



## **NATIONAL COUNCIL**

**Report of the National Council Standing Committee on  
Education, Science, ICT and Youth Development  
Oversight Visit to Youth Projects in Erongo, Kunene,  
Omusati, Oshana, Ohangwena and Otjozondjupa Regions  
from 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

May 2025

## 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	1
COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES.....	2
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	3
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	4
2. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE OVERSIGHT .....	5
3. COMMITTEE' STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT .....	5
3.1 Engagement with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and National Service .....	5
4 OVERSIGHT VISITS TO THE REGIONS ON THE YOUTH PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THE 121 CONSTITUENCY YOUTH ENTERPRISES INITIATIVE AND THE NAMIBIA YOUTH CREDIT SCHEME.....	11
4.2.1 Walvis Bay Rural Mini Market (Erongo Region) .....	13
4.2.2 Epupa Youth Trading in Opuwo (Kunene Region).....	14
4.2.3 Oshakati East Best Youth Trading (Oshana Region) .....	15
4.2.4 Oshikuku Youth Development .....	15
4.2.5 Ondobe Youth Enterprise .....	16
4.2.6 Oshikango Youth Trading Enterprise.....	17
5. NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE TRAINING CENTERS AND GARDEN PRODUCTION .....	22
5.1 Henties Bay Training Centre .....	22
5.2 Eunda Production Garden (Omusati Region) .....	23
5.4 Berg- Aukas Production Garden .....	24
7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	29

## **COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES**

### **MEMBERS:**

1. Hon. Olivia Tuyenikelao Hanghuwo, MP - Chairperson
2. Hon. Bethuel Tjaveondja, MP - Vice-Chairperson
3. Hon. Kosmas Katura, MP
4. Hon. Jeremías Goeieman, MP
5. Hon. Deriou Benson, MP
6. Hon. Sakeus Nangula, MP

### **SECRETARIAT:**

1. Ms. Moono Matengu - Chief Parliamentary Clerk
2. Mr. Rafael Hangula - Chief Information Officer
3. Ms. Moringa Goagoses - Parliamentary Clerk

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATINS**

<b>TVET</b>	<b>- Technical Vocational Education and Training</b>
<b>NYS</b>	<b>- National Youth Service</b>
<b>DBN</b>	<b>- Development Bank of Namibia</b>
<b>NORED</b>	<b>- Northern Namibia's Electricity Distributor</b>
<b>NAMPOL</b>	<b>- Namibian Police Force</b>
<b>NDF</b>	<b>- Namibian Defence Force</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>- Information Communication and Technology</b>
<b>NSA</b>	<b>- Namibia Statistics Agency</b>
<b>OMAs</b>	<b>- Offices, Offices and Agencies</b>
<b>NYP III</b>	<b>- National Youth Policy</b>
<b>MSYNS</b>	<b>- Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service</b>
<b>NYC</b>	<b>- National Youth Council</b>
<b>AMTA</b>	<b>- Agro-Marketing and Trade Agency</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The National Council Standing Committee on Education, Science, ICT and Youth Development, undertook oversight visits to Erongo, Kunene, Oshana, Omusati, Ohangwena and Otjozondjupa regions from 15<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> September 2024, to assess the status of the youth empowerment programmes facilitated and financed by the Ministry of Youth, Sport and National Service.
- 1.2 The National Council as part and parcel of Namibia's Parliament is constitutionally mandated to review Bills from the National Assembly. In line with its mandate, the Council has established portfolio Committees including the Standing Committee on Education, Science, ICT and Youth Development.
- 1.3 The Committee has a mandate in terms of Rule 158 of the National Council Standing Rules and Orders, among others to scrutinize and report to the Council on matters and questions falling within the ambit of Offices, Ministries, Agencies and all Public Enterprises dealing with education, science, information communication and technology, youth development, national service, sport, arts and culture.
- 1.4 Thus, the Committee having recognised the importance of youth empowerment in the wake of high unemployment records among youth in the country, Furthermore, having appreciated the significance and impact of the National Youth Service and the important role it plays in youth empowerment. The Committee undertook oversight visits to selected projects in the regions aimed at empowering and developing the youth in order to assess the achievements and identify potential challenges hampering the success of these youth empowerment initiatives.
- 1.5 Prior to the regional oversight visits, the Committee deemed it fit to engage relevant stakeholders that fall within the sphere of its oversight function dealing with youth development and national service. The stakeholders' engagement was held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with the **Ministry of Youth, Sports and National Service; National Youth Service** and the **National Youth Council**.
- 1.6 The engagement sought to obtain relevant information on the status of the youth empowerment programmes facilitated and financed by the Ministry and other institutions dealing with youth empowerment programmes under its jurisdiction. In addition, the Committee wanted to be briefed on the status of youth unemployment in the country.

## **2. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE OVERSIGHT**

- 2.1 The objective of the oversight visits was for the Committee to assess the status of the Youth Projects facilitated and financed by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and National Service and other institutions dealing with youth empowerment programmes under its jurisdiction.
- 2.2 The main aim was to assess the status of the youth projects funded under the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme and the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises. Mainly for the Committee to acquaint itself with the operations of the projects in terms of achievements and potential challenges hampering the success of these youth empowerment initiatives.
- 2.3 Furthermore, it was for the Committee to familiarise itself with the work of the National Youth Service in terms its mandate for youth empowerment initiatives.

## **3. COMMITTEE' STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT**

### **3.1 Engagement with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and National Service**

- 3.1.1 The Committee engaged the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and National Service on its role in promoting youth economic empowerment initiatives, and an update on the status of these initiatives. The briefing aimed to highlight the nature of the initiatives, beneficiaries and the localities (regions) of the youth empowerment programmes. Furthermore, the Committee sought an update on the status of youth unemployment in the country. The update included statistics indicating categories of unemployment, (e.g. unemployment rate by gender, age group, skilled and unskilled unemployed youth).
- 3.1.2 The Ministry operates within the third National Youth Policy (NYP III) that was launched on 21 July 2021, and that this active national youth policy of the ministry stands to operate as of 2020 to 2030. The high unemployment rate provides a partial impetus for the launch of NYP III, which identifies five (5) main policy objectives namely:

- 1) **Pillar 1: Youth Education and Skills Development:** To advocate that young people have access to quality and informal education, as well as skills development to improve overall education outcome.
  - 2) **Pillar 2: Youth Health and Well-being:** To promote access to youth-friendly health information, education and services to achieve a significant improvement in the health and well-being of young people through targeted interventions.
  - 3) **Pillar 3: Youth Employment and Economic Empowerment:** To facilitate access to economic empowerment opportunities
  - 4) **Pillar 4: Youth Civic and Political Participation:** To promote youth participation and representation in civic and political engagements.
  - 5) **Emerging Cross-cutting Issues:** To address contemporary challenges that the youth face in personal and national development arenas.
- 3.1.3 The Ministry is the custodian of the above policy objectives, however the policy itself cuts across all Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs), OMAs are supposed to be implementing youth empowering activities that are consistent with the objectives of the policy. There are also other initiative and interventions undertaken by other public or private institutions focusing on youth development or employment.
  - 3.1.4 In line with its mandate, the Ministry focuses on group of young people mostly those that are out of school, which the Ministry supports in upgrading their skills.
  - 3.1.5 The statistical information presented to the Committee on the unemployment rate among youth was in terms of the Labour Force Survey Report of 2018 which was undertaken by Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA).
  - 3.1.6 The Ministry depends on the statistics produced by NSA, because of its credible information that feeds the plans of the national development. The statistics highlighted that youth unemployment was very high. However, there was still an ongoing discussion on the current unemployment rate in terms of the latest population statistics, that would indicate the actual statistics relating to labour concern.
  - 3.1.7 The Committee noted that employment opportunities within the Namibian Labour Market is very scarce, particularly, taking into account the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry reported that there are 876,908 youth aged 15 to 34 in Namibia of which 310,854 (35.5%) are employed and 265,770 (30.3%) were unemployed.

3.1.8 The participation rate of the young people between the ages of 15 and 34 was at 65.8%, by indication of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 segregated by region and gender at a national level.

3.1.9 In that age group unemployed male youth are 56.4% and the unemployed female youth are 63.6%. In the same age group, the males in the urban set up that are unemployed are 60.9% and females 64.1% and respectively 53.3% male and 63% female in the rural set up. Regional statistics in terms of that age group, based on the survey of the labour national figure is 56.4% for male 63.6% for females across the fourteen regions are indicated.

**3.1.10 Table 1: Unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 years by Region and Gender**

REGION	MALE	FEMALE
1. //Kharas	63.2%	71.4%
2. Erongo	48.9%	55.7%
3. Hardap	53.1%	60.6%
4. Kavango-East	81.1%	76.1%
5. Kavango-West	51.2%	61.5%
6. Khomas	59.5%	66.2%
7. Kunene	63.8%	66.6%
8. Ohangwena	53.1%	67.6%
9. Omaheke	45.0%	68.6%
10. Omusati	39.2%	52.1%
11. Oshana	66.2%	62.9%
12. Oshikoto	56.2%	60.4%
13. Otjozondjupa	59.6%	63.4%
14. Zambezi	64.9%	59.6%

### **3.2 Engagement with the National Youth Service**

3.2.1 The National Youth Service (NYS) was established in accordance with the National Youth Service Act No. 6 of 2005, to amongst others, serve as a meeting point for youth from various social and cultural backgrounds.

- 3.2.2 To provide the youth with opportunities for further studies and training so as to enhance their opportunities for employment as well as to provide skills training and personal development programmes to the youth, and thereby contribute to National Development goals and alleviation of poverty.
- 3.2.3 In addition, NYS training interventions are aimed to instil a sense of patriotism, nationhood, and commitment to the development of Namibia among the youth, as well as foster an appreciation for volunteerism and civic responsibilities.
- 3.2.4 **The National Youth Service officers the following Programmes:**
- (1) National Service Training (NST)**
- (a) National Service Training is the first phase of training and it is also the feeder programme for the Voluntary Service and TVET programme, with a duration of six (6) months. During this period, recruits undergo rigorous basic training with the aim of moulding their behaviour from that of an ordinary civilian to that of a semi-military individual. The training, conducted in partnership with the Namibian Defence Force, Namibian Police Force, and Namibian Correctional Service, seeks to instil discipline, loyalty, patriotism, and commitment to the socio-economic development of Namibia among the Namibian youth.
- (b) In order to foster inclusivity and guarantee equitable representation, the recruitment process for this programme involves selecting youths from various social and cultural backgrounds from all 121 constituencies of Namibia.
- (c) Since its inception in 2008, a total of 6,867 youth has completed this intensive training programme. Among them, 2,717 secured employments in Offices, Ministries, and Agencies (OMAs) as well as in the Security Cluster, including the Namibian Defence Force, Namibian Police Force and Namibian Correctional Services.
- (d) The NST programme contributes significantly to the socio-economic development of the country by enabling and enhancing youth participation in national building and development processes, whilst increasing youth employability and fostering a sense of citizenship.
- (e) Similarly, it assumes a critical function in shaping the younger generation into well-mannered individuals who embody patriotism and act as role models of "*My Country, My Pride*" programme.

- (f) The impact of this programme goes beyond individual participation and has far-reaching effects on the community, economy, and nation as a whole. It also makes a significant contribution to these areas:

- ❖ Enhancement of youth sustainable livelihoods;
- ❖ Improvement of quality of life and enhancing self-reliance;
- ❖ The provision of a solid base upon which to build capability assets in terms of both hard and soft practical professional skills, work ethic and social networks; and
- ❖ Fosters virtues like self-control, punctuality, tolerance, reciprocity, mutual aid, and a sense of belonging, all of which are essential for good and responsible citizenship.

## **(2) Voluntary Service**

- (a) Upon completing NST, graduates transition to the next phase of the programme, which is Voluntary Service. Through this programme, recruits are assigned to various projects of national importance. The duration of this programme can vary from six (6) to twelve (12) months or even longer, depending on the nature of the project.
- (b) The aim of Voluntary Service is to foster civic virtues among the youth with a specific emphasis on promoting the values of volunteerism.
- (c) To date, a total of 6,130 youths were engaged in various projects of national importance on voluntary services. Some of the significant initiatives undertaken are:
- ❖ Rehabilitation of Etosha National Park Fence
  - ❖ Provision of cleaning Auxiliary Services under the Office of the President
  - ❖ De-bushing of Etegameno Children, Adult Rehabilitation Centre under the Ministry of Health, and Social Services
  - ❖ Crime Prevention under the Namibian Police Force,
  - ❖ De-bushing and fencing at Gam Resettlement,
  - ❖ Removal of illegal fences in Kavango East under the Ministry of Agriculture
  - ❖ Provision of security services and the Namibia Ports Authority (Namport)
  - ❖ Provision of labour for various NYS agricultural production projects
- (d) Participating in voluntary service projects is beneficial for recruits as it enhances their social well-being. They not only receive an upkeep allowance, but also gain

valuable work experience that can greatly improve their chances of securing permanent employment in the job market.

- (e) Recruits remain in service and may be deployed during national emergencies or any other activity of national importance as required. The Service aims to expand its coverage for Voluntary Service across the country by acquiring more Voluntary Service sites to provide increased opportunities for the youth.

### **(3) Skills Training**

- (a) NYS offers accredited trainings in fourteen (14) TVET programmes, which are registered with the Namibian Training Authority and accredited by the Namibian Qualifications Authority.
- (b) The Service's TVET programme equips the youth with the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise that are highly sought after in many sectors. This helps bridge the gap between the skills that companies require, and the capabilities possessed by job seekers. This initiative additionally enhances the process of industrialising the Namibian economy by 2030, as outlined in the Harambee Prosperity Plan II and other development agendas.
- (c) The recent discoveries of green hydrogen, oil, and gas in Namibia have created significant job opportunities for the youth, hence NYS plays a significant role in equipping young people with the necessary skills and training to capitalise on these discoveries. As a result, the Service is working towards optimising its programmes and broadening the range of its trades.
- (d) This is to ensure that it aligns with the national TVET priority areas and fulfils the goals of Vision 2030. Additionally, it aims to cater to the job demands of the new emerging sectors of economic growth.
- (e) Furthermore, TVET does not only prepare the youth for gainful employment but also equips them with the skills needed to start their own businesses and become employers or entrepreneurs themselves. To date, 6,454 trainees participated in NYS TVET programmes that ranges from level 1 to 4.

#### **(4) Youth Security Service**

- (a) The Service is mandated to create youth employment opportunities; however, in the absence of such opportunities in the formal job market, the Service has established a Youth Security Service (YSS) to provide interim employment opportunities for the youth.
- (b) The Youth Security Service guards and protects government and state-owned enterprises properties. So far, a total of one thousand one hundred and eighty-four (1184) youths are employed as security guards countrywide.

#### **4 OVERSIGHT VISITS TO THE REGIONS ON THE YOUTH PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THE 121 CONSTITUENCY YOUTH ENTERPRISES INITIATIVE AND THE NAMIBIA YOUTH CREDIT SCHEME.**

Following the stakeholders' engagement, the Committee visited various projects in selected regions to ascertain the status of the youth projects. The committee visited projects funded under the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises Initiative and the projects under the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme.

##### **4.1 THE 121 CONSTITUENCY YOUTH ENTERPRISES**

- 4.1.1 During the stakeholder's engagement with the Ministry of Youth, Sports and National Service, the Committee was informed of the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises initiative, which is a government program aimed at fostering youth entrepreneurship across all 121 constituencies in the country. The program is part of a broader initiative aimed at fostering youth entrepreneurship and economic development. It is designed to support young entrepreneurs by providing financial assistance, training, and business development opportunities.
- 4.1.2 The initiative aligns with Namibia's Harambee Prosperity Plan and the National Development Plan (NDP5), focusing on empowering youth through self-employment and enterprise creation. The Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service plays a key role in implementing this program, ensuring that young people in various constituencies have access to resources that enable them to start and sustain their businesses.

- 4.1.3 The primary goal of the initiative is to create sustainable, youth-led enterprises that can contribute to economic growth and job creation, particularly in rural areas. Each enterprise is intended to consist of five to ten young individuals from the respective constituency, focusing on sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services.
- 4.1.4 The program emphasizes self-employment and aims to reduce youth unemployment by equipping participants with entrepreneurial skills and opportunities.
- 4.1.5 To ensure the success of these enterprises, the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, in collaboration with the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN) and the University of Namibia, provided training to over 484 young people. This training covered essential aspects of business management, including the development of bankable business plans. As of the latest reports, approximately 60 out of the 121 business plans were ready for financing, with the remaining plans expected to be completed shortly.
- 4.1.6 The DBN allocated N\$1 million for the training phase and an additional N\$8 million in soft loans to fund 28 youth entrepreneurs across the 14 regions. The program aims to create at least 1,210 direct, permanent jobs, with the potential to generate further employment opportunities as the enterprises grow.
- 4.1.7 The 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises program represents a significant step towards empowering Namibian youth and fostering inclusive economic growth. By providing training, financial support, and a supportive policy environment, the initiative aims to transform young individuals into successful entrepreneurs who can contribute meaningfully to their communities and the national economy.
- 4.1.8 The Nantu-Likwafela initiative is involved in the implementation of the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises program in Namibia. This effort is part of a broader strategy to support youth entrepreneurship and economic development.
- 4.1.9 A tripartite agreement was signed between the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service (MSYNS), the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN), and Nantu-Likwafela, aiming to operationalize loans for 28 rural youth enterprises within the larger framework of 121 youth enterprises. The goal is to provide financial support and socio-economic opportunities for young entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas.

## **4.2 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises Visited**

The Committee visited and assessed the following **seven (7)** youth projects under the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises, in order to ascertain the current status of these project and identify potential challenges hampering their effective operations:

### **4.2.1 Walvis Bay Rural Mini Market (Erongo Region)**

- a) The Walvis Bay Rural Mini Market is a youth-led enterprise which sells food and small household goods. The business is being operated in a Cargo Container which is temporary located at the Walvis Bay Rural Constituency Office due to lack of space/land.
- b) The business has five (5) beneficiaries, of which three (3) are women and two (2) are men. The business idea was conceived and approved in 2018, however, funding was only availed in early 2024 and the business only begun operating around June 2024, after receiving a loan amount of N\$228,000.00 of which an amount of N\$ 33,000.00 was given in cash as a start-up capital.
- c) The delays in the actual commencement of the business negatively affected its operation. The business anticipated making profit as there were no similar businesses in the area at the time, however, when the funds were made available in 2024 the area had seen many shops, particularly supermarkets operating which brought stiff competition to the mini market.
- d) The delay also resulted in some of the beneficiaries losing interest and sought other alternatives as they felt that they had waited for too long for the business to start operating. The move which affected the functioning of the business in terms of manpower since only two beneficiaries are actively involved in the business.
- e) Similarly, the location of the business is a challenge as it not visible to customers thus it is struggling to make money to sustain the business. As a result, some items end up expiring which affects the business financially.
- f) In regard to the business's inability to attract customers due to its location, the Committee was of the opinion that the business lacked marketing strategy and proper branding which made it difficult for customers to locate the business.
- g) The business is further challenged by the fact that it is located among big supermarkets where people prefer to buy in bulk.

- h) The Committee was informed that recommendations were made to have the business relocated to Farm 37 which is about 10 to 20km outside Walvis Bay because there are no shops in the areas and the business could potential get land from the municipality.

#### **4.2.2 *Epupa Youth Trading in Opuwo (Kunene Region)***

- a) The Epupa Youth Trading is a business intending to trade in auto repairs and it is located in Okanguati of Epupa Constituency in Kunene Region. The project has four (4) beneficiaries that are active, two (2) males and two (2) females. The project started in 2020 first with training which was offered by BIPA. The Epupa Constituency Councillor assisted the beneficiaries at his own cost to register the business with BIPA.
- b) The project was expected to cost N\$700,000, however, only N\$250,000 was paid, mainly to the suppliers for building materials. The beneficiary informed the Committee the amount was not enough for what was required to kick start the project.
- c) The business is currently not operational, however, the shack where the business would be operating from has been built, although it is much smaller than intended.
- d) There is no electricity yet at the premise, although NORED was paid by the implementing agency to provide the business with electricity. The delay in the provision of electricity was also due to measurements which were done based on the original amount of N\$700,00.00.
- e) The Committee had questions pertaining to the financing and monitoring of the project that such matters were dealt with at the Ministry's head office in Windhoek. It was noted that, in most instances the Ministry's head office, dealt directly with the project members.
- f) The beneficiaries expressed frustration over the insufficient funding to start the project, arguing that the situation has contributed to delays in starting up with the operation. The beneficiaries felt cheated, they stated that they were trained and were clear on what had to be done. They further expressed gratitude for the Committee's visit, calling on the Committee to intervene and assist since they are required to begin paying back the loan and with the business not operating, it would be difficult for them to pay.

#### **4.2.3 Oshakati East Best Youth Trading (Oshana Region)**

- a) The Oshakati East Best Youth Trading is a brick manufacturing business, primarily focused on producing blocks of bricks. The business was initiated in 2018, but operations only commenced in September 2023. The beneficiary whom the Committee met at the site is the sole remaining beneficiary, following the abandonment of the project by the other youth which were initially involved.
- b) The business received machinery valued at N\$260,000, including concrete mixers, spades, wheelbarrows and a delivery truck, with N\$60,000 allocated for operational capital. The business currently produces approximately 2500 bricks weekly and 500 per day. It has three permanent employees, who are Brick Layers.
- a) The business faces significant transport challenges due to a truck breakdown, forcing the beneficiary to rent a truck for business operations, particularly the transportation of water and sand. It also need land to operate from, currently, the project is operating on rented piece of land owned by the beneficiary's brother.
- b) The business is not as profitable as expected, and the beneficiary reported a lack of support from the Ministry, hindering its growth.

#### **4.2.4 Oshikuku Youth Development**

- a) The Oshikuku Youth Enterprise, which manufactures aluminium windows and doors, received materials worth N\$450,000 inclusive N\$80,000 capital and a pickup truck. The business, however, is plagued by poor financial management, internal disputes among beneficiaries, and a lack of profitability. The enterprise's financial management has deteriorated, with an outstanding loan repayment and a bank account closure.
- b) The business has faced dishonesty and poor financial accountability, with funds diverted to unrelated activities like organizing a Youth Expo and taxi business. Beneficiaries reported a lack of proper training and support from the Ministry. The relationship with the Ministry was once positive, but the lack of communication about the enterprise's troubles has contributed to its downfall.
- c) The committee discovered that 50% of the beneficiaries lacked the necessary skills and experience to effectively carry out business activities. They attributed this to insufficient training and a lack of support from the relevant authorities. It was also found that only two of the beneficiaries had access to the enterprise's bank account.

- d) On November 30, 2023, the enterprise withdrew N\$5,000 from its funds to organise and participate in a Youth Expo, which diverted resources from the core business activities. The money was spent on merchandise such as beverages and a goat, among other things. As the situation worsened, one of the beneficiaries requested and was granted N\$5,000 to start a restaurant in Omaadi village, signalling her intent to leave the enterprise. Another beneficiary, was granted N\$2,000 to pay for her school registration.
- e) The committee further discovered that the loan payments were not being managed properly, resulting in the closure of the enterprise's bank account. Additionally, the enterprise owns land in Oshikuku town where it was meant to operate, but there is no proper structure in place. Instead, they are using the land to manufacture bricks. The enterprise is currently paying a monthly rent of N\$1,500. Since 2018, the enterprise has had a good working relationship with the ministry; however, the ministry was not made aware of the difficulties the enterprise has been facing.
- f) The constituency office, through the office of the regional Councillor, had initiated a meeting with all the beneficiaries before the release of funds. The constituency office was supposed to be included as signatories on the bank account. However, in a surprising turn, the office was not notified when the funds were released and only learned about it when the money had already been exhausted. The constituency office now felt side-lined

#### **4.2.5 Ondobe Youth Enterprise**

- a) The Ondobe Youth Enterprise is a brick manufacturing and construction business. The enterprise has faced transport issues and is struggling with loan repayments due to low business activity. The initiative was launched in 2018 and it was granted a loan of N\$350,000.00, with a remaining balance of N\$ 28,000.00 still held in the NANTU-Likwafela account. With these funds, the youth were able to construct a corrugated sheet workshop, purchase two brick-making machines, and buy a pickup bakkie.
- b) Unfortunately, the bakkie, valued at N\$100,000.00, was involved in an accident. The accident report has been filed at Ondobe Police Station, and photographs of the incident have been shared with the Youth Officer. It was noted that the pickup bakkie was not insured. The enterprise owns land, which was donated to them by the village

headman. The project has created employment opportunities for local community members.

- c) The committee learned that the enterprise is facing transport challenges. As a result, the profits generated are being used to cover transportation costs for deliveries. However, this situation has motivated the youth to work towards purchasing a small vehicle for the business to help with transport needs. The enterprise is struggling to secure construction tenders at the national level, which they believe would help ease the burden of repaying their loan.
- d) Due to slow business and ongoing transport issues, the enterprise is currently making smaller loan repayments of between N\$2,500.00 and N\$3,500.00 per month, instead of the agreed-upon monthly repayment of over N\$ 7,000.00. The beneficiaries reported a positive and supportive relationship with the ministry.

#### **4.2.6 Oshikango Youth Trading Enterprise**

- a) Oshikango Youth Project is located in Oshikango, Ohangwena Region. The Oshikango Youth Project is a carpentry enterprise that has faced significant delays, as the business has not yet begun operations despite being initiated in 2018. The project has received funds for constructing a workshop and installation of utilities, but it is still awaiting additional funding to begin manufacturing.
- b) The enterprise is comprised of six members, three women and three men, including: This carpentry enterprise was established in 2018. However, the business has yet to begin operations, with only land acquired from the village headman and an empty workshop built on the site. The enterprise is still waiting for a final quote for its core business materials from the Development Bank of Namibia.
- c) To date, the enterprise has received N\$108,353.22, which was allocated for the construction of a workshop, including the installation of electricity from The Northern Regional Electricity Distributor (NORED). Water and electricity are already connected to the workshop. Manufacturing has not yet commenced due to outstanding funds from the project implementing agent, NANTU-Likwafela. The enterprise requested a total of N\$250,000.00 to move forward with its operations.
- d) The enterprise is also facing transport challenges for the delivery of materials. Another concern raised was that some beneficiaries are losing interest in the project due to the

long waiting periods for payments from NANTU-Likwafela. The beneficiaries received training through the Ministry, but some of them are frustrated with the delays in progress. Initially, the beneficiaries requested four bank signatories for transparency, but the bank only provided two. At the time of the committee's visit, the enterprise's account held only N\$ 4,000.00.

#### **4.2.7 *Brick and Block Outjo***

- a) Brick and Block Outjo is a brick making business with five (5) beneficiaries comprising of two (2) females and three (3) males. The enterprise began operating in 2018 but only received a loan amount of N\$590,000.00 in November 2023 for operational equipment and N\$22,000 as start-up income.
- b) It produces two types of bricks used for the foundation and construction of houses. There are plans to build a small structure to rent out as flats from which it would also benefit as business pending approval from the municipality.
- c) The business had challenges in obtaining land, water and electricity which delayed the early start of the business, but have since been addressed. Currently, the operation is being challenged due to the broken brick making machine.
- d) Work is distributed among all the beneficiaries, and each beneficiary has a duty to perform of which the two (2) ladies does administrative work, one of the male has a car and does the pick-up and delivery job and the other one does logistics of the business and the last beneficiary does the marketing and sale of the business.
- e) The beneficiaries are receiving entrepreneurial training from a company sponsored by the Development Bank of Namibia, and the training is based on financial management of small enterprises.
- f) Currently, the business is not profitable to pay salaries but have secured some contracts from some schools and the new developments in Outjo. There would be 300 plots availed not far from where the business operates from which it would likely benefit due to the interest shown in the business. The enterprise intends to settle the loan in the next three (3) years starting from end of October 2024.

### 4.3 NAMIBIA YOUTH CREDIT SCHEME PROJECTS

- a) The **Namibia Youth Credit Scheme (NYCS)** is a government initiative designed to empower unemployed and out-of-school Namibian youth aged 18 to 35 by providing them with financial support and entrepreneurial training to start or expand their businesses. The Key Features of NYCS include:
- b) **Loan Amounts:** Loans range from N\$2,000 to N\$100,000, repayable over 36 months.
- c) **Group Lending Model:** Applicants form groups of 5–10 individuals from the same community, fostering mutual accountability
- d) **Training:** Participants undergo a two-week Basic Business Management course before applying for loans.
- e) **Mentorship and Monitoring:** Ongoing support is provided through mentoring and follow-up training based on individual needs.
- f) **Eligibility Criteria:**
- Namibian citizens aged 18–35
  - Unemployed and out-of-school
  - Willingness to become entrepreneurs
  - Parental or guardian recommendation
- g) **Application Process:**
- i) **Registration:** Interested youth register with an implementing agency or the youth office in their region
  - ii) **Training:** Attend a two-week Basic Business Management course.
  - iii) **Business Plan Submission:** After training, submit a business plan to the implementing agency.
  - iv) **Documentation:** Provide copies of identification documents and obtain approval from local Constituency Councillors.

The Committee visited and assessed the following youth projects funded under the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme:

### 4.3.1 Project Visited in the Selected Regions:

Project	Location	Amount	Loan Repayment	Status	Challenges
1.Barber Shop	Omuthiya, Omusati Region	N\$8,000.00	Yes (N\$800p/m)	The business has been operating smoothly and is profitable. There are two employees and maintains proper financial records	Lack of ownership of land. Pays a monthly rent of N\$750.
2.Barber Shop	Omuthiya, Omusati Region		Has not begun repaying his loan	Operational and employs two employees, but does not maintain proper financial records	Insufficient funds for business improvements
3.Salon	Tsumeb, Otjozondjupa Region	N\$3000.00	The salon has been operating for twenty (20) years and the business has graduated. Generates income of N\$4000 to N\$6000 per month	Fully paid (N\$3600)	Can no longer benefits as she is above 35
4.Photo Shop	Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa	N\$7813.00	Yes, paid N\$350 but to increase end September to N\$1500	Yes,	business does not make any profit to pay salaries as it is still at the developing stage.
5.Dry Cleaning – Grootfontein – provides laundry services	N\$20.000.00 and bought a mashing machine	Matured business, loan fully paid	Operational and employs seven (7) employees. Getting a salary of N\$1500.00 per month.	Yes, project is matured	Needs the industrial machine because the vacuum machine only worked for six (6) months and ceased. The small machine cannot wash heave duty laundry such as blankets. water is currently closed at the building

					the business is operating from.
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### **Khoi Roots Farming CC**

- a) Khoi Roots Farming CC is an agricultural enterprise based in the northern townlands of Outjo Municipality in Kunene Region. The company focuses on horticulture, poultry production, and Lucerne cultivation, aiming to contribute to local food security and economic development.
- b) In alignment with Namibia's Environmental Management Act, Khoi Roots Farming CC commissioned an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in April 2024 to assess the potential environmental impacts of its agricultural activities.
- c) The project received a medium-risk rating (Category B) and was issued an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC), indicating that, with appropriate mitigation measures, the environmental impacts are manageable.
- d) The project was funded under the Youth Credit Scheme and it was started by two young passionate and motivated girls from Rehoboth. One of the girls benefited from the NYCS in 2008 and travelled to Outjo in search of a land for the Agribusiness to produce Lucerne because there is no Lucerne supplier or any proper animal nutrition within a 100 kilometres radius from Outjo.
- e) The business received an amount N\$26,049 towards the de-bushing of the area. Currently the beneficiaries are leasing a 20 hectares from the Municipality of Outjo, with the four (4) years passed they have asked for extension for another five (5) years with the Municipality. In July 2024, the equipment which the Ministry procured for the clearing of the land was stolen while the girls were away for a funeral. They approached the Ministry for additional assistance and they were assisted.
- f) The Ministry have a keen interest in this project as the would like to be one of the project of focus due to its potential to employ other youth in the community. Hence, the Ministry have been providing financial and other support to the beneficiaries, including a N\$2,000 monthly allowance.
- g) The Ministry constructed a suitable accommodation with two rooms, a small kitchen, a toilet and a water tank as well as building a stand for the water tank.
- h) The Outjo Town Council pledged to support the youth with water for six months starting from January 2025 and they have started supplying the water.

- i) The borehole which the beneficiary requested from the Ministry was also recommended including a Bulldozer to help clean five hectares for the plantation.
- j) The Ministry will also relook into the Lease Agreement to see how other youth in the constituency could be included in the project.

## **5. NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE TRAINING CENTERS AND GARDEN PRODUCTION**

The Committee visited the following NYS Centres in order to familiarise itself with the work of the National Youth Service training and garden production centres.

### **5.1 *Henties Bay Training Centre***

- a) The Centre is based in the Erongo region and was constructed and completed in 2013. The Centre has a total area of 200 hectares, with a maximum capacity of 700. The Centre hosts a number of activities ranging from training (National Service Training and Skill Training (TVET), Voluntary Service and a small garden for self-feeding). The first training at the centre commenced in 2014. The Centre consist of 57 Staff of which 39 are male and 18 are female including the manager, admin, cooks, NDF, Nampol, NCS Assistant, Instructors, Interns and Security etc.
- b) The Service recruited 763 youth for its 15<sup>th</sup> intake training, 43 youth resigned from the programme and the current strength of the 15<sup>th</sup> intake recruits is 720. To meet its mandate, NYS offers a three-phase programme namely National Service Training, Voluntary Service and Skills Training (TVET) to the youth. The entry requirements are Grade 10 with twenty-three (23) points, Grade 11 with twenty-one (21) points and Grade 12 with twenty (20) points. The recruits are fed four (4) meals per day and their training starts at 04h00 am with physical exercises and continues with classes that starts from 07h00 to 09h45 am.
- c) The NST Curriculum consist of 20 modules and the TVET intake starts from phase 1 up to phase 3. In 2023 the 14<sup>th</sup> intake had three hundred and ten (310) recruits while the 15<sup>th</sup> intake in 2024 had seven hundred and twenty (720) recruits of which thirty-four (34) recruits resigned. Thus far the Centre recruited seven thousand three hundred and two (7302) youth of which six thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine (6839) completed the

training. The duration of the training is 6 to 12 months, due to limited space at TVET only 200 intakes for a period of three (3) years.

- d) Modules used are compulsory but a translator is used for the marginalised to use their vernacular language as the marginalised cannot be excluded. After each training it is compulsory for each trainee to go for voluntary work and a data base is kept for it to indicate and trace who has done voluntary work and who not.
- e) The Committee was informed that with the current intake criteria more youth are still left out as the centre does not have enough space and tools to accommodate all. Therefore, currently a classroom intake is used to accommodate a few extra youths.
- f) The criteria of the Grade 10, 11, and 12 intakes is due to the requirements of correctional services, police etc. they influence the intake and the marginalised are recruited as per the act. The current employment act of NYS allows all the youth trained to be absorbed into the clusters, but this does not happen because Namibian Police Force (NAMPOL), Namibian Defence Force (NDF) and Correctional services though the Centre writes to them to absorb these youths but they do not want to follow the NYS Act in order to recruit them.

## **5.2 Eunda Production Garden (Omusati Region)**

- a) Eunda Production Garden focuses on horticulture project producing variety of crops such as cabbage, tomatoes, spinach, and other vegetables which are sold to several community business owners. The youth are actively involved in the production and where needed, the centre use people from the community to assist.
- b) The seeds provided to the project is not enough, and chemicals to spray on the crops is a need that was requested on 15 April 2024, emails were sent but up to now they did not respond. Response towards the issues and challenges takes very long.
- c) The farm is very big, but the labourers are few. Therefore, there is a need for additional employment. The Committee was further informed that the machine used to pump water and the irrigation pipes are wearing out. Making the process of watering the seeds challenging, because it takes about 30 minutes to pump water, also take another 30 minutes to transfer of water from one point to another. The project needs additional sprinklers.
- d) On the basis of accommodation provided for the workers, there is a challenge of the toilets and showers being out of order. This is a serious health threat, however they have

reported this issue already, but nothing was done so far. Currently they are using mobile toilets.

- e) The beneficiaries in conclusion informed the Committee that they cannot disclose some of the information the Committee is requiring from them as they are not allowed to do so. They could not share as to how long the toilets and showers are out of order.

### ***5.3 Omauni Production Garden***

- a) The Omauni Production Garden is a rain-fed irrigation garden primarily focusing on Mahangu production which is a key crop in Namibia. The garden is located in the Okongo constituency of Ohangwena Region. The garden employs three permanent staff members, alongside two security guards. Additionally, there are 70 trainees from the National Youth Service (NYS) involved.
- b) It produces between 200 to 500 50kg bags of Mahangu each season. Spanning 200 hectares, the garden sells its produce to the Agro-marketing Trade Agency (AMTA). Currently, the production is reliant on a single tractor, which is used for both ploughing and sowing. The committee found that this arrangement is challenging for the employees, and the addition of another tractor would significantly ease the workload.
- c) The committee was also informed that the tractor frequently runs out of fuel, causing further disruptions to the operation. In a concerning discovery, the committee found that the staff accommodation, storage, and ablution facilities are in a poor and dilapidated state, requiring urgent attention.
- d) Furthermore, the committee identified the need to upgrade the flashing machine to improve efficiency. The garden hires 10 casual workers to assist with the operations, who are paid N\$50.00 per day.

### ***5.4 Berg- Aukas Production Garden***

- a) The Berg Aukas Production Garden is an agricultural initiative located approximately 18 km northeast of Grootfontein in the Otjozondjupa Region. Spanning 308 hectares, the farm cultivates white and yellow maize, along with various vegetables such as cabbages, onions, and spinach.

- b) The Garden plays a significant role in youth empowerment by providing vocational training and employment opportunities in agriculture. Additionally, it contributes to local food production, supporting community sustenance and economic development.
- c) The farm's water supply is vulnerable due to aging infrastructure. For instance, the failure of critical pumps that feed water from the old Berg Aukas Mine into the Eastern National Water Carrier has disrupted irrigation and livestock watering, affecting agricultural productivity.
- d) The NYS faces broader challenges, including limited funding and resource constraints, which impact the maintenance and expansion of facilities like the Berg Aukas Production Garden. These constraints hinder the implementation of necessary remediation measures and the provision of adequate training resources

## **6. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS**

### **6.1 The 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises Initiative**

- a) The Ministry of Youth, Sports and National Service took a bold step towards addressing youth unemployment and fostering economic growth through entrepreneurship for the initiative to establish 121 constituency-based youth enterprises which was launched in 2017.
- b) The program aimed at promoting youth-led employment and entrepreneurship across all constituencies, is aligned with the Harambee Prosperity Plan and National Development Plan (NDP5).
- c) Each enterprise was intended to consist of 5 to 10 unemployed young individuals from the respective constituency, supported by local Councillors and trained in project management and basic finance.
- d) Constituency Councillors are not actively involved with youth projects in their respective constituencies to provide support and guidance. They are only called upon once there are challenges encountered with either the beneficiaries or the Ministry.
- e) Beneficiaries were not adequately trained to manage the business, particularly in financial management and bookkeeping, given that most of these youth may not have advanced further in education.

- f) There is a lack of proper coordination, supervision as well as monitoring and evaluation of these projects. Particularly from the side of the Ministry in ensuring that the funds are disbursed to beneficiaries accordingly and revolved in order assist other youth programs. Projects are not well supervised or monitored to ensure that funded projects are provided with all the necessary support in order to operate effectively. The Ministry acknowledged the shortcomings and committed to address the issues.
- g) There is slow rollout of the 121 youth enterprises as only 28 Constituencies has benefited thus far. The Ministry cited funding as the major challenge and cause of the slow roll-out of the initiative to other remaining constituencies.
- h) The module of grouping young people (5 to 10) to work together on a project may not be effective as the Committee found on the ground that some beneficiaries are not serious and cooperative, some lose interest and abandon projects, making it difficult for the remaining beneficiaries to operate the business as intended.
- i) Most beneficiaries are dissatisfied with lack of support and services from the implementing agent, NANTU-Likwafela. In addition, there are delays in the payment of loans by NANTU-Likwafela, and some projects still have outstanding balances that still need to be paid by the implementing agent. The delay in the payment of loans have negatively affected some of the projects, resulting in late commencement and or in beneficiaries abandoning the businesses for greener pastures.
- j) Some implementing agents that the Ministry has contracted for both the 121 Constituency Youth Enterprises and the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme lack capacity. It was reported that some of these implementing agents do not have the capacity to carry out its facilitating and supporting role. Some of the agents do not even have offices (brief-case based) and some are based in Windhoek and thus not easily accessible by the beneficiaries.
- k) The government does not have the capacity to facilitate these funding initiatives. Hence, the need to contract a private implementing agent to facilitate the loans and support beneficiaries. As a result, NANTU-Likwafela was contracted for the 121 constituency enterprises. With regard to the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme, there are several implementing agents serving different regions.
- l) NANTU-Likwafela is an established entity that was formed by teachers to manage the loan scheme.
- m) Most of the projects are struggling to repay the loans as many of the businesses were not fully funded to operate at the level intended and as per the business plan. Some

projects have started paying back, however, they are paying less than they are expected to pay monthly due to various challenges including lack of office/operating space, forcing some to have to operate from rented premises.

- n) Some projects are still incomplete and are awaiting final payments in order to start operating. It was also found that some of the business proposals were not funded based on their business proposal as their initial fund request was reduced and this affected the operation of the projects.
- o) Some projects showed risks of mishandling of funds and therefore raised a concern and need for the financial books to be audited. Majority of the projects visited have not demonstrated prudent financial management, as most do not even have financial records.

## **6.2 NYS Training and Production Centres**

- a) The National Youth Service, established under the National Youth Service Act of 2005, aims to empower youth through civic education, skills training, and national service. However, the legal framework governing the NYS presents several challenges that impact its effectiveness and alignment with contemporary youth development needs.
- b) The Act, has not undergone significant revisions to address the evolving socio-economic landscape and the current needs of Namibian youth. This stagnation limits the NYS's ability to adapt its programs and services effectively.
- c) There are infrastructure and equipment challenges at some of the NYS training and production. Some equipment is old and some are non-functioning.
- d) There is lack of accommodation and ablution facilities at some of the NYS centres.
- e) Limited capacity and high demand. In the 2023/24 financial year, the NYS received 5,556 applications but could only recruit 310 youths due to resource constraints. This means that over 90% of applicants were turned away, highlighting a significant gap between demand and available capacity.
- f) Inadequate financial resources to fund its programs. This financial shortfall limits the expansion of training programs and the provision of necessary support services to recruits.
- g) Nearly half of NYS graduates struggle to secure employment after completing the program. This raises concerns about the alignment of the skills provided with the

current labor market demands and the overall effectiveness of the program in enhancing employability.

- h) Namibia's economy faces challenges in job creation, struggling to generate sufficient employment opportunities for its fast-growing workforce. This broader economic context affects the NYS's ability to place graduates into meaningful employment.

### **6.3 Namibia Youth Credit Scheme**

- a) The Namibia Youth Credit Scheme is a government initiative aimed at empowering unemployed youth aged 18 to 35 by providing them with financial support and entrepreneurial training to start or expand their businesses. While the program has positively impacted some beneficiaries, several challenges have been identified that hinder its overall effectiveness.
- b) Many youth entrepreneurs face difficulties accessing loans due to stringent lending criteria and lack of collateral. Although the NYCS aims to address this issue, the demand for financial support often exceeds the available resources, limiting the program's reach.
- c) The NYCS lacks robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress and impact of funded projects. This deficiency hampers the ability to assess the effectiveness of the program and make necessary adjustments.
- d) Beneficiaries have reported challenges with high loan repayment rates and inflexible repayment schedules, which can be burdensome, especially during the initial stages of business development. These stringent terms may discourage participation and increase the risk of default.
- e) Beyond financial assistance, many young entrepreneurs require additional support, such as mentorship, business development services, and market access. The absence of comprehensive support services can limit the success and sustainability of youth-led enterprises.
- f) Discrepancies in the appointment of implementing agencies and the absence of clear contractual obligations between the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service and beneficiaries have been noted. These administrative issues can lead to inconsistencies in program delivery and accountability.

## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) The committee's assessment of youth empowerment programs under the Ministry of Youth, Sports, and National Service highlights both progress and areas for improvement. The National Youth Policy III outlines strategies for education, employment, civic participation, and health to mainstream youth development into the national agenda.
- b) The Committee observed positive strides in youth education and skills development, with structured programs aimed at enhancing employability. However, there are challenges in economic empowerment, particularly in access to funding and sustainable business opportunities.
- c) There is therefore a need for stronger monitoring and evaluation to ensure programs effectively address youth needs and adapt to changing economic conditions. The Committee emphasises the importance of collaboration between government, private sector, and NGOs to create a more inclusive and impactful youth empowerment framework.

### 7.1 Recommendations:

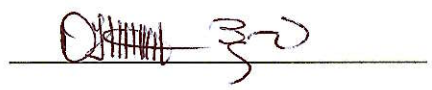
- 7.1.1 While the Development Bank of Namibia has provided initial funding for training, many youth enterprises still struggle with access to affordable capital. Implementing skills-based lending facilities and microcredit programs tailored to youth can bridge this gap. Such initiatives, aligned with the Harambee Prosperity Plan, can stimulate youth entrepreneurship and address financial constraints. It is therefore **recommended** that the **Ministry explore ways to expands access to finance and microcredit in order to accommodate more youth entrepreneurs.**
- 7.1.2 **Ministry to strengthen entrepreneurial training and mentorship to youth entrepreneurs.** Building training and mentorship programs is crucial to offer continuous mentorship and practical business skills training. Collaborations with institutions such as the University of Namibia can provide youth with the necessary skills to become entrepreneurs, enter the business world, or engage in community development.
- 7.1.3 Incorporating digital literacy and technology training into youth enterprise programs can significantly boost productivity and market reach. **The Ministry should therefore, enhance digital and technological capacity equipping young entrepreneurs with digital skills, leading to increased business performance and confidence.**

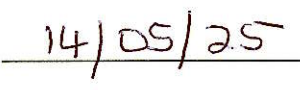
- 7.1.4 **The Ministry to decentralize key support services to the regions by establishing localised entrepreneurship hubs to support the youth.** Creating entrepreneurship centers in each constituency can serve as innovation hubs, providing resources such as co-working spaces, internet access, and business advisory services.
- 7.1.5 **The Ministry to promote sector diversification** in order to encourage youth enterprises to venture into diverse sectors like agriculture, creative arts, and sports which can open new economic opportunities.
- 7.1.6 **The Ministry to implement monitoring and evaluation systems.** Establishing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks can help track the progress of youth enterprises, identify challenges, and inform policy adjustments. Regular assessments ensure that support mechanisms remain effective and responsive to the needs of young entrepreneurs.
- 7.1.6 **The Ministry to consider fostering Public-Private Partnerships to collaborate with private sector entities** in order to provide youth enterprises with mentorship, market access, and additional funding opportunities.
- 7.1.7 Conduct a comprehensive review of the National Youth Service Act to update its provisions, ensuring they align with current youth development strategies and socio-economic realities.
- 7.1.8 NYS to be allocated more financial resources in order to expand its capacity to train and support more youths.
- 7.1.9 NYS Training Program to be aligned to ensure that the skills and training provided are aligned with current labour market needs in order to improve graduate employability.
- 7.1.10 NYS to strengthen partnerships by collaborating with private sector stakeholders to create more opportunities for internships and job placements for NYS graduates.
- 7.1.11 NYS Training programme to also consider school drop outs and not only focus on grade 10 intake. For example, grade 9s who can also equally to benefit from this training.
- 7.1.12 NYS to prioritise infrastructure upgrades at its centres and invest in repairing and upgrading water supply infrastructure to ensure reliable irrigation at the productions centres.
- 7.1.13 The Ministry to review the loan payments done by NANTU-Likwafela thus far in order to ensure that the outstanding payments are made to beneficiaries.

- 7.1.14 The Ministry to enhance access to Credit by developing youth-friendly financing mechanisms that consider the unique circumstances of young entrepreneurs, including micro-loans and grant opportunities.
- 7.1.15 The Ministry to provide comprehensive support services and offer additional services such as mentorship, business development training, and market linkage support to enhance the success of youth enterprises.
- 7.1.16 The Ministry to improve administrative processes in order to establish clear guidelines and contractual agreements between the Ministry and beneficiaries to ensure transparency and accountability in program implementation.

## **7. SIGNING OFF THE REPORT**

This report has been discussed by the Committee Members and content thereof, has been verified and agreed upon. The Chairperson of the Committee signed this report off on behalf of the Standing Committee Members.

  
***Honourable Olivia T. Hanghuwo***  
***Chairperson of the Committee***

  
***Date***