

VOTE 11: NATIONAL COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

The mandate of the Vote

The National Council, as the House of Review of the Namibian Parliament, has as its main mandate, the power to review and report on the Bills passed by the National Assembly on matters referred to it for that purpose and recommend legislation on matters of regional concern and exercise oversight functions. The mandate is delivered from Article 68 of the Constitution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE VOTE

Achievements 2014/15

Legislative Support Services

- The National Council held its Second Regional Session in Keetmanshoop, //Karas Region. The Session was preceded by community meetings as well as discussion forums aimed at increasing public participation in the law-making process.
- During the 2014/2015 financial year the National Council passed 9 Bills of which 3 were passed with amendments. A total of 9 reports were also tabled for discussion.
- The Office of the Chairperson conducted outreach activities in the Kavango West and East Regions from 21 June 2014 to 03 July 2014. The following constituencies were visited; Mpungu, Kahenge, Kapako Constituencies in Kavango West Region and Rundu and Mukwe Constituencies in the Kavango East Region
- The main objectives of the outreach was to consult Traditional Authorities on issues affecting the communities and to educate the communities about the law-making process.
- Also, the National Council also participated in 9 trade fairs whereby 10 000 people visited the Parliament stand.

The main objectives of the Vote

The main objective of the vote is to enable Parliament – National Council to fulfil its constitutional function.

Overall vote actual performance

During the 2014/15 financial year, the National Council had an allocation of N\$93 496 000 for the operational budget of which an amount of N\$80 924 290 was, equating 87%. Further, an allocation of N\$10 000 000 was for the development budget of which N\$9 860 045 was spend, equating 99%.

Breakdown \ Year	2014/15	
	N\$	
	Estimate	Actual
Operational Budget	93 496 000	80 924 054
Development Budget	10 000 000	9 860 045
Development Partners	0	0
Total	103 496 000	90 784 099

Overview of the ministerial targets

Name of the Ministerial Targets	2013/14 Actual	2013/14-2015/16 Target	2014/15 Forecast	2014/2015 Actual
Increase in the level of public participation in the law-making process to 75% by 2015/16	51%	75%	75%	62%
Two (2) National Council Sessions to be held in the regions during the period of 2014-2017 financial years.	0	2	1	1
Increase the number of follow up on the implementation of Standing Committees recommendations by the Executive to 65% by 2017/18	4%	65%	55%	32%

Targets:

Target 1: Increase in the level of public participation in the law-making process to 75% by 2015/16

Within the context of public participation, this provision allows the regional representative in the National Council an opportunity to be part of any regional meetings, thereby creating an opportunity for both the constituents, councillors and other interested parties to interact with their representative in the National Council during outreach and public hearings. In total the National Council Standing Committees conducted 78 oversight related activities and public hearings in all 14 regions. Nine (9) Bills were passed, 3 with amendments and 6 without amendments. 9 Reports were of oversight related activities were also tabled and considered by the House. The National Council also participated in 9 trade fairs whereby 10 000 people visited the Parliament stand.

Target 2: Two (2) National Council Sessions to be held in the regions during the period of 2014-2017 financial years.

The National Council held its second Regional Session in Keetmanshoop in the //Karas Region. Several activities like community meetings and discussion forums were also held. The regional sessions created an opportunity for the public to actively participate in the law-making process, and to interact with their representatives (MPs).

Target 3: Increase the number of follow up on the implementation of Standing Committees recommendations by the Executive to 65% by 2017/18

78 Oversight and public hearings were conducted by the Standing Committees. 61 responses on the queries and recommendations made were received and reviewed. Further follow ups were also conducted in some cases.

Effectiveness

Programme have made significant achievement however some still have limited knowledge about the National Council and its mandate.

Efficiency:

It was noted that some people do not know the difference between the Lower and the Upper House. More need to be done to ensure the people understand.

Impacts:

The target groups are using the output of the programme minimally – to increase their knowledge and is not intended to change their living conditions.

Program activities description

*P-Cod e	Program me Name	*A-Cod e	Activity	*MD in Charg e	2014/15		
					Estimate	Actual	Execution rate (%)
01	Legislative Support Services	01-01	Strengthen capacity of review and oversight	MD01	12,809,000	11,842,908	92.46
		01-01	Parliamentary coordination and support services	MD02	90,687,000	78,941,191	87.05
Sub-Total					103,496,000.00	90,784,099.90	87.05
Vote-Total					103,496,000.00	90,784,099.09	87.05

Programme description: Legislative Support Services

Programme objective

- To enhance public participation in the law making process;
- To strengthen the review and oversight function of the National Council.
- Ensure an enabling environment and higher performance culture

Main activities

- Strengthen capacity of review and oversight function;
- Improve parliamentary coordination and support services.
- Provide political leadership and strategic direction to the House.
- Promote inter-parliamentary cooperation.

Main output to achieve Ministerial target in the reporting year

- Enhanced capacity of the National Council Members to participate in the legislative process;
- Efficient and effective management of legislation in the National Council;
- Strengthened parliamentary relations
- Conducive and secure working environment for staff and MPs

Achievements

- During the period under review, the National Council passed 9 Bills.
- Out of all the reviewed Bills, 3 were passed with amendments: 9 Reports were also tabled, discussed and agreed to.
- The National Council held its Second Regional Session in Keetmanshoop, //Karas Region.
- 78 Oversight related visits and activities were carried out.
- All recommendations made in the various reports were forwarded to the line Ministries for their consideration and implementation.

Challenges

- The shortage of support staff is a challenge, as oversight of the effectiveness and efficiency of budgetary and policy matters requires expertise that is unavailable to the National Council;
- Unexpected cancellation of planned activities;

EXPENDITURE FROM CONTINGENCY 2014/15

None

EXPENDITURE BY STANDARD ITEMS

Breakdown \ Year	2014/2015	
	Estimate	Actual
Personnel Expenditure	45,224,000	36,807,356
Goods and Other Services	29,643,000	30,232,787
Subsidies and Other Current Transfers	11,133,000	10,829,524
Acquisition of Capital Assets(Operational)	7,496,000	3,054,388
Capital Transfers (Operational)		
Operational Budget	93,496,000	80,924,055
Operational Capital		
Acquisition of Capital Assets (Development)		
Capital Transfers (Development)		
Development Budget	10,000,000	9,860,045
Total State Revenue Fund Appropriation	103,496,000	90,784,100
Development Partners		

Explanation of variances

The average utilization of budgetary allocation in 2014/2015 financial year was 93%:

- Operational Budget expenditure was 87%
- Development Budget 99%.

The main contributor to the saving during the period under review was the budgetary allocation to the personnel expenditure. The saving occurred as a result of staff turnover and the unfilled vacancies on the establishment because of difficulty to fill vacant positions.

In addition, the funded positions for Members of Parliament who became Deputy Ministers and whose personnel expenditure remained on the Vote. The other contributing factor is that invoices for transport related activities did not reach the institution on time and funds provided for the maintenance of the building was not utilised due to lengthy processes.

Non-Tax Revenue

Revenue Source	Year	2014/15		
		Estimate	Actual	Variance %
Private telephone calls		500	143	(71)
Miscellaneous		50,000	29,497	(41)
Total		50,500	29,640	-41

Private Telephone Calls: The introduction of credit limits at the National Council led to reduce income in this regard however, the National Council made provision to recover any excess usage. During the period under review the National Council received N\$143.00 in this regard.

Miscellaneous: The National Council for the financial year 2014/15 estimates to generate N\$50,000.00 from collection of outstanding debts payment/balances from previous financial years.

During the year under review the National Council collected only 59% of the projected amount.

HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY

No. of Staff	2014/15
Approved	120
Funded	106

SUMMARY OF MOVABLE ASSETS

Furniture and equipment

The National Council Stock Tacking Report for 2014/15 financial year did not reflect any worn and damage items.

During the year under review there were no obsolete and redundant items.

Vehicles

The National Council does not run its own transport fleet.