



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

National Institute for Educational Development

THE STATEMENT ABOUT THE CURRICULUM REFORM FOR BASIC EDUCATION

Countries around the world are currently implementing the SDG4-Education 2030 and the global commitments as articulated in the Incheon Declaration and the Education 2030 Framework for Action. Education is central to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within the comprehensive 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, education is essentially articulated as a stand-alone goal (SDG 4) with its 7 outcome targets and 3 means of implementation. SDG4 and its corresponding targets aim to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia has committed itself to the implementation of the SDGs. Therefore the revised curriculum for the Basic Education has been aligned to the aspirations of SDG 4.

Since independence the Namibian education system has undergone reforms as a result of the government's commitment to provide equitable quality education for all. The process of curriculum review began in 2012, starting with the reorganisation of the school phases and revision of curriculum content. The process of curriculum review was rigorous and lengthy. It had been challenging to build consensus among stakeholders, because the whole nation has a keen interest in education and reaching consensus about what learners should learn is a complex undertaking.

The curriculum was revised to give direction to Basic Education as a crucial step towards the realisation of the *Vision 2030* and the aspirations of the National Development Plans. The revised curriculum ensures continuity of the foundation principles of the Namibian education system described in *Toward Education for All: A Development Brief*, in 1993. The goals, aims, competencies, core skills and key learning areas have been identified in relation to the *Vision 2030* as a curriculum for the future. The core skills are *Learning to learn, Personal skills, Social skills, Cognitive skills, Communication skills, Numeracy skills, and Information and Communication Technology skills*, while the learning areas are *Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Technology, Commerce, Arts and Physical Education*.

Vision 2030 sees Namibia as developing from a literate society to a knowledge-based society, a society where knowledge is constantly being acquired and renewed, and used for innovation to improve the quality of life. A knowledge-based society requires people who are healthy, well educated, skilled, pro-active, and with a broad range of abilities.

Through Basic Education, learners develop the competencies, attitudes and values needed for full participation in society by learning to use, acquire, construct, evaluate and transform knowledge. Learning to learn is at the core of this process, and in a knowledge-based society, this continues as lifelong learning.

The curriculum for Basic Education aims to respond to the aspirations of the Vision 2030 (complemented by Harambee Prosperity Plan and NDP 5). Vision 2030 aspires that:

Namibia is a fair, gender-responsive, caring and committed nation, in which all citizens are able to realise their full potential. Namibians live together in harmony, sharing common values and aspirations. Those living with disability are well integrated into the mainstream of society.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing a caring society are to foster the highest moral and ethical values, co-operation, democracy, tolerance, mutual understanding, and service to others; to develop the learner's social responsibility towards other individuals, family life, the community and the nation as a whole; to develop and enhance respect for, and understanding and tolerance of, other peoples, religions, beliefs, cultures and ways of life; and to promote equality of opportunity for males and females, enabling both genders to participate equally and fully in all spheres of society. The Social Sciences learning area is a key learning area for understanding the development of society, the mechanisms of globalisation, the importance of human rights and democracy, and environmental issues. The Social Sciences learning area comprises *Environmental Learning (Pre-Primary); Environmental Studies (Grades 1-3); Social Studies (Grades 4-7); Religious and Moral Education (Pre-Primary and Grades 1-9); Life Skills (Grades 4-12); Geography (Grades 8-12); History (Grades 8-12) and Development Studies (Grades 10-11)*. In addition, the Ministry has introduced the *Basic Pre-Vocational Skills Course*, a skills-based curriculum which caters for learning needs of learners who have learning difficulties, intellectual, visual and hearing impairments.

Vision 2030 also aspires that:

Namibians live a healthy lifestyle with the highest level of responsible behavioural practices that eliminate sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV infection and alcohol and substance abuse.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing a healthy society are to develop attitudes, practices, knowledge and activities which promote physical and mental health; to support and stimulate learners through childhood and youth; to promote the optimal development of the individual learner's potential, including those with special learning needs. The Natural Sciences are one of the main drivers of the transformation of society and the world. The learning area contributes to the foundation of a knowledge-based society by empowering learners with the scientific knowledge, skills and attitudes to investigate, observe, make deductions and understand the physical world in a rational scientific way. Learning Natural Sciences without positive values can be destructive. Therefore the learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to lead a healthy life. The Natural Sciences learning area comprises *Environmental Learning (Pre-Primary); Environmental Studies (Grades 1-3);*

Natural Science and Health Education (Grades 4-7); Elementary Agriculture (Grades 5-7); Life Science (Grades 8-9); Physical Science (Grades 8-9); Agricultural Science (Grades 8-12); Biology (Grades 10-12); Physics (Grades 10-12) and Chemistry (Grades 10-12).

The subject *Health- and Social Care (Grades 10-11)* is introduced in the curriculum to prepare learners who wish to follow a career in a health and social care environment.

Physical Education subject is critical in developing skills and right attitudes for a healthy nation. Lifelong physical activity is a crucial factor in the prevention of life-style diseases, in contributing to personal wellness, and maintaining physical fitness to be a fully productive citizen. Physical Education is the physical activity-based component of Health and Wellness Education across the curriculum. The Physical Education learning area consists of *Physical Education (Pre-Primary to Grade 11)*.

Furthermore, Vision 2030 aspires that:

Namibia is a peaceful, multi-party democratic society of popular participation. The basic tenets of human rights are protected. There is true freedom of expression, speech and association, and the people make their own decisions at national, regional, local and community levels. People exercise their civic responsibilities.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing a democratic society are to promote moral development, awareness of one's own beliefs and opinions, and respect for others; to promote democratic principles and practices at school level; to promote human rights, unity, justice and democracy; to extend national unity to promote regional, African and international understanding, co-operation and peace; to enable the learners to contribute to the development of culture in Namibia; and to promote wider inter-cultural understanding. As described earlier, the Social Sciences learning area is a key learning area for understanding the development of society, the mechanisms of globalisation, the importance of human rights and democracy, and environmental issues.

It is the aspirations of Vision 2030 that:

Namibia has high economic growth and full employment, where manufacturing and service industries are the main sources of income, and micro-, small, and medium-sized enterprises are important. It is also envisaged that a productive society will have a diversified economy with manufacturing exporting industries, and a well-developed and modernised commercial agricultural sector, which is environmentally sustainable. Economic growth and full employment with the equitable distribution of wealth and resources eliminate poverty.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing a productive society are to develop knowledge, understanding and values, creativity and practical skills, as a solid foundation for academic or vocational training, and for a creative, meaningful and productive adult life; to enable the learners to think scientifically, solve problems, and reflect on and apply knowledge, skills, values and attitudes; and to develop self-reliance and entrepreneurship in

preparation for the world of work and self-employment. The Commerce learning area is a skills-focused area, which is central to the economic development of a knowledge-based society. Learners acquire and apply commercial knowledge in practical situations, and develop the particular communication skills, and the work attitudes and practices, which are essential in effective business life. The Commerce learning area comprises *Entrepreneurial Skills (integrated in Home Ecology, Elementary Agriculture and Design & Technology in Grades 5-7)*; *Entrepreneurship (Grades 8-12)*; *Accounting (Grades 8-12)*; *Business Studies (Grades 10-12)*; *Economics (Grades 10-12)* and *Office Practice (Grades 8-11)*. Another learning area is essential for a productive society is the Arts. This learning area comprises *Arts (Pre-Primary and Grades 1-11)*; *Visual Arts (Grades 8-9)*; *Integrated Performing Arts (Grades 8-11)*; and *Art and Design (Grades 10-12)*.

Other subjects that are crucial for a productive society are material technologies, which include *Design and Technology (Grades 5-12)*; *Technical Studies A, Technical Studies B and Technical Studies C (Grades 8-9)*; *Metalwork and Welding, Woodwork, Building Studies, Motor-Mechanics (Grades 10-11)* and *Fashion and Fabrics (Grades 8-11)*. In addition, other subjects that are essential for a productive society are *Home Ecology (Grades 5-7)*; *Home Economics (Grades 8-11)* and *Hospitality (Grades 8-11)*.

Mathematics continues to be a compulsory subject from Grade 1 to Grade 11 and an elective subject in Grade 12. Mathematics is an indispensable tool for everyday life. It is also essential for the development of science, technology and commerce. Mathematical skills, knowledge, concepts and processes enable the learner to investigate, model and interpret numerical and spatial relationships and patterns that exist in the world. The Mathematics learning area consists of *Preparatory Mathematics (Pre-Primary)* and *Mathematics (Grades 1-12)*.

Equally, language is the most important tool for thinking, the most important means of communication, and one of the most important aspects of identity. A high level of communication skill in language is a prerequisite in a knowledge-based society. Learners will become proficient at least in the Mother Tongue and English, with a high level of communicative and social competence in face-to-face and virtual interaction, as well as understanding, using and producing good written and mixed (written and visual and/or oral and aural) texts for a variety of circumstances and situations. Namibian African Indigenous Languages should be used alongside English, the official language, as medium of instruction and as language subjects. African languages are vehicles for producing knowledge--for creating, encoding, sustaining, and ultimately transmitting indigenous knowledge, the cultural knowledge and patterns of behavior of the society. Rural-urban discrepancies can be addressed if barriers to communication on meaningful discourse about development are tackled through the use of local languages. The indigenous languages are repositories and means of transmission of this knowledge and the related social behaviors, practices, and innovations. Utilizing African languages more widely for representing indigenous knowledge opens the space for African languages to become an essential part of the knowledge base of

African societies and the world. The Languages learning area comprises *Mother Tongues/First Languages (Pre-Primary to Grade 12)*; *Second Languages (Grades 1-12)*; and *Foreign Languages (Grades 8-12)*, as well as *Namibian Sign Language*.

It is also the aspirations of the Vision 2030 that:

Namibia has minimal atmospheric, land and water pollution from croplands and rangelands or mines, and minimal pollution from urban and industrial areas. Farms and natural ecosystems are productive and sustainable socially, economically and ecologically.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing an environmentally sustainable society are to provide the scientific knowledge and skills, and attitudes and values needed to ensure that the environment is respected and sustained. As described earlier, both Social Sciences and Natural Sciences are key learning areas contributing to the realisation of an environmentally sustainable society.

Vision 2030 also aspires that Namibians have improved access to information and ICTs to achieve social and economic transformation in Namibia.

All aspects of the manufacturing process, relationships with customers and suppliers, and the manner, in which products are marketed and sold, have been transformed through changes in production and information technology. ICTs are applied throughout society to serve development goals.

The aims of the curriculum in relation to developing an information society are to develop information literacy: skills in seeking, evaluating, using and producing information and information sources appropriately. The sources include traditional and local knowledge, libraries and ICTs. Information literacy also means knowing the potential and limitations of different sources and types of information, including ICTs. The Information and Communication Technology learning area contributes to the foundation of a knowledge-based society in developing the learner's knowledge and understanding of the nature of information, the workings of ICT equipment and networks, and of information processes, skills in using ICTs to process and present information, creativity and the ability to innovate in ICTs and understanding of the importance of ICTs for development. Information and communication technologies include the following subjects: *Information and Communication (Grades 5-12)*; *Office Practice (Grades 8-11)* and *Computer Studies (Grades 8-11)* and *Computer Science (Grade 12)*.

The revised curriculum has been implemented in the Junior Primary phase in 2015, the Senior Primary phase in 2016, and in the Junior Secondary phase, Grade 8 in 2017, and Grade 9 in 2018. The Ministry is busy developing the syllabuses for the Senior Secondary phase (Grades 10-12). The implementation of the senior secondary revised curriculum will take place as follows: Grade 10 in 2019, Grade 11 in 2020 and Grade 12 in 2021.

