Namibia

Revised version, August 2006.

Principles and general objectives of education

Since independence (March 1990), Namibia has pursued several important goals: equitable access to schooling; a high quality of education; a high degree of internal efficiency of the education system; lifelong learning; and the democratic participation of all stakeholders. All the efforts are directed toward the establishment of a unified, non-racial, non-ethnic, and non-sexist national education system.

The Ministry of Education is committed to providing Namibian residents with equitable access to quality education and culture programmes to develop the abilities of individuals to acquire the knowledge, values, skills, attitudes and understanding they will require throughout their lifetime.

Current educational priorities and concerns

The five years from independence to 1995 marked the first phase of education reform in Namibia, and 1996 ushered in the beginning of the second phase of further educational developments in order to improve the quality of educational services rendered. As resources become scarcer and with an ever-increasing population, improving efficiency, in particular, becomes increasingly important to ensure the sustainability of the education system.

Much has been achieved in the education sector since independence, but there is still a lot that needs to be done. Concerted efforts have to be made to consolidate what has so far been achieved, including *inter alia*:

- further expanding access to schooling or education, especially for educationally marginalized children;
- ensuring more equitable distribution of educational resources;
- narrowing the gap in pupil-teacher ratios between and within regions;
- promoting internal efficiency in terms of administration, management and resource utilization at all levels of the education system;
- training more literacy officials and teachers, while reaching out to more adult learners and ensuring that those who enrol complete all stages of the programme.

The main focus of policy initiatives is to facilitate development toward the realization of the broad goals of education—access, equity, quality, efficiency, lifelong learning and democratic participation. In pursuance of these goals, the

Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (now the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture) adopted the following strategic objectives in 1996:

- involving stakeholders in a nationwide review of the planning and implementation process of the secondary education curriculum, and of the 1995 examination results, achievements, problems and constraints;

- establishing new schools, providing new classrooms in some of the existing schools and providing qualified teachers to meet the demand of the ever-increasing learner population;

- providing education to educationally marginalized children in remote areas, squatter settlements and farms, in consultation with other ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs);

- continuing reform and renewal of curricula, teacher education and the production of relevant teaching/learning materials to enhance the quality of education;

- promoting and strengthening the smooth functioning of education forums, in all education regions.

Even if the education sector is already consuming close to 30% of the government’s annual recurrent expenditure, this is still not enough to meet all the requirements, especially in the rural areas where the backlog is enormous. Following the implementation of the recommendations of the Wages and Salaries Commission, the Ministry spends about 80% of the recurrent budget on staff salaries alone. In addition, the distribution of human, material and financial resources among and within the education regions is still inequitable.

There is a great need to provide alternative avenues to cater to the increasing number of Grade X students, especially those who do not qualify for Grade XI. In this regard, the Namibia College of Open Learning has to be further strengthened with more personnel, materials, funds and its programmes need to be further expanded to meet the challenge of absorbing more learners. There is also a need to strengthen the capacity of the senior secondary level and to develop an integrated and comprehensive vocational education and training system.

The cost of higher education is increasing. This, coupled with the social demand for higher education, has placed tremendous pressure on the Government Bursary Scheme. It has been decided, therefore, to introduce a new Student Financial Support Scheme as from 1997. In order to promote equity in resource allocation and promote value for money, the Bursary Scheme will henceforth be converted into a Loan/Grant Scheme.

During 1999 a Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training conducted a review of what had been achieved during the first decade of independence, and made recommendations for the opening years of the twenty-first century. The Commission consulted with ministry officials and conducted public hearings around the country. It studied documents generated by the Ministry,
collected written submissions, and conducted an electronic discussion. In August 1999 a national conference was held, at which the Commission’s findings and provisional recommendations were presented. The final report was handed to the President in October 1999, and was publicly released in September 2000.

The recommendations in the draft report of the Commission were drawn on extensively in the drafting of a strategic plan for the Ministry for the period April 2001 to March 2006. The plan has been structured around eight national priority areas: equitable access; education quality; teacher education and support; physical facilities; efficiency and effectiveness; HIV & AIDS; lifelong learning; and sport, arts and cultural heritage. It should be noted that the objectives indicated in the Strategic Plan are in line with the Education for All (EFA) broad goals and have been further expanded in the EFA National Plan of Action 2002–2015.

The monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of programmes at school level remained unsatisfactory at the end of the twentieth century. Apart from the measures provided by fully external examinations at the end of Grades X and XII, a semi-external examination had been introduced at the end of Grade VII (end of primary school) in 2000. The Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training had recommended in 1999 that a national inspectorate be created to provide information annually on the functioning of every school in the country.

The education system is still confronted with many problems that were inherited from the pre-independence period. Lack of infrastructure, insufficient funding and lack of trained personnel, high failure rates, are among the major problems.

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

The drafting of a new Education Bill commenced about in the middle of the 1990s, but was tabled in Parliament only in September 2000. The **Education Act No. 16** was finally promulgated in December 2001. The primary objectives of the Act are to: provide for an accessible, equitable, qualitative and democratic national education service; provide for the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Education, the National Examination Assessment and Certification Board, Regional Education Forums, School Boards and the Education Development Fund; establish state and private schools and hostels; establish the Code of Conduct for the teaching profession; and establish the Teaching Service Committee.

The **Constitution** of the Republic of Namibia adopted on February 1990 states that: all persons shall have the right to education; 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; children shall not be allowed to leave school until they have completed their primary education or have attained the age of 16 years, whichever is the sooner (Article 20).
Administration and management of the education system

Primary, “combined” (see below) and secondary schools are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC, now the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture—MBESC). The organizational structure of the Ministry consists of two main departments: Formal Education and Culture and Lifelong Learning. There are three Directorates separate from but working closely with these departments: the Directorate of General Services, the National Institute for Educational Development, and the Directorate of Planning and Development.

Those directorates that form the Department of Formal Education Programmes are: Educational Programme Implementation and Monitoring; Inspectorate and Advisory Services; Special Education Programmes; and National Examinations and Assessment. Those directorates that form the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Libraries, Arts and Culture are: Adult Basic Education; Namibian College of Open Learning; Arts and Culture; and Library and Archives Services.

All the above-mentioned Directorates are based at the Ministry’s Head Office. In addition, there are seven Regional Education Offices.

Technical, vocational and higher education institutions are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science and Technology (MHEVTST), established in 1995. The MHEVTST is also responsible for the administration of the four teacher education colleges, while the MBEC, through the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), is responsible for the development of the curriculum and other programmes in teacher training. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare (now the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare) is responsible for early childhood education.

The three agricultural colleges are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development.

The Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) has been established in late 1996. The NQA is responsible for quality assurance, the accreditation process, the evaluation of qualifications, and standard setting procedures.
Structure and organization of the education system

Namibia: structure of the education system

Pre-school education

Pre-school education establishments are operated by the local communities and non-governmental organizations. About 10% of the relevant age group is enrolled in the few existing institutions, mainly concentrated in urban areas. The Ministry of Basic Education is responsible for the training of trainers and for curriculum development.

Primary education

Primary education lasts seven years, divided into lower primary (Grades I-IV) and upper primary (Grades V-VII). Under ideal conditions, a learner begins Grade I at the age of 6. At the end of the primary education cycle (Grade VII), learners are prepared for a semi-external examination as a transition to junior secondary education.

Secondary education

Secondary education comprises two cycles: junior secondary (Grades VIII-X) and senior secondary (Grades XI and XII). Many schools, however, do not follow the normal division between primary (Grades I-VII) and secondary (Grades VIII-XII). The term “combined” is used to describe these schools that offer a mix of primary and secondary grades. There are six vocational training centres which offer technical subjects at the junior secondary level. Learners at the junior secondary school level write the Junior Secondary Certificate Examinations, while the senior secondary education learners are prepared for the International General Certificate of Education.

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(IGCSE) and the Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education (HIGCSE) respectively, in collaboration with the University of Cambridge. It is, however, important to note that substantial progress has been made towards the localization of the IGCSE/HIGCSE examinations.

Higher education caters to only 1.5% of the school population. It consists of the University of Namibia, the Polytechnic of Namibia, four teacher education colleges, and three agricultural colleges. The Polytechnic awards national certificates and diplomas in several fields, such as accounting and information systems, engineering, language and communication, law, management and administration, and natural resources management. The teacher education colleges offer a three-year course leading to the Basic Education Teaching Diploma, the qualification required for teachers of Grades I-X.

On average, the duration of the school year at the primary and secondary levels does not exceed 200 working days (196 days in 2002 and 2003). The school year, which starts mid-January and ends at the beginning of December, is divided into three terms (trimesters) as follows: January-April, May-August, and September-early December.

The financing of education

The 1998/99 budgeted amount of N$1,467.5 million is one of the largest single allocations made to a ministry from the national budget. But this must be seen against the Ministry’s responsibility for nearly half a million school-going children, apart from the adults that the Ministry reaches through its adult learning programmes and the arts, culture, museum, archives and library services which the ministry provides to the nation as a whole. The increase of N$132.1 million over the 1997/98 budgeted expenditure is accounted for by further steps in the implementation of the recommendations of the Wages and Salary Commission, notably the personnel appraisal system, coupled with a general salary increase for public servants, and the implementation of provisions of the Labour Act.

The actual expenditure incurred on personnel employment by the Ministry represents 86.8% of the total appropriation for 1998/99. The allocation made to provide materials and supplies to primary and secondary schools represents 1.81% of the total appropriation.

From 1990 to 2002 public spending on education in Namibia has risen nearly fivefold. It is estimated that in 2000/01 public expenditure on education represented 9% of GDP.

The educational process

At independence the schools in Namibia were following South African curricula. Immediately following independence the revision of the school curriculum was initiated in order to make it learner-centred and relevant to the needs of Namibians. The curriculum has been structured in four phases: lower primary covering Grades I-IV; upper primary (Grades V-VII); junior secondary including Grades VIII-X and
completing the basic education programme (Grades I-X); and senior secondary (Grades XI and XII). The first curriculum reform cycle started in 1991. The full-cycle curriculum implementation from Grades I to XII was completed at the end of 1999.

The National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) in the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture is responsible for spearheading educational reform and for the on-going development of curricula and teaching programmes for the school system. The Institute established and manages the national Curriculum Panels and Committees, which are obliged to provide continuous support to the NIED on curriculum issues. The NIED and these bodies carry the prime responsibility for all curriculum issues, since they are in contact with the grass root level in monitoring, evaluating, and reviewing the curricula.

Textbooks are generally commissioned by publishers in the private sector and submitted to NIED for evaluation and approval, but when necessary NIED and its bodies initiate the development of learning materials. These bodies also develop teachers' guides and support materials and participate in teachers' upgrading activities.

The Panels and Committees submit all suggestions for changes to the curricula and teaching programmes, to the Curriculum Co-ordinating Committee (CCC) in the Institute for consideration. If needed the submissions are referred back with directives or for further research. If accepted by the CCC, the issues are endorsed and forwarded to the National Examinations Board for consideration and approval. The Examination Board carries ultimate responsibility for approving the study programmes as per curriculum and subject syllabi. The process is mostly from bottom to top. However, the Examinations Board is also obliged to instruct the Institute to pursue specific curriculum issues or suggest policy changes or areas to be included in the curriculum in the national interest.

During 1996, the Panels/Committees and Working Groups which were established at the end of 1995 became fully functional. They were able to draw up fourteen new primary syllabi, revise twenty-eight junior secondary syllabi, develop and translate lower primary syllabi into all local languages and develop five new senior secondary syllabi in African languages. In addition, they evaluated and recommended teaching and learning materials, and where necessary, developed appropriate new materials, as well as updating the textbook catalogue.

In 1998, new Curriculum Panels/Committees for the next three-year phase were established. All panel and committee members attended a course on the development and evaluation of textbooks and educational materials. Twenty-one subject syllabi were developed and approved by the CCC and the Examination Board.

The NIED ensures that all curricula adhere to the national priorities in education: quality, access, equity and democracy. Furthermore, the curricula should be relevant and useful to the national and local needs, mirror the expectations and aspirations of the nation and allow for individual needs as far as possible. In line with national policies all study programmes recognise the demography of the Namibian population and are geared to strengthen the national vision of unity in diversity. In recognition of world-wide requirements, the curriculum is gender sensitive, unbiased
regarding race, culture, colour or creed, promotes human rights and is firmly founded on internationally accepted curriculum theories.

Subject matter has been organized according to the different disciplines. Where appropriate, different disciplines have been integrated, such as “environmental education” in the lower primary phase (a learning area which integrates science, home ecology, civic issues, family life, historical and geographical aspects, as well as cultural information). In the upper primary phase social studies integrate history, geography, civics, culture and life skills. In the junior secondary phase the subject life science incorporates the biological and agricultural sciences into a single subject area. Religious and moral education is not only about morals and ethics, but also the study of all the major religions in Namibia and the world.

The knowledge contained in each one of the study areas is divided into subjects and the content is selected to suit the developmental level of the children, and captured in subject syllabi per grade. Between the different grades the content and competency demands increase in a spiralling approach by linking up with previous knowledge and progressively setting higher demands. By applying internationally accepted curriculum theories the developers used instruments to ensure appropriate depth and breadth in the curriculum. It was important to ensure that all the learning domains were included in each one of the syllabi in order to provide for balanced development. These domains are crucial to ensure cognitive development, psychomotor development, affective development and inter-personal development. The syllabus developers were sensitive in ensuring an acceptable balance between the domains in subjects and determined the weighting of domains and levels of knowledge according to the nature of the subject content.

In 2000, the Ministry decided to review the experiences of curriculum development and reform of the first decade of independence, and to look ahead to the needs and challenges of curriculum development in the next decade. The Ministry established a Curriculum Review Task Force consisting of the major partners and stakeholders in education, including teachers' unions, the University of Namibia, the Polytechnic of Namibia, vocational training and the colleges of education. The Task Force had to analyze the recommendations made by the Ministry's Efficiency Programme Report (1996) and by the Presidential Commission (1999). Some of these recommendations suggested streamlining and rationalization of the curriculum, while others suggested the inclusion of new subjects or new elements in the existing subjects. However, the curriculum review goes beyond the recommendations of the above reports and examines the basic education and senior secondary curricula in terms of design, relevance, efficiency, language issues, assessment, consistency and coherence. The processes of curriculum development as well as the models utilized are also considered.

In 2001, the NIED was undertaking a review of the full school curriculum. One of the issues to be addressed was the possible rationalization of the many optional subjects at junior and senior secondary level. The problems encountered were that curriculum developers do not always keep abreast of developments in their subject areas, while some curriculum developers lack the necessary expertise and attitudes necessary for successful curriculum development. Furthermore, the general public and some politicians often speak as if all the problems of society can be

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addressed through adapting the school curriculum. Such unrealistic expectations, if implemented, would lead to curriculum overload.

**Pre-primary education**

The National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy was adopted by Cabinet in February 1996. It addressed the establishment of early childhood programmes in relation to national development, and defined the respective roles of the government, NGOs, parents and the local communities in the provision of support for early childhood development. The Policy has been reviewed in 2005. This review was carried out through a long process of consultations at the national, regional and community levels among a broad range of relevant stakeholders. As a result of this process, a comprehensive draft document has been completed. In parallel to the policy review process, high-level discussions are taking place within government concerning the possible reallocation of responsibilities between the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare for children aged 0-4 (early years) and Ministry of Education for children in the age group 5-6 years (i.e. pre-primary education).

The responsibility for pre-primary education was transferred from the Ministry of Education to local communities under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing in 1995. With the creation of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare in 2000 (recently changed to Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare), pre-primary education and early childhood development catering for the less than 6 years age group, were assigned to this new Ministry, with the Ministry of Education being responsible for curriculum content.

Pre-school education establishments are operated by the local communities and NGOs. There are both formal ECD centres, and non-formal ECD centres, and non-formal-home-based care programmes, thus making the concept ‘enrolment’ difficult to interpret. The existing institutions are mainly concentrated in urban areas. Caregivers should at least have 6 years of education and have received at least six weeks of training in early childhood development before they start working with children.

Within the framework of the Mentoring Project, experienced and well-run ECD facilities (kindergartens) share their knowledge with less developed facilities, particularly home-based facilities in the poor areas of town/settlements. They employ a small cadre of part-time volunteers, who in turn visit an agreed number of poor ECD facilities, according to an agreed schedule, to disseminate knowledge and skills.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, a total of 49,182 children were involved in some form of pre-school education in 2003.

**Primary education (basic education)**

The main objectives of primary education outline the general direction of basic education. Among others, the following goals of basic education are contained in the Broad Curriculum guide:

- promote national unity, liberty, justice and democracy;
• promote human rights, respect for oneself and respect for others, their cultures and religious beliefs;

• support and stimulate learners through childhood and youth, and prepare them for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life and citizenship;

• develop literacy, numeracy, understanding of the natural and social environment, civic responsibility, artistic appreciation and expression, social skills, and promote physical and mental health.

The weekly lesson timetables for lower primary, upper primary and junior secondary levels are presented below:

**Lower primary education: weekly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of learning/subject</th>
<th>Number of weekly periods in each grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic and literary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>4 6 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another language</td>
<td>7 9 6 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwriting</td>
<td>3 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic information science</td>
<td>— — — 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>7 8 8 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural, scientific, social &amp; economic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental studies (natural science, health nutrition, environmental awareness; civics; history, geography, economics in Grades II–III)</td>
<td>3 3 5 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies (civics; history, geography; economics)</td>
<td>— — — 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (music, dance, drama, art)</td>
<td>3 3 3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual and ethical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education, Assembly</td>
<td>2 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education and health awareness</td>
<td>2 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and technology</td>
<td>— — 2 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total weekly periods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total weekly periods</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: MDEC-NED, 1996. Each teaching period lasts 40 minutes. The main cross-curricular themes which are integrated throughout the curriculum in all phases are population education, health education, and environmental awareness. Cross-curricular activities include: school sport; cultural activities; involvement of community; activities promoting the ethos of the school; educational tours; other activities.*

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
**Upper primary education: weekly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of learning/subject</th>
<th>Number of weekly periods in each grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic and literary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another language</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic information science</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural scientific</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural science and health education (health education and environmental awareness)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social and economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies (civics, history, geography, economics, guidance in Grade VII)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts (music, dance, drama; art)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spiritual and ethical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education, Assembly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education and health awareness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technological</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Options. One of: craft and technology, elementary agriculture, home ecology (needlework; clothing and home science)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total weekly periods (minimum)**

|             | 39(*) | 39(*) | 39(*) |

Source: IBD. (*The actual total is forty-two periods instead of thirty-nine. If we do not include time spent on revisions and examinations, it is estimated that a maximum of thirty-seven weeks per year are devoted to instruction.)

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Different ways of organizing teaching and learning will need flexible timetabling, using different lengths of period or blocks of time, as appropriate to the work to be done. Subjects involving a considerable amount of practical work (e.g., science subjects, agriculture, craft and technology, and pre-vocational subjects), are best organized in double periods. Project work in one subject, or cross-curricular work integrating several subjects, may need a block of periods for a day or more. At the lower primary level, especially in Grade I, learners may work best with blocks of time integrating subject areas, with shorter sequences when necessary.

In Grades I-III, wherever possible, the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue/familiar local language. In schools with learners with different mother tongues, every effort must be made to provide teaching in the mother tongue. Where there are enough learners, classes can be organized on the basis of instruction in a particular mother tongue. Where it is not possible to offer teaching through the
medium of the mother tongue or familiar local language, schools must apply to the Regional Director for permission to use English as a medium.

In Grades IV-VII, English should be the medium of instruction at least in the following subjects: mathematics, natural science and health education, social studies, craft and technology, home ecology and elementary agriculture. Other subjects can be taught in English, or continue to be taught in the medium of instruction used in Grades I-III. In Grades VIII-X, English should be the medium of instruction in all subjects.

It is the right of all learners to be taught in their mother tongue/familiar local language as well as in English. Learners should take both English and the mother tongue/familiar local language as subjects. In schools with learners with different mother tongues, and few learners in one or more language groups, multigrade teaching in the mother tongues should be organized. Where it is not possible to offer learners their mother tongue or familiar local language as a subject, schools must apply to the Regional Director for permission to offer a one-language curriculum for the classes concerned. In such a curriculum, English should be the medium of instruction and only English will be offered as a language subject.

Assessment of the progress and achievements of learners can be used by the teacher to evaluate the teaching and learning process in terms of relevance of content, learner participation, appropriate methods of teaching, optimal use of group work, individual work, etc. Formative assessment is used to motivate learners to extend their knowledge and skills, establish sound values, and to promote healthy habits of study. Assessment tasks help learners to solve problems intelligently by using what they have learned, and the teacher uses the information to improve teaching methods and learning materials.

At the end of a school year, the progress and achievements of the learner throughout the year are summed up. This is called summative assessment. Where there is an end-of-year test or examination, the summative assessment will consist both of the continuous assessment and the final assessment. On the basis of this, decisions have to be made as to whether or not a learner is able to progress to the next year, or would not benefit from that and has to repeat the year.

Continuous assessment should be planned and programmed at the beginning of the year, and be kept as simple as possible. Marks given for class activities, assignments, homework, or short tests on completion of a topic can be recorded for continuous assessment. In order not to take up too much teaching time with assessment, not less than five (one for the first term, and two each in terms two and three) and not more than nine (three per term) assessments should be done.

The grades obtained by learners through continuous assessment must be systematically recorded throughout the year, and used to inform the learner and parents on progress and achievements, and to guide remedial teaching when needed. In the lower primary phase, assessment consists of informal continuous assessment, while learners are carrying on with normal classroom activities, and should be as practical as possible. In Grades I-III, the oral medium should mainly be used. Learners’ drawings can also be used to assess (e.g. if a learner has a concept of

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numeracy). Assessment by reading and writing must only be done once learners have the necessary reading and writing skills.

In Grades V and VI, assessment consists of both informal continuous assessment as in the lower primary phase, and formal continuous assessment. Internal tests are allowed as part of formal continuous assessment. No external examinations will be administered in Grades V and VI. Continuous assessment will count 50% towards the final year mark, and an internal end-of-year examination will count 50%. There is a summative assessment at the end of Grade VII, relating to the objectives and basic competencies of the syllabus and using a variety of types of question to test a broad range of skills. Continuous assessment will count 50%, and the final examination, 50%.

In Grades VIII-X, assessment also consists of informal and formal continuous assessment. In addition, there are internal end-of-year examinations in each examination subject in Grades VIII and IX. These should not take up more than two weeks at the end of the year. There is an external examination in all examination subjects at the end of Grade X. Continuous assessment, including tests, may count no less than 33% and no more than 50% towards the final year mark. The same applies to the external examination in Grade X.

The learner’s level of achievement in relation to the basic competencies in the subject syllabuses is shown in letter grades A-E, where A is the highest and E the lowest grade. The relation between the grades awarded and the basic competencies is shown below:

- **Grade A**: achieved basic competencies exceptionally well. The learner is outstanding in the class in all main areas of competency.

- **Grade B**: achieved basic competencies very well. The learner is above average in the class, and is more proficient than average in several areas, e.g. showing quicker mastery of some competencies, or being able to apply competencies to unknown situations or contexts, or showing new insight.

- **Grade C**: achieved basic competencies. The learner has mastered the competencies satisfactorily in known situations and contexts. The large majority of learners should reach this level.

- **Grade D**: partly achieved basic competencies. The learner may not have achieved all the competencies, or may sometimes need help, but has sufficient competency to go on to the next grade.

- **Grade E**: not achieved the majority of basic competencies. The learner has not been able to reach a minimum level of competency for the year grade, even with extensive help from the teacher and is in need of remedial teaching.

When letter grades are awarded, it is essential that they reflect the learner’s actual level of achievement in relation to the basic competencies. Letter grades may be awarded directly or indirectly. When a letter grade is awarded directly, the teacher assesses the level of achievement of the competencies and awards the appropriate
letter grade. Letter grades are awarded indirectly when a percentage mark is used and then converted to the letter grade. Percentage marks must be related to criteria for assessing learner achievement in the same way as when awarding letter grades directly. The following table should be used to convert percentage marks to a letter grade:

- **A**: achieved basic competencies exceptionally well (80%);
- **B**: achieved basic competencies very well (66-79%);
- **C**: achieved basic competencies (40-65%);
- **D**: partly achieved basic competencies (30-39%);
- **E**: not achieved the majority of basic competencies (0-29%).

Nearly all learners should progress without repetition in Grades I-VII. Only in cases where the class teacher/teaching team in consultation with the principal and parents are absolutely convinced that a learner would definitely not benefit from progressing to the next grade, should a learner be held back and receive remedial teaching towards promotion the next year. No learner should repeat more than once in the lower primary phase, and more than once in the upper primary phase. Entry to junior secondary education depends on the learner’s performance in the summative assessment at the end of primary education.

To be promoted from Grade VIII to Grade IX, or from Grade IX to Grade X, learners should at least achieve D grades in all subjects. A learner who achieves an E in one of the examination subjects other than English, another language or Mathematics, and E in non-examination subjects, may be considered a borderline case. In these cases, achievements in the other subjects, and the learner’s performance over the three terms, must be taken into account. If the performance shows improvement over the three terms, or if the learner has achieved the Basic Competencies in four examination subjects, the learner should be promoted. No learner should repeat more than once in Grades VIII and IX. The teaching team should all participate in the decision about promotion or non-promotion. As far as possible, remedial teaching should be made available to repeaters as well as to others who need it. Students can repeat Grade X only through non-formal education, unless a learner is under the age of 16 or if there are exceptional reasons, such as illness, with the permission of the Regional Director.

One goal of the National Language Policy is to promote the language identity of children through the use of home languages as the medium of instruction in the first three grades of primary education. By allowing children to study in their own language during the early years they should more readily develop basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation. The choice of medium is decided by the individual school community, but has to be one of the twelve languages for which curriculum materials have been developed for the first three grades.

Only 7.1% of Otjiherero speakers receive instruction in their home language, while 35% of Khoekhoegowab speakers are taught in their home language.
Rukwangali speakers fare best with 93%, while 92% of the Oshindonga speakers and 89% of Silozi speakers are taught in their home language.

Pupils having home languages other than one of the twelve languages used as mediums of instruction are therefore not taught in their home language. For example, Bushman, Portuguese and Siyeyi speakers all receive their schooling in one of the twelve mediums of instruction in government-registered schools. In total, 55.1% of all Grades I-III pupils in Namibia are taught in their mother language, and 44.9% are taught in another language.

Many schools offer all the grades in one or more phases of education. Other schools, however, do not offer all the grades in a phase. Some have yet to expand to offer all the grades to complete a phase. Others, for historical reasons, start at a grade in the middle of a phase and offer grades into the next phase. Schools can be divided into three categories according to the range of grades they offer:

- In-phase schools offer grades which form one or more complete phase(s) of education (48.4% of all schools in 1995).
- Out-of-phase schools offer grades which do not cover any one phase. For example, they may offer Grades I-III, Grades IV-VI, or Grades VII-IX (21.7% of all schools in 1995).
- Partially in-phase schools are those that offer one or more complete phases, but also offer an incomplete part of another phase. For example, schools which offer Grades I-VI allow for lower primary to be completed but not the upper primary phase (29.9% of all schools in 1995).

Out-of-phase schools and partially in-phase schools thus restrict learner access and progression. In 1995, 666 schools were in-phase, 412 schools were partially in-phase and 298 schools were out-of-phase. The majority of out-of-phase schools are at the primary level, particularly lower primary, making it difficult for learners to complete this phase where basic literacy and numeracy skills should be acquired.

The average size of schools differs substantially between regions. This reflects different human settlement patterns and different ways of providing access to schooling. In the Okavango region, for example, many small rural primary schools have been established within walking distance of most children, while most schools in the Khomas region are large urban schools serving a concentrated urban population and, through hostels, the sparse rural population.

For the country as a whole, enrolment generally declines as the grades progress, with the greatest declines being between Grades IV and V, and Grades X and XI. The decline from Grade X is due to the limited number of places available in Grade XI. The drop-out rate is low between Grade VII (the final year of primary schooling) and Grade VIII, the start of junior secondary school. On a national scale there is widespread female participation in schooling, rising through the grades to a high of 57% in Grade X and declining slightly in senior secondary grades. The proportion of female learners, however, varies between regions.
Enrolment has grown substantially since 1990, at a rate of growth that has exceeded the population growth rate. The percentage of learners at school has increased and pupils remain longer at school than previously. Rates of growth have been greatest at the secondary level, especially the senior secondary phase, with Grade XII enrolment being three times greater than in 1990. However, there has also been a substantial decline in Grade I enrolment since 1991, from a record of 88,673 pupils in 1991 to 65,258 in 1995. This is because a backlog of learners who did not go to school before independence has largely been cleared. It is also because fewer Grade I pupils now drop-out of school and then start Grade I again in a following year. Enrolment in most regions declined slightly in 1995 in comparison to 1994 (0.5%).

Female learners generally do better than males in primary grades where they are promoted at a higher rate, and have lower repetition and drop-out rates. The converse is true in secondary grades, where males do better. The very high promotion rates in Grade XI are due to the almost automatic promotion of learners between the first and the second years of the International General Certificate for Secondary Education. A very small proportion of learners repeated Grade XII in 1995. The new policy aimed at eliminating repetition in Grade X, introduced at the beginning of 1995, has yet to be implemented.

Repetition rates vary substantially, being highest in the northern regions. It is estimated that for primary grades, 75.1% of all learners who start Grade I should complete Grade VII. A higher proportion of females (78.5%) than males (71.8%) complete Grade VII, because fewer females drop out from primary grades. The highest rates of completion are in the Erongo and Khomas regions, while only about 64% of learners in Ohangwena and 59% of those in Okavango complete grade 7.

Major differences in pupil/teacher ratios between the regions still exist, especially in the primary phase. In 1995, average pupil-teacher ratios ranged from a high of 44.1 learners per teacher in Ohangwena region, to a low of 20.8 in Karas.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2003 there were 408,912 pupils enrolled at the primary level (Grades I-VII), for an estimated gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 101% and a net enrolment ratio (NER) of 74%. The total number of teachers was estimated at 14,442.

**Secondary education**

In the senior secondary phase the learners are obliged to take six subjects from a wide selection available in the Broad Curriculum. At least one language in the curriculum is compulsory. All learners take the official language (English), while another language (Namibian language) is the norm. Learners select four more subjects from to the following fields of study: agriculture; commerce; home economics and health education; social sciences and humanities; natural science and mathematics; technical field of study.

In general, the proposed weekly time allocation is as follows: official language, 17.5%; another language, 15%; four promotion subjects, 60%; physical education, 2.5%; life skills, 2.5%; school organization/assembly, 2.5%.
About 50.6% of all learners who start Grade VIII complete Grade XII. About 10% fewer females complete Grade XII (46.0%) than males (56.0%). A total of 9.4 years of secondary teaching are spent on each female completing Grade XII, and 7.7 years on each male. For both sexes, the investment period is 8.6 years. Adding this to the total of thirteen years of primary schooling, it means that almost twenty-two years are spent on each Grade XII graduate.

High promotion rates in Grade XI in 1993 and 1994 are due to the introduction of automatic promotion of learners from this grade who are taking the two-year course leading to the International General Certificate of Secondary Education Examination.

There are six vocational training centres in Namibia which offer technical subjects at a junior secondary level. To enrol, learners need not have completed primary school if they have some work experience. The centres mainly provide training in building, metal- and wood-working, motor mechanics, electrician work, and fitting and turning. The vocational training centres for which information is reported here are those funded by the government. However, additional opportunities for further training are also available through the private sector.

Total 1996 enrolment in Vocational Training Centres (VTC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VTCs</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASLC</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'TC</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RVTC</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVTC</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZVTC</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total enrolment rates favour the male trainees as compared to their female counterparts. This situation can be attributed to the kind of courses that are on offer in most of the vocational training centres. Most courses are in traditionally male vocational areas and therefore do not render themselves acceptable to the female trainees. The Ministry of Higher Education aims to provide new opportunities for women and to support gender-specific initiatives in other ministries, such as Fisheries Inspectors/Observers and in NGOs including Women’s Action for Development.

In 1996, of the total of 73 trainees who sat the Level II examination, 55 passed. This means a pass rate of 75%. Due to logistical problems, one centre did not present its trainees for the examination.

Vocational education and training is undergoing fundamental development. In the years to come the following major initiatives will be undertaken: strengthening of the National Vocational Training Act, upgrading of the quality control systems, development of Community Based Skills Development Programmes and investigation into the establishment of a National University of Technology. Such a university will

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
promote acquisition, adaptation and application of technology to production, community and industrial development. The National Vocational Training Act is being reviewed to broaden its scope in order to accommodate all types of training and career development activities other than the apprenticeship system. In particular, the Act should accommodate competence-based training of non-apprentices. Quality control and quality assurance are issues of paramount importance in vocational education and training.

In order to expand and broaden the system of vocational training, a programme of community-based skills development is being planned. The goal here is to develop a demand-driven and competence-based skills development training programme to address the needs of communities. Target groups will be out-of-school and unemployed youth, stakeholders in the informal sector and women.

The Namibian Junior Secondary Certificate examination at the end of Grade X is an external examination in all the required subjects. The senior secondary phase culminates in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education examination. A small group of learners opt to take the Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education examination.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2003 there were 140,976 students enrolled at the secondary level (Grades VIII-XII), all programmes, for an estimated gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 58% (74% at the lower and 58% at the upper secondary level). The net enrolment ratio was estimated at 37%. The total number of teachers was estimated at 5,989 (of whom 4,733 teachers at the lower and 1,256 at the upper secondary level.

Assessing learning achievement nation-wide

In 1995, Namibia participated in the research project of the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). Data available from this survey indicate the percentage of Grade VI learners who reached a minimum and a desirable level of mastery in English reading. A group of English teachers and advisory teachers from several education regions had determined minimum and desired test outcomes prior to the survey. These threshold scores should be interpreted as a professional opinion, rather than official policy.

The outcomes of the SACMEQ survey indicated that the level of English reading comprehension in Namibia was far below the level subject specialists considered to be the minimum learners should achieve to progress to Grade VII. The survey also highlighted great disparities in achievement between regions and within those regions where the mean achievement was relatively high (MBEC, 1999).

Higher education

As mentioned, the tertiary education system in Namibia consists of the University of Namibia (UNAM), the Polytechnic, four teacher education colleges and three agricultural colleges. The following table shows enrolments at tertiary institutions in 1995:

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Enrolment at tertiary institutions (1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Total enrolment</th>
<th>% female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Namibia</td>
<td>3,501</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polytechnic of Namibia</td>
<td>3,272</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Training College</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Colleges</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges of Education</td>
<td>1,866</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9,199</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UNAM consists of seven faculties: agriculture and natural resources; economics and management science; education; humanities and social science; law; medical and health science; and science. Programmes at undergraduate level normally last four years.

The Polytechnic offers full-time, part-time, distance education, and extracurricular courses. Approximately 4,000 students are currently enrolled at the Polytechnic. The medium of instruction is English. Admission is based on completion of Grade XII or equivalent qualification: Prospective students should have a matriculation certificate or equivalent, with a maximum of 6 qualifying subjects, which must yield a score of at least 25 points. A candidate should obtain an "E" symbol or better in English. Besides the general admission requirements, individual schools and departments may have additional or special admission requirements which will be stipulated under each qualification. Courses leading to a National Certificate normally last one year. Programmes leading to the award of a National Diploma usually require three years of study. The one-year programme leading to the Bachelor’s Degree in Information Technology, B.Tech (IT), is an advanced continuation to the diploma programmes in information technology. Therefore, students who intend to pursue the B.Tech (IT) degree must have graduated from one of the diploma programmes in IT (or equivalent), before they can register for this qualification.

In 2003, it is estimated that the total enrolment at the tertiary level was 11,788 students (of whom 53% women), for a gross enrolment ratio of 6%. The total number of teachers was 898, of whom 27% women. (UNESCO Institute for Statistics).

Special education

The Directorate of Special Education Programmes, at the MBEC, renders services in the education and training of learners with special needs and abilities. These services address the needs of learners with hearing, vision or other physical, emotional and mental disabilities. Also included are the above-average, gifted and specially talented learners.

The Special Schools and Programmes Division focuses on those who show a severe backlog and who need remedial education and special class teaching. The main

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
strategy is to integrate all learners with impairments or learning difficulties as fully as possible into the mainstream.

The major obligation of the Diagnostic, Advisory and Training Services Division is to render professional services in the field of diagnostic and therapeutic needs, career guidance and psychological services to all learners in mainstream schools as well as to those in special schools.

In 1996, there were six special schools in the country funded by the government. A total of 1,091 learners were enrolled in special schools and classes for students with special needs.

**Private education**

Most schools in Namibia are run by the government. Of all Grades I-XII learners, only 4.1% were enrolled in private schools in 1995. In 1996, of the total number of learners some 3.7% attended private schools.

**Government and private schools (1996)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,435</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure**

In 1995, almost 53,000 boarders (11.2% of all learners) lived in 189 government and 67 private hostels. Most hostels are in towns in the southern, sparsely populated regions. In Omaheke region about 67% of learners are boarders while in the Ohangwena and Oshikoto regions, less than 4% of the learners board.

Private hostels are subsidized by the government, and the great majority are operated by religious organizations. About 10,000 boarders were accommodated in private hostels in 1995. Many other learners board informally in the homes of relatives and friends close to schools. In some regions, these homes receive a small subsidy from the government.

Hostels are overcrowded in some regions, with more boarders than they have been designed to accommodate. In other regions, spare places are available. Hostels provide access to both primary and secondary learners in the southern and sparsely populated regions. In the northern and more densely populated regions, hostels are used almost exclusively to provide access to secondary learners. Very few primary learners in these regions gain access to schooling through hostels. Nationally, 64.2% of boarders are in secondary grades and 35.8% are in primary grades. For Namibia as a whole, there are 7.9 boarders for each staff member in government hostels.
The quality of classrooms and provision of basic services varies greatly between the regions. A significant proportion of classrooms in the northern regions are traditionally constructed of mud, sticks or metal sheets, or are outdoor spaces with no walls. About 19% of all classrooms are of a traditional structural type and have been built by parents and other community members anxious to have schools near to their children. Such classrooms are rare in the rest of the country.

Large proportions of schools do not have toilets, water, telephones or electricity. Only 23.9% of schools have any quarters for teachers. Regional disparities in these amenities are perhaps greater than in any other aspect of the education system.

Since 1992, there has been considerable expansion in the provision of classrooms. However, new traditional (stick and mud) structures have been added as fast as permanent classrooms have been built. There has, thus, been little change in the proportions of permanent and traditional structures used as classrooms. The number of outdoor spaces used as classrooms, usually under trees, has remained fairly constant at about 300.

The provision of sanitary facilities has increased substantially from 1992 to 1995, while electrification programmes and water supply schemes have benefited many schools. The provision of telephone services to schools has not changed to any significant degree, and there has been little change in the proportion of schools able to offer housing to their teachers.

**Adult and non-formal education**

The National Literacy Programme in Namibia (NLPN) was launched in the second half of 1992 to boost literacy levels amongst the many adults who did not achieve literacy skills from formal schools. The programme is divided into three stages (I-III). Adults can enrol at any of the stages depending on their levels of literacy. A fourth stage is to be introduced.

The response to the programme has been encouraging. During its first three years of implementation, over 83,000 persons enrolled. Only 23% of that number were male. Examinations at different stages have been taken by 70.5% of those enrolled, of which 81.2% passed. About 22,000 adults have acquired basic mother tongue literacy skills beginning in Stage I.

The goal of the NLPN is to attain 80% adult literacy by the year 2000. To achieve this literacy rate, it is estimated that another 60,000 adults must become literate, at least at the Stage I level.

The Directorate of Adult Basic Education is dedicated to the provision of basic skills to disadvantaged adults and out-of-school youth, to enable them to improve their own lives and contribute more effectively to national development. The Adult Skills Development Programme is in the process of establishing related programmes such as the Adult Upper Primary Education Programme and the Community Learning and Development Centres to take care of the educational needs beyond literacy.

In November 1994, the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) was created as a separate directorate within the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture. This was the first step along the road to the establishment of a semi-autonomous institution as mandated by the Cabinet. In 1996 further progress was made towards this goal with the completion of draft legislation and its consideration by Parliament. In 1997 by Act of Parliament (Act 1 of 1997) it became a parastatal entity, offering junior secondary and senior secondary education and various other programmes to out-of-school youth and adults.

As stated in the College’s strategic development plan, NAMCOL’s mission is to provide pre-degree programmes to adults and youths who are not able or do not wish to take part in conventional, institution-based education. The College is central to the MBEC’s strategy to provide education for all through the expansion of educational opportunities for those in remote areas, where there are no secondary schools, and for those who cannot study during the day because of work, family or other commitments. In addition, NAMCOL’s programmes offer a second chance for learners who have not been successful in the formal education system.

Through the NAMCOL, learners can enrol either in distance education (correspondence) courses or join face-to-face classes. The face-to-face classes are more popular, accounting for 85.4% of enrolment in 1995. Classes are held in the evenings and afternoons in fifty-seven centres across the country (seventy-two centres in 1996). Learners take the same Grade X examinations as learners in formal education. Grade XII learners, however, sit a separate examination administered in Namibia but certified by the Department of Education and Culture of South Africa.

### Teaching staff

In 1995, 71.6% of all teachers had professional training in teaching. The proportion of teachers who are professionally qualified varies from region to region. For example, 92% of the teachers in Khomas region are qualified, whereas only 40% of those in Okavango are qualified.

The proportion of teachers who have completed Grade XII varies from region to region. While 92% of the teachers in Khomas have a qualification of Grade XII or higher, only 32% in Okavango and 44% in Omusati have this level of qualification. Nationally, about 59% of teachers have Grade XII or a higher qualification.

Teachers’ qualifications have improved over the past four years. Nationally, the proportion of teachers with Grade XII or a higher academic qualification, has increased from 51.5% in 1992 to 59.2% in 1995, while the proportion of teachers with a formal teacher training qualification increased from 66.5% to 71.6% All regions have had an improvement in levels of academic training, but improvements in levels of professional training have been more erratic, with Okavango showing a consistent decline in the proportion of qualified teachers. Despite efforts to upgrade the qualifications of under-qualified teachers, the situation was still heavily skewed in 2000. Not only did the average learner-teacher ratio range from 20.7 to 35.7 across education regions, with a national average of 29.1, but 48% of the teachers had either no formal teacher training or, although having formal training, had less than three
years of tertiary level training. In general female teachers, accounting for 61% of the teaching force, were better qualified than their male counterparts.

The four colleges of education offer three-year courses leading to a Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD). The BETD is a unified general preparation for all basic education teachers (primary and junior secondary), combining a common core foundation for all, with opportunities for specialization in relation to phases of schooling and subject areas. The minimum requirement for the BETD is an acceptable level of maturity, and a Grade XII with IGCSE passes or the equivalent.

In 1996, all four colleges of education together produced a total of 566 graduates, of whom 233 were females and 333 were males. In the same year, about 10,000 applications were received for admission, but only 622 candidates were admitted, as the capacity at the four colleges is limited.

The total enrolment for 1996 at all the four colleges was 1,728 students, of whom 768 were females. Compared to the 1995 enrolment figure of 1,538 teacher trainees, the figure for 1996 (1,728 teacher trainees) represents an increase of 8.9%. There is also a marked increase in the total number of females enrolled in the BETD programme, making it apparent that the government policy on gender balance and access to higher education is being adhered to.

All students who were admitted to the four colleges were granted government scholarships. An amount of 3,250 Namibian dollars (N$) per student was made available to the first- and second-year students, while N$4,550 per student was made available to third-year students.

The number of learners per teacher varies a great deal, especially between primary and secondary grades and between regions. Differences between primary and secondary grades reflect the higher number of teachers needed for subject teaching. In some regions the disparity between primary and secondary learner-teacher ratios is greater than in others, suggesting that different regions place different levels of priority on primary and secondary teaching.

**Educational research and information**

Information is not available.

**Sources**


**Web resources**
