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“Enhancing Participatory Democracy in Namibia” (EPDN),
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NATIONAL TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY (TVET)

Summary and recommendations for Civil Society by EPDN



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Vision

“A Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector which promotes economic and employment growth through a focus on initial (pre-employment) and continuous TVET programmes and courses for the formal and informal economy.”

Mission

“To accelerate the development of occupational competence through equitable TVET financing and access to employment in the formal and informal economy.”

Goal

This “policy shall ensure that it responds to the current and future skills development imperatives needed to build a knowledge-based citizenry to make Namibia an industrialised nation and a globally competitive country.”



Leading Offices / Ministries / Agencies (O/M/As)

The custodian of the TVET policy is the **Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation (MHETI)**. The ministry’s role concerns itself primarily with governance, monitoring and evaluation as well as ensuring the effective application of the policy by implementing bodies.

MHETI oversees, coordinates and closely works together with the four agencies regulating and financing education and training: **National Training Authority (NTA)**, **National Qualification Authority (NQA)**, **National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)** and **Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NASFAF)**.

Both the NTA and the NQA hold important responsibilities with regards to implementing the TVET policy.

What does the policy say about responsible bodies?

MHETI’s mandate includes the provision of “policy direction and necessary support in areas such as strategy development, target setting, promulgation of TVET orders or by-laws, delineating a broad framework for courses, teaching and learning, and policy revision.”

Furthermore, **MHETI** is responsible for regulating the financing of the TVET sector and monitoring the effectiveness of the implementers of the policy.

In summary - **MHETI** is tasked with **ensuring an enabling environment for the successful implementation of TVET programmes**. This includes effective governance



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and coordination of O/M/As and non-state actors involved in the education and training sector.

The NTA plays a crucial role in the development of a high quality, national TVET sector by establishing standards and qualifications for occupations, falling under this sector. Furthermore, the policy states that: “NTA shall also be responsible for the levy collection and disbursement.” The Vocational and Education Training (VET) levy, introduced in 2014 is an important funding mechanism for the TVET sector.

The NQA is responsible for “all quality assurance aspects in education and training in the country.” This means that NQA develops the ‘pathways’ that lead to a vocational certification. In other words – pathways stipulate the requirements that need to be achieved to gain a national TVET qualification. In addition, NQA also evaluates and rates skills learned outside a formal training environment. Importantly – training providers for TVET qualifications have to seek accreditation from NQA for their institutions and courses.

What main measurable and positive outcome should be produced by the policy?

According to the policy document: “The main purpose of the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy is to **support an expanded provision of quality-driven TVET programmes and courses to Namibian youth and adults.**”

Crucially this means that Namibia’s TVET sector is set-up in such a way as to respond successfully to current and future skill needs, required as the country industrialises and its economy becomes more competitive.

Specific targets and outputs to be achieved as part of the TVET policy’s implementation are detailed in the (separate) implementation plan. This also means that implementers will have to address identified challenges hampering the TVET sector and mentioned in the policy (see recommendation box).

Five Policy Objectives & Benefits

The TVET policy stipulates five specific objectives, each supported by multiple strategies outlining activities to be undertaken to achieve the overall policy goal.

The objectives are to:

- **Objective 1** – Improve Governance and Management of the Sector
- **Objective 2** – Enhance Quality and Relevance of Programmes
- **Objective 3** – Increase Access and Equity in Programmes
- **Objective 4** – Promote Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- **Objective 5** – Diversify Sources of Funding and Equitable Financing of programmes





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What does the policy say about public participation in its drafting and its revision?

The development of the current *TVET* policy **involved a wide range of stakeholder and considerable consultations**. The 2021 *TVET* policy replaced the dated *TVET* policy from 2005.

The current policy explicitly acknowledges the **“effective participation of all stakeholders” to ensure that the complexity and diversity of the TVET sector is accounted for as the TVET policy is implemented**. Key stakeholders, according to the policy, include among others “academic and research institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the community at large.”

Furthermore, the policy acknowledges the important role of civil society as a key stakeholder in the policy’s implementation in order to: “mobilise rural people and community participation.”

There is limited information regarding the revision of the *TVET* policy. However, it is stated that the policy should be treated as a flexible document that should be revised on a continuous basis, and therefore would be “subjected to regular reviews and revisions.”

Given the limited amount of data on the implementation status of the *TVET* policy it is likely that the start of the revision process will be delayed beyond 2025.

Are the associated costs or a budget assigned to the policy?

The *TVET* policy document itself does not contain a budget, however the accompanying implementation plan outlines a five-year budget with annual figures per activity, divided along each policy objective and strategy. The total budget of the policy comes to N\$ 32,420,000

Frequently Asked Questions

What does the policy say about its enforcement?

There is little information regarding enforcement in the *TVET* policy. However, the document does state that: “success of implementing this policy shall be subjected to legal and regulatory arrangements enforced by laws.”

What does the policy foresee about its evaluation?

The policy notes **that regular monitoring and evaluation of the TVET sector is a specific strategy under policy objective two**. In addition, the monitoring of the policy’s implementation **falls under MHETI responsibility and will be guided by the implementation plan**. This plan sets out activities, outputs and targets that should be achieved for the success of the policy. Monitoring and evaluation should take place every six month for the five-year policy implementation period.



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What does the policy need to succeed?

Besides achieving the stipulated outputs and targets in the implementation plan; it is likely necessary that stakeholders in the *TVET* sector will pro-actively and in a coordinated manner address various challenges outlined in the policy that hampers *TVET* implementation in the country.

Furthermore, it is recommended that stakeholders should address significant communication and coordination deficits for the policy to succeed. A first step in this regard could be the establishment of a dedicated and capacitated policy secretariat under *MHETI*.

The policy and civil society - the policy's impact on the day-to-day work of CSOs

While the policy acknowledges the role of *CSOs* in implementation, there is limited and clear information on how the policy can be utilised by civil society. Among others, the *TVET* policy states that *CSOs* should “facilitate local initiatives, use indigenous resources and technology” and notes that *CSOs* have an important role to play in fostering community participation in sustainable development of agriculture.

Furthermore, government should actively support the activities of CSOs to develop the TVET sector. Hence the policy should serve as an overarching guidance document for **CSOs involved in TVET as well as a possible avenue to seek cooperation and support from government entities such as NTA and NQA.**

Recommendations: How can CSOs make best use of the policy?

Overall, the *TVET* policy provides for a clear framework for the national advancement towards the policy's stated goal. *TVET* policy's objectives and strategies are comprehensive and relevant. However, the policy's adoption is significantly challenged by practical barriers which are not addressed in the policy and hamper implementation.

Nevertheless, the *TVET* policy is a useful tool that should be used to remind regulators and fellow stakeholder of their respective mandates in establishing a well-functioning vocational education and training environment that speaks to the needs of industry and students. The policy's implementation plan can also be useful as it can highlight where progress is lacking and which targets have actually been met.

Non-state stakeholders should use every opportunity to remind *MHETI*, *NTA* and *NQA* – that the **lack of a dedicated national secretariat to effectively coordinate implementation** and share crucial information, **obstructs the TVET sector.**

Without **better, regular and inclusive communication and cooperation - issues around curricula development, training material financing and data collection, among others, cannot be solved.** Indeed, an improved coordination will also greatly enhance collaboration between state authorities themselves – benefitting the whole sector.

Finally, stakeholders **should note that, coordination structures are not detailed in the current TVET policy and this should be addressed as a matter of urgency when the current policy is revised.**



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You can find the link to the policy here:

https://www.nta.com.na/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TVET_POLICY.pdf



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