The Namibia Training Authority entered into Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with ten local training institutions at a ceremony held in the capital, on the 9th of August 2016.

The agreements fall into two broad categories, and are to be implemented under the Vocational Education and Training Levy’s Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window. The first category involves approved intervention areas for funding as part of demand-led training interventions with seven local training institutions, totaling N$ 27,876,942.82. Altogether 901 trainees stand to benefit from these interventions. The institutions are DAPP Vocational Centre, Namibian College of Open Learning, Phillipi Trust Namibia, Wolwedans Academy, Business School of Excellence, Triumphant College and Tulipohamba Training Academy.

Specific qualifications covered under these agreements include Bricklaying and Plastering (Level 3); Office Administration (Level 3); Automotive Mechanics (Level 3); Plumbing and Pipefitting (Level 3); Welding and Metal Fabrication (Level 3); Counselling Services (Level 3); Hospitality and Tourism (Level 2); Wholesale and Retail Distribution (Level 2); Wholesale and Retail Operations (Level 2); Logistics (Level 5).

The agreements also cover training in other key areas, including Electrical and Electronic Engineering; Telecommunication Engineering; Construction Engineering; Accounting and Finance; Marketing; Counseling; Occupational Health and Safety; Healthcare Administration; and Community Health Education. The second category involves approved intervention areas for funding as part of support and capacity-building interventions with three local training institutions, totaling N$ 8,694,210.00.

Institutions benefitting from these agreements include the DAPP Vocational Centre, where the funding is to support the establishment of production units and innovative approaches to training delivery and the Community Skills Development Foundation (COSDEFF), where the funding is to be applied towards equipment, minor repairs and renovations to three training centers. It is anticipated that the support to COSDEFF will enable it to meet the accreditation requirements of...
The Namibian Federation for the Visually Impaired (NVFI) has welcomed the funding support it is to receive through the Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window of the Vocational Education and Training Levy.

The NTA has entered into a N$ 1.9 million Service Level Agreement with the NVFI to support it in ensuring the continuity of its rehabilitation training and service centre, which amongst others offers braille, community-based rehabilitation training, computer training, entrepreneurship development and peer counselling services.

Speaking at a signing ceremony in the capital on Tuesday, 9th August 2016, NVFI Executive Director, Moses Nghipandulwa welcomed the agreement saying it will help to sustain the operations of the NVFI, which submitted a request for financial support to ensure the continuity of training at its service centre.

“Forty-five persons now stand to benefit from further training under this funding intervention. The timing of this agreement is perfect. The Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired previously funded the NVFI, but its financial support ended on the 30th of December 2015, which has led to the suspension of the rehabilitation training programmes, from April this year”, Nghipandulwa explained.

On his part, CEO, Jerry Beukes highlighted that the support to the NVFI was aligned to the NTA’s ongoing objective to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities into the VET sector. “We are pleased to now be part of the NVFI’s activities and we trust that they will continue their good work in making VET an inclusive and viable option. Inclusiveness remains high on our agenda and we look forward to consider requests for support and cooperation from other roleplayers to ensure that we secure and grow inclusive training opportunities for many more Namibians living with disabilities”, Beukes stressed.

Greetings!

Promoting inclusiveness in the VET sector is a key component of the NTA’s ongoing strategic endeavour.

It is important for people living with disabilities to access opportunities to develop initial knowledge and skills and become lifelong learners, so that they too can contribute to maximising the national stock of available industry skills.

A Service Level Agreement between the NTA and the Namibian Federation for the Visually Impaired (NVFI), under the Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window of the VET Levy, is therefore a step in the right direction.

However, it goes without saying that much more needs to be done to effectively address existing impediments to VET access, participation and successful outcomes faced by people living with disabilities.

Engaging in strong stakeholder partnerships in support of a shared inclusiveness agenda will therefore form part of our work for the foreseeable future.

Yours in Vocational Education and Training,

Jerry Beukes

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Staff Stake-out

Tell us more. Who is Toni Eksteen away from the office? Exactly the same person. In fact, a very down-to-earth individual, who like relaxing at home with my two girls and members of the extended family. I do enjoy spending time with friends now and then. So, a nice braai at home in the company of good friends and family is always on the cards.

What do you enjoy about being a Data Input Clerk? Although it may seem monotonous and boring to some, I enjoy all aspects of my work. What makes it more enjoyable is the positive work atmosphere we try to maintain, despite the fact that things can get hectic at times. We try to have fun now and then, but when we work, we are serious. There is no room for error in our line of work.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years? Although I’m only a Data Input Clerk now, I see myself growing in the finance field over the next five years. I think it’s a huge plus that I work in a finance environment like the fact that my work has to do with finance. Its difficult to say where I see myself after five years, but I do see myself completing a Bachelor’s degree by then. I would like to stay at the NTA, but one never knows where new roads lead.

How would you describe the NTA work environment? I have been at the NTA since 2010 and the environment has changed so much. It is still a fun atmosphere to work in, but now our work is so multi-faceted and diverse. I still enjoy being at the NTA and I have made some very good friends here.

What is the first thing you do in the morning? I am God-fearing woman. So, my day starts with a prayer to say thank you for another day and opportunity. My two daughters are my greatest blessing. I see to it that they are ready for school.
The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) and its sister organisation, the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA), staged a joint media conference at the NQA Head Office in the capital on the 28th of July 2016. CEO, Jerry Beukes and his NQA counterpart, Franz Gertze addressed the media at the event. Below, the verbatim statement issued to the media.

a) The NQA and the NTA have been inundated with requests from industry and training institutions alike that short courses be recognised, and that learners of such training be awarded credible certificates to attest to their attainment of skills and knowledge. Similarly, the recognition of short courses on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has for long been a challenge in Namibia.

b) This challenge was further highlighted with the introduction by the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) of Regulations for the Registration of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Providers (Government Notice 300), and Regulations Relating to the Use of the VET Levy for Funding Training Programmes and Projects (Government Notice 5395).

c) In view of the fact that the scope of the NQF does not currently provide for the recognition of short courses, the aforementioned challenges have prompted a consultative inquiry into how short courses could possibly be recognised. This process is of particular significance for VET Levy-paying employers who, under this programme’s Employer Training Grant Funding Allocation, may claim back up to 50% of their contributions, based on evidence of training conducted for a particular financial year.

d) In responding to the aforementioned challenges, the NQA commissioned a study to consult key stakeholders to seek their views and recommendations relating to the formal recognition of short courses in Namibia. Following the completion of this consultative process, the two regulatory bodies, NQA and NTA, agreed on the following resolutions:

i. **Defining Short Courses in Namibia**: Short courses in Namibia be defined as any activity involving teaching and learning that requires less than 400 hours of learner effort (or less than 40 NQF Credits).

ii. **Categories of Short Courses in Namibia**: Short courses fall under two broad categories – those that are **credit bearing** which are registered on the NQF, and **non-credit bearing** in that they fall outside the intended scope and purpose of the NQF.

iii. **Quality Assurance of Short Courses**: Credit bearing short courses must be offered by an accredited institution as per provisions of the Accreditation Regulations of 2006 (Government Notice 124). Regarding the non-credit bearing skills development programmes – where such courses are of vocational nature, the provider and the course must be registered by the NTA. The NTA is prioritising the processes around the registration of providers of such short courses.

iv. **Certification of Short Courses**: Short courses that are registered on the NQF and that are offered by accredited training providers will be recognised by the NQA. Conversely short courses that clearly fall outside the NQF scope are to be certificated principally through certificates of attendance. In some cases, a vendor-certificate may be issued.

v. **Responsibilities for Professional Short Courses**: Quality Assurance processes for any short courses intended for the meeting of professional development requirements and/or ongoing rights to practice as a professional is the responsibility of the relevant professional bodies recognised by the Government of the Republic of Namibia under law, or by other means.

e) Moving forward, the NQA and NTA, as sister regulatory organisations, under the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation will continue to engage their stakeholders regarding these resolutions and how to proceed as far as the implementation thereof is concerned. END
The NTA’s Standards, Assessment and Certification Council approved the applications for registration of three training institutions, at its meeting held on the 26th of July 2016.

The institutions are Ngato Vocational Training Centre, Namibian Institute of Welding and NICHE Training Academy.

Ngato VTC can now enroll trainees for the National Vocational Certificate in Business Services (Office Administration) Level 1, while the Namibian Institute of Welding is now registered to enroll trainees in the area of Coded Welding, which include plate carbon welding, pipe welding and stainless steel welding, from Level 1 to Level 3.

On its part, NICHE Training Academy received approval to enroll trainees for the National Vocational Certificate in Metal Fabrication, from Level 1 to Level 2.

At the same meeting, the SACC also approved applications for the expansion of training scope of the following institutions:

- Namibian College of Open Learning (Rundu) - National Vocational Certificate in Business Services (Office Administration) Level 1-3;
- Monitronic Success College - National Vocational Certificate in Business Services (Office Administration) Level 1;
- Marco Mpollo Vocational Training Centre - National Vocational Certificate in Business Services (Office Administration) Level 1 and National Vocational Certificate in Bricklaying Level 1.

Speaking to The Stakeholder, Quality Assurance Manager, Ian Gicheru welcomed the approvals, noting that it demonstrated that the local VET market was responding to the need to free up more training opportunities for young Namibians. “We are delighted by the steady and solid growth. And I need to thank the training institutions concerned for their hard work and commitment in seeing to it that they meet the requirements, as set out in the Regulations for the Registration of Training Providers”, he said.

Gicheru also encouraged institutions, not yet registered with the NTA, to do so without delay, noting that there were still institutions that mislead parents and prospective trainees into believing that they are indeed registered institutions, while they are not. “We invite all training institutions not registered with us to approach our offices and to access the necessary support and guidance towards preparing and submitting formal registration applications. It is the right thing to do”, he explained.

He also called on prospective trainees to always establish whether a training institution was indeed registered with the NTA, before they pay any monies, including enrollment fees. “The list of registered institutions continues to grow making it difficult for us to share printed copies with stakeholders, including trainees. However, the NTA keeps an updated list of all registered VET institutions and the scope of course offerings on our website. This list can be accessed through the link http://www.nta.com.na/?page_id=1022. Should people not be able to access the list via the website, they are welcome to visit our offices or call us at 061-2078557”, Gicheru highlighted.

Gicheru expects more applications to be approved at the SACC’s next meeting, which is scheduled to take place on the 11th of October 2016.

More than 900 Trainees to Benefit from VET Levy KPI Funding …… Continues

It also includes support to the Namibian Federation of the Visually Impaired, which is to apply the funding towards ensuring the continuity of its rehabilitation training and service centre, which amongst others offers braille, community-based rehabilitation training, computer training, entrepreneurship development and peer counselling services.

CEO, Jerry Beukes, highlighted that the VET Levy’s Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window provided for up to 35% of all monies collected through this programme, to be invested in the development of skills and capacities in high-demand, in prioritized sectors of our economy. “The services of the beneficiary training institutions were solicited through an open and transparent procurement process, through which accredited training providers were invited, in October 2015, to submit proposals for training in occupations identified in high demand as listed in the NTA’s National Skills Development Plan for the Vocational Education and Training Sector. These proposals were evaluated against strict technical criteria aimed at ensuring that trainees benefit from high quality training services”, he explained.

Beukes said the signing of SLAs signified the solid progress in realising the VET Levy as a programme under which our country can sustainably enhance both the quality and quantity of technical and vocational skills provision. “The NTA continues to prioritise demand-led training interventions to the benefit of trainees and training institution and industry partners, alike. It demonstrates the value we attach to the creation of high quality, equitable and accessible training opportunities for the Namibian people. It shows that while much more still needs to be done to grow more such opportunities and develop our national skills base, we are on the right track”, he noted.

On his part, Chairperson of the National Training Fund Council, Patrick Swartz refuted recent media reports that the VET Levy was allegedly being administered from South Africa and commended the NTA for implementing and administering the VET Levy in a sustainable, viable, efficient and effective manner. “Yes, the VET Levy programme has brought about a more stable and sustainable funding regime under which to accelerate the provision of equitable, quality and accessible technical and vocational training services”, he highlighted.

Swartz also stressed the importance of VET in delivering the skills needed for a modernised economy and in countering the disturbingly high levels of youth unemployment. “We need to do more to support the development of local skills as a tool for individual empowerment and national economic development. Going forward, the NTA needs to intensify collaboration with all the relevant stakeholders under the VET Levy programme, especially its industry and training institution stakeholders”, he emphasised.
PICTURE FOCUS
From Around and About the VET Scene

EDUCATION PARTNERS
CEO, Jerry Beukes shakes hands with the CEO of the Namibia Qualifications Authority, Franz Gertze at the end of a recent joint media conference.

VET VETERAN
NIMT Executive Director, Eckhardt Mueller, sharing his wealth of expertise at the 2016 NTA Training Provider Forum.

CORPORATE LOOK
Board members, Tim Parkhouse and Dr. Gilbert Likando pictured at a recent employee introduction session.

MILESTONE MOMENT
National Training Fund Council Chairperson, Patrick Swartz delivered a keynote message at the VET Levy Key Priority Training Service Level Agreement signing ceremony.

HEALTHY VET
Johannes Petrus, Matti Hasheela, Ananias Mule and Paulus Iipinge enjoying the recent State-Owned Enterprise Sports and Fun Day.

QUALITY IN VET
Veripi Tjaimi and Doerte Schneider from the Quality Assurance Division posing for a picture.

PUTTING PEN TO PAPER
Prof. Jeffrey Kiangi signs on behalf of Triumphant College at the recent Key Priority Training Service Level Agreement signing ceremony.

VET & BEAUTY
Trainees at the Shadonai Training Institute pictured during a practical training session.
The Commercial Advancement Training Scheme (CATS) is to stage a graduation ceremony at the Arebbusch Travel Lodge in the capital, on the 22nd of September 2016.

CATS is a dual-training programme targeted towards Grade 12 graduates who are interested in a career in business, but also employees within CATS and its member companies that have shown potential to climb the corporate ladder. Founded in 2005 by a group of visionary business leaders, CATS is a two-year dual training system, which is currently partnering with 22 Namibian industry leaders.

Asked about the dual-training approach and its outcomes, CATS Programme Coordinator, Stefanie Goettinger said it resulted in a win-win situation, as CATS member companies train their potential future employees and provide them with the necessary skills to ensure that graduates are competent in their jobs after they have completed the two years of training, thus bridging the skills shortages that are affecting a variety of trades.

“CATS Trainees receive a fully-funded tertiary education, while applying theoretical contents in practice through on-the-job training. By rotating through various departments, they get a clear understanding of how the business works and how different functions in the organisation are interlinked”, she explained.

Goettinger added that in addition to covering tuition and registration fees, the member companies provided a monthly allowance to trainees. “Upon completion of the programme, trainees are qualified industrial management assistants with two years’ of relevant work experience. These successful candidates become sought-after employees, especially in our current member companies”, she highlighted.

All graduates are to be awarded Industrial Management Assistant certificates at the ceremony. The certificates are issued by CATS, and the Southern African-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAGCC), as well as the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK). The graduates are also to receive Applied Business Process Management certificates, issued by the Namibia University of Science and Technology and Practical Training certificates, issued by the relevant member company.

The CATS programme is recommended by former graduates. Speaking to The Stakeholder, Merlyn Tjiposa, who graduated in 2013 and who now is employed as a Debtor Assistant at Ocean Liner Services, a division of Manica Group Namibia at Walvis Bay, said she will continue to recommend CATS to others. “It’s a great opportunity to get both practical and theoretical experience. And for people who don’t have funds to further their education, this can be their chance to do so”, she noted.

On her part, Richardene De Waal, Procurement Officer in the Supply Chain Department at Swakop Uranium, said she would definitely recommend the CATS programme, as she considered it a brilliant platform to start a career. “Most employers nowadays are looking for work experience and CATS provides just that. It was easy for me to get hired”, she said.