Local trainers need to be equipped with what is required to make the VET sector responsive to national economic, social and political needs. The Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi said this at the Okakarara VTC graduation ceremony, staged at the Otjozondjupa town on the 23rd of September 2016.

Dr. Kandjii-Murangi stressed that a range of other factors exacerbated the shortage of competent and skilled trainers, including the low reputation of their profession and the fact that many trainers possess relatively low formal qualifications, severely affecting training delivery at higher qualification levels. “Furthermore, many trainers are inappropriately practically skilled, because of a training system that long emphasised theoretical knowledge, often not aligned with modern technology requirements, and which disregarded the importance of practical skills and appreciation of the world of work”, she highlighted.

The Minister also cited the increasingly multi-functional roles and responsibilities of trainers, which she noted have led to new learning approaches with greater autonomy for trainers for programme decisions and outreach to the world of work. “A wide range of countries now require significant non-academic work experience as part of the certification of trainers, in efforts to break down the divide between VET institutions and workplaces”, she noted.

Dr. Kandjii-Murangi also stressed that youth unemployment and new forms of work organisation were driving a renewed search for balanced skills development that responds more closely to real workplace needs. “This in turn creates a need for closer cooperation between industry, VET institutions, trainers and other stakeholders to come up with strategies through which we can bridge this divide”, she said.

CEO, Jerry Beukes, in a message delivered by General Manager: Information Technology, Tengovandu Kandetu, congratulated the trainees and encouraged them to embrace innovation as they enter the world of work as VET practitioners. “You are the future. You are the ones that carry our country’s aspirations to become an innovative nation. You are the innovators of tomorrow”, he said.

Level 3 certificates were awarded to trainees in the areas of Welding and Fabrication (31); Plumbing and Pipefitting (29); Office Administration (19); Auto Mechanics (24); Hospitality and Tourism (37); Bricklaying and Plastering (19); Hairdressing (13); Carpentry and Joinery (10); and Clothing Production (2).
Fruitful discussions at NTA Village on the 11th of October 2016 between the NTA and the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) of South Africa, may soon result in the formalisation of a partnership agreement between the two entities.

Elaborating on the good work the HWSETA was doing in her country’s health, social development and veterinary sectors, CEO, Yvonne Mbane said her organisation was keen to enter into a mutually beneficial partnership with the NTA. “Partnership with peer organisations in the broader SADC region is important to the HWSETA. Yes, we are eager to share our successes with others, but we equally value that we too can learn important lessons from our peers in neighbouring countries”, Mbane noted.

CEO, Jerry Beukes echoed his counterpart’s sentiments noting that the NTA appreciated the value that can be derived from cooperation with HWSETA. “As a relatively young organisation, the NTA stands to benefit immensely from the experience of a peer organisation such as HWSETA, especially as far as training levy disbursement and job attachment practices are concerned. I am positive that we soon can formalise a partnership”, he said.

HWSETA endeavours to create an integrated approach to the development and provision of appropriately skilled health and social development workers, to render quality services comparable to world-class standards.

Its broad strategic objectives include the development and implementation of sector skills plan; identification of workplaces for practical work experience; disbursement of training levies collected; forge links and partnerships with stakeholders and relevant bodies; and the promotion of the employment of disabled persons.

The widespread pursuit of collaborative relationships has become a significant trend in the international VET arena. The adage that two brains are better than one explains to an extent why many VET roleplayers explore and enter into such partnerships.

Recent visits to our headquarters by peer organisations from South Africa, Botswana and Finland, once again underlined this reality that partnerships with others can culminate in extensive and surprising results.

The NTA is still relatively young and stands to learn a lot from peers in the SADC region, and beyond.

However, while the NTA will continue to explore new partnerships with donors and peer organisations, we always need to ensure that such partnerships translate into meaningful cooperation towards a common goal and mutual benefits.

Partnerships are good. Meaningful partnerships are better, because the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts.

Yours in Vocational Education and Training,
Jerry Beukes
The NTA entered into a multi-partner agreement with the Namibia Water Corporation (NamWater), the Roads Contractor Company (RCC) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) towards the delivery of training in the area of Heavy Plant Operator.

The agreement was signed at a media conference at the NamWater Head Office on the 27th of September 2016.

CEO, Jerry Beukes, in a message delivered by Acting COQ, Richwell Lukonga, described the agreement as a meaningful step in advancing, strengthening and expanding the VET system to better serve the current and emerging local skills needs, especially in critical occupational areas, where serious shortages are experienced.

“One such skills area needed by industry, especially in the roads, logistics and mining sectors, is that of Heavy Plant Operators. It is an area that requires our immediate focus to grow the numbers of qualified Namibian operators. However, we are hampered in this regard, because currently, there are no registered institutions offering training in this field”, he explained.

On his part, NamWater CEO, Dr. Vaino Shivute welcomed the agreement, saying it can go a long way in addressing the pressing industry need for skilled Heavy Plant Operators.

“This partnership demonstrates how public institutions and donors can pull together and create synergy. Indeed, it will support us all in alleviating the shortage of qualified Heavy Plant Operators. NamWater is delighted to be a partner. This is certainly a step in the right direction”, he remarked.

Through the National Training Fund (NTF), the NTA will allocate N$148.8 million over the next two years for heavy plant, capital works and equipment, towards the total capital requirement of N$21.5 million to start Heavy Plant Operator training at the Namwater HRDC, outside Okahandja.

The NTA will also provide funding for the annual operational costs to train at least twenty Heavy Plant Operator students to NQA Level 3, as guided by the unit costs, which currently stands at about N$60,000 per trainee.

Furthermore, the NTA will support overall implementation in terms of quality assurance; the review of unit standards and qualifications; and assessment and certification services.

NamWater will be responsible for the delivery of Heavy Plant Operator training and provision of all support, technical and training services to successfully deliver the training course, which stand to benefit from the already established infrastructure, administrative and management services at the Namwater HRDC.

In addition, NamWater will invest in the construction of a practical training area (roads and pit), which completion is anticipated by the end of this year.

In turn, the RCC will donate heavy plant equipment, which include machinery deemed critical for training delivery, including a front-end loader, dozer, excavator, tipper truck, backhoe loader and a water trailer. While relatively old, the machinery will also support overall training delivery in other key aspects, especially as machinery repairs, is concerned.

The RCC will also avail a fully equipped workshop in Windhoek, one qualified diesel-mechanic and one work-hand to execute the necessary repairs on the machinery.

GIZ is to avail funding to ensure training delivery starts in the first quarter of 2017.

The funding will be used to procure two machines critical to the start-up, namely a Tipper Truck and a Tractor Loader Backhoe (TLB), either refurbished or new.

GIZ is also to provide advisory support services through the ProVET team (e.g. quality assurance, coordination, training provider support etc.), as well as recruit the services of a technical expert for the NamWater HRDC to provide hands-on support towards implementation.

An intake of at least 20 Namibians is anticipated for the three-year training course in March 2017. A second intake will take place once trainees under the first intake are on industry placements. Senior officials from all four organisations are to be appointed to serve on a Joint Heavy Plant Operator Task Team, tasked to ensure the effective implementation of the agreement.

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The NTA, in partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) inaugurated one of five Etango Solar Projects at the Windhoek Vocational Training Centre (WVTC) on the 07th of October 2016.

The Etango Solar Project is aimed at the development and implementation of training programmes in the area of renewable energy and consists of a small wooden structure with a photovoltaic and solar warm water system installed on the roof. Local VET trainers, trainees and industry participants took part in the building of the structure and the installation of the solar systems.

Officiating at the inauguration, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Christian Schlaga, emphasised the need for local expertise in the manufacturing, installation and maintenance of solar energy equipment and accessories in Namibia. “The German government will continue to support the development of Namibia’s VET sector. I commend our joint Promotion of Vocational Education and Training (ProVET) Project for this initiative, because it promotes the use of Namibia’s abundant sunlight in sustainable development”, he noted.

In a message delivered on his behalf by the General Manager: IT, Tengovandu Kandetu, CEO Jerry Beukes, commended the ProVET Project for its support towards the development of Solar Installation and Maintenance qualifications. “We have submitted these qualifications, which are in high demand by our local industry and business stakeholders, for registration to the Namibia Qualifications Authority. Registration on the National Qualifications Framework is imminent and rollout to adequately resourced training institutions will then start in earnest”, he remarked.

Etango projects have also been set up at the Valombola Vocational Training Centre (Oshana), Rundu Vocational Training Centre (Kavango-East), Eenhana Vocational Training Centre (Ohangwena) and Namibia Institute of Mining and Technology Arandis (Erongo).

“Etango” means “sun” in Oshiwambo.

A delegation of the Human Resource Development Council of Botswana (Botswana HRDC) paid a benchmarking visit to the NTA on the 13th of October 2016.

The purpose of the visit was to consider and evaluate the Namibian experience in benchmarking the development and planning processes of the Botswana HRDC and that country’s National Human Resource Development Plan.

Sharing the plan’s key aspects, focus areas and challenges since its implementation started in 2010, Botswana HRDC CEO, Dr. Raphael Dingalo, highlighted the importance of establishing a relevant and fit-for-purpose national education system.

“Implementation comes with challenges and we have had our fair share. However, we appreciate that we can learn from our SADC neighbours and that is why we are paying this benchmarking visit to the NTA”, he explained.

On his part, CEO, Jerry Beukes told the delegation that “the NTA is not yet where we want it to be, but we continue to work hard and we have indeed made tremendous progress”.

The Botswana HRDC was established through the Human Resource Development Council Act of 2013 by the Government of Botswana and became operational on the 8th of November 2013.

Its National Human Resource Development Plan’s overall objective is to address issues related to skills development and promote the optimal use of labour as a critical component of sustainable economic growth.

The High Commission of Botswana facilitated the visit.
PICTURE FOCUS
From Around & About the VET Scene

VET Veterans
Curriculum Implementation Manager, Ernst Eixab, WVTC Trustee, Alberta Heita and NIMT Executive Director, Eckhard Mueller pictured at the Etango Solar Project ceremony at the Windhoek VTC.

Questions Please
Health & Social ISC Chair, Evelyn Breuer also participated in the recent discussions with the HWSETA (RSA).

Congratulations
Senior Assessment Officer, Samuel Ujaha congratulating a trainee at the recent Okakarara VTC graduation ceremony.

Pen to Paper
NamWater CEO, Dr. Vaino Shivute signing the Heavy Plant Operator Implementation Agreement.

VET Culture
A Windhoek VTC Cultural Group performed at the recent Etango Solar Project inauguration ceremony at the centre.

Education Leaders
Dr. Fernando Siamisang and Dr. Raphael Dingalo of the Botswana HRDC listening attentively to a presentation during a recent benchmarking visit to NTA Village.

Guest of Honour
Ambassador, Christian Schlaga and Windhoek VTC Principal, Paulus Haukongo arrive at the Etango Solar Project ceremony.

Proud Moment
Okakarara VTC Manager, Penson Mootu pictured with a proud OVTC trainee at the recent graduation ceremony.

Etango means Sun
Trainee and trainer participants in the Etango Solar Project at the Windhoek VTC posing for a picture after the end of inauguration ceremony.

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The Namibia Training Authority (NTA) endeavours to become Namibia’s port of call for vocational skills! through the sustainable facilitation of training and related services provision, organizational effectiveness, funding, regulation, the administration of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Levy, and stakeholder engagement and communication.

The NTA develops and maintains competence-based training curricula, training manuals and training delivery guides. The NTA is currently in the process of developing training manuals for the following occupations:

1. Postal Services;
2. Hospitality; and
3. Tourist Guiding.

It is against this background that the NTA is inviting suitable candidates to write training manuals for the abovementioned occupations. Interested persons should meet the following requirements:

1. Relevant tertiary qualifications in any of the above occupations;
2. Proven record of experience in material development;
3. Sound research skills and analytical abilities;
4. Good writing, reading and comprehension skills;
5. Computer literate;
6. Sound planning, organising and managing ability of own work, time, meetings, schedules etc.;
7. Good presentation and communication skills; and
8. An understanding of learning methodologies.

Interested persons should submit a comprehensive CV and proof of relevant qualifications to:

NTA VET Standards Division
P.O. Box 70407, Khomasdal, Windhoek
Rand Street, Khomasdal, Windhoek

Closing Date: 11 November 2016

Enquiries:
Kristofina Junias
Tel: (061) 2078 655 Fax: (061) 2078551
Email: kjunias@nta.com.na

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FINISH DELEGATION VISITS NTA

A Finnish delegation, headed by the Deputy Head of Mission of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Elisabet Kivimäki paid a visit to the NTA on the 04th of October 2016.

The delegation comprised of lecturers from different universities in Finland and the visit was aimed at introducing the various universities and to explore possible collaboration and partnership with the NTA.

CEO, Jerry Beukes briefed the delegation on the NTA’s mandate, strategic initiatives, achievements and challenges, while the Finnish team shared information on their education system and the different training programmes on offer at their universities.

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3. Tourist Guiding.

3. Tourist Guiding.

2. Hospitality; and

1. Postal Services;

Fieldwork and communication skills; and

The presentations were followed by discussions on the different education systems and models of the two countries and how Finland, through its local Embassy, can render support to the NTA.

Beukes also informed the delegation about the negative perception Namibian communities hold of VET careers as a second option to academic career paths. “VET in Namibia continues to suffer as a result of this unfair stereotyping. However, the NTA remains committed to the youth and we will continue to do our utmost to attract them to the VET sector”, he noted. The presentations were followed by discussions on the different education systems and models of the two countries and how Finland, through its local Embassy, can render support to the NTA.

In vi ta tion

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STAKEHOLDER DIARY

- 31 October 2016
  National Training Fund Council (NTFC) Meeting, Windhoek

- 02 November 2016
  Board Technical Committee Meeting, Windhoek

- 04 November 2016
  Board Finance Committee Meeting, Windhoek

- 07 November 2016
  Board Human Resources Committee Meeting, Windhoek

- 06 December 2016
  Board of Directors Meeting, Windhoek

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