



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

**BUDGET MOTIVATION
2023/2024 FINANCIAL YEAR**

VOTE 29

BY

HON. DR PEYA MUSHELENGA, MP

MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

28 March 2023

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

I rise to present to this august House and motivate as well as seek your support for Vote 29 of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) for the 2023-2024 Financial Year.

The ICT Ministry received an allocation of **Six Hundred and Fifty-One Million, Four Hundred and Forty-Five Thousand Namibia Dollars (651,445,000.00)** from the 2023-2024 National Budget to carry out our core mandate of coordinating, managing and disseminating government information, promoting the use and development of ICTs infrastructure, policies and strategies, among others. A summary of the key programmes and allocations is outlined as follows:

Programme 1: Information and Communication Technology Development

An amount of **Nineteen Million Eight Hundred and Eighty-Seven Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Four Namibia Dollars (19,887,954.00)** was allocated to this programme to among others continue to formulate, review and assess the implementation of laws, policies and strategies pertaining to ICT. The work on the development of the Digital Strategy which commenced in the previous financial year will continue to ensure that the strategy is in place to propel Namibia to an informed society with a knowledge-based economy.

Furthermore, the review of various ICT policies and possible consolidation into a uniform Nation ICT policy is on the cards. The Ministry will undertake an assessment to ascertain the impact of the existing ICT legislative and Policy framework. The drafting and consultations on the Cybercrime Bill and the Data Protection Bill continue with efforts to have them tabled in the National Assembly, in addition, the Ministry will continue with the implementation of the National Cybersecurity Strategy and awareness-raising plan, the roll-out of the awareness campaign which is critical at this point in this digital era. It aims to educate our citizens on the various risks they encounter while using the internet.

On ICT infrastructure development the programme will focus on coordinating national initiatives aimed at increasing coverage and accessibility of technology infrastructure and services for all citizens. It is evident that the importance of ICT infrastructural development cannot be overstressed, hence our continued efforts to improve the establishment of such infrastructure in partnership with private sector players. The Ministry will continue coordinating and monitoring this implementation of the National Broadband Policy with the view of narrowing the digital gap. The National Broadband Policy will be reviewed to include the SADC 2025 broadband targets.

Programme 2: Print Media Affairs

An allocation of **Sixty-Seven Million, Four Hundred and Ninety-Four Thousand, Six Hundred and Ninety-Five Namibia Dollars (67,494,695.00)** is made to this programme to facilitate the enhancement of Government information dissemination and the implementation of the Nationhood and National Pride Programme (NNP) which aims to inculcate the spirit of patriotism, nationhood and national pride among Namibians.

Out of the total budget under this programme, **Twenty Million Namibia Dollars (N\$ 20,000,000.00)** is allocated for the establishment of the Information Commission during this financial year to prepare for the full implementation of the Access to Information Act, Act 8 of 2022 as signed into law by His Excellency Dr Hage Geingob. The Access to Information legislation will ensure that our citizens have unhindered access to information that will enable them to make informed decisions about their lives and their livelihoods, allow them to participate in the democratic processes, and enhance transparency and accountability which are the cornerstone in building public trust.

As part of putting mechanisms in place to pave the way for the full implementation of this legislation, the Ministry has already started capacitating Government communications officers from all Offices, Ministries and Agencies of the State to prepare them for the implementation of this important legislation.

Honourable Speaker,

With the development and approval by the Cabinet of the Government Communication Strategy last year, the Ministry will work with Communications Officers from all OMAs, Regional Councils and Local Authorities to ensure that information dissemination is delivered timely and accurately to our people. Similarly, under this programme, the Ministry will also scale up the enhancement of citizen participation and engagement under the Nationhood and National Pride Programme to ensure that our people are sensitised and capacitated in appreciating our shared value, rich history and protecting Namibia's fauna and flora within the confine of the law.

Additionally, the Ministry endeavours to finalise the Community Media Policy framework to support the development of community media in Namibia. Although the process started in the last financial year, additional consultations were needed to ensure that all stakeholders are fully on board.

Honourable Members,

An amount of **Twenty-Seven Million Namibia Dollars (N\$27,000,000.00)** is allocated to **New Era Publications Corporation (NEPC)**. NEPC will continue to disseminate pertinent information through its daily newspaper, New Era, reporting on community and government-related matters.

Programme 3: Audio-Visual Media and Regional Offices

A total amount of **Four Hundred and Eighty-Six Million, One Hundred and Sixty-Seven Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Two Namibia Dollars (N\$ 486,167,992.00)** has been earmarked for the programme **Audio Visual Media & Regional Offices**, of which **Sixty Million, Three Hundred and Fifty-One Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Two Namibia Dollars (N\$60,351,992.00)** have been targeted for **Multi-Media Services**, under which government information is gathered, produced and disseminated in multimedia and digital formats for ease of consumption by the public.

Furthermore, this programme provides a range of multi-media products and services through the Government Communications Centre (GIC), Rural Information Communication Technology Centres and regional offices in our quest to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural communities.

Also, under this programme, an amount of **Six Million Namibia Dollars (N\$ 6,000,000.00)** has been allocated to the Namibia Film Commission secretariat (**NFC**), for the **Namibia Film Development Fund**, to continue promoting Namibia as a preferred film destination internationally while developing the local film industry. Once fully developed, this industry has the potential to create hundreds of jobs for our youth, and much-needed income for our service providers.

During the 2023/2024 financial year, the Ministry will roll out a marketing strategy to attract productions from Asia and also to appoint a Film Champion for Namibia to further propel our competitiveness locally and internationally. The introduction of the bursary and innovation scheme early this year has benefitted some young Namibians and aims to ensure that the industry invests in specialised skills to evolve with the changing times and trends. Furthermore, this year will also see the implementation of the NFC's online services, for a speedy and professional service.

Local content creation and capacity building of creatives in the film space remain key and will be achieved through a robust stakeholder engagement that involves multiple stakeholders in our society.

Honourable Speaker,

The Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (**NBC**) has been allocated an amount of **Three Hundred and Ten Million, Three Hundred and Ten Thousand** Namibian Dollars (**N\$ 310,310,000.00**) towards their **Operational Budget** and **Eighty-Two Million** Namibia Dollars (**N\$ 82,000,000.00**) towards their **Development Budget** for the upgrade of the remote rural broadcast networks, dilapidated studios and equipment.

Additionally, an amount of **Twenty-Seven Million and Five Hundred and Six Thousand** Namibia Dollars (**N\$27,506,000.00**) is allocated to Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA) to enable them to carry their constitutional responsibility of informing, educating and entertaining our nation towards the realization of our developmental goals.

Programme 4: Coordination and Support

An amount of **Seventy-Seven Million, Nine Hundred and Four Thousand, Three Hundred and Fifty-Nine** Namibia Dollars (**N\$ 77,904,359.00**) has been allocated to this fourth and last Programme of **Coordination and Support**.

Out of the total amount, **Fifty-Nine Million, Nine Hundred and Four Thousand, Three Hundred and Fifty-Nine** Namibia Dollars (**N\$ 59,904,359.00**) is earmarked for the Ministry's operational activities, whereas an amount of **Eighteen Million** Namibia Dollars (**N\$18, 000,000.00**) will be utilised for the Ministry's development budget to cater for the Construction activities of the Ministerial Hardap Regional Office.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

I, therefore, submit Vote 29 to this House for favourable consideration and subsequent endorsement.

Thank You!

