



Electoral Commission of Namibia

BUDGET MOTIVATION
VOTE 28: ELECTORAL COMMISISON OF NAMIBIA
2019/2020 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

MOTIVATION FOR BUDGET

BY

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SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, 24 APRIL 2019

HON. CHAIRPERSON OF THE WHOLE HOUSE COMMITTEE, HONOURABLE MEMBERS

It is with pleasure that I once stand before you, Hon. Members to present the budget for Vote 28, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) for the financial year 2019/2020.

I also would like to thank Honourable Minister of Finance, Calle Schlettwein and his entire team for the well grafted budget targeted at stimulating economic growth, employment creation and further adjusting the public fiscal stance to sustainable and stable levels.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, honourable members,

The Namibian Constitution provides for the establishment of the Electoral Commission of Namibia as a constitutional body following the Constitutional Third Amendment Act of 2014. The Electoral Act 2014, (Act 5 of 2014), sets out the mandate of the ECN which are to; organize, direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections and referenda in a free, fair, independent, credible, transparent and impartial manner as well as to strengthen constitutional democracy and promote democratic electoral and referenda processes.

Allow me to highlight some of the ECN's achievements pursuant to their constitutional mandate. The ECN has successfully managed to run all elections since 2014 (by-elections, Presidential and National Assembly, Regional Councils) using various modern technologies **Biometric Voter Registration System** and **Electronic Voting Machines which are commendable milestones.**

What makes the accomplishment of the ECN so notably impressive is the fact that ECN sought to make use of the new approach in problem-solving technics, namely, using innovative technology solutions as a tool to fix electoral systems and

processes and make them responsive to the current and emerging needs of the electorate.

It is therefore worth congratulating the ECN for a job well done and encourage the institution to continue such a success story for the forthcoming PNA Elections of 2019.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, honourable members,

For the 2019/2020 financial year, the ECN has been allocated a total amount of **Two Hundred and Eighty-Eight Million Namibian Dollars (N\$288,358,000.00)** as an operational budget. Out of that total, **\$ 49 million** has been allocated for personnel expenditure, for both permanent and temporary staff. However, the non-personnel expenditure has been reduced to **\$ 239 million** making it practically challenging for ECN to deliver its constitutional and legal mandate.

In this year, the ECN is required to conduct Presidential and National Assembly (PNA) Elections which are preceded by Supplementary Registration of Voters (SRV) culminating in Polling Process countrywide.

In executing its mandate, the ECN has two crucial programmes under its budget, namely: Administration of Elections, and Voter and Civic Education. The above two programs are complemented by Programme Policy Co-ordination and Support Services which is charged with the responsibility of providing administrative support function to these programs.

The proposed ceiling for 2019/2020 financial year has been cut from **N\$ 357 million** to **N\$ 288 million**. That means the total proposed budget has been cut with **N\$ 81 million**. At the same time the entire Capital Project budget was cut to zero.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, honourable members,

The breakdown of the budget for the two programmes of the Electoral Commission inclusive of Policy Co-ordination and Support Services is as follows:

Program 01: **Administration of Elections**

In terms of the provision of Section 49 (2) of the Electoral Act, 2014, the ECN is mandated to hold elections and/or referenda to ensure good governance and the consolidation of our representative democracy.

During 2019/2020, the ECN, through this programme, is expected to recruit, train and deploy election officials (i.e. registration officials, administrative and IT Field Support Staff) at various levels to man national SRV related activities. This means, the ECN shall recruit and train a total of around **5,154 registration officials** for deployment locally and in all **34 Namibian Embassies** across the globe to register all eligible voters constituting a total of around **804 registration teams**.

The ECN shall also hire helicopters specifically to be used in Kunene and Zambezi Region during Supplementary registration of voters, polling process and voter education due to the geographic nature of these two regions.

The ECN shall also procure critical registration materials and hire trucks to transport materials from National Head Quarters to all 13 Regional Stores located outside Windhoek as well as vehicles for the Regional Management and Registration Teams.

The ECN is expected to conduct elections for the newly proclaimed Ondangwa Urban Constituency By-Election which is to take place on the **15th June 2019** as a result of vacancy in Oshana Regional Council following the appointment of Hon.

Irimari Kaulifewangali Elia, former Councilor for this Constituency as Governor for Oshana Region on the 18 March 2019.

Furthermore, the ECN is required to conduct Polling for the Presidential and National Assembly Elections countrywide during the period under review. During this process, the ECN through this program is equally expected to recruit, train and deploy around **14,000 election officials** (i.e. polling officials, administrative and IT Field Support Staff) at various levels to man polling related activities constituting a total of around 2,293 polling teams.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, honourable members,

During the financial year under review, the ECN must also make contingency provisions for other by-elections which could become necessary at any time.

An amount of Twenty **One Hundred and sixty- three million, Namibian Dollars** (N\$163,9) has been allocated for **Administration of Elections of which** an amount of **N\$9 ,9 million** is for Personnel Expenditures and **N\$ 153,9 million** remaining will cater for non-personnel expenditures which is for the procurement of Goods and Other Services, creating a shortfall of **N\$ 38.6 million**.

Program 02: Voter and Civic Education and Information Dissemination

Voter and Civic Education is one of the core functions of the ECN and normally precedes all other electoral activities. Therefore, the ECN has designed a comprehensive voter education and information dissemination campaign aimed at informing all eligible voters about the 2019 PNA elections.

In terms of Section 49 (1) (a) of the Electoral Act 5, of 2014, the Commission must, when supervising, directing, controlling and promoting voter and civic education -

pursue the objective to make the meaning and purpose of elections well understood by the electorate.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, honourable members,

It is the mandate of this programme to ensure that all the eligible voters are accorded the opportunity to have all the required information on electoral processes. The voter education sessions together with advertisements will complement each other to help give required information to the public in order to make the public aware and educate them on all electoral processes.

An amount of Fifty three million, twenty three thousand and four hundred and fourteen, **Namibian Dollars** (N\$53,023,414.00) has been allocated for Voter Education. From this amount **N\$18 million** is for Personnel Expenditures and a mere **N\$ 35 million** remaining will cater for non-personnel expenditures which is for the procurement of Goods and Other Services creating a shortfall of **N\$ 11,9 million**.

Policy Co-ordination and Supervision and Support Services

The purpose of this programme is to provide administrative support to all the ECN's programmes to ensure the proper financial management, optimal utilization of the allocated resources and other administrative issues. An amount of **Seven hundred and fourteen Million, five hundred and ninety seven, Eight Hundred and fifteen, Namibia Dollars** (N\$714, 597,815.00). From this amount **N\$21 million** is for Personnel Expenditures and a mere **N\$ 50 million** remaining will cater for non-personnel expenditures which is for the procurement of Goods and Other Services creating a shortfall of **N\$ 31.7 million**.

Conclusion

Hon. Chairperson of the Whole House Committee, Hon. Members,

In keeping with its mandate, the ECN is obliged by law to conduct all possible by-elections as well as all the electoral activities highlighted above during this financial year. This presentation makes a case for the activities and programmes that the ECN wishes to undertake during the financial year.

At the same time, the budget of the ECN has been cut with an amount of **N\$ 81 million** exposing the entire operational to potential challenges in the built up to the 2019 national elections. It could thus be expected that the ECN would approach this August house with an additional request during the Mid Term Budget review.

In Conclusion, I urge all Honourable Members of this august House to support these motivations and approve the budget of **Two Hundred and Eighty-Eight Million Namibian Dollars (N\$288,358,000.00)** for the Electoral Commission of Namibia for the 2019/2020 financial year.

I THANK YOU