



## REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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National Institute for Educational Development (NIED)

### ANNUAL REPORT 2011/2012 DIVISION: CURRICULUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The main functions of the Curriculum Research and Development Division are curriculum research, review and development; the development, evaluation and selection of learning support materials; continuous professional and capacity development; the monitoring of curriculum implementation and participation in the marking and moderation of external examinations. This report summarises the NIED activities as well as a number of sub-programmes in ETSIP carried out for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 as per the NIED mandate.

#### 2. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Division had achieved its main objectives in carrying out the following activities:

##### 2.1 Curriculum Research, Review and Development

The Division engaged in research on curriculum models used in Southern Africa and in developed countries and from these viewpoints analysed the Namibian school curriculum critically. After many meetings, much deliberation and consultation with our stakeholders, a proposal was submitted to the Curriculum Coordinating Committee and the National Examination, Assessment and Certification Board (NEACB) on a total curriculum reform within a structured curriculum review cycle for the improvement of quality teaching and learning at classroom level. Consequently, all staff members in the Division participated in a workshop aimed at setting learning standards and designing a scope and sequence competency matrix for each subject in the curriculum.

An Education Officer was appointed as caretaker of the Early Grades Reading Assessment (EGRA) Programme. Consultants were recruited for the development of EGRA instruments, the training of administrators and the piloting in three languages (English, Khoekhoegowab and Oshindonga). Another consultant was recruited for the development of policies and other documentation for the Textbook Reform.

Curriculum Panels and Committees continued to meet in February and July to discuss feedback from the regions on the implementation of the curriculum and to develop and evaluate learning support materials. Language Committees of the five languages (Khoekhoegowab, Rumanjo,

Setswana, Otjiherero and Thimbukushu) commenced with the development of syllabuses and specimen assessment materials at NSSC Higher Level, while the Curriculum Panel for Art and Design and the Committee for French Foreign Language started with localisation of their subjects.

Portuguese as a Foreign Language was introduced in six secondary schools and Mathematics as a compulsory subject was implemented in all secondary schools. The final drafts of the Special Education syllabuses were completed and teachers responsible for pre-vocational subjects in Khomas and Hardap regions received training.

In view of the re-introduction of vocational subjects in the school curriculum, extensive research studies were undertaken, stakeholder meetings were held and a curriculum development workshop was held for developing syllabuses for the Upper Primary and Junior Secondary phases.

The Social Sciences sub-division continued to involve in activities and meetings for the strengthening of cross-curricular issues like HIV and AIDS prevention, Environmental Education, Human Rights and Democracy and Road Safety.

The involvement in external examination activities remains a useful and necessary exercise for education officers working on curriculum development because it provides one with knowledge and understanding of the aspects of a subject with which learners are having difficulties. A number of officials were thus involved in the marking and moderation of Junior and Senior Secondary national examinations.

## **2.2 Development, Evaluation and Selection of Learning Support Materials**

The provision of quality, appropriate and culturally sensitive teaching and learning support materials remains a critical objective for the Division, as it contributes significantly to the improvement of the Namibian education system.

The Rationalised Textbook Catalogue was updated for 2012 and it contains newly revised materials to support curriculum implementation.

The African Language Curriculum Committees continued with the development and editing of novels, anthologies of verses and poems and readers to address the shortage of appropriate literature materials. They further developed Grammar textbooks, Dictionaries and Glossaries, Orthographies and Teacher's Manuals.

All Curriculum Panels and Committees ensured that appropriate Training Manuals were developed for facilitator training to ease the efforts of cascade training.

A School Readiness Manual and Resource Book were developed by the Lower Primary Curriculum Panel to assist Lower Primary teachers in dealing with learners who had not attended Pre-primary classes.

Tenders for the printing, binding and distribution of assessment manuals for Agriculture and for the development of Mathematics Continuous Assessment Manuals for both the Upper Primary and Junior Secondary phases were submitted.

### **2.3 Continuous Professional and Capacity Development**

The Division continued to provide facilitator and teacher training for meaningful implementation of the subject syllabuses, empowering teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to equip teachers with knowledge to teach their subjects effectively and confidently and to avoid irregularities during examinations.

As part of the continuous professional development and capacity building of NIED staff members, a number of local, regional and international activities were attended. All curriculum officials participated in a curriculum development workshop conducted by Dr Frikkie Engelbrecht and most officials attended the National Education Conference.

### **2.4 Monitoring of Curriculum Implementation**

The *Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS)* study report was compiled and presented to NIED officials. Monitoring and Evaluation visits were undertaken to various regions and some of the curriculum officials participated in the Summative moderation of the BETD Inset programme.

### **2.5 Other Achievements**

The Education Officer for Computer Studies created an e-mail platform to ensure regular communication with teachers of the subject. Teachers used this tool to voice their challenges and collaborated in efforts to solve these problems. Web pages for Oshindonga and Oshikwanyama had been uploaded on the NIED website.

The expansion of the Pre-primary programme continued successfully.

## **3 CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS**

A number of challenges that constrain the work of curriculum officials were experienced, namely:

- For most of the reporting year, there were vacancies for the SEO: Broad Curriculum and Curriculum Management, the EO: Home Sciences and the EO: Social Studies, resulting in work overload.
- The inefficient computer lab at NIED results in up to four teachers sharing one computer during training workshops.
- A lack of Advisory Teachers in the regions for some subjects resulted in the teachers being more dependent on NIED education officers.
- The work load of the vocational subjects is too much for one person.
- The progress in Ju|'hoansi remains slow, due to a lack of expertise and the infrequency of activities to keep the momentum going.
- The provision of textbooks in general and for the African languages in particular remains a big challenge for the Ministry of Education.
- Most of the teachers teaching African languages were not trained in the language. Therefore they find it hard to cope with the syllabus content and need more in-service professional training opportunities.
- Delays in appointment of Pre-primary teachers are still experienced in some regions and it causes the postponement of scheduled teacher training initiatives with up to two months in some instances.

- Multi-grade and Life Skills teaching remain a challenge with teachers that were not trained to deal with the situation.
- The process of translating Lower Primary materials is too slow.
- The persistent lack of tools and equipment in schools and the delay in delivery of ordered equipment hamper the effective implementation of especially Agriculture, Science subjects, Pre-primary education and EGRA.
- The implementation of compulsory Mathematics in the Senior Secondary phase pose challenges because most of the Mathematics teachers lack subject content knowledge.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Despite certain challenges the Division can look back at a productive year and is proud of its achievements and contribution to quality education in Namibian schools. These achievements were made possible by dedication of education officers and the participation of all education stakeholders. NIED received generous support through ETSIP and its development partners, and the financial and technical assistance of donors.

## **DIVISION: PROFESSIONAL, RESEARCH AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

The main objectives set for 2011/12 were to:

- Promote the capacity of Divisional Staff members through various professional development opportunities;
- Implement activities related to the Namibia Novice Teacher Induction Programme in selected regions of Namibia as part of the five-year rollout phased-in approach;
- Assure quality of in-service teacher education programme through moderation of the BETD In-service teacher education programme;
- Ensure an effective national coordination of the TRC network activities;
- Render support to NIED's activities in the areas of curriculum design and development, research and professional development by providing editorial work, layout designs and lithographic services;
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation research of curriculum implementation and policy in Namibian schools.

### **4. INTRODUCTION**

The overall mandate of the Professional, Research and Resource Development Division is continuing professional development for teachers, monitoring and evaluation of education policy and curriculum implementation through research, materials development and national coordination of the TRC network activities. This report presents a synopsis of the various NIED activities as well as a number of sub-programmes in ETSIP carried out between the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 as per the NIED mandate.

### **5. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Division had attained its main mandate by carrying out the following activities:

#### **5.1 Professional Development**

As part of capacity building of the NIED staff members, local and international activities were attended. These included the following: the national education conference, the ODL conference, ICT Forum in Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, an e-learning Africa Conference in Tanzania, HIV & AIDS for teacher educators' course and training in monitoring and evaluation of programmes. In addition to the capacity building activities for NIED officials, staff members conducted national facilitators' trainings and other workshops to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The training workshops focused on the Regional Trainers of Trainers for mentor teachers, training of mentor teachers, ICT integration and the establishment of Regional Continuing Professional Development Coordinating Committees (RCPDCCs) across the 13 regions. Further, the Division continued managing the smooth phase-out of the BETD Inset Programme.

A total of 60 Regional Trainers of Trainees (ToTs) for the Mentor Teachers training programme for both Kavango (35) and Omaheke (25) Education Directorates were trained in May 2011. During the period of July to September 2011, a total of 672 mentor teachers and principals were trained both in

Kavango (593) and Omaheke (79) Education Directorates to augment implementation of Namibia Novice Teacher Induction Program (NNTIP) in schools.

A total of 124 teachers were also trained as school-based trainers in ICT integration across 8 regions to assist with the imparting of the necessary knowledge and skills to other teachers which had already been deployed with ICT labs as part of the Tech/na!

Staff members coordinated various activities related to the English Language Proficiency Programme (ELPP) such as the finalisation of the report on the findings of the needs assessment survey, the development and administration of the Proficiency Assessment Tool (PAT) which was successfully administered in all the 13 regions.

Some staff members of the Division collaborated with the CPD Unit at the University of Namibia in February 2012, to establish the RCPDCC in the remaining 12 regions to ensure the smooth coordination and leadership of all CPD programmes for educators.

During the period in the reporting year, 347 in-service teachers earned the Basic Education Teachers Diploma from the BETD INSET centres and Units across the country in several specialization fields including Lower Primary, Upper Primary and Junior Secondary school phases.

## **5.2 Improved effectiveness and efficiency of the TRC network**

The NIED Resource Centre conducted the Annual General Meeting (AGM) involving all regional TRC Managers to review progress with past activities implemented and to also examine the planned activities for the new fiscal year. A Working Group Meeting was also held with the TRC Managers to update the TRC Network Policy and Procedures Manual which is currently being updated to bring it line with the emerging and broadened roles of TRCs as resource hubs for continuing professional development at the national and local levels.

## **5.3 Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation Research**

During the 2011/12, the NIED officials conducted various research activities. These included, the 'Evaluation of promotion requirements in Namibian Schools' and the 'Evaluation of Multi-grade Teaching in Namibian Schools' reports were finalised and posted on the NIED website.

Further, the report on 'Evaluation of literacy and numeracy skill development at lower primary in Namibian schools' is completed. At the moment the report is being refined before it is tabled to the MPCC and later uploaded at the NIED website.

Besides the aforesaid studies which were carried out, the Research leading to the development of Namibia Sign Language (NSL) NSL resource materials/book is in process. This phase covers Life Science and Natural Science Grade 8 through 10 with the last field work undertaken between February and March 2012.

## **5.4 Other achievements**

On staffing, the Division experienced staff turn-over at the end of April, June and August 2011. The posts of an Education Resource Officer and that of the Library Assistant were only filled in the beginning of February 2012. The only posts that are still vacant include a Data Typist, Education Officer for Research and CEO.

## **6. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS**

A number of challenges were experienced that constrained the implementation of the planned activities by officials, specifically:

- Delays in filling vacancies coupled with some staff members on full study leave during the most part of the reporting year such as the CEO, the EO: Research, Education Resource Officer and that of the Library Assistant resulted in work overload and delays in the release of some reports.
- Regions not taking full ownership of the Namibia Novice Teacher Induction Programme (NNTIP) by role players such as Regional Head Offices, inspectors, advisory teachers, trained mentor teachers and principals, resulted in lack of participation in certain activities, e.g. mentor teacher training workshop by some trained Regional ToTs and systematic induction of newly qualified teachers, etc.
- Need for continuous and sufficient funding of the activities of the BETD Inset Programme until it phases out completely at the end of December 2013.
- Large number of BETD Inset teachers/students that have dropped out of the programme for various reasons, i.e. difficulty in affording study fees, illness, etc. and those that still have a large number of modules and activities to complete. The available time left is not sufficient for most of them to settle outstanding debts, complete the BETD Inset Programme and qualify.
- Slow pace with the implementation of the ELPP due to work that is involved in every activity.
- Lack of school-based training in ICT integration by trained School-based Trainers at their respective schools due to numerous reasons including but not limited to teachers not feeling obliged to conduct the training, limited access of the necessary functional ICTs and accessories in classrooms and lack of motivation to attend the training by teachers.