



ETSIP

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

[N\$239.9 million]

Background

1. Vocational training and skills development contribute to economic growth through their direct link to labour productivity. The initial development and constant upgrading of market-relevant skills are therefore critical factors in realising Namibia's goal of accelerated economic growth through productivity growth. A skilled workforce is also fundamental to the attainment of the objectives of increased export-oriented manufacturing and improved economic competitiveness. Among other things, Namibia's transition to a KBE will demand a skilled, competitive workforce. Unfortunately, at present skills shortage is one of the most critical constraints to growth and employment creation.

Achievements

2. Since independence enrolment in vocational training centres (VTCs) has increased more than sixteen times from about 150 trainees to 2 500 trainees. In addition, community skills development centres (COSDECs) have been established in nine locations to provide non-formal short-term training for youth and adults. An instructor training programme has been established at the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN). The government has already planned for some reforms that respond to weaknesses in the sub-sector. A training levy was authorised by the National Vocational Education and Training Act in 1994, but has not yet been implemented. In 2003, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) to take overall responsibility for management of the system under the direction of employers and other stakeholders, and also to devolve greater authority to VTCs to improve their management capacity and contextual relevance. A Project Management Unit (PMU) has been created to prepare for the establishment of the NTA. One of its main achievements has been the formation of Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and National Assessment Panels (NAPs) in which industry is fully involved and chairs the different Committees. The TWGs develop standards, qualifications and competency based education and training (CBET) modularised curricula for technical trades, commercial courses as well as hospitality and tourism. NAPs develop and manage national assessment and certification arrangements in their areas of responsibility. Despite the NTA not being legally established the above-mentioned have been achieved. Premises to accommodate the NTA was purchased by the government. At the time of writing the draft Bill is available and on its way to parliament.

Challenges

3. The main challenges are to: (a) strengthen management capacity of the system to respond to, and involve employers in policy decisions and directing the system, i.e. to make it more demand led; (b) decentralise public skills provision to respond better to local requirements and stimulate initiatives; (c) build the quality of training; (d) reduce reliance on the

government for financing and provisioning of skills development, and (e) to expand coverage and outputs equitably.

Priorities

4. Establishment of the NTA, with significant employer control, is priority number one, as this will facilitate and enable achievement of all other objectives. The second priority is VET curricula reform. Priority number three is devolution of authority to VTCs. This will entail significant management development and will be done in stages. In parallel, the fourth priority is to upgrade instructors and expand their output. The fifth priority is to introduce the training levy. The final priority for the first phase of ETSIP, based on implementation of the earlier measures, is to diversify and expand the output of skilled workers through a variety of means, including stimulation of private training markets.

Priority Components

Strategic Objective A: Strengthen the management capacity of the VET System

- Component 1:* Establish the Namibia Training Authority
Component 2: Management development at vocational training centres

Strategic Objective B: Improve the quality of VET

- Component 3:* Establish competency based education and training
Component 4: Upgrade instructor qualifications and expand outputs
Component 5: Re-equip VTCs

Strategic Objective C: Mobilise resources for training and use them efficiently

- Component 6:* Establish the levy system

Strategic Objective D: Expand VET outputs to meet labour market demands

- Component 7:* Diversify and expand training provision

(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.)

Component Descriptions

Component 1. Establishing the Namibia Training Authority [N\$21.7 million]

5. *Challenges.* Management of the VET system is presently lodged in the MoE and is highly centralised. This presents several problems: employers tend not to be involved in the direction of the system even though they employ most of the graduates of vocational training and know what skills are required, and training institutions have little authority which dampens incentives and accountability.
6. *Objectives:* (a) A semi-autonomous NTA is established with employers playing a majority role; (b) the NTA has taken over management and direction of the VET system; (c) delivery capacity is strengthened for the VET sub-sector; (d) demand-oriented training is achieved; and (e) industry participation at sector level is enhanced through the establishment of Industry Skills Councils.

7. *Component Description:* Under the programme the legislative framework will be established, including replacement of the current VET law of 1994 by a new VET Act, along with implementing regulations. Enactment by Parliament will be followed by appointment of the Board and secretariat. One of the first tasks of the NTA will be the preparation of a business plan. This will include elaboration of a comprehensive organisational development plan to be designed with external assistance. It will cover definition of financial, administrative and operational procedures for the NTA. Within the first two years a comprehensive VET development strategy will be prepared, covering areas of expansion to meet critical skill requirements as articulated by employers. Another major task will be to develop a Management Information System (MIS) system on VET, and integrate it into the overall sectoral EMIS. This will be based on (a) identification of information needs for management processes and decisions; (b) formulation of data collection as by-product of normal administrative processes in training institutions; and (c) provision for regular analysis, publishing and access to information through common databases.
8. *Implementation:* The PMU for the NTA is responsible for the preparatory work for the establishment of the NTA and is overseeing the development of legal documents. Once Parliament approves the new VET Act, the Minister of Education will be responsible for establishing the Board and secretariat. Thereafter the NTA will be responsible for developing and exercising its essential functions. The key activities on the critical path are drafting and enactment of the new VET Act, appointment of the Board and secretariat and commencement of support for organisational development. There will also be support for the senior management of the Ministry of Education and the Directorate: Vocational Education and Training in organisational development in its redefined role.
9. *Outputs and Indicators:* The component is expected to produce the following outputs (with indicators): (a) legislative framework adopted and implemented (new act gazetted); (b) employer involvement in directing the VET system; (c) productive organisation and staffing of the NTA (procedures adopted; evidence of NTA outputs and achievements; evaluation by stakeholders); (d) comprehensive VET strategy produced; (e) EMIS system operational for VET; and (f) training content re-oriented to employer demands (indicated by uptake of graduates in the labour market).

Component 2. Devolve authority to vocational training centres through management development [N\$3.8 million]

10. *Challenges:* The operation of VTCs is essentially centralised, with the Directorate: VET making many key decisions for the VTCs. There is a lack of flexibility, incentives and accountability for management staff of the VTCs. More productive results could be obtained by placing the VTCs under local boards, and making them responsible for finding their markets and mobilising resources. Devolution of authority to VTC management promises benefits in terms of increased productivity and accountability, but cannot be implemented without careful planning and preparation. The purpose of this component, therefore, is to develop the management systems and competencies necessary for VTCs to assume greater authority, including training of Board members.
11. *Objectives:* The component has two objectives: (a) management capabilities of VTC Boards and management staff developed and strengthened; and (b) Quality management systems (e.g. accounting and reporting) installed and operational at VTCs.

12. *Component Description:* The first activity under the component will be to prepare an overall plan and schedule for devolution of authority. The legal and regulatory framework will be revised to allow VTCs to operate semi-autonomously under boards of directors. Administrative systems will be developed for the VTCs with local and external technical assistance covering (a) accounting systems and procedures; (b) personnel management; (c) EMIS and communication reporting; and (d) administrative manuals and procedures. Boards of directors will be appointed for VTCs along with management and administrative staff. Competencies will be defined for VTC managers and staff and registered with the NQA. Training needs analyses will be conducted among VTC management and administrative staff. The results of this needs analysis will form the basis for development and implementation of training programmes for approximately 50 VTC management and administrative staff members in general and financial management. Phased implementation of devolution will commence following the training, in 2007, probably with one or two pilot institutions and will be completed by 2010. One of the first tasks of the new VTC management teams will be to prepare centre-specific development plans as a basis for performance contracts with the NTA.
13. *Implementation:* The devolution preparation programme will be managed by the NTA. Key activities on the critical path are: changing the legal framework; preparation of a devolution plan; appointment of management; training needs analysis and developing/implementing the management development programme. The relationship of the management of the NTA and VTCs would be based on performance agreements.
14. *Outputs and Indicators:* The following outputs are envisaged: (a) boards and managers of VTCs able to manage their own operations and respond to local, regional and national market needs and development plans and raise own revenue. (*Indicators:* attainment of annual centre based development plans; meeting target training outputs at given costs and acceptable quality standards.); (b) individual development plans completed for each VTC (Number and type of graduates and employment rates); and (c) quality management systems implemented at all VTCs, COSDECS and related institutions.

Component 3. Establish competency-based training (CBET) [N\$27.1 million]

15. *Challenges:* Curricula are based on standard blocks of time spent, rather than competencies acquired. In addition, instructors are not easily held accountable for the level of trainee achievements. A more effective and efficient way of training is to focus on competencies acquired in modules. Other challenges are: (a) Horizontal and vertical articulations of qualifications through a system of credit transfers; (b) opening and broadening access to training for all target groups including disadvantaged groups and those already in employment; (c) development of training programmes for the informal, traditional and SME sector; as well as (d) enhancing communication between training providers through the formation of a providers association.
16. *Objectives:* Generally, the introduction of competency-based training in all vocational training institutions is the focus of this programme. The following are the main objectives: (a) CBET introduced and maintained in all vocational training institutions; (b) learning and skill outcomes of vocational trainees are uniform and satisfy industry requirements, (c) training system is flexible and provides for horizontal and vertical articulation. (d) recognition of competencies of persons who are already in employment.

17. *Component Description:* The main activities needed to achieve the objectives are: First, a study tour to be undertaken by three VET curriculum specialists to learn from the experiences with CBET in other countries. The process of development of CBET will involve: (a) developing standards and qualifications according to the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), Levels 1 up to 4 for Artisan training as well as level 5 for technicians; (b) defining knowledge, skills and competencies to be acquired by trainees; (c) appointing working groups in different occupational areas; (d) acquiring/purchasing CBET packages in consultation with stakeholders, including copyright agreements; (e) identifying and developing CBET packages for new areas, such as entrepreneurship and HIV and AIDS awareness and acquiring or developing associated training materials; (f) Development of assessment materials and training of assessors, verifiers and moderators; (g) establishment of assessment panels and implementation of a new competency based assessment and certification system in collaboration with the NQA; (h) registration and accreditation of training providers in collaboration with NQA; and (i) orientation and training of all training providers on the implementation of CBET.

The next major step will be to verify CBET packages with stakeholders, especially employers. Once completed, the national vocational qualifications will be registered within the NQF. The third phase will involve reforming the existing testing and certification system according to CBET; revising inspection procedures and manuals; developing and implementing training programmes for instructional staff in CBET methodologies; and training managers, assessors and verifiers in CBET methodology. It is vitally important that employers understand and approve the CBET system. Therefore, a key step before implementation will be to market and promote the CBET system with employers. In addition, an overall implementation plan and schedule will be prepared for introducing CBET, starting with piloting at one of the VTCs. CBET programmes will be introduced progressively starting with key trades in Year I, accompanied by monitoring of progress and evaluation of results.

18. *Implementation:* The NTA will be responsible for developing and implementing the CBET programme based on initial work already underway.
19. *Outputs and Indicators:* Two main outputs are envisaged: (a) CBET used effectively as the method of training in vocational training centres (as indicated by monitoring and evaluations); (b) learning; skill achievements and employability of trainees increased (*Indicator:* performance on skill tests); (c) Technician level training provided for - training to NQF level 5. (d) increased number of trained moderators, assessors and verifiers; (e) assessment panels and new competency based assessment and certification system established in collaboration with NQA.

Component 4. Upgrade instructor qualifications and expand outputs [N\$1.7 million]

20. *Challenges:* Previous assessments have noted that the majority of instructors in VET institutions, except some in the non-public VTCs, are poorly trained and their technical skills are of variable quality. Many have had little formal or recent industrial experience and their levels of literacy in English, numeracy and ICT need substantial lifting. About half of the instructors teach at levels equivalent to their own highest formal qualification. Upgrading of instructors is all the more urgent given the need to introduce CBET (Component 3) and to expand outputs from vocational institutions.

21. *Objectives:* The objectives of this component are: (a) technical and instructional competencies of instructors raised to defined standards; and (b) supply of trained instructors increased to support VET expansion plans.
22. *Component Description:* The component involves activities both for in-service upgrading of instructors and expansion of the supply of qualified instructors. In-service upgrading includes: (a) definition of minimum and desired competencies for instructors, i.e. establish detailed standards for instructors; (b) conducting a training needs analysis of current staff to identify gaps; (c) re-designing existing in-service training programmes in line with required competencies; (d) contracting training institutions to develop and deliver in-service training, including training of trainers and inclusion of industrial experience - serious consideration will be given to using SADC institutions, based on evaluation of relative costs and quality; and (e) evaluating the existing training programme at the PON against the newly defined competency standards. This evaluation will be used to develop or revise current in-service training programmes at the PON. In addition, a mentoring support system will be developed at VTCs for continuous in-service development of instructors. As a basis for expanding the supply of newly trained instructors, the supply and demand for instructors will be projected taking into account overall VET expansion plans developed by the NTA and attrition rates, both for the public and non-government sectors. Special attention will be given to skills areas in growing demand by employers. Following these analyses of in-service and pre-service requirements an overall VET instructor development plan will be prepared. The plan will include a comparative analysis of whether additional instructor training capacity should be established in Namibia or other institutions used within SADC, as indicated by cost-quality analysis. (f) recruiting qualified and experienced instructors from the local, regional and international environment, where necessary; and (g) training instructors that are able to facilitate training at middle management (technician) level.
23. *Implementation:* Implementation would be the responsibility of the NTA in collaboration with the PoN.
24. *Outputs and Indicators:* The component will generate an array of outputs: (a) competency standards for instructors defined; (b) training needs analyses completed; (c) in-service training programmes delivered to about 150 instructional staff (evaluation of numbers trained and results obtained); (d) instructor qualifications raised to defined standards (as indicated by examinations); (e) pre-service instructor training expanded by about 100 new instructors (numbers trained); (f) instructor development plan prepared and implemented (monitoring and evaluation); (g) mentor support system in place in VTCs (assessment by trainees). (h) learning and skills achievement and employability of graduates increased.

Component 5. Re-equipping VTCs [N\$23.7 million]

25. *Challenges:* Quality training requires sufficient, up-to-date equipment in working order. To provide quality training, institutions must provide for turnover of equipment to keep equipment up-to-date. Moreover, the introduction of CBET inevitably will require different kinds of equipment in many cases. The challenge is do this in an affordable manner. Therefore, the component includes provision for re-equipping VTCs and installing procedures for proper maintenance. It must be noted that in this process there would be no compromise on the quality of equipment. However, notice must be taken that some of the VTCs have and are benefiting from other donor support.

26. *Objectives:* (a) Equipment standards met at all VTCs; (b) increased learning and skill competencies acquired by trainees.
27. *Component Description:* The re-equipping of VTCs will entail the following activities: (a) define equipment standards in line with CBET curricula; (b) survey existing VTCs and other training institutions, comparing actual provision with defined standards to identify gaps and equipment needed; (c) prepare equipment lists and obtain necessary budget approval; (d) arrange for installation of equipment; (e) provide training in use of new equipment for instructors; (f) design workable system for equipment maintenance; (g) prepare and deliver training programmes in equipment maintenance; and (h) hold VTC managements accountable for following proper maintenance procedures.
28. *Implementation:* The component would be implemented under the NTA with the full collaboration of VTCs.
29. *Outputs and Indicators:* (a) definition of equipment standards for various training programmes; (b) completed gap analysis of equipment needed; (c) equipment standards met at all VTCs (based on assessment); and (d) trainee competencies increased particularly in terms of practical skills (as evidenced by assessment of learning and skills outcomes).

Component 6. Establish an effective levy system [N\$0.9 million]

30. *Challenges:* The 1994 Vocational Education and Training Act allowed for a levy on payrolls to be used to finance vocational training. This has never been implemented. However, the establishment of the NTA with majority employer control presents an opportunity to introduce the levy to suit the needs of employers. The case for a levy rests on four reasons: public funds are limited by overall deficits in public spending and other urgent national priorities. Given widespread poverty, training fees are relatively inelastic as a way of increasing income to institutions. The private sector, as one of the main beneficiaries of training, should share in the costs for improvements in the type and quality of skills available to them. Second, firms presently under-train, in part because they may lose trained staff to competitors. A levy should be designed to give all enterprises a financial incentive to train their workers. Third, a training levy should raise revenues to finance a much-needed expansion of VET outputs. Finally, a levy could stimulate an increase in the number and variety of VET providers, mostly private.
31. *Objectives:* The component has four objectives: (a) an effective levy system is in place; (b) the amount of non-government financing available for training is increased substantially; (c) training within enterprises is stimulated; and (iv) training is based on employer demand.
32. *Component Description:* The aim of the component is to design and implement a levy system for skills development. This requires, first, policy decisions on the main recommendations of the recent feasibility study, including rate of collection, size of establishments levied, and mechanisms for collecting the levy. These policy decisions will be taken in collaboration with stakeholders. The challenge in levy systems is to ensure that the costs of administration of the system justify the resources raised, i.e. the levy system should be easy to administer. Subsequently, regulations for the levy system will need to be developed; an accounting system adopted for contributions and use of levy proceeds, as well as reporting procedures for communicating to stakeholders revenues raised and their destinations. Criteria and procedures

for accessing the funds will be developed by the NTA. It is important that the government does not reduce its contribution to VET when the levy is enacted.

33. *Implementation:* The NTA will be responsible for developing and implementing the levy system.
34. *Outputs and Indicators:* The component is expected to generate the following outputs: (a) effective and efficient training levy in operation (as assessed by employers); (b) increased revenue to be used for training (amount of net financing mobilised for training); (c) increased output of skills into the labour force, increased upgrading of skills in the economy (numbers of people who acquire skills by occupation); (d) increased employer interest in training and increased employer incidence of training (i.e. evidence of more training by employers); and (e) increased private provision of training through levy proceeds.

Component 7. Diversify and expand training provision [N\$161 million]

35. *Challenges:* The initial production and constant upgrading of market-relevant skills are critical factors in realising Namibia's goal to accelerate economic growth through productivity. Yet, skills shortage is one of the most critical constraints to Namibia's growth and employment creation. In addition, the social demand for training far outstrips supply. Only about 3 per cent of those who complete grade 10 can gain admission to VTCs. The participation of marginalised and designated groups as well as employed rural and urban youths needs to be increased.
36. *Objectives:* (a) Availability of skills in the labour force expanded as needed for economic growth; (b) expanded opportunities for school leavers to acquire skills needed for employment and income generation; (c) ultimately, increased labour productivity.
37. *Component Description:* The component embodies a varied strategy to diversify and expand vocational education and training. Implementation of the strategy would commence with an assessment of the current capacity and utilisation rates and expansion potential of training institutions. The results of the first assessment would lead to measures for the expansion of enrolments and outputs through greater efficiency and more intensive use of existing facilities, such as evening and weekend training. Expansion of enrolment would be supported in high quality existing VET institutions. Much of the needed skills production will have to be provided in non-government training institutions. Therefore, the strategy also calls for the design and implementation of incentives to stimulate expansion of training by private providers. Construction of new vocational training centres and COSDECs as well as the renovation of four existing COSDECs and similar institutions will be embarked upon. The component would also support an identification of the beneficiary incidence of participation in VET by region, language, income, gender. The results would provide a basis for development and implementation of a plan to increase enrolment of high priority target groups. A comparative analysis will be undertaken of the cost-effectiveness of creation of new VTCs in Namibia vs. sponsoring trainees in other SADC countries with a view to expanding annual training by about 3 000 persons. Finally, an exploration will be made of the use of ICT and distance learning as means to expand the output of skills, particularly for those unable to attend formal training institutions. It must be noted that it will be limited only to those areas that ICT and distance learning modes have proven to be effective within VET.

38. With regard to the COSDECs, Kayec, Ehafo and other similar institutions it is hoped that increased output would be realised through the new modular competency-based curriculum that is steadily taking shape in the VET system. As for the COSDECs, mobile units would also be utilised.
39. The College of the Arts will be brought within the VET system.
40. *Implementation:* The vocational expansion programme will be undertaken under the auspices of the NTA.
41. *Outputs:* (a) Thirty percent increase in enrolments in existing VTCs (from 2 100 to 2 800); (b) enrolment of approximately 3 000 trainees either in existing VTCs, new VTCs in Namibia or in SADC institutions; (c) about 1 500 trainees completing COSDEC courses per annum.



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.