



Namibia

Nangolo Mbumba
Minister of Education



Hon. Nangolo Mbumba was born on 15 August 1941 at Olukonda in the Oshikoto Region of northern Namibia. He was a teacher of Science and Mathematics while in exile, principal of the Namibian Education Centre in Angola and Assistant Director and Head of Department of Education and Teacher Training at the United Nations Institute for Namibia in Lusaka, Zambia. Hon. Mbumba have served in various Ministerial portfolios namely, Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, Minister of Finance, Minister of Information and Broadcasting and currently, Minister of Education. A Member of Parliament for the SWAPO Party since 1993, and is married with five children.

Towards inclusive societies: The role of public policies

Article 10(2) of the Namibian Constitution, states that " no persons may be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status." Furthermore, Article 20(2) states that " primary education shall be compulsory and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge."

These constitutional obligations inform education provision and practice in Namibia. The historical past of apartheid, necessitates that education should play a critical role in fostering unity and building of an inclusive society with equal opportunities for all.

Building inclusive societies from divided societies, as the case in Namibia, requires explicit public policies, behaviour change and inculcation of new value systems, hence the role of education. The values of equal opportunities, equity, sharing, tolerance and dignity, which underpins inclusive societies, need to be internalized, if inclusive societies are to be achieved. These values should not only be internalized, but also practiced in our interactions with others.

Teacher training programmes should therefore include issues pertaining to the management and appreciation of diversity and building inclusive societies in the teacher preparation programmes, if the pillar of education of learning to live together is to be achieved.

It is against this background that Namibia is continuously engaged in reforming her education system. The reforms are being carried out to determine the extent to which the education system has achieved the broad goals of education of access, quality, equity and democracy as well as the internationally agreed upon goals. Furthermore, the reforms intend to evaluate the contribution of education towards social cohesion and sustainable development.

Namibia has developed a long-term education strategic plan, namely the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). The objective of the Programme is to provide equal opportunities and qualitative education to all the learners in Namibia.

**International Conference on Education,
48th session, 25-28 November 2008
“Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future”**



Education takes place in a national and global context. National education policies should therefore not only respond to the national context, but also to the global context. We are educating global citizens, hence the balance between the national and global societies. Finally, partnerships and the sharing of knowledge and experiences cannot be overemphasized in our quest of building inclusive societies.