central TV**, and **CNBC Africa**. Regional Partnership agreements were also forged with the **Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation** and the **Zimbabwean Broadcasting Corporation** in the interest of Pan-SADC co-operation.

MTC

As a strategic imperative, MTC co-invested in WACS during the past financial year, with the view to provide broadband connectivity for its internet users.

During the past year, MTC invested an amount of **US\$15 million** in the WACS and **US\$10 million** on the associated national fibre optic networks, which is critical for its future 4G services.

MTC have put contingencies in place to provide 4G service to the rest of the country in due course. This follows the successful implementation of the 4G technology in Windhoek since July 2012 under phase one and phase two respectively. Under phase three, areas such as Outapi, Oshakati, Tsumeb, Otjiwarongo, Keetmanshoop, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay are expected to have full 4G access by May 2013.

The Government through MTC has drummed up initiatives to ensure that ICT is at the forefront of rural development. To this end, MTC has introduced a pilot concept of Netman Centres (ICT Containers) which is already implemented in the settlement of Otjinene in the Otjozondjupa region. These Centres which are subsidized by MTC and managed by the local communities provides internet services, and allow

customers to procure MTC products and services as well as offering fax and photocopy facilities.

The Centers aims to empower rural communities with information and to provide access to the super highway while at the same time creating employment. More ICT containers will be rolled out to other regions in the next months, with the target being six (6) ICT containers in 2013 and seven (7) in 2014.

TELECOM NAMIBIA

With the landing of the WACS cable at the port of Walvis Bay, Telecom Namibia is now providing high internet bandwidth to the country. Furthermore, Telecom provided the Ministry of Works and Transport with internet installation infrastructure and backhaul at its 42 Civil Aviation sites including those in remote areas throughout the country, while wireless broadband connectivity was provided to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration at its 10 remote border posts to enable the Ministry to ensure proper immigration control via real time links to its databases in Windhoek.

International Point of Presence (PoPs) has been installed in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Frankfurt and London. This will extend Telecom Namibia's network footprints and makes it a Tier 2 carrier actively making business in the international wholesale market.

NAMPOST

During 2012, NamPost invested an amount of **Fifteen million Namibian Dollars (N\$15 million)** for the upgrading of its banking system to improve customer service delivery and to achieve its financial inclusion objective. As attest to by the FinScope survey of 2011 that was released last year, access to banking in Namibia increased from 45% in 2007 to 62% in 2011. Of the 15 countries in Africa that participate in the survey, Namibia now ranks 2nd to South Africa that is standing at 63% inclusion as per 2011 survey. Further strategic interventions by NamPost are expected in the next three years to give further impetus to the Government's vision of financial inclusion as articulated by the Cabinet Committee on Financial Inclusion and the Namibia Financial Sector Strategy: 2011-2021.

Honourable Chairperson,

Honourable Members of this august House,

Before I proceed with the budget request for 2013/14, I deem it necessary to share with this august House, the main strategic interventions to be implemented by the SOEs under my Ministry's ambit who are not receiving budgetary assistance from the government.

The Communication Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) through consultation with stakeholders will provide advisory support for the formulation the Broadband Policy for Namibia, which will provide for the roll-out of broadband service at affordable prices, realistic speed and quality services to rural areas. The implementation of this policy will go hand-in-hand with Universal Service Access Policy and projects.

Telecom Namibia will expand the Optical Transport Network (OTN) throughout the country during the current financial year to better provide high speed internet connectivity to the Namibian population.

The Government IT infrastructure is currently being upgraded to handle the increased WACS capacity and to improve intra-governmental e-communications with the ultimate aim to launch full-scale e-government services.

In its efforts to make internet accessible to the citizens and to bridge digital gap, Telecom Namibia has developed special offering for internet access to schools, institutions of high learning and hospitals in the country.

At the same time, Telecom Namibia will implement the national PoPs in all the 13 regions to offer free internet access to all government institutions countrywide for the next five years to connect the regional Government service hubs which are provided by the Office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development. This will enhance the Government's decentralization programme.

NamPost in partnership with MICT plans to expand the Multi-Sectoral Centers across the country during the financial year. Core to this strategy is a demand driven

need to transform Namibia into a knowledge based society for the achievement of Vision 2030.

Honourable Chairperson,

Honourable Members of this august House,

For the financial year 2013/14, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology has been allocated an amount of **Six Hundred and Seventy Eight Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Five Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 678,695.000)**. In summary, allow me to highlight how MICT will undertake and implement the following programmes:

Programme 1: Facilitate ICT Infrastructure Development

Under this programme, an amount of **Seventy-Nine Million, Four Hundred and One Thousand (79,401,000)** is earmarked for the development of E-waste Management Policy, the completion of the DTT Policy guidelines, update of the Broadcasting Policy and the completion of Information Policy. The Ministry will oversee the setting up of the Universal Service Fund (USF) as per the Communications Act of 2009, while amendments to the Act will be proposed to include broadcasters to contribute and use the USF for deploying services to rural areas. Under this Programme, the Digital Terrestrial television (DTT) Migration project will be implemented. This will include policy developed and awareness creation.

My Ministry will spearhead the hosting of the 5th SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum from 15th to 17th April 2013 following the adoption of the SADC Roadmap on Broadcasting Migration by the SADC Ministers responsible for ICT.

The forum will review the implementation of the SADC Roadmap by the SADC Member States and address some of the challenges that are facing Member States in the implementation of the Roadmap.

During this financial year, the Ministry will start with the construction of six (6) of its regional offices in Omaheke, Ohangwena, Omusati, Oshikoto, Kavango and Erongo regions to address the shortage of office space.

Programme 2: Market Namibia to attract international investments.

For this programme I requested an allocation of **Thirty-Four Million, Two Hundred and Seventy Three Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 34,273,000)**.

Under this programme, the Namibia Film Commission plans to aggressively encourage the development of a filming culture in Namibia and ensure that local films are screened to the Namibian people at no cost.

In order to attract major foreign film productions to Namibia, NFC has put in place programmes to offer incentives while at the same time market Namibia as a preferred film making destination on the international market. Furthermore, high level discussions are on course with a number of stakeholders such as Namibia Tourism Board, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Environment and Tourism as well as the Ministry of Home Affairs to strengthen cooperation and aggressively market Namibia to the international world to make our country competitive in Africa.

The NFC will finalize the formulation of filming standards for the film industry as guidelines to prevent abuse of the industry, improve local technical skills and minimize the exploitation of local crew who are mostly used at lower levels on set by the international filming companies coming to Namibia.

Programme 3: Enhance Performance of the SOEs and Institutional bodies.

An amount of **Four Hundred and Fifty Million, Seven Hundred and Eight Five Thousand (450,785.000)** is allocated under this programme and will be implemented as follows:

An amount of **Seventeen Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 17 million)** is earmarked for NAMPA to be able to implement its activities for 2013/14 financial year which include the introduction of public relations services to complement its current product output, and to undertake its property development project as part of the income generation in order to reduce financial dependency on Government.

An amount of **Seven Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 7 million)** is allocated to New Era. During this financial year, New Era in conjunction with NAMPA and other

stakeholders plan to set up a joint venture printing press in order to save on printing cost and generate income. Plans are also underway to develop Ongwediva office park in Oshana region to further generate additional revenue.

For NAMZIM, an amount of **Seven Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 7 million)** is allocated for this financial year. This will assist Namzim to increase its presence in the SADC region by opening three new offices in Zambia, Angola and Botswana and open up new market in other countries in the region in order to cover issues pertaining to the region's development more effectively; to increase the newspaper readership and increase revenue.

For NBC, an amount of **Four Hundred and Eleven Million, Seven Hundred and Eighty-Five Thousand Namibia Dollar (N\$411,785,000)** is allocated for this financial year to be able to convert the country from analogue to digital broadcasting, as well as to execute its mandate in terms of the Broadcasting Act. I am pleased to inform this august House that plans are at the advanced stage to introduce a dedicated channel for Parliamentary proceedings by May 2013 to bring Parliament proceedings live to all our people countrywide.

For the Namibia Film Commission Fund, an amount of **Eight Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 8 million)** is allocated for the development and marketing of the film industry to the local and international arena in order to promote the Namibian film industry in general.

Programme 4: Improve Human Resource Capacity

Under this programme, an allocation of **Twenty-Four Million, Two Hundred and Twenty-Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 24,229,000)** is requested.

The Namibian Government will be hosting the 2013 International E-Learning Africa Conference in May 2013. The Conference is co-hosted with the Ministry of Education and provides the opportunity for showcasing Namibian development in ICT and Education.

Furthermore, the Ministry will continue with the implementation and review of the Service Delivery Survey Report of 2007 and the installation of security control system to our regional offices. A number of Vehicles will also be procured from this allocation for MICT to be able to effectively implement its programmes.

Programme 5: Production and dissemination of multimedia information

For this programme I requested an amount of **Forty-Three Million, Seven Hundred and Twenty-Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 43,729,000)** to be able to publish and disseminate the Ministerial publications, namely: Namibia Review, Government Information Bulletin and the MICT Update, disseminate Cabinet releases as well as implement the Copyrights Service.

Programme 6: Promotional Materials for Nationhood and National Pride Campaign

For this programme an amount of **Twelve Million, Seven Hundred and Thirty-Nine Namibian Dollars (N\$ 12,739,000)** is allocated.

As I have indicated earlier, the Nationhood and National Pride campaign has been launched countrywide and the Ministry will now start with the rollout of outreach activities which will include visits to schools and communities; radio and TV adverts, dramas and the production of promotional and multi-media information materials. HIV/AIDS campaign, Decentralization of MICT activities and the advertisement of national events will also be implemented under this programme.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members of this August House,**

In light of the above, I humbly submit Vote 29 to the tune of **Six Hundred and Seventy-Eight Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Five Namibian Dollar (N\$ 678,695.000)** for your consideration.

I thank you.