



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

**BUDGET MOTIVATION
2025/2026 FINANCIAL YEAR**

VOTE 29

BY

HON. EMMA THEOFELUS, MP

MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

7 May 2025

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

As I rise to motivate Vote 29 - Information and Communication Technology on this day, I want to speak on the backdrop of the World Press Freedom Day celebrations being held currently in Brussels on the occasion of the inscription of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration into the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. This is a huge milestone for Namibia, as we are being recognised for our role in upholding press freedom in this country and how we set a great example for Africa and the rest of the world. Congratulations to Namibia!

I would like to congratulate H.E President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on becoming our First Female Elected President and in entrusting me with the responsibility to lead at the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology.

I am grateful to the former Deputy Minister Hon. Modestus Amutse and to the Executive Director Dr. Audrin Mathe and the entire team for assisting me in steering this very important institution at different times in the past and for this 8th administration. This budget will be the first step towards our quest to “champion Information and Communication Technology for socio- economic-development” as per the vision of the Ministry of ICT and I applaud the Minister of Finance, the Director General of the National Planning Commission and their teams for helping curate this development focused budget.

Just to provide a brief overview of the current ICT landscape, I will delve into some key ICT notables.

The development and expansion of digital infrastructure addresses key national priorities by enhancing broadband access, reducing the digital divide and fostering economic growth through innovation and technology-driven industries. Namibia's overall 4G population coverage stands at 88.4%, a notable increase from 85% in 2022. High coverage is more in the urban areas as opposed to the rural areas.

As of January 2024, Namibia had an internet penetration rate of approximately 62.2%, equating to about 1.63 million users. This represents a significant increase from previous years, highlighting the country's commitment to closing the digital divide.

Namibia's fibre optic network stretches to 18,719.5 km, which is still low. This is due to delays from the Local Authorities for approval for the digging of trenches in their respective towns. Furthermore, rolling out of fibre optic network is not economically viable for operators, thus they choose not to invest in them. Low fibre networks roll-out may also be attributed to lower demand or population density.

In 2022, radio was still used more regularly than television despite a 10% drop compared to 2019. Radio was also the main source of news for Namibians with 40.7% identifying it as the main source of news. Unexpectedly, the internet (23.6%) was the second most used source for news. Notably, television (21.2%) and newspapers (12%) were used less than radio or the internet.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

I now present to you our plans to create a dynamic, collaborative and progressive ICT environment through efficient service delivery that fosters access to information in a digital economy for the next 12 months.

The ICT Ministry received a total appropriation of Eight Hundred and Ninety-Eight Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-Five Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$898,455,000.00) for the 2025/2026 financial year. These funds are earmarked towards the Ministry's operational and capital expenditure, including subsidy provision to the Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA), Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and the New Era Publication Corporation (NEPC).

Herewith follows a summary of the exact allocation per programme.

Programme 1: Information and Communication Technology Development an amount of Sixteen Million Nine Hundred and Eighty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$16,988,000.00) to develop and facilitate the implementation of ICT policies and laws, as well as coordinate ICT infrastructure development. Furthermore, under this Programme, we strive to bridge the digital divide through remote Rural Information Communication Technology Centres.

Specifically, for the 2025/2026 financial year, we want to witness the full operationalisation of the Electronic Transactions Act, Act number 4 of 2019. Therefore, the Electronic Information Systems Management Advisory Council will establish the Online Consumer Affairs Committee. We remain committed to modernising public service delivery and accelerating Namibia's digital footprint. Therefore, we are taking decisive steps to enable secure and trusted digital transactions. The implementation of secure and accredited E-Signatures will allow for the digital validation of documents across Government and the private sector, significantly reducing reliance on manual processes and handwritten signatures.

Furthermore, **Fourty-Million Namibian Dollars (N\$40,000,000)** will be disbursed to the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia for the establishment of Radio Access Network (RAN) sites through the Universal Service Fund. This will support the deployment of mobile broadband and voice networks at **15** sites, prioritising **22 schools** and **2** clinics in line with the Universal Policy and Regulations. These sites will be at the Omuhongo Clinic and Epembe in the Ohangwena Region and Okankolo in Oshikoto Region; Nehale LyaMpingana, Onayena and Okankolo in the Oshikoto Region; Ruacana in the Omusati Region; Mukwe in the Kavango East; Ombombo Clinic, Epupa and Opuwo Rural in the Kunene Region; Linyati and Kabbe South in the Zambezi Region; Kalahari in the Omaheke Region; Berseba in the //Karas Region and Omatako and Tsumkwe in the Otjozondjupa Region. This will also include the provision Public WIFI hotspots at all RAN sites.

I must clarify Hon. Chairperson that this list is not exhaustive and we endeavour to expand to as many constituencies with poor or no network coverage in this financial year with our partners such as MTC and Powercom.

Programme 1 will also cater for the continued operations of the Namibia Cybersecurity Incidence Response Team (Nam-CSIRT) as the focal point for cybersecurity matters in the country, while the National Cybersecurity Strategy and Awareness Raising Plan will be implemented to promote safer online behaviour and instil a culture of cyber hygiene among the citizens. This will include the development of the model for organisational Cybersecurity hygiene policies and Child Online Protection Guidelines/Toolkit. The Cybercrime Bill and amendments to the Communications Act will also be tabled in Parliament in the current financial year.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

The Ministry undertakes to finalise the reviewed National Broadband Policy to increase the broadband speed from 2Mbps to a minimum download of 25Mbps and 3Mbps upload.

Of late, matters relating to the protection of citizens' rights to privacy and the issue of personal data protection has been of paramount interest to all netizens. Therefore, once discussed at the Cabinet Committee on Legislation, the Data Protection Bill will be tabled in Parliament in the 2025/2026 financial year.

For the preservation of a national eco-system and national security, preliminary work on the National Data Center will commence during the current financial year.

Other matters receiving our close attention include data costs, cost of devices such as smart phones and building the necessary skill set for a prepared and secure cyber nation especially the question of ICT technicians and their recognition including remuneration in the public service and in the ICT industry in general.

Lastly, Programme 1 intends to implement the directive by H.E Dr. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, the President of the Republic of Namibia, to develop a Database of Information Technology experts in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, as stated in Her Excellency's recently delivered State of the Nation Address.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

Programme 2: Print Media Affairs

This programme will receive an allocation of **Twenty-One Million Two Hundred and Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$21,209 000.00)** to enhance unhindered access to information through the coordination of Government communication as well as the timely and effective communication of Government policies, programmes and projects to the public through various platforms.

Through the Nationhood and National Pride Programme, the Ministry will soon roll out a behavioural change communication campaign themed **#EndGBVNamibia** to address growing incidences of GBV in our country. The Ministry will also champion campaigns such as Ethical Use of Social Media, Anti-Poaching, National Symbols and Clean-Up Namibia.

To ensure uniformity and consistency in Government branding and communication, we are finalising the Government Corporate Identity Manual. This manual will standardise how public entities represent themselves - across logos, typography, colours, official documentation, signage and digital platforms.

Honourable Members,

With the enactment of the Access to Information Law and its accompanying Regulations, we have made budgetary provision to ensure that the implementation is not only legally sound, but also practically feasible. Our Ministry has now passed the baton to the National Assembly to ensure that Information Commissioner and his/her Deputy are appointed as per the law.

Honourable Members,

We have embarked on a project called 'Brand Namibia' which is an outward looking initiative that aims at promoting a positive image about Namibia as an ideal destination for investment, tourism and film production. This initiative carried out in partnership with other institutions such as the Ministry of International Relations and Trade, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), Namibia Tourism Board etc. Through the Brand Namibia and the Nationhood and National Pride Programme, Namibians will be able to tell their story to the world.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

An amount of Twenty-Seven Million Five Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$27,500,000.00) is allocated to the New Era Publication Corporation (NEPC) to ensure access to credible and timely public information, particularly in regions with limited digital infrastructure.

The budget will go towards existing circulation systems which will be upgraded to add additional functionality that will enable the company to manage the distribution, tracking and overall logistics of delivering newspapers to outlets and subscribers more efficiently. Additionally, a portion of the capital budget has been allocated to the renovation and refurbishment of the Corporation's investment properties (Head Office and Ongwediva Office) as well as the improved operational support.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

We now move onto **Programme 3: Audio-Visual Media and Regional Offices which has been allocated an amount of Eighty-One Million Nine Hundred and Thirteen Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$81,913,000.00)** to provide a range of multi-media products and services. In addition, under this Programme we undertake efforts to promote Namibia as a preferred film destination internationally while developing the local film industry.

Under Programme 3, the Ministry has **allocated Seven Million, Five Hundred Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$7,500,000.00)** to the **Namibia Film Commission Secretariat (NFC)**, for the Namibia Film and Video Development Fund. The Ministry intends to facilitate the transformation of NFC autonomy and this includes the amendment to the NFC Act and drafting of regulations to ensure sustainability of the Commission and formalisation of the film sector.

Honourable Members,

Additionally, Programme 3 provides for **the Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)** which will receive an amount of **Three Hundred and Sixty-One Million Eight Hundred Fifty-Three Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$361,853,000.00)** for their Operational Budget and **One Hundred and Fourty Million Namibian Dollars (N\$140,000,000.00)** towards their Development Budget. The allocated budget will support various projects and production activities, all aimed at enhancing NBC's operational efficiency, content delivery and service to the Namibian public.

Direct Operational Costs account for 26 percent of NBC's operational budget. NBC has since on-boarded temporary contract employees, hence a reduction in their operational costs.

In addition to the above, as part of NBC's key initiatives for 2025/2026, the Broadcaster intends to usher in new Television Channels on NBC which cover the following amongst others:

1. **Dedicated Parliamentary Coverage:** A dedicated television channel will be introduced for the Parliamentary proceedings to ensure broader access, especially for the rural communities without TV or smart devices. The NBC will explore the options to enhance the broadcast proceedings on radio. This channel will cater for both the National Assembly and the National Council – NBC does not generate any revenue from this.
2. **Education and Priority Content.**
3. **Local Content Commissioning on Television and Radio.**
4. **National and Special Event Coverage.**

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

Moving on, Programme 3 also gives provision for the allocation of an amount of **Twenty-Seven Million and Seven Hundred and Six Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$27,706,000.00)** to the Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA) to embark upon news and information dissemination initiatives that will effectively ensure that the Namibian Story is told comprehensively, accurately and objectively.

Furthermore, as directed by Cabinet, the Ministry will undertake to consolidate the Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA) and New Era Publication Corporation (NEPC) into one entity.

Honourable Chairperson,

Last but not least, an amount of **Eighty-Two Million Eighty-Four Thousand, Namibian Dollars (N\$82,084,000.00)** has been allocated to **Programme 4: Coordination and Support** which

renders corporate support services to the Ministry, ensuring its efficient and effective management of general administration.

Furthermore, this Programme is allocated a total **Seventy-Nine Million (N\$79,000,000.00)** for the construction of our Regional Offices and envisaged Head Office. Out of that, **Sixteen Million Namibian Dollar (N\$ 16,000,000.00)** is budgeted for the finalisation of the construction of the Ministry's Hardap Regional Office.

Twelve Million, Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$12,228,000.00) is budgeted for the start of the construction of the //Kharas and Kunene Regional offices. A further **Fifty-One Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 51,000,000.00)** has been allocated for the start of the construction for the MICT Head Office. The latter project started in 2016, however was put on hold due to economic challenges.

**Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,**

I am pleased to submit Vote 29 to this august House for perusal, discussion and endorsement.

Thank You!

