



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Statement

by

Honourable Katrina Hanse-Himarwa, MP
Minister of Education, Arts and Culture

at the official launch of the Education Act, Act 16
of 2001 Review process

10 July 2015

Windhoek

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Morning!

It is indeed my pleasure and privilege to be with you this morning.

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is in the process of reviewing the existing Education Act: Act 16 of 2001 with the aim to transform the current Act in accordance with the latest developments and current needs of the Namibian Education System. The reviewed Education Act will ensure inclusivity, equitable access, participation and equity in education towards quality teaching and learning in Namibia. Also in line with what the President of the country His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob continues to say that “no Namibian must be left out”, thus inclusivity is of paramount importance.

The Ministry appointed a Steering Committee, comprising of government sectors and agencies, teacher unions, development partners, academia and civil society, to lead the process of conducting the Regional Consultations. This Steering Committee will be supported by UNICEF and the Directorate of Law Reform in the Ministry of Justice.

The new amended Education Act will align educational programmes to relevant policy and legislation and national priorities such as VISION 2030, NDP4 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to prepare the citizenry for skills which will drive the Economy.

Beyond the legislative imperative, the review of the Education Act also provides a platform for the new legislation to be a document of and for the people – a living document that will ensure that the interest of all parties in providing a quality education are reflected.

Therefore, I am calling for nationwide public participation in the review of the Education Act and developing a new Education Act for Namibia’s children that

put education at the centre of our development imperatives. Education is a key priority for our Government in ensuring that we fight poverty and inequality that still impedes our development goals.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are going to engage young people, youth, parents/guardians, public, private, religious and policy makers to act on behalf of our girls, boys, children with disabilities, orphans, remote rural dwellers, peri-urban poor, and other vulnerable children by using this opportunity of the review of the Education Act to promote equity, equality, and positive learning outcomes by giving a fair chance to the Education of EVERY child and young person.

As a Ministry, we will consult parents, teachers, learners, unions, private sector, academia and all other friends of education to ensure that our new Education Act provides a blueprint for quality education and lifelong learning, from Early childhood Development, early learning and foundation phase to secondary education, equipping our children with the skills and abilities to live and thrive in a Namibia that pursues excellence in education.

We need to identify issues that must be addressed to have a more progressive Education Act which is forward looking and will stand the test of time. We need to use this review process to plan and integrate. Cease the opportunity to take a futuristic approach. We should give Namibia a head-start for her children and young people.

We shall also use this opportunity to increase our people's understanding of the significance of meaningful participation as enshrined in our constitution, clarify our own various roles, purpose and responsibility in the development of our education system, learning environment, learning processes and learning outcomes.

We must reflect on the role of our teachers and the environment in which they take care of our children and advise on how our children may better be supported by our teachers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, as the Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, I invite all Namibians from our urban to our rural areas, old and young, boys and girls, men and women, to join us in reviewing and developing a new public legislation that echoes all our ideas and optimism for a new era of education and learning in Namibia.

We will also make use of traditional and social media platforms, so keep your eyes open. You will have an opportunity to provide input and to review drafts as they become available. We want to come up with the people's Education Act, which ownership lies in the hands of the Namibian people, that is why every effort will be made to consult as broad as possible and get input from all Namibians.

We cannot do this without you, the Namibian people. Let the Education Act not be a document that should be hidden on library shelves or offices. It should be a living document that enshrines our hopes and goals for our children and our Nation as a whole. So be part of it – quality education, is our shared responsibility.

Let me once again thank UNICEF, The Law Reform and Development Commission and all other stakeholders for supporting this important process.

I THANK YOU