

## **Outreach Programs**

### **Introduction**

Namibia is a Unitary State founded on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. The vast majority of the Namibian population lives in the rural areas, villages, settlements and towns far away from the capital Windhoek where the parliament is located. This makes it difficult for those not living in the capital to easily access parliamentary activities or parliamentarians. Thus, the parliament carries out outreach programs to the regions as often as possible.

The overall objective is to: **”TAKING PARLIAMENT TO THE PEOPLE”**

### **Types of outreach programs**

#### **1. The Speakers’ Outreach program**

When the House is on recess, the Speaker/Deputy-Speaker joined by backbenchers from different political parties represent in parliament and a technical team from the parliaments’ Secretariat visits a couple of regions constituencies.

The aim is to take Parliament to the people with “the View of Consulting Constituencies about Service Delivery from the Government”. The team held meetings with the Constituencies Development Committees (CDCs) and community residing in any particular constituency.

These are consultative meetings where the Speaker/Deputy Speaker and his/her team listen to the constituency development activities and communities needs and the delivering of service by the government as appropriated through the annual budget.

#### **2. School Outreach Program**

This outreach program is primary designed and directed at school going children of Namibia. As often as it is possible, the Parliament Educational Public Educational Team by its own initiatives or invitations by schools in the regions visits schools in a particular educational Circuit and present classes to school children of that Circuit about Parliament, Democracy and Governance.

The aim is to educate the school going children about Parliament and how the country is governed. Information publications by Parliament are being distributed as well.

### **3. Community and Exhibitions/Trade fairs Outreach Programs**

These are general outreach reach programs aimed at reaching out to as many people as possible. Trade Fairs and Exhibition Shows provide the right platform to educate, interact and distribute parliamentary information to the general public.

At the moment, the Parliament compulsorily participate in the two main Trade Shows in the country, these are the Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair (OATF) and the Windhoek Trade and Agricultural Show. The interests being shown by members of the public in parliamentary affairs is enormous. Parliament also participates in two small towns Fairs annually on rotational basis.

### **4. Colleges of Education Educational Outreach Program**

#### **Introduction**

This is an educational program focusing on teaching student teachers about the constitution of the Namibian Parliament; its powers and functions; procedures and activities and Public Participation in the Law Making Process. It will also cover topics prescribed in schools and BETD syllabi. This program will enable Parliament to enhance the parliamentary process and ultimately consolidate democracy.

#### **Objectives**

- To present proper and accurate parliamentary information
- To enhance student teachers' knowledge and understanding of Namibia's parliamentary system, through an engaging educational experience
- To facilitate the sharing and development of ideas, resources and methods for teaching about parliamentary democracy and governance
- To empower teachers champion the consolidation of democracy and extend the discussion about parliamentary democracy to their own classrooms and communities
- To enhance public participation in the law-making process

#### **Benefits**

- Experience and gain first hand views on the intricacies of government and the legislative process, the role players and their functions
- Gain insight into the fundamental issues of democratic governance
- collect creative ideas and useful tools for teaching about Parliament, governance and democracy
- Forge contacts with dynamic teachers colleges

#### **The focus**

This program primarily focus on student teachers of the social science subjects and their lecturers, but other students of other disciplines are also encouraged to participate, as democracy and governance are foundation on which all important decisions in the

country are made. Teachers and learners from the surrounding schools are also encouraged to participate in the programs.

### **5. Outreach Through Radio Services (KNOW YOU PARLIAMENT)**

Outreach through Radio is a Parliamentary Civic Educational program aimed at introducing the basics and important topics of parliament, democracy and governance to the public.

Radio is the most used medium of communication and information dissemination in Namibia as through radio one can reach out to as many people as possible. This program is envisaged to start off first through NBC National Radio Service and then will be extend to other NBC Language Services and possible community and commercial radio stations. This will depend on the availability of both capital and human resources.

#### **Its objectives are to:**

1. educate members of the public about the parliamentary process
2. generate interests among the youth into parliamentary activities
3. reach out to as many people as possible , and deliver a clear , accurate and complete parliamentary information
4. enhance public participation in the law-making process

#### **The target group**

The program primarily target young people, especially school going and out of school youth who might be sitting at home in the afternoon.