



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

**BUDGET MOTIVATION
2025/2026 FINANCIAL YEAR**

**VOTE 29
BY
HON. EMMA THEOFELUS, MP
MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

7 May 2025

**Honourable Speaker of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

As I rise to motivate Vote 29 - Information and Communication Technology on this day, I want to speak on the backdrop of the World Press Freedom Day celebrations being held currently in Brussels on the occasion of the inscription of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration into the UNESCO Memory of the World Register. This is a huge milestone for Namibia, as we are being recognised for our role in upholding press freedom in this country and how we set a great example for Africa and the rest of the world. Congratulations to Namibia!

I would like to congratulate H.E President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on becoming our First Female Elected President and in entrusting me with the responsibility to lead at the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology.

I am grateful to the former Deputy Minister Hon. Modestus Amutse and to the Executive Director Dr. Audrin Mathe and the entire team for assisting me in steering this very important institution at different times in the past and for this 8th administration. This budget will be the first step towards our quest to “champion Information and Communication Technology for socio- economic-development” as per the vision of the Ministry of ICT and I applaud the Minister of Finance, the Director General of the National Planning Commission and their teams for helping curate this development focused budget.

Just to provide a brief overview of the current ICT landscape, I will delve into some key ICT notables.

The development and expansion of digital infrastructure addresses key national priorities by enhancing broadband access, reducing the digital divide and fostering economic growth through innovation and technology-driven industries. Namibia's overall 4G population coverage stands at 88.4%, a notable increase from 85% in 2022. Connectivity is stronger in urban areas of regions such as Khomas (98%), Oshana (99%) and Omusati (96%). However, rural regions like Kunene (49%), Omaheke (64%) and Kavango West (70%) have significantly lower coverage, highlighting a digital divide. The noteworthy disparity between the highest and lowest coverage regions (50 percentage points) suggests the need for targeted infrastructure investment in underserved areas. While Namibia has good national coverage, improving access in rural regions is essential for bridging the connectivity gap.

As of January 2024, Namibia had an internet penetration rate of approximately 62.2%, equating to about 1.63 million users. This represents a significant increase from previous years, highlighting the country's commitment to closing the digital divide. However, compared to its regional peers like the Republic of Botswana, there is still room for improvement in this regard.

Namibia's fibre optic network stretches to 18,719.5 km, with the longest coverage in the //Karas (3340.48 km), Erongo (2547.72 km) and Otjozondjupa (2624.34 km) regions. Central and southern regions, including Khomas (1775.97 km) and Hardap (2232.11 km), have significant fibre infrastructure, likely due to economic hubs like Windhoek and Walvis Bay. In contrast, northern and eastern regions, such as Kavango West (544.84 km), Omusati (539.52 km) and Zambezi (571.72 km), have relatively lower coverage, possibly due to lower demand or population density.

Honourable Members,

It is worth mentioning that telecommunication operators roll out infrastructure in areas which are commercially viable. Therefore, the Government's deliberate decision to appropriate funds for the construction of the Radio Access Network sites across the country to develop ICT infrastructure in unserved and underserved areas. In the process employment will be created and ICT services will be available to the citizens, exposing them to ample opportunities resulting in poverty reduction.

In terms of our global status, Namibia achieved Tier 4 (Evolving) status in the 2024 Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Namibia scored 36.93 out of 100, indicating that Namibia has a significant cyber-capacity gap. This is as a result of a combination of a weak legal framework, lack of comprehensive regulations to address issues such as data protection, cybercrime and the responsibilities of digital service providers, limited technological investment, inadequate capacity building and low levels of international cooperation has resulted in Namibia being classified as a Tier 4 cybersecurity nation.

Furthermore, Namibia's telecommunications sector has seen overall growth in shareholder equity, driven primarily by MTC, which holds over 85% of total equity despite market share fluctuations. Telecom Namibia has shown steady growth. As a result, the sector's total equity has increased, highlighting MTC's dominant role in driving the ICT industry growth.

According to Market Consolidated Report for 2023 issued by the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN), the state-owned Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and MultiChoice dominated the broadcasting sector. Additionally, MultiChoice operates on a different business model, primarily focusing on subscription services along with sales and repairs of decoders, while NBC generates nearly 50% of its revenue from advertising.

In 2022, radio was still used more regularly than television despite a 10% drop compared to 2019. Radio was also the main source of news for Namibians with 40.7% identifying it as the main source of news. Unexpectedly, the internet (23.6%) was the second most used source for news. Notably, television (21.2%) and newspapers (12%) were used less than radio or the internet.

The Information and Communication Technology regulatory frameworks in Namibia play a paramount role in shaping the country's digital landscape. These frameworks are designed to promote growth, ensure fair competition, close the digital divide, safeguard consumer interests, and advance the country's digital transformation. In order to adapt in the digital era, Namibia has developed laws, policies and frameworks that will ensure resilience in the digital transformation while at the same time protecting citizens from the many dangers that come with embracing this promising yet perilous age.

Honourable Speaker,

Namibia's ICT sector has demonstrated remarkable progress in enhancing digital connectivity and infrastructure. However, the country still faces critical challenges, including gaps in rural connectivity, declining internet penetration and an evolving cybersecurity threat landscape.

Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach that fosters innovation, strengthens policies, and ensures equitable access to digital resources.

A key priority should be the expansion of ICT infrastructure, particularly in remote areas, to bridge the urban-rural divide and enable inclusive digital participation. Investment in human capital, through digital literacy programmes and workforce upskilling, will be instrumental in cultivating a tech-savvy population capable of driving digital transformation. Furthermore, the adoption of robust cybersecurity measures will be crucial to protecting national digital assets and ensuring public trust in digital services.

To achieve meaningful progress, multi-stakeholder collaboration is essential. The Government, private sector and international partners must work together to develop sustainable ICT policies and strategies that align with global best practices. Furthermore, public-private partnerships should be leveraged to attract investment, enhance service delivery and promote technological innovation.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

I now present to you our plans to create a dynamic, collaborative and progressive ICT environment through efficient service delivery that fosters access to information in a digital economy for the next 12 months.

The ICT Ministry received a total appropriation of **Eight Hundred and Ninety-Eight Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-Five Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 898,455,000.00)** for the 2025/2026 financial year. These funds are earmarked towards the Ministry's operational and capital expenditure, including subsidy provision to the Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA), Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and the New Era Publication Corporation (NEPC). Herewith follows a summary of the exact allocation per programme.

Programme 1: Information and Communication Technology Development

An amount of **Sixteen Million Nine Hundred and Eighty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$16,988,000.00)** to develop and facilitate the implementation of ICT policies and laws, as well as coordinate ICT infrastructure development. Furthermore, under this Programme, we strive to bridge the digital divide through remote Rural Information Communication Technology Centres.

Specifically, for the 2025/2026 financial year, we want to witness the full operationalisation of the Electronic Transactions Act, Act number 4 of 2019. Therefore, the Electronic Information Systems Management Advisory Council will establish the Online Consumer Affairs Committee. We remain committed to modernising public service delivery and accelerating Namibia's digital footprint. Therefore, we are taking decisive steps to enable secure and trusted digital transactions. A key priority in this regard is the implementation of the Electronic Signatures (E-Signatures) in line with the provisions of the Electronic Transactions Act. The implementation of secure and accredited E-Signatures will allow for the digital validation of documents across Government and the private sector, significantly reducing reliance on manual processes and handwritten signatures. This aims to provide for the legal recognition of electronic transactions; provide for consumer

protection in electronic commerce and regulate the liability of service providers for actions of their clients.

In turn, this will enhance the efficiency, speed and cost-effectiveness of national, regional and international transactions supporting Namibia's vision of a digitally enabled economy.

Furthermore, **Forty-Million Namibian Dollars (N\$40,000,000)** will be disbursed to the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia for the establishment of Radio Access Network (RAN) sites through the Universal Service Fund. This will support the deployment of mobile broadband and voice networks at 15 more sites, prioritising 22 schools and 2 clinics in line with the Universal Policy and Regulations. These sites will be at the Omuhongo Clinic, Okankolo and Epembe in the Ohangwena Region; Nehale LyaMpingana, Onayena and Okankolo in the Oshana Region; Ruacana in the Omusati Region; Mukwe in the Kavango East; Omombo Clinic, Epupa and Opuwo Rural in the Kunene Region; Linyati and Kabbe South in the Zambezi Region; Kalahari in the Omaheke Region; Berseba in the //Karas Region and Omatako and Tsumkwe in the Otjozondjupa Region. This will also include the Public WIFI hotspots at all RAN sites.

The Universal Service Fund remains a critical instrument for advancing equitable access to ICT services across Namibia. It serves as a dedicated delivery mechanism to ensure that all citizens, regardless of geographical location, benefits from reliable, affordable and high quality digital connectivity.

In addition, Programme 1 caters for on-going efforts to secure Namibia's National Digital infrastructure and to protect Namibians in this digital age by prioritising the strengthening of our national cyber resilience. Cybersecurity remains the corner stone of our digital future and Government reaffirms its commitment to investing in secure, resilient ICT infrastructure as a foundation for economic growth, innovation and national development.

This will be done through the continued operation of the Namibia Cybersecurity Incidence Response Team (Nam-CSIRT) as the focal point for cybersecurity matters in the country, while the National Cybersecurity Strategy and Awareness Raising Plan will be implemented to promote safer online behaviour and instil a culture of cyber hygiene among the citizens. This will include the development of the model for organisational Cybersecurity hygiene policies and Child Online Protection Guidelines/Toolkit. The Cybercrime Bill and amendments to the Communications Act will also be tabled in Parliament in the current financial year.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

The Ministry undertakes to review the National Broadband Policy to increase the broadband speed from 2Mbps to a minimum download of 25Mbps and 3Mbps upload to comply with the decision of the meeting of Southern African Development Community Ministers responsible for ICT. As approved by Cabinet, the implementation of the International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT 2020) 5G Strategy will continue.

Of late, matters relating to the protection of citizens' rights to privacy and the issue of personal data protection has been of paramount interest to all netizens. Data protection allows for safeguarding of personal data and to guard against its misuse. Therefore, once discussed at the Cabinet Committee on Legislation, the Data Protection Bill will be tabled in Parliament in the 2025/2026 financial year.

Furthermore, the National Digital Strategy will be implemented in partnership with all relevant stakeholders. This strategy is aligned to and aims to accelerate Vision 2030, Harambee Prosperity Plan 2, and the National Development Plan 6. It also complements other key strategic documents that intersect with Information and Communication Technologies to formalise a vision and roadmap for the country to leverage the power of technology to accelerate its national development goals

As part of our plans, the Ministry intends to submit to Cabinet, for approval and implementation, the consolidated National ICT Policy. Climate change brings about extreme challenges to which leads to an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, shifting disaster patterns and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. Namibia is not spared due to frequent weather-related hazards, such as flooding and droughts, which are becoming recurrent and less predictable. The speed and effectiveness of emergency response depends on the availability of communications to enable the exchange of information between different actors in real time or as fast as feasible. Information and Communication Technologies are one of the major pillars for disaster management and risk reduction. Therefore, Cabinet recently approved the National Emergency Telecommunications Plan which will be implemented in partnership with all relevant stakeholders in the current financial year.

For the preservation of a national eco-system and national security, groundwork on the construction of the National Data Center will commence during the current financial year. This Centre will play a pivotal role in modernising data management, enhancing data security and enabling data-driven decision making for the Government and various stakeholders.

To further enhance access to ICTs to bridge the urban-rural digital divide for remote communities, the Ministry plans to equip Rural ICT Centers with ICT equipment. This will allow for an environment where every citizen can participate meaningfully in the digital economy. Moreover, the Universal Access and Service Policy for ICTs will be reviewed to accommodate emerging trends and set the framework for the availability of a full range of equitable, accessible and affordable ICT services.

Lastly, Programme 1 intends to implement the directive by H.E Dr. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, the President of the Republic of Namibia, to develop a Database of Information Technology experts in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, as stated in Her Excellency's recently delivered State of the Nation Address.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

Programme 2: Print Media Affairs

This programme will receive an allocation of **Twenty-One Million Two Hundred and Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$21,209 000.00)** to enhance unhindered access to information through the coordination of Government communication as well as the timely and effective communication of Government policies, programmes and projects to the public through various platforms.

Furthermore, under this Programme, we continue to run multiple initiatives to instil a sense of patriotism, nationhood and national pride among the citizens of Namibia, including campaigns for behavioural change on issues related to social ills. Through the Nationhood and National Pride Programme, the ministry will soon roll out a behavioural change communication campaign themed #EndGBVNamibia to address growing incidences of GBV in our country. The ministry will also champion campaigns such as Ethical Use of Social Media, Anti Poaching, National Symbols and CleanUp Namibia.

Our first key initiative is the realignment of the Government Communication Strategy to the National Development Plan 6. This alignment is not merely administrative but a transformative one that every message, campaign and communication initiative from Government reflects the broader national vision in terms of coherence, transparency and accountability. We aim to build a communication framework that speaks to development priorities whether it is on digital transformation, youth empowerment or sustainable economic growth. Therefore, we intend to review the current Government Communication Strategy during this financial year.

As we all know, social media has become a powerful tool for expression, connection and engagement. However, it also presents challenges that can undermine social cohesion and public trust. Therefore, during this financial year, we intend to intensify our public education efforts on ethical social media use, with a focus on media literacy, digital responsibility and the legal implications of online conduct. Through partnerships with various stakeholders, we aim to foster a digital culture grounded in respect, accuracy and constructive dialogue. Social media must be used as a platform to unite, not divide; and for enlightenment, not misinformation.

To ensure uniformity and consistency in Government branding and communication, we are finalising the Government Corporate Identity Manual. This manual will standardise how public entities represent themselves—across logos, typography, colours, official documentation, signage and digital platforms. A clear and consistent identity builds public trust and reinforces the credibility of government messages. After all Government branding fosters professionalism, reliability and a cohesive national image.

Honourable Members,

National events - be they commemorative or celebratory, are opportunities to showcase our unity and values and reflect who we are as a nation. Therefore, we will ensure that the public follows the proceedings of national events by staging live screening of national events at our regional offices countrywide for public attendance.

The enactment of the Access to Information Law and its accompanying Regulations represents our unwavering commitment to transparency, accountability and democratic governance. As a

Ministry, we have laid the foundation for the next chapter, which is the commencement of the implementation of this law which will mark a new era of openness in our nation.

I am pleased to inform you that all necessary mechanisms for its successful rollout are now firmly in place. We have made budgetary provision to ensure that the implementation is not only legally sound, but also practically feasible. We recognise that access to information is more than a legal right - it is a tool for empowerment, development and social justice. Our Ministry has now passed the baton to the National Assembly to ensure that Information Commissioner and his/her Deputy are appointed as per the law.

The Ministry is committed to strengthening the foundation of Government communication. The professionals who serve as Government Communication Officers are the bridge between policy and people. Their dedication, creativity and resilience are vital to the functioning of our democracy.

To honour and inspire excellence in this field, the Ministry will continue to maintain the Government Communication Officers Awards to celebrate innovation, diligence and public service. These awards highlight the vital role communicators play in ensuring that our citizens are well-informed, engaged and heard. We are committed to creating a communication ecosystem that is inclusive, efficient and future-ready. We will continue to foster innovation and strengthen public access to information and champion open dialogue between the government and the citizenry.

This is not merely a communication strategy - it is a national conversation. It is about how we speak, how we listen and how we connect as a country. We shall therefore continue to communicate with purpose, share information with integrity and engage with one voice for a better tomorrow.

Key to this Programme is concerted efforts to disseminate Government information to the public on developmental projects undertaken by Government through our research-based monthly publication of the Namibia Review magazine. This Government flagship magazine which is responsible for the review of policy and development has been successfully revamped and is being distributed free of charge in all 14 regions of the country to promote access to information. As directed by Cabinet, the Ministry will work towards publishing a translated Namibia Review bi-annually to ensure that all communities in Namibia can read and understand developmental stories in their own mother tongues.

Honourable Members,

National branding is important for nurturing a positive global image. This can lead to increased tourism, foreign investment and trade. A strong nation brand can enhance our overall position globally that resonates with international audiences. Therefore, we have embarked on a project called 'Brand Namibia' which is an outward looking initiative that aims at promoting a positive image about Namibia as an ideally destination for investment, tourism and film production. This initiative carried out in partnership with other institutions such as the Ministry of International Relations and Trade, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB), Namibia Tourism Board etc. Through the Brand Namibia and the Nationhood and National Pride

Programme, Namibians will be able to tell their story to the world. As a country, we will be able to achieve social cohesion and social harmony, when we are united, proud and well branded.

Through the Nationhood and National Pride Programme, the Ministry partnered with Office of the President, the Ministry of Justice, NAMPOL, National Youth Service, among others, to implement the National Symbols campaign. This campaign aims at promoting the correct use of national symbols and observation of their related protocols. Through targeted interventions, we have observed positive behavioural change among the youth and many institutions have started using the correct national coat of arms in their communication. However more still need to be done.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

An amount of **Twenty-Seven Million Five Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$27,500,000.00)** is allocated to the **New Era Publication Corporation (NEPC)** to ensure access to credible and timely public information, particularly in regions with limited digital infrastructure.

The budget has been strategically structured to ensure short-term functionality and long-term value creation. Thus, NEPC will continue to disseminate pertinent information through its daily newspaper, New Era, while also utilising a range of other multi-media platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram and YouTube through which it now reaches an audience of around 860 000 people to report on community and Government-related matters.

NEPC endeavours to continue with its countrywide programme under which it tells the success stories of State-owned Enterprises, Regional and Local Authorities and publishing regional focus editions. In the quest to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural communities and to serve the reader at its point of need, NEPC recently launched Era Select (a segmented version of New Era through which readers can subscribe to only sections of their choice).

Furthermore, during the 2025/2026 financial year, NEPC will finalise research which it is jointly undertaking with the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology on the use of Artificial Intelligence in media. Once the research is concluded, tools will be developed with the cooperation of a team of IT experts from the Namibia University of Science and Technology to implement AI in the NEPC workspace for a speedy and more professional service.

Newsrooms across the world are gearing towards becoming more digital. While print remains viable in a small population like Namibia, the digital space offers endless opportunities that ought to be tapped into. With that in mind, NEPC aims to finance the setting up of a modern studio for the New Era Online team. This will make it easier to convert print stories into digital versions and enhance podcasts on topical news. NEPC also plans to introduce a Customer Relationship Management system, which will help the Corporation to streamline processes, enhance customer satisfaction and drive revenue growth.

Moreover, the existing Circulation systems will be upgraded to add additional functionality that will enable the company to manage the distribution, tracking and overall logistics of delivering newspapers to outlets and subscribers more efficiently.. The Capital budget will ensure an efficient, safe and technologically equipped workspace that supports staff productivity and aligns with our strategic operational goals.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

In alignment with national developmental goals and the New Era Publication Corporation will run a 12 Month Graduate Internship Program; Which serve as a platform to

- Equip graduates with practical experience and work-readiness skills and improve their employability across the public and private sectors.
- Provide industry exposure to students in their area of studies and be able to finalise their studies.

Lastly, to support sports development and to continue nurturing stakeholder relations, NEPC has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Netball Namibia to promote the netball premier league and help them move towards professionalism while developing the girl child.

Honourable Members,

We now move onto **Programme 3: Audio-Visual Media and Regional Offices** which was allocated an amount of **Eighty-One Million Nine Hundred and Thirteen Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$81,913,000.00)** to provide provide a range of multi-media products and services. It further serves as a conduit for Government entities on information dissemination through digital platforms/channels such as the Government Information Centre (GIC) and the provision of livestreaming services. In addition, under this Programme we undertake efforts to promote Namibia as a preferred film destination internationally while developing the local film industry.

A key driver for economic advancement is technological innovation. Therefore, we plan to develop a digital media content hub that will contribute towards national digital transformation and enhanced transparency and good governance in line with the NDP6 pillars. In line with the provisions of the Access to Information Act, the initiatives to upscale information dissemination would go a long way in promoting the principles of transparency, accountability and good governance.

The Ministry, in its quest to enhance research and development of the media sector, will draft Media Development legislation to promote community media growth and accountability as well as provide incentives for the media. This will ensure that the sector contribute towards economic growth.

Under Programme 3, the Ministry has allocated **Seven Million, Five Hundred Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$7,500,000.00)** to the **Namibia Film Commission** Secretariat (NFC), for the Namibia Film and Video Development Fund. The Ministry intends to facilitate the transformation of the NFC until it reaches full autonomy over the MTEF period. Therefore, this will require an amendment to the NFC Act and drafting of regulations to ensure sustainability of the Commission and formalisation of the film sector. Parallel to this, we intend to collaborate with local and international partners to ensure Namibian content is of the highest quality and is able to travel globally, with our breath-taking locations as backdrop.

We also undertake to develop film hubs in the regions to decentralise content creation. Regional hubs will not only unlock hidden talent but will encourage story-telling and create much needed jobs for young people. Furthermore, we anticipate to provide support to start-ups in the film sector which will provide for unique products and services and improve our country's competitiveness in the region.

Honourable Members,

Additionally, Programme 3 provides for the **Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)** which will receive an amount of **Three Hundred and Sixty-One Million Eight Hundred Fifty-Three Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$361,853,000.00)** for their Operational Budget and **One Hundred and Fourty Million Namibian Dollars (N\$140,000,000.00)** towards their Development Budget.

The allocated budget will support various projects and production activities, all aimed at enhancing NBC's operational efficiency, content delivery and service to the Namibian public. The NBC's operational cost is classified into 5 cost centres, namely; Direct Operational Cost, Employment Cost, H.O. Support Cost, Repairs and Maintenance and Finance Cost.

Direct Operational Costs account for 26 percent of NBC's operational budget. These costs are directly linked to NBC's core activities and are mainly driven by:

1. **Artist Fees:** The NBC engages artists to support productions for both radio and television, as well as to assist with business administration tasks. Professional artist service rates range from N\$300 to N\$1,200 per hour. The NBC utilises the skills of these artists not only to ensure quality broadcasts but also to contribute to job creation;
2. **Satellite Transponder Rental:** NBC is migrating from C-Band to KU-Band via Intelsat 10-02 to achieve full network coverage, with no expected increase in rental costs;
3. **Program Materials:** Budget allocated for local and international program acquisitions, supporting the content needs of NBC1, NBC2, and NBC3. Additionally, NBC plans to purchase international sports rights. Key expenses include live coverage of national events, elections, and new channel content (kiddies, telenovela, sports, music, etc.). The NBC plans to expand its television offering through additional segmented channels aligned with national priorities and audience trends. This expansion will require significant investment in both local and international content;
4. **Spectrum Frequency and Broadcasting Licensee Fees;** and
5. **Royalties** to support and stimulate the music industry.

In addition to the above, as part of NBC's key initiatives for 2025/2026, the Broadcaster intends to usher in new Television Channels on NBC which cover the following:

1. **Dedicated Parliamentary Coverage:** A dedicated television channel will be introduced for the Parliamentary proceedings to ensure broader access, especially for the rural communities without TV or smart devices. The NBC will explore the options to enhance the broadcast proceedings on radio. This channel will cater for both the National Assembly and the National Council;
2. **Education and Priority Content:** New channels will focus on education, health, sports and music.
3. **Local Content Commissioning on Television:** the NBC aim to commission 15 local films (52 minutes each), the aim is to set aside N\$10 million for this project which will assist the Creative Industry by providing jobs to independent producers for both Radio and Television. Depending on the guideline budget, the NBC aims to commission extra 4 soapies, 4 reality shows, 4 drama series, 4 comedies and dedicated children's youth, women and sports programming.
4. **Local Content Commissioning on Radio:** the NBC will produce 11 radio dramas, 11 comedies and dedicated content for children, youth, sports and environmental documentaries and women focused content.
5. **National and Special Event Coverage:** The NBC will continue with the coverage of significant national events including the state funerals, presidential trips, United Nations General Assembly, African Union and Southern Africa Development Community Summits, regional elections, and major events.
6. **Official Presidential Engagements:** The NBC will cover both the of local and international presidential events.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

Furthermore, NBC operates 66 transmitter sites. Rental costs for towers and utilities across six regional offices are projected at N\$21 million for 2025/26, with tower rentals estimated at N\$1.7 million annually. The Broadcaster plans to pay for content acquisition, freelancer fees and vehicle leases collectively accounting for N\$47.6 million of direct costs.

Another operational Cost Centre for the NBC is 'Employment Costs'. Given that the NBC is a people intense business entity, employment costs are projected at N\$301.5 million for 2025/26, up 5.2 percent from the previous year and will represent 59 percent of total operational costs. Employment costs show a steady upward trend, reflecting NBC's focus on supporting staff while maintaining cost control efforts. The rollover effect is due to the adjustments which had to be made as a result of the post-strike agreement between the NBC and NAPWU at the time.

As part of its Capital Development projects, the following projects are planned for the 2025/26 financial year to drive technological growth and modernisation:

1. **Implementation of Direct-to-Home (DTH) Satellite Technology** to achieve full (100 percent) broadcasting network coverage across Namibia.

2. **Replacement of Four Radio Studio Mixing Consoles** in Windhoek and selected regional offices.
3. **Continuation of the Rooftop Renewable Energy Project and upgrades to physical security infrastructure**, including enhancements to CCTV and access control systems.
4. **Expansion of the FM Radio Network** to extend coverage to underserved areas.
5. **Procurement of Studio Equipment for the Drama School** to support production and training activities.
6. **Replacement of the Dalet Media Asset Management System** with a modern solution to improve efficiency and content handling.
7. **Upgrade of Studio 1** which is being used for Television News and Namibia Connects to support High-Definition (HD) and Ultra High Definition (4K) production capabilities.

Moving on, Programme 3 also gives provision for the allocation of an amount of **Twenty-Seven Million and Seven Hundred and Six Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$27,706,000.00)** to the **Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA)** to embark upon news and information dissemination initiatives that will effectively ensure that the Namibian Story is told comprehensively, accurately and objectively.

These initiatives include the deployment of adequately qualified journalists to all the regions for news coverage and the capacitation of regional officers and journalists with vehicles, equipment and adequate office spaces.

Honourable Speaker,

NAMPA continues to play a crucial role in developing credible, reliable and trustworthy content and providing quality assurance services in the development of literary material of national importance. The literary material may include legacy books, business catalogues and documentaries.

The Agency will continue to direct resources towards the coverage of news and will report comprehensively on all important events, project and programmes of Government and matters of public interest. NAMPA editorial products will continue to be distributed widely through the subscribing newspapers – New Era and The Namibian – NBC TV and radio, social media and all subscribing local radio stations. NAMPA stories also reach international audiences through our wide network of international partners in countries like Zimbabwe, China, Zambia, Ghana, Cuba, Lesotho, India, Russia, Indonesia and Malaysia. The Agency are further looking to sign news content exchange agreements with Angola, Nigeria, Botswana and Kenya.

In an effort to support local students and graduates, the NAMPA Media Internship Program is one of the most robust in the local media industry, with over 500 students having participated in it thus far. Most of these former interns are now fully employed, serving in different important portfolios in public and private institutions, after they received training in news writing, videography, presentation, photography, interviewing and research.

Over the past year, the Agency achieved a notable 96.3% increase in revenue compared to the previous year, driven by successful product launches, special projects and expanded market reach.

NAMPA penetrated new markets and secured key partnerships, leading to significant growth in market expansion compared to the previous year, and establishing a solid foundation for future growth.

Looking ahead, the news agency is well-positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities, leverage strengths, and address challenges proactively. With a focus on innovation, customer-centricity and operational excellence, the Agency is poised for sustained growth and continued success in the upcoming year.

Honourable Speaker,

Last but not least, I present to the house, **Programme 4: Coordination and Support** which renders corporate support services to the Ministry, ensuring the efficient and effective management of its financial resources, general administration, transport, human resources auditing and internal Information Technology (IT) systems. An amount of **Eighty-Two Million Eighty-Four Thousand, Namibian Dollars (N\$82,084,000.00)**.

Furthermore, this Programme is allocated **Seventy-Nine Million (N\$79,000,000.00)** for the implementation of the Ministry's Capital Projects comprising of the construction of our Regional Offices and envisaged Head Office. A total of **Sixteen Million Namibian Dollar (N\$ 16,000,000.00)** is budgeted for the finalisation of the construction of the Ministry's Hardap Regional Office, which will be completed towards the end of the second quarter. A further **Twelve Million, Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$12,228,000.00)** is budgeted for the start of the construction of the //Kharas and Kunene Regional offices and **Fifty-One Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 51,000,000.00)** for the start of the construction for the MICT Head Office. The latter project started in 2016, however was put on hold due to economic challenges.

**Honourable Speaker,
Honourable Members,**

I am pleased to submit Vote 29 to this august House for perusal, discussion and endorsement.

Thank You!

