



ETSIP

INFORMATION, ADULT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

[N\$119.1 million]

Background

1. Adult learning and access to relevant information are indispensable contributors to an education that is not limited and tied to formal education. They provide a framework for education and self-education activities at work and in the wider society, within and beyond the classroom, the curriculum and examinations. Social and economic development requires an enabling environment of information provision and management as well as a functional adult education system.
2. This sub-programme addresses the needs of the workers and the un-employed, open and distance students, learners from pre-primary to tertiary level, citizens without educational qualifications and skills, researchers, small entrepreneurs and disadvantaged groups in the society through revised and expanded adult education programmes and more equal and improved access to information and learning resources.
3. The library and information service sector has been globally recognised as a critically important support structure for education, research, knowledge creation, public administration and economic development in knowledge based economies. The necessity to develop the Namibian library and information service sector in view of the KBE is clearly recognised in Vision 2030. This sector has been revolutionised by the use of ICT for information management and the emergence of the internet. Online information has the potential to provide fast, widespread and cost-effective access to an unlimited amount of knowledge. The main problem remains the unequal distribution of access facilities to tap these information and learning resources based on economical and regional inequalities. Libraries, which exist as a free and generally available information service network throughout the country, are the obvious choice for public access points to overcome the digital divide. The ICT Policy in Education and the E-Governance Policy for the Public Service recognise this role for the libraries and the necessity to act on it.
4. The expansion of access to education has created a need for libraries as study centres. In the previously disadvantaged regions and localities the community library users are mainly primary and secondary school learners and open and distance students. This is a general phenomenon on public/community library usage in African countries – they are clearly a support network for the education sector.
5. In this context, this sub-programme will redress inequalities in access to knowledge and learning resources, thus empowering and un-tapping the human potential of the disadvantaged regions and social groups on the way to a learning society and knowledge-based economy.

Achievements

6. *Adult education:* Launched in 1992, the National Literacy Programme (NLP) in Namibia has enrolled 30 000 – 40 000 adult learners per annum in a programme that now includes three stages of basic literacy (roughly equivalent to a lower primary education) and an adult upper primary education certificate. About 70% of participants have been women, leading to specific efforts to increase the number of male participants. On average more than 55% of those enrolled have written and passed end-of-year tests. In recent years the literacy programme has diversified to include (a) Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment; (b) Community Learning and Development Centres; and (c) Family Literacy. In 2004 a National Policy on Adult Learning was adopted.
7. Established by law in 1997 as a semi-autonomous institution, the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) attracts 25 000 – 30 000 learners per year to its alternative secondary education programme. NAMCOL learners write the same examinations as those in formal education, and the rate of improvement of their results has been significantly better than in formal education. NAMCOL has developed high quality localised instruction materials and is generally acknowledged to be a well-managed institution. It is now venturing into computer training and a few professional courses.
8. *Library and information service sector:* Namibia has a network of library and information centres, which has been continuously expanded to cover the previously disadvantaged regions. The network consists of national, special/scientific, academic, educational and community libraries, including also the National Archives. A legal framework exists for staffing and budgeting to sustain this network and facilitate countrywide access to information and study resources as well as for public access, custody and care of official records.

Challenges

9. *Adult education:* With adult literacy rates in Namibia having reached 83% by the year 2003, there appears to be a need for a more widely based adult learning programme that nevertheless still supports the disadvantaged in their efforts to work their way out of poverty. Closer synergies with formal education are being sought. There is a need for an overarching policy on lifelong learning as Namibia pursues its intention of becoming a learning nation.
10. *Library and information service sector:* Access to knowledge and information to all Namibians as required by a KBE, would entail the library and information service network and knowledge management systems to be upgraded and refocused to serve the new economy. This would include expansion of ICT access points to the public, developing new methods and tools and repositioning itself to deliver, countrywide, locally and externally created knowledge to support education, lifelong learning, research, employment creation and production in the new economy.

Priorities

11. The most critical areas to address are outdated policies and legislative and regulatory frameworks that hinder responsiveness to the changing society and requirements of Vision 2030, large inequalities in access to relevant learning and information resources and strategies to widen and improve access to adult education programmes. The supporting priority is to upgrade knowledge management systems to improve access and maintenance of nationally

relevant knowledge, a key requirement for democratic and efficient administration, research, quality education and lifelong learning.

Priority components

Strategic objective A: Ensure that adult and lifelong learning and information service sector programmes are relevant and responsive to the needs of a learning society

Component 1: Strengthen the policy and legal framework for information and lifelong learning

Strategic objectives B, C and E: Expand equitable access to quality information and lifelong learning programmes

Component 2: Improve equity and access to high quality lifelong learning opportunities

Component 3: Improve and strengthen equitable access to information and learning resources

Strategic objective E: Strengthen all information institutions

Component 4: Quality and effectiveness of knowledge management systems

(Note: Only the above mentioned strategic objectives of the 15-year ETSIP Strategic Plan will be covered in the first phase of implementation. The others will be dealt with in subsequent phases. Strategic Objective D was incorporated in the Vocational Training and General Education Sub-Programmes.)

Component 1. Strengthen the policy and legal framework for information and lifelong learning [N\$7.2 million]

12. *Challenges:* Several policies and laws for information and lifelong learning institutions need to be revised in view of the changed circumstances from the early years of independence when they were formulated. The information service sector needs to be re-assessed to establish its necessary preparedness for a knowledge based economy.
13. *Objectives:* The IALL policies and legal framework are strengthened following a review to identify gaps and weaknesses. The policies relating to the following are revised and operationalised: (a) the national library and information service sector; (b) the archives policy and legal framework; (c) the legal framework and funding formula for grants to NAMCOL; (d) the National Literacy Programme; (e) establishment of the Council on Adult Learning; and (f) development of national policy on lifelong learning.
14. *Component Description: Adult education:* The 2003 national policy on adult learning is to be taken further through legislation which will establish the Council on Adult Learning envisaged in the policy to galvanise the many and varied providers of adult learning in a coordinated national drive to increase adult learning. A national policy on lifelong learning is also to be developed as a means of more closely integrating all components of education and economic development at local, regional and national levels. Adult learning programmes are to be strengthened through a comprehensive evaluation of the operation of the National Literacy Programme and subsequent actions. The programme is to be evaluated and its policy revised. A particular focus will be workplace literacy.
15. On the basis of a study to be carried out, the funding formula for grants to NAMCOL is to be reviewed and re-negotiated. The NAMCOL Act of 1997 is also to be amended.

16. *Library and information service sector:* Assessment of the overall library and information service sector needs to be carried out to establish the preparedness of this sector for the KBE, including identifying what is required for the sector to deliver value added products and services and the roles of the information workers in a KBE. It is also critical to analyse and revise the existing infrastructure, policies and legal framework in order to facilitate the strategic objectives of equity, efficiency, quality and pro-poor approach in line with Vision 2030.
17. The current legislation on public records management in the form of the Archives Act and its regulations is outdated and does not provide the necessary legislative framework for the challenges of e-governance and electronic records. The Archives policies and legislative framework are to be reviewed and revised.
18. *Implementation.* The adult education policy reviews will be carried out by the Directorate: Adult Basic Education (DABE) together with, as appropriate, the board of NAMCOL. The Directorate: Library and Archives Service will carry out the assessment and policy review of the library and information service sector assisted by professional researchers. Revision of the Archives Act will be done by a professional team established by the National Archives.
19. *Outputs and Indicators:* Strategic assessment and revised policy and strategy of the national library and information service sector in line with Vision 2030. Revised Archives policy and legal framework. Evaluation of and revised policy for the National Literacy programme. Policy documents for adult education and lifelong learning. NAMCOL Act amended. Establishment of National Council on Adult Learning.

Component 2: Improve equity and access to high quality lifelong learning opportunities
[N\$43.3 million]

20. *Challenges:* The quality of adult education and training programmes is vital for their credibility and success. Another challenge is responsiveness to labour market and employment needs to actually support the out of school adult population in income creation and active citizen skills. With adult literacy rate in Namibia having reached 83% by the year 2003, there appears to be a need for a more widely based learning programme that nevertheless still supports the disadvantaged in their efforts to work their way out of poverty. Closer synergies with formal education are being sought. The main challenges are: (a) an overarching policy on lifelong learning as Namibia pursues its intention of becoming a learning nation; (b) reaching 90% adult literacy by 2015; (c) setting standards for the Adult Upper Primary Education curriculum and literacy programme; (d) developing materials that are accessible to the visual impaired (Braille); (e) to have 56 Community Learning and Development Centres, incorporating public library and fully equipped with ICT in all 13 educational regions by 2015; (f) to expand the ASDSE project to all the 13 educational regions; and (g) to have family literacy centres in all districts in Namibia.
21. *Objectives:* The National Literacy Programme is improved through: (a) improved planning; (b) adult skills development for self-employment extended to all regions with assistance of other partners; (c) increased support for NGOs engaged in adult learning; (d) improved and extended multi-purpose community learning and development centres of various kinds, including support to ICTs with additional partners. Targeted reading skills improvement campaigns are carried out to address reading skills problems at primary school level based on SACMEQ results. Regions, cities, towns and villages have integrated plans for education and

development. Participation of marginalised groups in lifelong learning is increased through strategies such as family literacy programmes. Adult literacy qualifications are recognised by the NQA.

22. *Component Description:* The National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) is an integral part of the national education system and part of the four major national education goals. To enhance the quality and get formal accreditation for adult education programmes, the curriculum of the NLPN is to be revised, starting with the establishment of literacy qualifications under the NQF. Among the changes envisaged is an emphasis on relevant workplace literacy and entrepreneurial skills. The planning of the NLPN is to be improved by making better use of demographic information with a particular focus on workplace literacy. The family literacy programme is to be extended to more disadvantaged communities to enhance the interest of parents in their children's future and increase the self-confidence and interest in learning of the adults. Another programme targeting learning capacities of children from disadvantaged families is a multi-sectoral reading skills campaign developed by NLAS in co-operation with DABE and the formal education sector. The *Adult Skills Development for Self-Employment Programme* is to be extended to all regions of the country. Workplace literacy programmes are to be promoted through a code of good practice and incentives. Partnerships for learning are to be developed with the organisations of people with disabilities, marginalized groups and remote area dwellers. A few towns or regions are to be assisted to develop integrated plans for education and economic development.
23. The 14 Community Learning Centres, which through cooperation with the Library and Archives Service will continue to incorporate a community library, are to be improved and to receive more learning resources, including computers. Educational radio programmes are to be developed through a studio administrated by NAMCOL as a joint venture of NAMCOL and tertiary institutions. The radio studio will be consolidated to become a qualified and sustainable education radio production entity supporting formal, vocational, tertiary and lifelong education and training programmes.
24. NAMCOL will diversify its programmes and make them more relevant to the needs of the education system and the economy (in view of the planned reduction in the number of learners seeking a second chance at secondary education in terms of the General Education Sub-programme).
25. *Implementation:* This component is to be implemented by DABE and NAMCOL. ICT programmes are to be implemented in cooperation with the ICT division in the MoE. The reading skills campaigns are to be implemented by NLAS and the regional librarians in cooperation with DABE and the formal education sector.
26. *Outputs and Indicators:* The principal output of this component is an increased number of participants in the National Literacy Programme. This will be evident through increased numbers of (a) firms that have literacy programmes in place and functioning; (b) campaigns and public participating in events; (c) learning regions/towns/villages; (d) hours of educational broadcasting per week; (e) schools where family literacy programmes are available. The new curriculum is developed, implemented and the qualification recognised by the NQA.

Component 3: Improve and Strengthen Equitable Access to Information And Learning Resources [N\$63.4 Million]

27. *Challenges:* The nationwide library network is struggling with inadequate resources to respond to the demand for up-to-date information and educational resources for resource based education, open and distance programmes, research and information requests from community members. Wider and more equal access to information and learning resources countrywide could be provided by making use of international and national electronic information resources. To achieve this, the currently ill-equipped community libraries need to be upgraded to enhance internet connectivity and public ICT access. The social reality in the formally disadvantaged areas of the country has also defined a need for a new concept for the community libraries as multipurpose community information and study centres. The physical facilities, mostly inherited from the pre-independence era, need to be assessed and upgraded to provide the necessary support for the learners and students who are the main users of the countrywide community library network. A further challenge is the need for qualified staff and adequate infrastructure for decentralisation, regionally based development and support for the school and community library network.
28. Online information has the potential to provide fast, wide-spread and cost-effective access to an unlimited amount of knowledge. With public access points and national portals and support systems it provides an enormous means to improve equality in access to information and learning resources, support to SMEs and informal economy, decentralised research and innovation opportunities. The main problem remains the unequal distribution of access facilities to tap these information and learning resources – wide digital divide based on economical and regional inequalities. Libraries, which exist as a free and generally available information service network throughout the country, are the obvious choice for public access points to overcome the digital divide. The ICT Policy in Education and the E-Governance Policy for the Public Service recognise this role for the libraries and the necessity to act on it.
29. In addressing the need for a skilled labour force in Namibia, several problem areas have been identified including low reading skills levels, problems in mathematics and science capacity and lacking capacity to find and use information in tertiary education, research work related tasks, planning and administration. Functional and nationwide public library network and committed and qualified library and information service professionals are the key to information literacy skills and information resources required by the competitive knowledge based economy. National library and information service sector audit confirmed the existence of high level staff commitment as well as need for adequate library services. The IALL programme is addressing the identified problems to upgrade the sector to a level that will contribute to improvement of educational outcomes and nationally relevant information provision.
30. *Objectives:* This component will redress inequalities in access to knowledge and learning resources, thus empowering and un-tapping the human potential of the disadvantaged regions and social groups on the way to an information society and knowledge-based economy. This component aims to: (a) redress countrywide inequalities in access to meaningful information and learning resources; (b) support resource based education; (c) support open and distance study opportunities; (d) promote ICT literacy; (e) create local expertise for the creation, dissemination and management of nationally relevant electronic information; (f) establish nationally relevant “multipurpose information and study centre” library model (g) create adequate decentralised school and community library support and development infrastructure through regional libraries in disadvantaged regions/areas.

31. *Component Description:* The first part of this component, the e-library programme, addresses the widening digital divide in access to information and learning resources and aims to upgrade the countrywide library network to respond to the basic requirement of Vision 2030. It widens the scope of the traditional community libraries by improving response to the need for multipurpose information and study centres. Libraries, which exist as a free and generally available information service network throughout the country, are the obvious choice for public access points to overcome the digital divide and provide more equal countrywide access to electronic information and learning resources. The beneficiaries will be the geographically and economically disadvantaged groups of the society.
32. Open and distance learning is acknowledged as a socially and economically important educational channel on the individual and national level in Namibia. Up to 50% of tertiary education students study through distance education. Over 28 000 secondary level students study through NAMCOL. Distance education relies more and more on electronic communication and learning resources. Without public access to ICT through libraries this option and other national and international e-learning resources will only benefit a privileged few.
33. Priorities would be set for the first 30 libraries and later phasing in all 60 national/regional and community libraries. Planning, connectivity infrastructure and deployment will be carried out in accordance with and as part of the cross-sectoral ICT in Education Sub-Programme. To ensure technical sustainability and optimal use of the ICT access points for the benefit of the communities, staff capacity building will include training in ICT maintenance and troubleshooting as well as advanced skills in educational use of internet. Physical facilities will be upgraded to secure safe conditions for equipment. The E-library programme will respond to Vision 2030 and the national ICT policies in establishing nationwide public ICT access points using the existing library network. (Implementation and funding allocation through ICT for Education sub-programme: Component 3, Point 9).
34. The other part of the E-library programme will address more equal access to nationally crucial information through digital content creation and management. Development in electronic resources has created an urgent need to develop national expertise in the library and information sector for optimal use of electronic information and digital collections as a tool for improved equity.
35. Professional capacity building in this field will also contribute to the process of digitisation and electronic dissemination of paper based local content for wider access to relevant national information which is necessary to support study, teaching, career development, legal practices and legal rights and for making well informed decisions in planning and development.
36. The second part of this component responds to need for a regional structures and local professional capacity to ensure and develop more equitable access to information and learning resources. This component would ensure that a decentralised regional structure is established to guarantee sustainability of the service to the grassroots' community. During the first phase of ETSIP, three regional libraries would be established. The location and design of these libraries will be planned to benefit the identified low income and disadvantaged groups in the community. These regional libraries will provide coordination, enhance networking and resource sharing and facilitate mobile book services to schools and communities. They will also provide adequate facilities to function as deposit centres for all documentation published in and about Namibia (policies, consultancy reports, legislations, statistics,

monographs and periodicals) as well relevant technical and economical materials to facilitate research, innovation, studying and administration as a regional resource centre. Solar energy solutions will be investigated as power source and if proved feasible will provide for considerable savings in energy costs. This component will also improve professional capacity to provide for local specialised expertise in educational and productive use of national and international sources of knowledge and information.

37. *Implementation:* The Directorate of Library and Archives Service [NLAS] will implement this component. The E-library programme will be carried out with the ICT division in the MoE within the ETSIP ICT sub-programme. The MoE regional offices, especially the regional librarians, together with the NLAS team, will supervise the implementation of the programme at the regional level.
38. *Outputs and indicators:* These activities form part of concerted efforts to address reasons for social inequalities in a crucial area which is access to survival information and study and learning resources on equal basis combating social and economical differences. The main outcomes will be (a) a countrywide public ICT access point network enhancing electronic information and educational resources and e-governance through community libraries; (b) internet resources used in libraries by learners, SME entrepreneurs and citizens for productive communication and information retrieval; (c) a communication and educational resources network for open and distance students established through the library network; (d) sustainability and efficiency of the infrastructure ensured by affordable and fast internet connection; (e) ICT literacy and training enhanced through the library network; (f) local expertise for information and knowledge management and service delivery including creation, dissemination and management of nationally relevant electronic information; (g) adequate and well resources study centre libraries serving and contributing to better educational outcomes in three disadvantaged locations; and (i) an adequate regional library to support the integrated school and community library network development functions in three regions.

Component 4. Quality and effectiveness of knowledge management systems
[N\$5.1 million]

39. *Challenges:* In a KBE, institutions need to be learning institutions with the capacity to change and to maintain adequate information management systems. Adequate information management in the public service is increasingly recognised as the cornerstone of maintaining transparency, accountability and institutional memory for efficient administration. However, the management of public records is lagging behind in relation to the fast technological development and may result in the loss of institutional memory and means of accountability in a democratic society. Preservation of historically important knowledge, documented records and national heritage is in danger because of lack of adequate facilities and equipment.
40. *Objectives:* This component aims to: (a) improve the national capacity and tools for management and the availability of knowledge, information and learning resources to facilitate education, research, economic and social advancement; and (b) ensure efficiency and effectiveness and support for good governance, transparency and accountability in the public service.

41. *Component description:* The critical area of this component is information management systems in public institutions. Policies and tools for records management in public institutions will be revised and updated to maintain transparency, accountability, citizen's rights and institutional memory for efficient administration and democratic processes. A policy and tools for electronic records management will be developed in co-operation with the Office of the Prime Minister.
42. New national knowledge management tools will be developed to improve the use of databases in information management.
43. The challenge for the National Archives to ensure the preservation of the historically important national heritage documentation will be addressed by establishing adequate physical facilities and staff capacity. Work has already started in developing and evaluating specifications to establish a national preservation laboratory to save photos, films and other historically important documents in danger of being lost because of disintegrating materials or obsolete technologies. The preservation facility will serve the needs of all scientific and other institutions as well as individuals throughout the country by providing adequate expertise and tools to preserve endangered historically important documents.
44. *Implementation:* The Directorate of Library and Archives Service will be responsible for implementing this component. Main responsible institutions will be the National Library and the National Archives. The National Archives will be in charge of the records management programme in co-operation with the OPM.
45. *Outputs and indicators:* (a) better national information management systems to ensure access to existing knowledge; (b) adequate preservation facilities at the National Archives; (c) policy and adequate information management systems for transition from paper based records environment to electronic records and electronic archiving in place; and (d) qualified staff to ensure that government records are adequately managed.



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

ETSIP is spearheaded by the Ministry of Education

For further information, comments or concerns regarding ETSIP, please contact:
The Public Relations Office, Ministry of Education, Private Bag 13186, Windhoek
Tel: + 264 61 2933366 • Fax: + 264 61 2933368
e-mail: info@etsip.na