



Republic of Namibia

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE MOTION BY HON.
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**ON POST-COVID-19 CHALLENGES IN THE
EDUCATION SECTOR (PRIMARY AND SECONDARY
SCHOOLS)**

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members

As the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, we have noted the issues raised by the Hon. Member during his motivation on the motion: *Post COVID-19 challenges in the education sector (primary and secondary school)*.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is aware of the challenges we face in the education sector, and we are as much as possible trying in every way possible to address these challenges, however the Ministry alone will not be able to solve all the challenges mentioned, the old adage that “*it takes a village to raise a child*” rings so true.

Classroom shortages vis-a-vis learner performance:

As indicated in the report on the outcome of our meeting with His Excellency President Hage Geingob, on the status of the Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary level (NSSCO) and Senior Secondary Certificate Advanced Subsidiary (NSSCAS), the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has identified infrastructural gap as one of the factors negatively affecting teaching and learning, contributing to learners' undesirable performance. This rendered our sector less resilient against the impact of Covid e.g resulting in disruptions of teaching and learning to adhere to COVID-19 safety measures, especially social distancing. We have also established that in Primary Education this gap (infrastructure) is causing overcrowding in classrooms. → lookin' back (days)

The Ministry's remedial measures to address the shortage of classrooms include the fast-tracking of school infrastructural development through the Accelerated Infrastructure Development Plan (AIDeP), which identifies and cost the immediate Ministerial infrastructure needs. It is through this plan that targeted funds will be allocated to all regions, based on respective regional classroom shortage or infrastructure needs, as was elaborated in our budget introduction. We have a shortage of 4500 classrooms, understandably we cannot construct all those classrooms in one year, but we have a clear plan to add those 4500 classrooms over a period of seven years.

The Ministry took the shortage of classrooms as an urgent educational need. It is for this reason that in the 2023/2024 Financial Year, we purposefully allocated an amount of **Two Hundred and Thirteen Million Namibia dollars (N\$ 213 Million)** towards the construction of additional classrooms, as we also aim to rehabilitate dilapidated school ^{and hostel} infrastructures.

The N\$ 213 million would enable the Ministry to construct additional 510 classrooms and 70 ablution facilities because as the number of classrooms at a particular grow, so does the need for additional ablution facilities.

Hon. Speaker,

According to the latest (2022) 15th School Day Statistics, the Ministry currently maintains a total number of **1709** government schools, with a total learner population of **Eight Hundred and Thirty-nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-nine (839 579)**.

In addition to infrastructure needs the recent changes in the curriculum, saw the addition of skills-based/pre-voc subjects which have created additional infrastructure needs to accommodate such subjects at school level, including teaching and learning materials, workshops and specialized classrooms, e.g home ecology, hairdressing etc.

The Ministry acknowledges this widening gap for school infrastructure and it is being addressed as a matter of priority with a focus on strategic investment and domestic resources mobilization. The immediate priority is to address the existing school, ^{and hostel} infrastructure needs, ^{in addition} that includes classrooms, ICT Resources and Computer laboratories, Pre-vocational workshops and Science laboratories.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

With respect to the granting of learners who were unsuccessful to return to schools, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture has as per Circular 1/23 granted permission for candidates who did not meet the requirements to proceed to the NSSCAS to be given an opportunity to repeat NSSCO (Gr. 11) full time provided there is space available at schools and the learners is 18 years or younger on the 1 January 2023.

Hon. Speaker,

At this stage the Ministry is unable to conduct Supplementary or Mid-year examinations due to the limited staff capacity of the Directorate of National Examinations and Assessments and to honour the accreditation agreement with Cambridge, the said agreement does not MAKE provision for supplementary examinations. Cambridge International Examinations renders services of quality assurance globally and examinations take place at different times, thus, their revisers are not available for a second national examination in Namibia.

In conclusion, I must state that we are addressing the shortcomings in our schools, and I call upon all of us to come on board, the education of the Namibian child should be our collective responsibility. I say this time and again, GOVERNMENT alone cannot solve all the problem in isolation. It will take all stakeholders' support to improve the situation in education as far as infrastructure in schools and hostels is concerned.

Thank you.

Looking Back on 2020

Grades	Number of days attended 2020	Number of days missed	
Pre-Primary to Grade 3	94	104	¹⁹⁸ 213 198
Grades 4,5,6	79	119	198
Grades 7 & 9	89	109	198
Grade 8	84	114	198
Grade 10	120	78	198
Grades 11 & 12	145	53	198

Out of the 198 school days planned, the number of days learners attended school in 2020, did not adequately prepare them for the 2021 school year