



**Electoral Commission of Namibia**

**MOTIVATION FOR BUDGET**

**VOTE 28:**

**ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF NAMIBIA**

**2018/2019 FINANCIAL YEAR**

**INTRODUCED BY**

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**WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, 12 APRIL 2018**

Check against delivery

**HON. CHAIRPERSON OF THE WHOLE HOUSE  
COMMITTEE,**

**HON. MEMBERS,**

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the budget for Vote 28, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) for the 2018/2019 financial year.

A total allocated amount of **Sixty Eight Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$68,968,000.00)** is being requested for consideration and approval by Parliament.

As the Honourable Members of this august House are well aware, the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) was established by an Act of Parliament and has now become a constitutional body following the Constitutional Third Amendment Act of 2014. The Electoral Act 2014, (Act 5 of 2014), sets out clear objectives of the ECN - to organize, direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections and referenda in a free, fair, independent, credible, transparent and impartial manner as well as to strengthen constitutional democracy and to promote democratic electoral and referenda processes.

In order to carry out such objectives the ECN employed various modern technologies. It is rewarding to note the following on the use of modern technologies.

The ECN was conferred with an award from the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) in recognition of the ECN's achievement in Electoral Management, also known as Electoral Ergonomy, in December 2016.

The Electoral Ergonomy Award recognizes Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) and Electoral Officials which tailored electoral procedures to the psychology of their voter and the specific characteristics of their electorate. Initiatives nominated for the award may pertain to any aspect of electoral management, such as the design of the polling ballots or adaptation of voting machines, the organization of the polling station or the polling booth, research on alternative voting mechanisms such as advanced, postal, or electronic voting.

Furthermore, the award recognizes the ECN's tireless efforts to improve the electoral processes, particularly in the entire African continent. What makes the accomplishment of the ECN so notably impressive is the fact that ECN sought to make use of the new

approach in problem-solving technics, namely, using innovative technology solutions as a tool to fix electoral systems and processes.

For example, the introduction of **biometric voter registration system** and **Electronic Voting Machines** won the Electoral Commission of Namibia international accolades the world over - not only from their SADC regional EMB's, but the entire African continent and beyond. Congratulate the Electoral Commission of Namibia for a job well done and encourage them to continue such a success story for the forthcoming elections of 2019 and 2020.

In this year, the ECN has two crucial programmes under its budget, namely:

- (1) Administration of Elections, and
- (2) Voter Education and Information Dissemination.

The Policy Co-ordination and Support Services ought to be added to the main two programs mentioned above.

With the above mentioned background let me focus on the following two major aspects: First, the budget for 2018/19 Financial Year of the ECN, including major challenges, and second, on the specific



programmes to be carried out during the 2018/19 financial budget year.

## **1. Budget for 2018/19 Financial Year**

The proposed ceiling for 2018/2019 financial year has been cut from N\$106 million to N\$68 million. That means the total budget has been cut with N\$38 million. At the same time the entire Capital Project budget was cut to zero.

From the N\$68 million an amount of N\$51 million has been put aside and remains intact for the personnel expenditure, for both permanent and temporary staff. However, the non- personnel expenditures has been reduced to a mere N\$17 million.

Usually, such an amount of N\$17 million under normal circumstance is merely for one division in the ECN and not for the whole agency. It means that the N\$17 million shall be distributed amongst all divisions of the ECN.

Put it differently, the entire operations of the ECN will be greatly challenged during the 2018/19 Financial Year due to the drastic budget cuts. The drastic budget shall be a major challenge to the operations of the ECN in fulfilling its mandate.

## **2. The Breakdown of the Budget for the two Programmes of the ECN is as follows;**

The breakdown of the budget for the two programmes of the Electoral Commission inclusive of Policy Co-ordination and Support Services is as follows:

### **2.1 Program 01: Administration of Elections**

In terms of the provision of Section 49 (2) of the Electoral Act, 2014, the ECN is mandated to hold elections and/or referenda to ensure good governance and the consolidation of our representative democracy.

During the forthcoming financial year, the ECN must make contingency provisions for by-elections. In the real world, by-elections are a real possibility. They may emerge without a warning in case of a vacancy as a result of the resignation or death of any of the councillors of any Regional Council.

Hence, an amount of **Thirteen Million, Six Hundred and Twenty Three Thousand, Namibian Dollars (N\$13,623,000.00)** has been allocated, **N\$8,9 Million** is for personnel expenditures and a mere

**N\$4,7 Million** remaining is allocated for non-personnel expenditures which is for the procurement of Goods and Services.

The following required activities to be carried out:

- a. Registration of Voters,
- b. Holding of By-elections,
- c. Update of Voters Register,
- d. Auditing of Voter Verification Devices (VVD's),  
Mobile Voters Registration Kits (MVRK's), and  
Electronic Voting Machines (EVM's),
- e. At this stage consultation's has been conducted with the  
political parties and other stakeholders on  
implementation of the utilization of paper trail and  
challenges with regard to the paper trail.

## **2.2 Program 02: Voter and Civic Education and Information Dissemination**

Voter and Civic Education is one of the core functions of the ECN and normally precedes all other electoral activities; therefore, the ECN has designed a comprehensive voter education and information dissemination campaign aimed at informing all eligible voters about these important events on the election calendar.

In terms of Section 49 (1) (a) of the Electoral Act 5, of 2014, the Commission must, when supervising, directing, controlling and promoting voter and civic education - pursue the objective to make the meaning and purpose of elections well understood by the electorate.

The ECN will continue to use the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and all other devices in all the by-elections to be undertaken during this MTEF period. It is the mandate of this programme to ensure that all the eligible voters are accorded the opportunity to have all the required information on electoral processes. The voter education sessions together with advertisements will complement each other to help give required information to the public in order to make the public aware of the EVMs and other electoral processes.

An amount of **Twenty Five Million, Five Hundred and Fifty Eight Thousand, Namibian Dollars (N\$25,558,000.00)** has been allocated for Voter Education. Hence an amount of **N\$20,8 million** is for Personnel Expenditures and a mere **N\$4,7 million** remaining will cater for non-personnel expenditures which is for the procurement of Goods and Other Services.



The amount will be used on the following activities of the ECN:

- 1) Conducting voter education and disseminate voter information,
- 2) Promoting democratic culture and good governance so as to ensure credible election processes,
- 3) Raising public awareness on elections, democracy building and political tolerance during elections,
- 4) Monitoring and evaluation of all voter education activities, and
- 5) Conducting democracy and electoral research and survey.

### **2.3 Policy Co-ordination and 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. Therefore, an amount of **Twenty Nine Million, Seven Hundred and Eighty Thousand, Namibia Dollars (N\$29,787,000.00)** has been allocated to ensure the smooth running of the day-to-day activities of the Electoral Commission of Namibia. Thus, an amount of **Eleven Million (N\$11 Million)** will be

distributed among the following cost centres (sections) in order to execute their daily activities as support to the main programmes:

- 1) Commission Services (Office of the Chairperson)
- 2) Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)
- 3) Finance Division
- 4) Human Resource Management
- 5) Auxiliary Services, and
- 6) IT Section

The major activities carried out under this programme include:

- a) Electoral Act Amendment Workshop
- b) Strategic Planning Workshop
- c) Political Party Meetings
- d) Training & Development, Gender mainstreaming and Capacity Building,
- e) Acquisition and Maintenance of Information Technology (IT) Equipment and Systems,
- f) General Administrative Costs,
- g) International fees and Subscription, and
- h) Wellness Promotion, Prevention and Mitigation of HIV/AIDS.

Once again, such an amount of **N\$11 million** for six divisions/sections will remain a challenge to effectively administer the operations of the institution.

### **3 Conclusion**

Hon. Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Hon. Members,

In keeping with its mandate, the ECN is obliged by law to conduct all possible by-elections as well as all the electoral activities highlighted above during this financial year. This presentation makes a case for the activities and programmes that the ECN wishes to undertake during the year.

At the same time the budget of the ECN has been cut with an amount of N\$ 38 million and the entire operational budget will face major challenges. Despite such challenges, hopefully, the ECN has to discharge these duties successfully and thereby uphold the democratic principles and tenets of democracy enshrined in our Constitution and the Electoral Law of the Republic of Namibia.

In Conclusion, I urge all Honourable Members of this august House to support these motivations and approve the budget of **Sixty Eight Million, Nine Hundred and Sixty Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars** (N\$68,968,000.00) for the Electoral Commission of Namibia for the 2018/2019 financial year.

**I THANK YOU**