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Beyond Primary Education:
Challenges and Approaches to Expanding Learning Opportunities in Africa

Parallel Session 6A

Curriculum for
Post-Primary Education

Localisation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET): the case of Namibia

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Contents

ANNEX II GLOSSARY OF TERMS

FIGURE 1: NAMIBIA QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)

- 5/36 -

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
CBET	Competency Based Education and Training
CBO	Community Based Organisation
COSDEC	Community Skills Development Centre
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KAYEC	Katutura Youth Enterprise Centre
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAMCOL	Namibia College of Open Learning
NAP	National Assessment Panels
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NQA	Namibia Qualifications Authority
NQF	Namibia Qualifications Framework
NSSB	National Standards Setting Body
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
NTF	National Training Fund
PMU-NTA	Project Management Unit for the Establishment of the Namibia Training Authority
QMS	Quality Management System
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
TP	Training Provider
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTC	Vocational Training Centre

1. ABSTRACT

The greatest challenge to the whole process of localizing curricula in Namibia is the bias by practitioners and educators for a more scientific, academic, general and standardized vocational education and training.

This bias is based on the in-built traditional paradigm of education and training which is characterized by an overemphasis of high general academic secondary school requirements for access to training and qualifications and instructor based delivery and assessment methods and techniques.

The whole essence of the Namibia Qualifications Framework (NQF) which is managed and maintained by the Namibia Qualifications Authority and the new Namibia Training Authority curriculum materials and national assessment and certification arrangements is to open up the NQF and access to training and qualifications to different target groups at workplace (company), national and local levels and the fostering of articulation and linkages between the different evolving qualifications.

Establishing a balance between the contextualization and opening up of training at different levels of the NQF requires a total paradigm shift for all instructors, trainers, training managers, educators, employers, employees and policy makers. The NQA and NTA concept of open entry access to Level 1 of the NQF and the replacing of the current academic English, Mathematics and Drawing being in taught in public Vocational Training Centres parallel to the offering of vocational training and occupation-related theory by work-related calculations, literacy, numeracy and communication skills is being grudgingly accepted. There are many who believe this lowers vocational training standards and undermines opportunities for progression to the Polytechnic and the University.

The focus on the "myth" of preparing all vocational education trainees for progression to degree level is enshrined in this traditionalist paradigm and is difficult to change. It is contradictory to ensuring a practically competent output at each level of the NQF. At the lower levels of the NQF this requires a focus on work-related competences which are different to "pure" academic competences. Work-related competences are essentially contextual and relevant to the local socio-economic and geographical and physical setting. The nature of local industry is based on the utilization and processing of locally available resources. Training needs analysis and tracer studies are required in order to define the local skills needs. Without such scientific studies the tendency to centralize all training will thrive.

By its very nature the NQF allows the development of a diverse range of standards and qualifications as long as they meet all the guidelines and requirements of the NQF and the different NQF level descriptors. However, the difficulty of determining local skills needs and distinguishing between local and national needs and the complexities involved in the implementation of a more flexible NQF results in curriculum centralization and a "one for all" approach.

The success of curriculum localization in Namibia requires the NQA and NTA to effectively manage the change of traditional concepts and perceptions among all key stakeholders. The participation of all key stakeholders is critical for the success of the whole reform process of establishing a market-driven and flexible vocational education and training system.

2.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Namibia is going through a transformation process. The VET sector has been characterized by a highly centralized and inflexible curriculum which focuses on a relatively limited range of male-dominated blue-collar trades and occupations with restricted growth potential and relatively high capital costs. The transformation is aimed at making a significant shift towards more curriculum diversification and the inclusion of emerging occupations in the manufacturing and service and knowledge oriented industries such as hospitality, tourism, information technology, food processing and financial services. This major shift in focus is guided by the Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy of 2005 which, in turn, is a significant contributor to the strategy to achieve Namibia's Vision 2030 which envisions "to improve the quality of life of the people of Namibia to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by 2030". Vision 2030 is based on a comprehensive development model which is underpinned by socio-economic development at both local and national levels. The Namibia VET system is accordingly faced with a major challenge of developing and implementing a training system which adequately caters for both local and national skills needs.

2. The Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy (2005) provides for the establishment of the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) to coordinate the development and implementation of a flexible competence based VET system based on the Namibia Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQA is legally responsible for the development and maintenance of the NQF functions of the setting of standards and qualifications, quality assurance, accreditation, the evaluation of qualifications and assessment standards, including the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The NTA is responsible for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of vocational education and training in Namibia, engaging industry, business, training providers, trade unions and other stakeholders in reforming the VET system and ensuring that VET programs and services meet the current and emerging needs of industry, business and the broader community. These need essentially encompass community, local and national needs. The two organisations' functions and responsibilities are carefully coordinated through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two organizations. It is the ultimate responsibility of the NQA and NTA to promote the flexibility, accessibility and decentralisation of the new VET system.

3. Namibia has embraced the *competency-based education and training (CBET)* approach to VET. Under this approach, unit standards, which describe the outcomes demanded by industry and the community, form the basis for curriculum, assessment and qualifications in the national VET system. The decision to adopt this approach was made on the basis that the overriding purpose of vocational education and training is to produce *competent workers.* These are workers who are able to apply their knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform work activities to the standard expected in the workplace.

4. The Namibia Qualifications Framework (NQF) guides all vocational education and training provided in Namibia. In reality and scope, the NQF describes the different levels of education and training qualifications that are offered by schools, VET institutions and tertiary education institutions in Namibia. The ten levels in the NQF reflect the complexity of learning and do not equate to "years spent learning". Qualifications on the NQF are based on unit standards which form the building blocks of qualifications.

The NQF allows for:

- open entry and exit which enhances access and equity for all the different target groups.

- a modular approach (recognition of each unit/module as a stand alone qualification with a specified credit value based on the complexity of the learning involved) which enhances curriculum flexibility and provides the opportunity of developing training modules for both local and national training needs. Trainees are able to select different combinations of units/modules based on their local and individual needs.

- Articulation between qualifications and public, private and NGO providers. This provides the opportunity of establishing a comprehensive national training framework which integrates diverse

and different local training needs with national training priorities. The flexible understanding and interpretation of the NQF by all stakeholders is important to avoid the use of the NQF as a tool for the over-centralization of standards, qualifications and curricula.

5. Competencies required by workers in specific occupations are described in the unit standards. Unit standards in Namibia are developed under the authority and guidance of the NQA. The PMU-NTA and its successor in law the NTA coordinates and manages the development of standards, modular curriculum for the Vocational Education Training (VET) which is Levels 1 to 5 of the NQF. The unit standards themselves comply with, and are derived from the NQF. To make standards relevant to industry requirements, industry itself is genuinely involved in the standards development process. Other relevant stakeholders are also involved especially in development of those standards specific to localities where there are strategic government interests (social and political considerations). The process of standards development and its inherent systems allow for development of standards with both national and/or local relevance and application.

6. Quality assurance and flexibility are critical elements of the standards development process in Namibia. The process guarantees that local needs are included and catered for, not only through the development of "dedicated" optional standards but even in the development of what are generally regarded as national standards. The active involvement of employers and training providers from the different regions and communities is an attempt to reflect local needs. The important aspect to note is that the process should be fair, inclusive, transparent and participatory.

7. The underlying concept and long term vision of the NTA as far as development of standards and programs is concerned is to decentralize, to the extent possible, curriculum development and delivery to training providers (TPs). To facilitate the decentralization process, NTA is putting in place a Quality Assurance System to ensure that quality is not compromised. The granting of autonomy to public Vocational Training Centres will provide the required local decision making for effective response to local training needs.

8. As part of facilitating the decentralization process, and in addition to monitoring adherence to the quality assurance system, NTA is currently training managers of training providers on the management of their own *Quality Management Systems(QMS)..* Overall, the approach facilitates maximum flexibility on the part of TPs to respond to local needs and requirements while at the same time not compromising on the quality and recognition of qualifications at both local and regional levels.

9. Assessment is a very critical component of any competency based training system. In this regard, it is very important that the process be as transparent and as objective as possible to enhance credibility. NTA is putting a lot of emphasis on training and certifying assessors as a means to guarantee that the assessments are both rigorous and fair.

10. In response to the increased need and demands for decentralization of assessment, NTA is currently in the process of establishing and implementing an assessment and certification system that caters for both decentralized and centralized situations.. The competency based model of assessment is a combination of centralization and decentralization. The internal assessment system is delegated to training providers. Successful completion of internal assessment is a pre-requisite for qualification for external assessment. This gives importance to internal assessment as a component of the national assessment arrangements. The centralized assessment system involves NTA trained and certified assessors who conduct assessments for relevant qualifications. Under this new system which is outlined in the national assessment arrangements, the NTA maintains a pool of competent and certified assessors drawn from both industry and training institutions and the actual assessments are conducted at registered national assessment centers.

11. In the long term, it is envisaged that NTA will restrict its role in assessment to quality assurance and decentralize external assessment to accredited and registered national assessment centres. To facilitate achievement of this long term objective, NTA is investing a lot in building assessment capacity, both human and institutional. This is designed to ensure the existence of a pool of assessors and moderators in

the different regions and localities in order to provide easy access to assessment and qualifications to local target groups.

12. The issue of effectively and efficiently granting autonomy to the current Ministry VTCs, remains a contentious challenge. While there are compelling reasons to decentralize and give more autonomy to training providers, there are equally compelling concerns regarding the capacity of some training providers to discharge this responsibility efficiently and effectively. It would seem that the best way forward is to adopt a gradual process of decentralization which is supported by an intensive capacity development process which NTA seems to be favouring.

13. Despite significant progress that has been made regarding the promotion of the localization of curricula and decentralization of curriculum development in Namibia, some formidable challenges to full development of the system still remain to be addressed. Key challenges to note relate to the following:

a) Balancing social imperatives with economic realities is very difficult since there are no sufficient resources (financial and otherwise) to meet both the economic (business) objectives of the VET system and the socio-political (development) objectives of the VET system. Compromises need to be made.

b) Perception of time and process is challenging. Perceptions that the current curriculum reform process will yield immediate benefits to stakeholders are seriously misplaced. This process is quite long and gradual, requiring substantial investment in capacity development before sustainable results can be achieved.

c) Capacity limitations pause serious threats to the success of the curriculum reform process. First and foremost, there does not seem to be a shared vision regarding the nature and scope of the transformation process. Secondly there is a serious shortage of human capacity (quantity and quality) as well as institutional capacity to successfully drive the transformation process.

3.   INTRODUCTION

14. Namibia's VET system is currently going through a transformation process. The VET sector has, for the most part, been focused on a relatively limited range of trade related occupations and industries. (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004). There has tended to be concentration of training in :

- A narrow range of "blue-collar" traditional trade occupations in industries such as automotive, electrical, building and construction engineering

- Male dominated occupations which has meant that relatively few young women participate in VET

- Industries in which job growth is likely to be restricted compared with areas of high potential job growth such as the financial and services sectors

- Relatively high capital cost areas such as automotive and other areas where there are also high maintenance and material costs

3.1 Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy

15. It is important to note that the above, until recently, has been the trend worldwide (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004). Recently, however, there has been a significant shift in VET provision in many countries towards more service and knowledge oriented industries such as hospitality, tourism, information technology, food processing and financial services. The development of the VET system in Namibia is underpinned by Namibia's Vision 2030. This Vision 2030 is the expression of a national multi-pronged development which envisions "to improve the quality of life of the people of Namibia to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by 2030". (Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy, 2005).

16. The vision pre-supposes a Namibia that is transformed into a healthy and food secure nation, in which all preventable, infections and parasitic diseases (including HIV/AIDS) are under secure control; people enjoy high standards of living, a good quality of life and have access to quality education, health and other vital services.

17. In order to achieve the above vision, Namibia needs to develop a diversified open market economy, with a resource-based industrial sector and commercial agriculture. In pursuing this route, greater emphasis is placed on skills development with capacity building vigorously being pursued by both private and public sectors. VET as a component of the Namibia National Development Plan (NDP) will play a very critical role in the country's efforts to realize Vision 2030. The specific VET mission will be to ensure:

An effective, and sustainable system of skill formation closely aligned with the labor market that equitably provides the skills needed for accelerated development and the competencies needed by youth and adults for productive work and increased standards of living. (Adapted from Education and Training Sector Improvement Plan (ETSIP), page 50, 2005).

18. The specific objectives of the Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy are outlined as:

a) Competent and employable workforce for a service focused and industrialized Namibia

b) A stable organization and management system that clarifies roles and responsibilities and is accountable to the National Assembly through the Minister of Education (MoE)

c) Sustainable partnership between government, private sector and civil society to resource the provision of VET

d) Training system that is responsive to emerging needs, equitable in terms of access, a system that provides learning towards recognized qualifications (Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy, 2005).

3.2 Important Role Players in the Namibian VET System:

19. The Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy (2005) provides for the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Namibia, through the Directorate: Vocational Education and Training to be responsible for the overall policy development of the VET system. Two autonomous bodies under the MoE play important roles in the actual development of the VET system in Namibia. These are the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) and the Namibia Training Authority (NTA).

20. The Ministry of Education (MoE)'s role is mainly to:

- Provide the policy and legal framework for VET within the education and training sector

- Finance overall management and regulation of the system and ensure access for disadvantaged groups

- Ensure an effective governance structure linking and coordinating sub sectors of education and training, other ministries, especially the National Planning Commission (NPC), the Ministries of Trade and Industry, Labour and Social Welfare, Finance and autonomous/statutory/parastatal bodies, especially the NQA and National Council for Higher Education (NCHE); Regional Education Forums and National Education Advisory Council and employers' organizations.

21. The Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) is legally responsible for the development and maintenance of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) through standards and qualifications setting, quality assurance, accreditation, equation of qualifications and assessment including the recognition of prior learning (RPL).

22. The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) is responsible for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of vocational education and training in Namibia, engaging industry; business; training providers; trade unions and other stakeholders in reforming the VET system and ensuring that VET programs and services meet the current and emerging needs of industry, business and the broader community. However, NQA acknowledges the lead role of the NTA in vocational education and training, especially with regards to the development of standards, curriculum, assessment and qualifications as well as the accreditation of training providers. To make this relationship functional, which is very critical, the two organizations have agreed, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to work cooperatively to promote the development of a vocational education and training system in Namibia that is responsive to industry, business, community and national needs as a whole.

23. Training Providers (TPs):

- Provide a range of high quality, relevant and flexible skills development programmes that will lead to formal qualifications recognized by the NQA

- Maintain quality standards of teaching, management and financial stability under guidelines from the NTA

- Ensure that the institution abides by the laws of the country

24. Employers:

- Make clear their needs for skilled and trained people in key business sectors and functions over the short to medium term

- Contribute to the development and implementation of policies and strategies to create a vibrant and effective vocational education system for Namibia

- Nominate able, committed and dedicated persons to serve on the Board of the NTA, Industry Skills Councils and Management Boards of relevant training institutions

25. Trade Unions:

- Identify skills development needs and opportunities among groups of staff

- Provide information and counseling to staff on education and training opportunities within companies, through self-study and job-specific training courses

- Establish links with nearby schools, training centres and colleges to encourage young people to take up vocational and technical training as a path to a worthwhile career

- Encourage and ensure that various members share their skills with trainees

26. Learners and their Families

- Provide feedback on the relevance and standards of curriculum and teaching

- Encourage a learning culture and actively participate in ensuring each learner's success

This structure entails the decentralization of key VET functions to semi-autonomous agencies and hence provides a framework flexibility, decentralization and localization of the curriculum.

3.3 Key components of a Competency Based Approach to VET

27. The VET system in Namibia has embraced *Competency Based Education and Training (CBET)*. Under this approach, unit standards, which describe the outcomes demanded by industry and the community, form the basis for curriculum, assessment and qualifications in the national VET system. This undertaking was made on the basis that the overriding purpose of vocational education and training is to produce competent workers. These are workers who are able to apply their knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform work activities to the standard expected in the workplace. (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004).

28. In essence, competent workers:

- Are able to do the job right

- Know how and why things are done

- Know what to do if things go wrong

- Have the right approach and attitude to do a job properly and safely

- Are able to transfer their skills to new situations

29. Competency, therefore, according to this definition means that workers need both skills to do the job right and the requisite knowledge and capacities to deal with problems, explain work processes, comply with procedures and adjust to changes resulting from the introduction of new technology, economic restructuring and innovation in the workplace. (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004). This understanding has an important bearing on how curriculum and, learning materials are developed, how assessment (including recognition of prior learning) is done and eventually how articulation and certification are done.

3.4 Implications of Vision 2030 and policy of decentralisation on the localization of the curriculum

31. Vision 2030 and the new vocational educational and training policy have implications for the localization and globalization of the curriculum. The Vision 2030 ambition of making Namibia internationally competitive creates a major tension with the ideals of the curriculum localization. In order for Namibia to be globally competitive, it must bench mark its products and services against the best in the world. This means that the VET system should produce highly competent workers who are able to favourably compete with their counterparts in developed economies. The VET system should therefore be bench marked against the systems of other countries. This implies the globalization of the curriculum at the expense of localization. It is accordingly necessary to adopt a curriculum development approach which strikes a favourable balance between local and global prerequisites.

32. Namibia has embarked on a policy of decentralisation of education and training and other areas to the different regions. This policy is outlined in Vision 2030 and in all National Development Plans. This policy implies the decentralisation of the administration and management of schools and vocational training centres to the regions. The implementation of this policy will bring regional and local needs to the fore and will enhance the decentralisation and localisation of curriculum development. At the moment all systems are too centralised in Windhoek and this hampers regional and local development. The localisation of curriculum will enhance the effective utilisation of local resources. For instance, an institution in a largely cattle rearing area can focus on training on the processing of hides into leather and the manufactures of leather products.

4. STRUCTURE, PROVISIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NAMIBIAN NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)[*]

4.1. Descriptive Analysis of the NQF

32. There is a growing trend in Namibia today, encouraged by both government policy and practical realities, that VET providers do offer programs that lead to qualifications within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF describes the different levels of education and training qualifications that are offered by schools, VET institutions and tertiary education institutions in Namibia.

30. Figure 1. below gives a diagrammatic representation of the NQF, illustrating the 10 NQF levels and the related certification levels. Of the 10 levels indicated in the Framework, each has a qualification title and a descriptor. The ten levels, titles and descriptors are detailed in the chart in Annex I to this report.

Figure 1. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
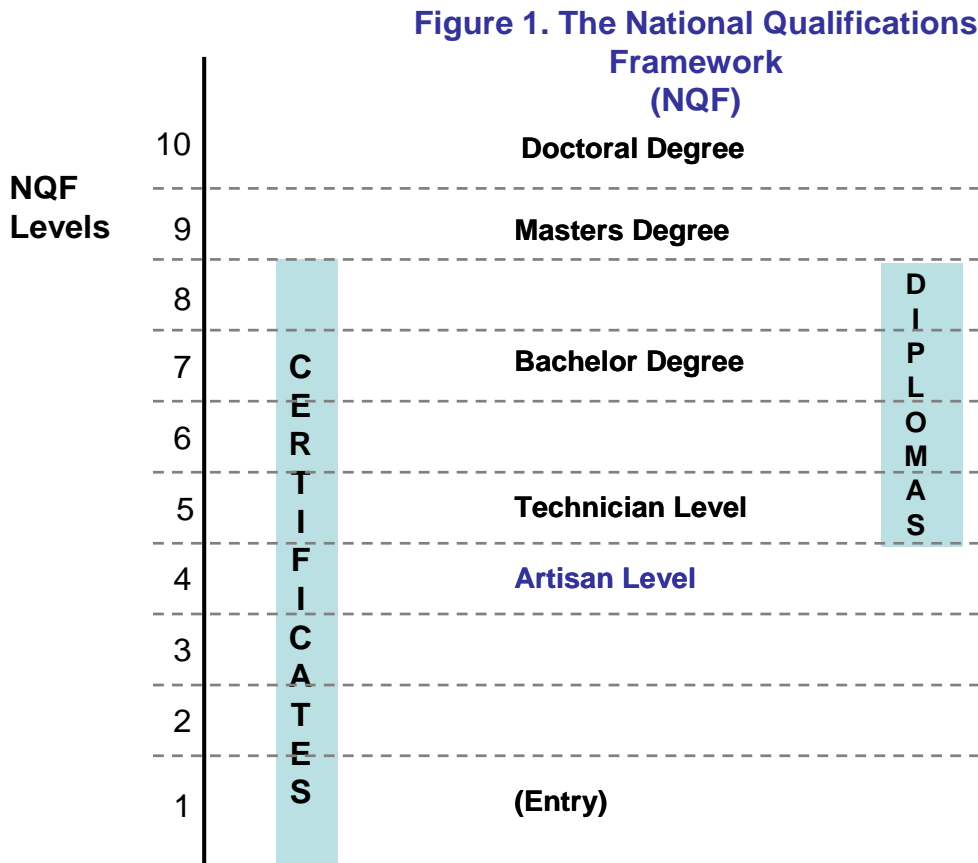
Source: Curriculum Reform in Vocational Education and Training – A Discussion Paper prepared by the
      Namibia Training Authority Program Management Unit, 2004

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[*] Adopted from Namibia Vocational Education and Training Policy, page 28-30, 2005

31. The levels in the Framework reflect the complexity of learning, not equating to "years spent learning". The level in essence reflects the content of the qualification concerned. Generally levels 1-3 reflect senior secondary education and trade training; Levels 4-6 are equivalent to advanced trades, technical and business qualifications and Levels 7 and above equate with advanced qualifications of graduate and post-graduate level.

32. Qualifications in the Framework are based on unit standards. These are the building blocks of qualifications. In the VET sector, unit standards for particular occupations and industry areas are developed by the NTA in consultation with industry, business, training providers and other experts. All unit standards have a credit or point value.

33. Qualifications are issued when learners attain a group of unit standards with a specified credit value. For example, a learner would gain a qualification when he or she has been assessed as being competent against a particular group of unit standards with a specified total credit value.

34. All qualifications in the VET system will progressively be based on unit standards and learners will be issued with national qualifications drawn from the National Qualifications Framework. In most industries, these qualifications will range from Level 1 to Level 5 of the Framework.

35. Under the NQF, learners will be able to gain recognition and formal certification for a single unit standard and progressively build a national qualification. For example, a learner may gain one unit standard in a particular industry area, such as construction, by completing a program at a COSDEC or other community provider. That learner may gain additional unit standards in this industry area over time by undertaking assessment at work, completing a distance delivery program through NAMCOL or participating in a training program at a VTC or a private training provider. When the learner has attained the required group of unit standards with the specified credit value s/he will be issued with the appropriate qualification. This learner may then decide to attain further unit standards and progressively build a higher level qualification. In other cases, learners will enroll in a full program at a VTC or private training provider and attain all the unit standards required for a specific qualification.

36. Under the NQF, qualifications gained through the VET sector will articulate with relevant qualifications offered by tertiary education providers. Thus, VET qualifications form part of an articulated pathway that links programmes offered by community organizations, schools, VET and tertiary education providers such as Polytechnic and the University of Namibia.

37. Progressively the entry requirements for VET programmes will be expressed in terms of unit standards or standards based qualifications. Entry to level 1 qualifications will be open. In those cases where the demand exceeds the availability of places in VET programmes, the NTA will establish transparent and public selection criteria. Whilst entry requirements and selection criteria will be established for training programmes, there will be no restriction on people seeking to have their prior learning recognised by undertaking an assessment against any unit standard in the Framework upon payment of the appropriate fee.

38. Major observations related to the NQF are, therefore, that

- Open entry enhances access and equity

- Modular approach (recognition of each unit/module as a stand alone qualification with a specified point value) enhances flexibility of the VET system itself

- The NQF structure and process in itself facilitates articulation, both between providers and vertically as well as horizontally

- Recognition of prior learning enhances efficiency and effectiveness of the training provision itself (cost saving and value-addition approach)

4.2. Critical Drivers of the Successful Development of the NQF

There are several critical variables and drivers which have resulted in the relative success of the NTA and NQA in the establishment of the NQA.

- Several studies conducted over the last four years, the manpower requirements projections of Vision 2030 highlighted the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Namibia VET system. There was general consensus among all key stakeholders on the urgent need to reform the VET system. This made all key stakeholders responsive to the new reform process and the implementation of the NQF and the new curriculum. All key stakeholders fully support the whole reform process and view it as the last option Namibia has to improve the VET system.

- Industry and other key stakeholders in Namibia have had some exposure to the reforms taking place across the border in South Africa and in other countries implementing qualifications frameworks. This has made stakeholder sensitization easier. There are strong historical, social and economic ties between Namibia and South Africa. It is accordingly relatively easy to get stakeholder buy-in for any reform which has similarities to what is happening in South Africa.

- Namibia has a relatively small population and industry both of which are concentrated in Windhoek and a few other major cities. This makes it relatively easy to consult and lobby key stakeholders.

- The NTA and NQA had the advantage of learning from strengths and mistakes of South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and other countries who have implemented national qualifications frameworks. The lessons learnt from the experiences of other countries resulted in the development of more pragmatic, efficient and cost-effective structures and systems which suit the Namibia context.

- The implementation of the new reforms are driven by a small team of international and regional consultants and local staff. This team has been given a lot of autonomy by the government to drive the reform process.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS

39. As noted in 3.3 above, the competencies required by workers in specific occupations are described in the unit standards. Unit standards are in turn, developed under the authority and guidance of the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA). The unit standards themselves comply with, and are derived from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

40. For clarity, it is important to emphasise that *unit standards* describe the work activities performed in the workplace i.e. describe what a competent person is able to do in the workplace. Unit standards do not describe the training or skill development that a person needs to be able to perform this work. This aspect is captured by the *curriculum* which describes the teaching and/or learning required to perform according to requirements specified in the standards i.e. to become competent in the workplace. In competency based training, these standards, of necessity, provide the basis for:

- Curriculum development

- Learning materials development

- Assessment

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

- Articulation and credit transfer

- Certification

- Pathways

41. Since the focus of unit standards development in Namibia's VET system is on identifying the required standards of performance in the workplace, industry must be genuinely involved in the standards development process. The increasing emphasis government is placing on ensuring that VET contributes significantly to improvements in living standards of the people also means that a broader range of stakeholders need to be involved in the process of standards development to facilitate decentralisation/localisation of the VET system.

42. In reality, the NTA involves industry and other relevant stakeholders in standards development. The NTA facilitated process of standards development is flexible. The process and its inherent systems allow for development of standards with both national and/or local relevance and application. This flexibility is mainly facilitated and achieved by an approach to recognize *core standards and optional/elective standards,* giving possibilities for the following "qualification options".

Option 1: Core standards based qualification (national standards only)

Option 2: Core standards + optional standards based qualifications (hybrid of both national and local defined standards)

Option 3: Optional standards based qualification (local standards solely to address locally defined needs and requirements)

5.1. Quality Assurance and Flexibility in Standards Development

43. As noted earlier, the NTA develops, and under delegation from NQA, approves unit standards for occupations and industries up to and including Level 5 of the NQF in consultation with industry, business, training providers, trade unions, the self employed and other stakeholders. The status of the 'unit standard' is the first and most critical element in the quality assurance system. The format of 'unit

standards' is specific and standardised. The clarity of its definition leaves no room for misinterpretation by potential developers. However, the content of unit standards is flexible enough to meet the requirements of the 'option' preferred by the stakeholder.

44. For Options 1 and 2 described above which have elements of national standards the NTA establishes Technical Working Groups (TWGs) with local and regional representation for the standards development process. A typical TWG consists of local and national industry representatives; formal and informal sector representatives and instructors from Training Providers (TPs) in the areas concerned i.e. government, private sector, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs etc.

45. In the NTA process for standard development outlined above, there is a guarantee that local needs are included and catered for, not only through the development of 'dedicated' optional standards but even in the national standards thus developed. NTA has invested substantially to make the process fair, transparent and truly participatory to ensure that it adequately caters for training needs of the broad spectrum of stakeholders.

5.2. Regional Pressures and the Establishment of a Regional Qualifications Framework

46. There are regional pressures which create a lot of tension with the drive towards localization of standards and curriculum. The SADC Protocol on Education and Training signed by all the SADC Heads of State and Government establishes a SADC policy on the development of a regional qualifications Framework which links the qualifications frameworks of the different SADC countries. The establishment of a regional qualifications framework implies the benchmarking and comparability of standards and curriculum across the different SADC countries in tension to decentralization and localization. Due to its past history and economic dependence on South Africa, Namibia has tremendous pressure to align all its systems to South Africa. In many sectors there is a general tendency towards the wholesale adoption of South African standards and curricula. This is in contradiction to the drive by the NTA and NQA for the development of local standards and curriculum.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM CONTENT AND PROGRAMS

47. The underlying concept and long term vision of the NTA regarding the development of curriculum and programs is to decentralize, to the extent feasible, curriculum development and delivery to training providers (TPs). However, as NTA is concerned with maintenance of quality in such processes, it can, and has already started, to decentralize those functions based on a wholesome quality assurance process/system.

48. Key elements of the Quality Assurance System include:

- Curriculum so developed must be based on predetermined principles of CBET

- Training delivery should also be based on pre-determined CBET concepts and principles on the *planning, implementation, and evaluation* of instruction

- Training delivery *management* must be based on principles and guidelines of internal assessment systems ensuring that each training institution keeps specified records of student performance

- Training providers need to adhere to professional institutional management standards that guarantee effective supervision, internal monitoring, internal quality assurance etc.

49. As part of its facilitation of the above process, the primary role for NTA is monitoring adherence to the quality assurance system by the training providers. As the system is being gradually rolled out, a key facilitating input of the NTA at the moment is training managers of Training Providers (TPs) on the establishment of their own *Quality Management Systems.*

50. The approach taken by the NTA in the instance of development of curriculum content and programs can best be summarized as 'decentralisation/delegation with responsibility'. The approach facilitates maximum flexibility on the part of the TPs to respond to local needs and requirements while at the same time not compromising on the quality and recognition of qualifications at national and even international level.

7. ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION PROCESSES

51. The process of assessment is a critical component of any competency based training system. The purpose of assessment is to determine whether the learner/candidate has attained the competency identified in the relevant unit standard[s] – in other words can the learner/candidate perform the work described in the standard to the level expected in the workplace? (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004).

52. In competency based training, assessment involves collecting evidence and making judgments about whether competency has been achieved. This evidence may take different forms and could include:

- Observation of the person performing the job

- Examining a sample of work produced by the learner/candidate

- Reviewing a report from the learner's/candidate's employer

- The results of a written or oral test

- The demonstration of a skill

53. It is very important that the process be as transparent and as objective as possible if the assessment is to be credible. To this end, it is important that regardless of the form of evidence utilized, the ultimate purpose of assessment is to confirm that an individual can perform to the standard expected in the workplace as described in the relevant unit standard[s]. In addition, and in order to ensure that the assessment is both rigorous and fair, it must be conducted by qualified assessors who are both:

- Technically competent in the work being assessed and

- Competent in assessment

54. Responding to the increased necessity for decentralization of assessment, NTA is currently in the process of establishing and implementing an assessment and certification system that caters for both decentralized and centralized situations as follows:

    a) Decentralised Assessment System:

- Training provider has primary responsibility to plan, implement, monitor and manage the assessment process

- NTA has a monitoring responsibility as a quality assurance measure to ensure compliance with quality standards

- Internal assessment is prioritized as it is generally acknowledged that more learning takes place through feedback provided from internal assessments than from just one external assessment at the end of the training period

- To ensure that internal assessment is taken seriously, NTA requires that only candidates who pass the internal assessment are allowed to sit for the external assessment

    b) Centralised Assessment System:

- Assessment is conducted by trained assessors who are registered and certified by NTA for the relevant qualification levels

- NTA maintains a pool of competent and certified assessors drawn from both industry and training institutions (instructors)

- Assessment is only conducted at registered assessment centres that should have sufficient capacity and infrastructure to conduct credible assessments

7.1 Quality Assurance and Flexibility in Assessment

55. To enhance flexibility, the NTA designed Assessment System allows for recognition and certification of competencies acquired through work and life experience. This is particularly helpful as it facilitates access to qualifications for people already in employment. The whole assessment and certification system is managed through a structure and mechanism of National Assessment Panels (NAPs) comprising experts from industry and training providers (instructors).

56. The current roles and functions of NAPs are:

- To develop assessment materials

- To appoint assessors (later assessors will be appointed by the relevant assessment centers when system is fully established)

- To moderate and issue results

57. As noted earlier, the Namibian VET system is in transition. In the long term, it is envisaged that NTA will restrict its role as far as assessments go to quality assurance mainly. To facilitate achievement of this long term objective, NTA is vigorously training assessors that will be able to take up this responsibility. The desire to decentralize and/or localize assessment needs to be preceded by a serious capacity development process both institutionally and in terms of the required human resources otherwise it cannot be realized.

8. PROVISION OF AUTONOMY TO TRAINING PROVIDERS

58. VET in Namibia is currently mainly delivered through Vocational Training Centers (VTCs). Due to the pressure and desire to decentralize VET, there are serious efforts to make VTCs more autonomous, especially after the equally autonomous NTA is established and VTCs will have to be accountable to it. It is the long term vision of the NTA to grant a high degree of autonomy to all government controlled VTCs but obviously within an agreed quality assurance system and under agreed contractual arrangements with the NTA to meet strategic national requirements. In furtherance of this understanding, VTCs will be autonomous in terms of their day-to-day operations and will have autonomy to decide what they teach and on necessary changes required in their curricula.

59. It is however, very important to note that the issue of VTC autonomy still remains a contentious one, resulting in the Namibian government proceeding very cautiously with it. There is a school of thought which says that it is not in the interest of government to let go of VTCs. One clear issue of concern to government is the issue of location of current VTCs that could lead to unfair competition among them as those VTCs located closer to industries have a relatively good chance to prosper unlike those located in remote rural areas. Ndjoze-Siririka (2003:6) also warns that VTCs should and "must take account of their pivotal role in the national economic development process". The challenge of balancing market demand with social responsibilities becomes paramount.

60. As in the case with decentralization and/or localization of assessment, there is also concern that there is currently a serious lack of management capacity in most VTCs. The issue of granting autonomy can, therefore, not be divorced from the urgent process of institutional capacity building and human capacity development for the VTCs.

61. The NTA has, as a complementary measure, made a proposal to incentivise VTCs to perform. The proposal is for all training providers (not only governmental) to receive government funding based on merit. Those training providers giving quality and good results (value-for-money) will be given more funding. With this approach being followed, quality and value for money can only be the obvious winners.

62. In terms of content, other important elements of the decentralization process will include:

- Institutional management

- Financial and administrative management

- Recruitment and staff development

- Networking with relevant stakeholders

- Public relations and advocacy on VET related issues

9. KEY CHALLENGES TO LOCALISATION OF CURRICULA AND DECENTRALISATION OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

63. As noted in the introduction to this case study, Namibia's VET system is undergoing reform and the transition process is still in its infancy. Although significant progress has been made to date, some formidable challenges still remain to fully exploit the huge potential there is. Key challenges to note related to localization of curricula and decentralization of curriculum development are as follows:

a) Balancing social imperatives with economic realities:

In terms of resources, industry remains the biggest player in the Namibian VET system. Social and developmental priorities of government do not always necessarily coincide with the business priorities of industry. What is politically and socially desirable is not always necessarily economically sustainable. Specifically in the process of standards and curriculum development, there is urgent need for a paradigm shift to manage the dominance of big companies in big towns. The challenge is to negotiate a win-win situation for both government and industry. However, one has to note the goodwill that currently exists between government and industry as a great asset. This has been mainly facilitated by NTA's participatory approach to the transformation process in which it attempts to meaningfully engage all relevant stakeholders in the process to enhance ownership.

b) Perception of time and process:

It has to be acknowledged that the transformation of the VET system in Namibia has raised a lot of expectations, most of which cannot be fulfilled in both the short and medium term. This is mainly because curriculum reform is a process and not an event. The process inevitably takes much longer to fully function than is anticipated. It takes a substantially long time to establish the framework and institutions to make curriculum reform work and even much more time to develop the requisite human competencies to make the new system work effectively. There is evidence in some quarters that stakeholders are not patient and are getting frustrated with the slow pace of reform especially as it relates to development of curriculum and training materials as well as the decentralization and localization of assessment. Few instructors in VTCs have adequate training in assessment and even fewer have had exposure to competency based assessment. (NTA Discussion Paper, 2004).

c) Capacity limitations:

Capacity constraints remain the biggest challenge to the curriculum reform process of the Namibian government. Important aspects of the capacity constraints to highlight are the following:

- Conceptual understanding of the process i.e. unit standards development → curriculum development → training materials development → assessment is greatly limited seriously compromising capacity to participate in the process by most stakeholders. There is inadequate technical and pedagogical expertise.

- The flexibility that is required/needed in developing unit standards, especially optional standards, requires a high level of competency in facilitation. This expertise is simply not available or completely inadequate.

- Institutional management capacity at the levels to be decentralized to is highly questionable. The question or challenges arises therefore, regarding how you can effectively decentralize without the requisite capacity? For curriculum decentralisation and localization to work effectively there is need to build adequate structural and technical

capacity at regional and local levels. The current focus on building the capacity of training providers. The regional governments and other regional authorities need to be mobilized

- Overall, a much more fundamental challenge remains to develop a shared national vision for VET that can guide all stakeholders in Namibia towards one common goal. It seems as if Namibians from different walks of life have a different vision regarding how VET should be organized and managed depending on their priority considerations.

d) Decentralisation versus central quality assurance

There is a need to balance between decentralization and central quality assurance. In a decentralized system like the one Namibia is trying to implement, there is need for a strong central unit which provide and monitor the implementation of quality assurance guidelines. This is necessary to guarantee the quality and value national training programmes, assessment results and certificates.

10. SUMMARY OF COUNTRY EXPERIENCES, WORK IN PROGRESS AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

64. The Project Management Unit for the Establishment of the Namibia Training Authority [PMU-NTA] was established four years ago to spearhead the establishment of the NTA and the introduction of curriculum reform process.

65. Policies, structures, concepts, principles and procedures for the development, implementation and evaluation of standards, qualifications, modular curriculum, training materials, national assessment and certification have been developed and piloted for about sixteen occupations. Implementation of the new curriculum commenced with pilots in Bricklaying in February 2006. In 2007, implementation was spread to seventeen public and private training providers in over ten occupational areas. The experiences of the first year of national implementation (2007) are being evaluated for improvement and consolidation in 2008.

66. One of the assignments of the PMU-NTA was the development of a national VET policy and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Bill legally establishing the NTA and the training levy. The VET policy was approved by Cabinet in 2006. The VET Bill has now been approved and passed by Cabinet, the National Assembly and the National Council and should be law by the end of 2007. This will provide a permanent legal and financial framework for the sustainability of the reform process.

67. The major future plans for VET reform are outlined in the ETSIP document. The plans under the ETSIP include: capacity building at all levels; re-equipment of VTCs; construction of new VTCs in rural and peri-urban localities outside the major towns; providing a semi-autonomous status to public VTCs; the encouragement of training and the offering of the new competency based curriculum by private and NGO training providers; and the strengthening of the development and implementation of the new competency based training and assessment system across all occupational areas.

68. The whole process of developing the policy and legal framework and the development and national approval of technical development concepts and procedures is now going into the fifth year. The process has required a huge initial financial investment from Ministry, development partners including the EU, SIDA, Lux Aid, the ETSIP and local partners like the Namibia Tourism Board for the development of Hospitality and Tourism training programmes, the ICT Department in the Ministry of Education for the development of ICT training programmes, the NGO Management Institute for the development of NGO management qualifications and the Roads Authority for the development of qualifications in road building and maintenance. The major challenge remains the development of human capacity at both national and local levels for the sustainability of the whole reform process and the effective implementation of the new curriculum.

69. The diversification and localization of curriculum development and implementation requires adequate capacity at local level. There is a planned gradual development of the capacity of public, private and NGO training providers in different local settings across the country as an integral part of ETSIP.

11. MANAGING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER SADC COUNTRIES

70. The whole change process is complex and very difficult to effectively manage. The current successes of the reform process is a result of synergy at executive, policy and operational levels.

71. The whole reform process was initiated and is being driven by the government executive and policy levels. The idea and concept of the NTA was developed by the then Minister of Education and now Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, the Right Honourable Nahas Angula. The Prime Minister has provided impetus for the reform process at policy and executive levels and for the passing of the VET Bill by Cabinet, Parliament and the National Council. The Prime Minister is a known exponent curriculum decentralization and localization in order for it to meet the needs of disadvantaged and unemployed rural and urban youth.

72. At the policy level the Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training, is responsible for the overall coordination and financing of the reform process. The Ministry of Education established a Task Force to conduct the management of the project on its behalf. The Task Force is a "mirror" of the NTA board and comprises representatives of industry, employers, employees and government. The Task Force supervises the PMU-NTA project manager and the monitors the implementation of all plans and budgets.

73. The day to day management of the project is delegated to the project manager. The manager has a lot of autonomy on operational issues. This is a critical factor for success.

74. Another key success factor in the management of the change process is the demography of Namibia. With an estimated population of 1,8 million, the Namibia employment and VET systems are relatively small compared to that of other developing countries. This makes stakeholder consultations and consensus building easier.

75. The management of the change process has been made easier by lessons learnt from the experiences of other countries who have embarked on similar reforms for the past decade. This includes the "big brother" South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Botswana, Mauritius, Malawi and other SADC countries. Namibia shares experiences with other countries in the SADC region implementing similar reforms within the framework of the SADC Protocol on Education and Training. This is done through workshops, conferences and country visits. The heads of qualifications and training authorities in SADC have constituted themselves into a committee responsible for facilitating the sharing of experiences. The committee organizes biannual regional conferences for the showcasing of concepts, procedures, products and experiences. The last conference was hosted by Namibia in 2006 and the next one will be held in Mozambique in 2008.

12. THE DIMENSIONS OF LOCALISATION AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

76. The main target groups to benefit from the localization of the curriculum are unemployed and under-employed rural and out of school youths. In order to adequately cater for the needs of these target groups, there is open entry to Level 1 of the NQF. Generic Level 1 unit standards and curricula on HIV and AIDS Awareness and workplace numeracy, literacy and basic communication skills have been developed to compensate for the low academic qualifications of these disadvantaged target groups. This has kindled the interest and participation of NGO and other training providers involved in community skills development. COSDECs, KAYEC, DAPP and other NGO training providers and Ministry of Youth training centres have embarked on the implementation of the new curriculum at Level 1 of the NQF. This is indeed a welcome development which promotes curriculum decentralization and the offering of training at community level. There is great potential for the development of unit standards and curricula which meet local skills needs.

77. All approved standards and curricula are made available on the PMU-NTA website and are distributed to interested stakeholders on request. The PMU-NTA has established a national data base of all training providers to ensure the timely dissemination of information.

78. There are capacity and resource limitations for the effective and sustainable implementation of the localization of the curriculum and the whole reform process. There is need for the gradual development of the capacity of policy makers, NTA staff, educators, managers of training institutions, instructors, assessors, moderators and other stakeholders. Namibia might have to import foreign qualified manpower in critical shortage areas if the reform is to succeed. There is need to change the paradigm and perceptions of all those involved including trainees, parents and the community.

79. The effective implementation of the reform process requires a substantial investment of resources. The PMU-NTA and the Ministry of Education have embarked on the mobilization of the required resources through the training levy (1% of the wage bill of employers), development partners through ETSIP and public funding. The efficient management of resources and the demonstration of tangible success are critical in order to sustain the interest of all these sponsors of the reform process.

13. CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES OF THE NAMIBIAN TVET SYSTEM IN RELATION TO CURRICULUM LOCALISATION AND DECENTRALISATION WHICH CAN BE REPLICATED IN OTHER COUNTRIES

80. The decentralization and localization of the curriculum and training of urban and rural unemployed youths and other marginalized target groups through the COSDEC (Community Skills Development Centres) Foundation is one such good practice which can be replicated in other countries. Through the COSDEC Foundation, the government has provided a framework and funding for the establishment of COSDECs in all regions and districts of Namibia is an innovative and systematic approach of curriculum decentralization and localization. Each COSDEC has the liberty to work with its local community to identify community training needs and develop tailor made curricula and training programme.

81. Entry into NTA level 1 curriculum is open. There are no academic or age restrictions. This opens up access to recognized qualifications to marginalized target groups including COSDEC trainees and trainees from other public, private and NGOb

14. CONCLUSION

82. Namibia has embarked on a very comprehensive and flexible curriculum reform process in vocational education and training (VET). The major transformation is from a very highly centralized system of the past to a new more decentralized system of VET provision and delivery. Significant progress has been made in the direction of localization of curricula and decentralization of curriculum development. However, a lot of challenges still remain to realize the vision of a demand driven VET system in Namibia that addresses both the needs of industry and the needs of society as a whole. Due to capacity limitations, it has to be acknowledged that the process will be gradual and protracted. It is significant to note, however, that the bottom-up and highly participatory approach that Namibia has chosen to utilize for its VET system transformation will underpin the process's wide acceptance, relevance and overall sustainability.

83. The PMU-NTA is grateful to the ADEA for selecting Namibia as one of the countries for this study. The study has highlighted some key challenges which Namibia needs to address in order to enhance the localization of curricula and the decentralization of curriculum development. Namibia is eager to learn from the experiences of other countries.

84. For Josh Mushauri and Lewis Durango who conducted the study and produced this report, the whole study was an enjoyable learning experience.

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16. LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

1) NDJOZE-SIRIRIKA Muvatera, Director, Directorate of VET, MoE
2) NGONDJI Daniel, Deputy Director, Directorate of VET, MoE
3) HEITA Albertina, Deputy Director, Directorate of VET, MoE
4) SHINANA Ephraim, Chief Curriculum Officer, Directorate of VET, MoE
5) EIXAB Ernst C, Chief Vocational Education Inspector and Acting Chief Trade Test Officer, national Trade Testing Center (NTTC), MoE
6) ARRIES Corrie, Head of Administration, Windhoek Vocational Training Center (WVTC)
7) NAKATANA L, Head of Liaison and Business Development, Windhoek Vocational Training Center (WVTC)
8) YATES Mike, Director, KATUTURA Youth Enterprise Center (KAYEC) Trust, Windhoek
9) CROES Geert, Curriculum Development Coordinator, Namibia Training Authority (NTA) Project Management Unit
10) SHINDI Alpheas *(Team Leader curriculum implementation and evaluation)*, Namibia Training Authority (NTA) Project Management Unit
11) PRINGLE Lawrence, Project Manager, Namibia Training Authority (NTA), Project Management Unit
12) DURANGO Lewis *(Manager Curriculum Development and Implementation)*, Namibia Training Authority (NTA), Project Management Unit
13) PLATT Quinton, Namibian School of Engineering Technology
14) KAZONDUNGE Magreth, Namibian Small Contractors Association (NSCA)
15) Staff members of Centres for Curriculum Development and Implementation and Assessment and Certification, NTA PMU

Annex 1 : NQF Descriptors[1]

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[1] Source: Namibian Vocational Education and Training Policy Paper (2005), Ministry of Education

Level	Descriptor
10	Comprehensive, systematic and in-depth mastery of a discipline/field's knowledge, research, analytical and/or creative requirements. Able to contribute ideas and to debate at the cutting edge of an area of specialisation. Highest level of research capabilities and/or in the creation of new knowledge, art or work. Provide through publication and/or presentation an original contribution to knowledge through research or scholarship, as judged by independent experts and peers applying international standards
9	Comprehensive and systematic knowledge in a discipline or field with specialist knowledge in an area at the forefront of that discipline or field. Capacity for self-directed study and the ability to work independently. Planning and carrying out of a substantial piece of original research or scholarship to internationally recognised standard and involving a high order of skill in analysis and critical evaluation. Identification, analysis and proposed responses to real work or complex issues and problems drawing systematically and creatively on the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Advanced information retrieval, processing, analytical, synthesising and independent evaluation of qualitative data. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of specialist and non-specialist audiences and/or in diverse genres.
8	Deepened, comprehensive and systematic expertise in a particular discipline. Developed research capacity using a coherent and critical understanding of the principles, theories and methodologies of a particular discipline. Selects research methods, techniques and technologies appropriate to a particular problem. Efficient and effective information retrieval and processing skills, involving critical analysis and independent evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data. Engages with current research and scholarly or professional literature. Able to present and communicate academic or professional work effectively, catering for a wide range of audiences and/or in diverse genres.

Level	Descriptor
	Knowledge of a major discipline with areas of specialisation in depth. Analysis, transformation and evaluation of abstract data and concepts in the creation of appropriate responses to resolve given or contextual abstract problems.

7	Carry out processes that require a command of highly specialised technical or scholastic and basic research skills across a major discipline and which involve the full range of procedures in a major discipline. Application in complex, variable and specialised contexts. Planning, resourcing and managing processes within broad parameters and functions with complete accountability for determining, achieving and evaluating personal and/or group outcomes.
6	Demonstrates focused knowledge and skills in a particular field using general principles and application and/or some specialised knowledgeable with depth in more than one area. Analysis, reformatting and evaluation of a wide range of information used in the formulation of appropriate responses to resolve both concrete and abstract problems. Carry out processes that require a command of wide-ranging highly specialised technical or scholastic skills and/or which involve a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures, often in non-standard combinations, often in highly variable routine and non-routine contexts. Manages processes within broad parameters for defined activities. Complete accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.
5	Broad, general knowledge based on general principles in a specific area with substantial depth in some aspects. Analytical interpretation of a wide range of data and the determination of appropriate methods and procedures in response to a range of concrete problems with some theoretical elements. Carry out processes that require a wide range of specialised technical or scholastic skills involving a wide choice of standard and non-standard procedures. Employed in a variety of routine and non-routine contexts. Self-directed and sometimes directed activity within broad general guidelines or functions. Full responsibility for the nature, quantity and quality of outcomes, with possible responsibility for the achievement of group outcomes.

Level	Descriptor
	Employing a broad knowledge base incorporating some theoretical concepts or in-depth applied knowledge and skills in a specific area. Analytical interpretation of information. Making informed judgment and offers a range of sometimes innovative responses to concrete but often unfamiliar problems.

4	Carry out processes that require a wide range of technical or scholastic skills and/or that offer a considerable choice of procedures. Often employed in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. Applied in self-directed activity under broad guidance and evaluation. Complete responsibility for quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the quantity and quality of the output of others.
3	Employing some relevant theoretical knowledge and interpretation of available information. Uses discretion and judgment over a range of known responses to familiar problems. Carry out processes that require a range of well-developed skills and offer a significant choice of procedures within a range of familiar contexts. Applied in directed activity with some autonomy. Under general supervision and quality checking, though with significant responsibility for the quantity and quality of output, with possible responsibility for the output of others.
2	Employs basic operational knowledge using readily available information. Uses known solutions to familiar problems with little generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are moderate in range, are established and familiar and offer a clear choice of routine responses. Applied in directed activity under general supervision and quality control. Some responsibility for quantity and quality, with possible responsibility for guiding others.
1	Employs recall and a narrow range of knowledge and cognitive skills. No generation of new ideas. Carry out processes that are limited in range, repetitive and familiar, and employed within closely defined contexts. Applied in directed activity under close supervision with no responsibility for the work or learning of others

Annex II

Glossary of Terms :

Note: The Source of each definition in this glossary is indicated as being provided by either the NQA – Namibian Qualifications Authority or the NTA – Namibia Training Authority. The year in which the definition was published is also provided

Accreditation | The formal recognition of standards, curriculum and training institutions by the appropriate recognition authority [NTA-2004]

Articulation | The arrangements which facilitate the movement or progression of learners from one course to another, or from one education and training sector to another. [NTA-2004]

Assessment | A process of collecting and interpreting evidence of competence or achievement [NQA-1999]

Certification | Documentary evidence that a qualification is awarded [NQA-1999]

Credit | A value assigned to a module standards which reflects the relative time and effort required to complete its outcomes [NQA-1999]

Credit transfer | Transferring credits between courses which lead to a national qualification [NQA-1999]

Competency | Means the knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal attributes combined through underlying understanding to perform all or some of the duties and/or activities required by an occupation or function [NQA-1999]

Curriculum | The specifications for a course that comprises a collection or package of modules [NTA-2004]

Learning materials | Training materials in print and electronic form that are used by learners to acquire the outcomes specified in competency based curriculum and unti standards [NTA-2004]

Moderation | A process of ensuring the consistency of assessment with the required standard [NQA-1999]

Module | A documented sequence of learning which is based on a unti or cluster of unit standards [NTA-2004]

National Standards Setting Body | Representative industry/occupational bodies which develop national standards in cooperation with the NQA [NQA-1999]

Pathway | A path or sequence of learning experience that can be followed to attain competency [NTA-2004]

Provider | An individual, institution or organisation providing education or training [NQA-1999]

Qualification | Certification awarded to a person on successful completion of a course in recognition of having achieved particular group of unit standards [NTA-2004]

Recognition | The formal approval of training organisations, products and services operating within the VET sector [NTA-2004]

Recognition of Prior Learning	A process of acknowledging competencies obtained outside formal education and training [NQA-1999]
Standards Generating Body	Industry or occupation based groups that undertake standards development on behalf of the relevant NSSB or the NQA [NTA-2004]
Unit standard	Nationally registered statements of education and training outcomes and their associated performance criteria {NQA-1999}
Vocational education and training	Post compulsory education and training, excluding degree and higher level qualifications, which provides people with occupational or work related knowledge and skills. International terms include TVET, VTET, VTE, FET and TVE [NTA-2004]