The NTA expects to receive the newly-constructed Gobabis Vocational Training Centre (GVTC) from the contractors by the 30th of May 2015.

The NTA’s Manager: Capital Projects, Gad Kangueehi describes the project as a fantastic milestone. “The project has been completed on schedule and within budget, whilst high quality workmanship has been maintained throughout. It is indeed, a milestone to be celebrated and appreciated”, he noted.

He also lauded the contractors and consultants for their commitment to the project. “Delays and postponements are common at construction projects, and whilst we had our fair share, the contractors remained dedicated throughout. We are very happy with the quality of their work”, he emphasised.

According to Kangueehi, the contractors have been inundated with queries from local leaders and parents who seemed anxious for the centre to open its doors. “From the onset, the encouraging support for the project from the local community, especially the Gobabis Town Council, further fused the project team to work harder and to finish the project on time”, he noted.

On his part, Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes expressed his satisfaction with the project and the potential it now generates to expand the offering of Vocational Education and Training (VET) services to the inhabitants of the greater Omahke region. “It is a strategic consideration for the NTA, under its VET Expansion Plan, to grow the number and scope of training opportunities for young Namibians. We now look forward to also expanding the VET footprint to eastern Namibia”, he explained.

The GVTC has workshops for Airconditioning and Refrigeration, Office Administration and Electrical General and should be able to accommodate about 60 trainees.

The NTA is now to proceed with equipping the workshops and lecture rooms.

A date for an official opening ceremony, to be followed by an announcement on when the GVTC is to open its doors to the public, is to be made in due course.
The NTA is making excellent progress in facilitating Namibia’s maiden appearance at the 2015 WorldSkills Competition, scheduled to take place in August in Brazil.

NTA Manager: VET Standards, Sens Shoolongo, who is also the Technical Delegate for WorldSkills Namibia, told The Stakeholder that Namibia was to send competitors for Bricklaying, Plumbing, Joinery and Electrical General, to participate in the bi-annual event.

Shoolongo also indicated that the Namibian competitors were soon to depart for South-Korea, where they will train with members of the South-Korean team, in each of these disciplines. “The opportunity for our competitors to prepare for six weeks with their South-Korean counterparts, forms part of the UNESCO Better Education for Africa’s Rise (BEAR) Project, which has an overall objective the enhancement of the relevance of VET programmes to skills needs. Skills experts in each of the three trade areas are also to accompany the competitors”, he noted.

Shoolongo is confident that the Namibian team will come back with a medal. “We are not participating for the mere sake of it. Our objective is not only for our competitors to show their mettle against the best in the world and to make our country proud, but that we return home with at least one medal”, he emphasised.

WorldSkills International (WSI) is an international skills competition for youth that is held in a different member country every two years. Competitors from 17 to 22 years old demonstrate their excellence in a number of different skilled trades and technology contest areas. Its mission is to promote, through the cooperative actions of members, a worldwide awareness of the essential contribution that skills and high standards of competence make to the achievement of economic success and individual achievement.

Through competitions held every two years, WSI attempts to raise awareness about opportunities that exist in skilled professions to encourage youth to explore such opportunities. The full Namibian delegation to WorldSkills São Paulo will be introduced at a media conference, which is to take place upon the competitors’ return from their preparations in South-Korea.

The 43rd WorldSkills Competition will take place at Anhembi Parque, São Paulo, Brazil, from 11 to 16 August 2015.

Greetings!

Numerous studies have been undertaken on the importance of Vocational Education and Training in the social and economic development of people and nations.

However, too many parents still continue to cherish the aspiration that their children will go to university. This intense desire to pursue an academic education generates unrealistic expectations and undue pressure on learners in schools. The consequence is a prejudice against, and less-than-positive image of VET, and all its negative associations with those who are less academic.

In reality, the greatest gaps in our country’s human resource development are in the technical and vocational skills domain. The expansion of VET opportunities will therefore, for the foreseeable future, remain a key strategic objective for the NTA and our partners. The completion of the Gobabis VTC in the Omaheke region is a welcome addition to our VET footprint and we look forward to it delivering competent, confident and entrepreneurial VET graduates in future.

Yours in Vocational Education and Training,

Jerry Beukes
Adelheid Aweses has been appointed as a member of the Board of Directors of the Namibia Training Authority. Aweses replaces Hila Nghiwete, who is the only member of the Board that has not been re-appointed to serve another three-year term. Loide Shaanika now takes over from Nghiwete, who served as Deputy Chairperson, during her tenure.

Board Chairperson, Otto Nakasole Shikongo welcomed Aweses’ appointment saying that she brings a wealth of experience that can only be of benefit to the Board of Directors, and the organisation at large.

Aweses holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Degree in Development Studies from the University of East Anglia, UK, as well as a Masters Degree in Rural Social Development from the University of Reading, United Kingdom.

She served as a Deputy Director of Rural Development in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (1990-1998) and subsequently worked as a gender consultant for the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome, Italy (1998-1999), and as Regional Food Security Coordinator for FAO (1999-2000) in Namibia.

Since, she has been consulting in the field of gender mainstreaming for various sectors and agencies. She is currently the Director of Planning and Development in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

She is also the co-chair of the Steering Committee of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All.

In her remarks, Annegret Al-Janabi, Counsellor for Development Cooperation at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, highlighted the importance of qualified and competent trainers in any VET system. Al-Janabi also emphasised the German government’s ongoing commitment to further support and fund the ongoing development of the Namibian VET system, through GIZ and the ProVET project.

On her part, the Managing Director of VeryCoolIdeas, a South African-based training institution that facilitated the course, Kim Dry-Courtois, encouraged the graduates to confidently apply their skills in their respective places of work.

The course covered the key areas of planning, delivery, assessment and moderation.

It is accredited in South Africa by the South African Qualifications Authority, and is as such recognised by the Namibia Qualifications Authority.

Moreover, it is competency-based and those who successfully completed it will now be able to deliver competency-based training.
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info@nta.com.na

FINAL TOUCHES: Workers taking care of final touches during an inspection visit to the newly constructed Gobabis VTC.

PROUD GRADUATES: OD-ETD graduates joining the Counsellor for Development Cooperation at the Embassy of Germany in Windhoek, Annegret Al-Janabi for a group photo.

BEAR VISIT: Members of the BEAR Project Implementation Team during a visit to NamWater HRDC outside Okahandja.

CERTIFIED TRAINER: Acting COO, Richwell Lukonga and Counsellor for Development Cooperation at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Windhoek, Annegret Al-Janabi joining a OD-ETD graduate for a photo.

READY FOR INTAKE: The Airconditioning and Refrigeration Training Workshop at the newly constructed GVTC.

PROUD FACILITATOR: VeryCoolIdeas MD, Kim Dry-Courtois, who facilitated the OD-ETD course smiling for the camera.

A NEW CROP OF CERTIFIED TRAINERS: OD-ETD graduates listening attentively at their graduation ceremony at NTA Village Hall.

BROTHERS IN VET ARMS: Manager: VET Standards, Sens Shoolongo and Manager: VET Programmes, Amon Haufiku attended the OD-ETD graduation.

THANK YOU: ProVET Intern, Dessy Tjozongoro getting a hug from a OD-ETD graduate for her kind assistance and support.

FINAL TOUCHES: The Electrical General workshop at the newly-constructed GVTC.
For any trainer, it is always very rewarding to connect with former trainees and witness the progress they are making in their careers.

**SH: Who is Titus Malangu?**

Without going into too much detail about my background, allow me only to say that I am an experienced and competent VET Manager, an individual passionate about the VET sector which I have served in various capacities for the greater part of my life, a humble servant of my people, and a devoted family man. I am the leader of Valombola VTC, which for years has been a leading local VET institution.

**SH: Tell us about your team?**

I am proud to lead a very dedicated and motivated team. Indeed, it is through their hard work, commitment and drive that VVTC continues to make a difference in the lives of Namibians, from all walks of life.

However, a team means nothing without teamwork! And teamwork is what we have at VVTC - A sense of unity and a sense of enthusiasm for common interests and responsibilities. Teamwork is the glue that keeps a team together, a bond that promotes strength, unity, reliability and support. Teamwork is also the oil that makes the team work. It enables us to move smoothly towards targets and sustain our forward momentum.

**SH: What makes your job rewarding?**

For any trainer, it is always very rewarding to connect with former trainees and witness the progress they are making in their careers.

**SH: Did you experience any challenges when you took over as Centre Head at VVTC?**

Yes, indeed. There was immense pressure on VVTC, from stakeholders, alumni and the broader community alike, to regain its proud reputation as a centre of excellence for vocational and technical training.

At the same time, we had to deal with demands to increase our trainee intake numbers, improve quality and improve our overall pass rate.

I am proud to say that we have made, and continue to make, steady inroads in this regard. We have, through in-house renovations involving our trainees, improved the old and dilapidated infrastructure. This has resulted in a strong sense of ownership amongst trainers and trainees alike. I am confident that the VVTC leadership, through focusing on our core business of training, will continue to drive our centre forward.

**SH: What is your message for our country’s VET trainers and trainees?**

It is important for our trainers to appreciate the key role they play in the VET value chain. The old adage that the quality of training will only be good if the trainer is of good quality is very true.

Our trainers should never lose sight of this consideration. In fact, it should drive them to do more for their trainees every day and ensure that we deliver empowered and skilled individuals for industry and the labour market.

In turn, our trainees should seek to develop a thorough understanding of the Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) system.

They need to understand the key elements of CBET in terms of its objectives; the role of the VET trainer; the responsibility of the trainees; unit standards to be attained; and how and when competencies will be assessed.

**SH: What is your message for our country’s VET trainers and trainees?**

It is very encouraging to find our former trainees visiting their alma mater to share their successes and motivating our current crop of trainees to put shoulder to the wheel.

I guess it is all about seeing the change skills development is making in the lives of people. Skills empower people. We need more skills to empower our nation!

**SH: How would you describe the relationship between VVTC and the NTA?**

The assistance and support we receive from the NTA have indeed been overwhelming. The NTA’s focus on improved governance and effective and efficient management is having the desired impact. VTCs, especially the respective management teams, now seem to appreciate the importance of sound stakeholder relations, especially with industry partners. The introduction of annual business plans has encouraged and motivated us to be more strategic and target-driven. We are now able to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact we are making towards improving our service offerings.

**SH: How would you describe the relationship between VVTC and the NTA?**

An improved understanding of the CBET concept will allow them to live up to key expectations and requirements.

**SH: Having worked in the training sector for such a long time, what are your views on the future of VET in Namibia?**

I am very positive about the future! However, in my opinion, there are a few things that we need to address to bring about a truly relevant VET regime for our country.

We need to invest more resources into ensuring a proper transition from the modular or traditional teaching approach to the CBET approach. Our trainers need to therefore have a solid grounding in CBET to support the change.

We need to be flexible and explore arrangements under which external experts employed by industry can supplement training at our centres on a part-time basis. We seem to be over-reliant on permanently appointed trainers, who sometimes have solid theoretical backgrounds, but lack relevant and recent industry experience.

We also need to be more aggressive when it comes to the upskilling and development of our trainers. Many of them are only being introduced to CBET now. Do they understand what it takes to deliver under CBET?

Other areas that require urgent attention include the development of training and learning resources; the development of attitudinal competencies critical for employment; the development of fit-for-purpose workplace learning programmes; articulation arrangements to support graduate mobility; and trainee records and tracer studies.

**SH: How would you describe the relationship between VVTC and the NTA?**

The Stakeholder, as part of a special focus on the leaders behind the VTCs, introduces the Centre Manager of the Valombola VTC in the Oshana region, Titus Malangu (photo), to our readers.
NIMT Trainees Restore Historical Alte Feste Steamtrain

The Namibia Institute for Mining and Technology (NIMT) is soon to re-introduce to the public, a steam train, which was brought into the country in 1904, and was kept at the Alte Feste Museum in the capital.

Funds for the renovation work had been donated by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany. Renovation work was done by trainees from NIMT’s Engineering Trades and Building and Civil Trades campus. The train consists out of a steam locomotive, a coal wagon, a passenger wagon, a general goods wagon and a cattle wagon.

NIMT Executive Director, Eckardt Mueller says it is still to be decided when the train will be relocated to Windhoek, but that stakeholders in the project decided that it be re-introduced to the public at a ceremony to take place at NIMT’s Arandis Campus, on the 18th of May 2015.

“The renovation work on the train had been very time-consuming as some sections had to be totally rebuilt. However, we are happy that we could complete this assignment and now hand over this historical train to the Namibian Government”, Mueller emphasised.

A Successful 7th UNESCO BEAR Project Workshop

In line with UNESCO’s Strategy for Technical, Vocational Educational and Training (TVET), Namibia was selected as one of five Southern African Development Community countries to receive technical support in curriculum development and capacity building from the Government of the Republic of Korea. As part of the project, named the Better Education for Africa’s Rise (BEAR), the Korea Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training (KRIVET) has been involved in capacity building for curriculum development on two qualifications nominated by the NTA, namely, Carpentry and Process Plant Operators.

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the relevance of TVET programmes to skills needs. In the capacity building phase, the specific objective is to enhance the VET system capacity to ensure the employability of graduates from formal VET programes in the construction sector.

A 7th BEAR Project Workshop was held at NTA Village last month and focussed on two major components of training institution management, namely the development of a management plan, and quality assurance monitoring and evaluation tools. The discussions centered around the adaptation of the Korean model for an institutional management plan to suit the requirements of local public and private vocational training institutions.

Participants from training institutions also extrapolated important aspects of the quality assurance tools and monitoring questionnaires, for the purpose of adapting them to their own circumstances.

ZAMBEZI VTC TO HOST 2015 VTC GAMES

The town of Katima Mulilo in the Zambezi region is to play host to the Annual Vocational Training Centre Games, this year.

Chairperson of the VTC Sports Union, Petrus Kosmas told The Stakeholder that the annual event, which was staged in the capital last year, has been growing from strength to strength.

“It only VTCs partook in the event last year, but the success of that event already attracted interests from other private institutions who seem very eager to also enter their teams”, Kosmas noted.

According to Kosmas, the staging and organisation of a successful event can go a long way in cementing the reputation of the VTCs as preferred providers of technical and vocational training services.

“It can also assist in leveraging the VTCs as training institutions that assign importance to both the rendering of quality training services and in creating an environment where balanced lifestyles are encouraged through participation in sport”, he added.

Teams are to participate in the following codes: Football (Men); Football (Ladies); Volleyball (Men); Volleyball (Ladies) and Netball. The event is to take place at the Katima Mulilo Sport Complex, in August.

A Successful 7th UNESCO BEAR Project Workshop

According to BEAR Project Coordinator, Veruschka McKay, participants found the comparisons with the Korean model very interesting. “Although the Korean model is very forward-thinking and the level of implementation is at a much higher level than applicable to the current Namibian environment, the fruitful discussions enabled the team to look at possible adaptations to suit the local context”, she explained.

Meanwhile, at a meeting with the KRIVET experts, the Head of the UNESCO Windhoek Office, Dr. Jean-Pierre Ilboudo extended on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, his gratitude to the Korean Government, for its contribution to the development of TVET in Namibia, and the SADC region. Ilboudo remarked that in many African countries, education policies were not addressing TVET adequately. “The new President of Namibia sees TVET as very important for this country to reach its Vision 2030 goals and the outcomes of the BEAR Project should assist not only Namibia, but the rest of the region to change policies regarding TVET and improve their TVET systems”, he noted.