MCA Namibia Education Project Description

April 2009

The MCA Namibia Programme is funded by the US Government through the Millennium Challenge Corporation
Table of Contents

1. Introduction 4
2. Project Description & Cost 6
3. Activity 1: Improving the quality of general education 7
   Sub-Activity 1: Expansion and upgrading of 47 general education schools 7
   Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance to improve school maintenance & administration 8
   Sub-Activity 3: Equipment for Colleges of Education (CoEs) 9
4. Activity 2: Improving access to and management of textbooks 9
   Sub-Activity 1: Baseline Study of Textbook needs 11
   Sub-Activity 2: Procurement of English, mathematics and science books 11
   Sub-Activity 3: Textbook management training 12
5. Activity 3: Investment in construction and management of Regional Study and Resource Centres 12
   Sub-Activity 1: Construction of 3 Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs) 13
   Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance and training for RSRCs 13
6. Activity 4: Expanding vocational and skills training 14
   Sub-Activity 1: Improvement and expansion of Namibia’s network of COSDECs 15
   Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance to establish a National Training Fund 17
   Sub-Activity 3: Competitive grants for high-priority vocational training programmes 17
7. Activity 5: Expanding and improving access to tertiary finance 18

Annex 1: Project Locations 21
Annex 2: Summary of MCC Environmental & Social Assessment for Education Project 22
Abbreviations

AEC  Annual Education Census
AIDS  Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CIF   Compact Implementation Funding
CLDC  Community Learning and Development Centre
COE   College of Education
COSDEC Community Skills Development Centres
COSDEF Community Skills Development Foundation
EIA   Environmental Impact Assessment
EMIS  Education Management Information System
EMP   Environmental Management Plan
ESA   Environmental and Social Assessment
ETSIP Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
GDP   Gross Domestic Product
GRN   Government of the Republic of Namibia
HAMU  HIV/AIDS Management Unit
HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LSM   Learning Support Materials
MCA   Millennium Challenge Account
MCC   Millennium Challenge Corporation
MoE   Ministry of Education
NCA   Northern Communal Areas
NSFAF  Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund
NTA   Namibia Training Authority
NTDB  National Textbook Development Board
NTF   National Training Fund
RSRC  Regional Study and Resource Centre
SCMU  Supply Chain Management Unit
SDF   School Development Fund
VET   Vocational Education and Training
VTC   Vocational Training Centre

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I. Introduction

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Namibia Compact, providing grant funding for public investments in Education, Tourism and Agriculture (livestock and indigenous natural products), was signed on 28 July 2008 between the Republic of Namibia and the US Government, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). An amount of US$304.5 million will be available for development in the target sectors, over and above current Government allocations and assistance from other development partners.

MCA Namibia, which is a programme implementation unit working under the auspices of the National Planning Commission, is implementing the Programme (www.mca.gov.na).

The Tourism Project seeks to bring the conservancies in high potential tourism areas into the mainstream of the tourism business, increasing the financial and in-kind benefits to rural conservancy members. Internationally-acknowledged best practice models for community-based tourism and community-based natural resource management underpin the Tourism Project. This is the first time in MCC history that a country programme includes tourism, acknowledging the sector’s tremendous poverty alleviating potential in conservancy areas. The Etosha National Park will serve as a model for increased participation by the adjacent conservancies. The MCA Namibia Tourism Project will facilitate access to the Park for the conservancies around it through exclusive access concessions, to be awarded through the 2007 Concession Policy.

The Livestock Activity seeks to bring the marketing opportunities for farmers who live north of the Veterinary Cordon Fence closer to the opportunities farmers enjoy south of the Fence. The focus will be on improving veterinary services aimed at obtaining animal disease-free status for the Northern Communal Areas (NCA) in order to gain access to international markets. The accompanying public investment in rangeland management will improve access to grazing and farming practices. The overall objective is to increase the farmers’ cash income derived from livestock and smallstock farming in the NCA.

Increasing direct participation of the primary producers in the processes of value addition to raw, natural products such as Marula, Kalahari Melon Seed, Hoodia, Devil’s Claw and Ximenia is the key objective of the Indigenous Natural Products Activity. The value chain approach that the MCA Namibia Programme has adopted will ensure that the activities are responsive to the fast-changing market realities for natural products. At present, most of the revenue from selling products made of these valuable commodities is generated outside Namibia. The MCA Namibia Programme will facilitate an increased participation by the primary producers in the final processing, packaging and marketing of these products.
In **Education**, the Programme seeks to bring the quality of the work force closer to the requirements of industry and the labour market at large. This is in line with the aspirations of Vision 2030 and the 3rd National Development Plan’s strategic objective for “productive and competitive human resource and institutions”; whose values informed the programming, content and activities of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). ETSIP was developed in collaboration with a number of bilateral and multilateral governments/donors/partners. Among the major bilateral partners supporting the implementation of ETSIP is the Government of United States of America whose support to ETSIP implementation is being executed by the Millennium Challenge Corporation. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) was established in January 2004 as a United States Government Corporation to implement the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). MCC’s mission is to reduce poverty by supporting sustainable, transformative economic growth in developing countries, which create and maintain sound policy environments. MCC is designed to support innovative strategies and to ensure accountability. The MCC will thus be a party to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Namibia and governments and donor communities supporting the implementation of ETSIP and will be party to the ETSIP Annual Review Meeting hosted by the Ministry of Education.

The MCA Namibia Education Project contributes to Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). It aims to improve the competency and knowledge of young Namibians by supporting new and innovative methods of learning in addition to the more traditional approaches to education and improve physical infrastructure for learning and teaching in schools, regional study and resource centres and Community Based Skills Development Centres. Reference is made to Annex 1 for the project locations.

ETSIP represents the education and training sector’s response to the call of Vision 2030. Its key purpose is to substantially enhance the sector’s contribution to the attainment of strategic national development goals, and to facilitate the transition to a knowledge based economy. In the immediate future, it will improve the quality, range and threshold of skilled labour required to improve knowledge-driven productivity growth, and thus contribute to economic growth. By adopting a pro-poor approach to the distribution of opportunities for high quality and market-responsive education and training opportunities, ETSIP will contribute directly to the attainment of equitable social development by addressing sector weaknesses, among others; (a) low quality and effectiveness as evidenced in low student learning outcomes; (b) low efficiency in the use of available resources; (c) persisting inequalities in the distribution of education input and outcomes; (d) low capacity for knowledge creation and application; and (c) doubtful development and market relevance. In addition, diverse studies identified (a) inadequate financial resources; (b) low system delivery capacity, and (c) HIV and AIDS as key constraints to the transformation of the education and training system into an effective tool for supporting development.

The first phase of ETSIP will focus on strengthening of the immediate supply of middle to high level skilled labour to meet labour market demands and support overall national development goals. Such supply of labour is critical for improving not only the overall productivity, but higher value-added productivity. The MCA-Namibia programme will assist the country to realise these objectives.
For ease and feasibility of implementation, ETSIP is phased into three five-year cycles, with the first cycle spanning 2006/07 to 2010/11- (now extended to 2013), which coincides with the 3rd National Development Plan. It is a comprehensive sector-wide programme that covers: (i) early childhood development and pre-primary education, (ii) general education, (iii) vocational education and training, (iv) tertiary education and training, (v) knowledge and innovation, and (vi) information, adult and lifelong learning.

In response to immediate needs, the first phase of ETSIP will focus on strengthening of the immediate supply of middle to high level skilled labour to meet labour market demands and support overall national development goals. Strengthening labour supply is critical for poverty reduction and redressing social inequalities, immediate objectives of the MCA Namibia Programme.

II. Project description and cost

The MCA Namibia Programme intends to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of Namibia’s education sector through systemic reforms and critical interventions that are consistent with the objectives of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). In particular, MCC funding will be used to improve the quality of education and training and access for under-served groups thereby enhancing the quality of the labour force increasing (self-) employment perspectives of many young people in Namibia.

The Education Project comprises of the following activities:

1. Improving the quality of general education;
2. Improving access to and management of textbooks;
3. Investment in construction and management of Regional Study and Resource Centres;
4. Expanding vocational and skills training; and
5. Expanding and improving access to tertiary education finance.

As cross-project support, the MCA Namibia Programme will contribute to the management and prevention of HIV and AIDS in the education sector by supporting the HIV/AIDS Management Unit (HAMU) in the Ministry of Education (MoE).

### Education Project Budget (in US$ million)

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<th>Activity</th>
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<th>Y2</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Y4</th>
<th>Y5</th>
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### Activity 1: Improving the quality of general education

This Activity involves the rehabilitation and innovation of school infrastructure, including teacher housing and equipment, in approximately 47 primary and secondary schools, and the funding of training programmes for school managers, administrators and teachers. The aim is to improve the quality of education at primary, junior secondary and senior-secondary schools, mainly in the underserved Northern Communal Areas (NCA), and to increase the number of students who proceed to senior secondary education.

The MCA Namibia Programme support will be directed towards improving the quality of education through:

(i) Expanding and renovating up to 47 general education schools in 9 of the 13 political/administrative regions;

(ii) Providing technical assistance for the production of training materials based on the MoE “Minor Maintenance Policy” and training to improve school maintenance and enhancing school administration at regional and local levels;

(iii) Providing policy, operational and administrative support for both general schools and the teacher training colleges (equipment and training in textbook and learning resource management and utilisation).

The MCA Namibia Programme will address dimensions of poor quality of infrastructure and equipment, overcrowding and lack of places at schools, repetition and difficulty in attracting well-qualified teachers to isolated schools.

**Sub-Activity 1: Expansion and upgrading of 47 general education schools**

Due to the fact that a majority of general education schools within the NCA are increasingly providing both primary and secondary education (“combined” schools), there is currently extensive overcrowding and shortage of space, particularly for senior secondary students (grades 11 and 12). The rudimentary physical condition of a number of the schools is negatively influencing the quality of and access to general education in these regions.
The MCA Namibia Programme will effect infrastructure improvements at up to 47 schools of which, among others, specific improvements would include:

(i) Construction of additional classrooms,
(ii) Addition of teacher hostels (at selected rural schools);
(iii) Repair of dilapidated walls, flooring, and roofing;
(iv) The addition of facilities including libraries, administrative blocks, and science laboratories; and
(v) The provision of water supply, sanitation, and electricity access.

The schools are selected through the ETSIP’s “needs pyramid”, which incorporates criteria such as the number of temporary classrooms in use and number of children of school-going age in the area who are not enrolled in school. Of the 47 schools, 35 schools are seeking to relieve overcrowding, 12 to expand in order to introduce senior secondary education, 26 to have conventional housing facilities for teachers, 34 to have adequate toilet facilities for girls and 17 to have electricity connection and 6 to get potable water. At the majority of the schools, both the primary and secondary grade repetition rates are above the national average of 17.8%. Given that a sizeable percentage of teachers within these schools have achieved standard qualification benchmarks (to a satisfactory level), the poor quality of the school conditions influences the high repetition rates.

All construction works for 47 schools will take place on existing school sites, with the exception of a few teacher housing construction sites that may require limited extensions and expansions to areas outside the existing school sites. As such, no full EIA is required but MCA Namibia will undertake a broader Environmental and Social Assessments Framework (ESAF) and detailed sited specific Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to ensure the mitigation of the identified potential environmental impacts. In addition, public health and safety plans which include sections on (1) public health and safety, (2) HIV / AIDS awareness and prevention, and (3) public consultation for each of the general school’s construction sites will be developed to ensure the safety of workers, learners and local stakeholders.

The MCA Namibia Programme will see to the effective implementation of these activities at the 47 schools, while ensuring that as part of the Compact provision, the public health and safety, HIV / AIDS awareness and prevention, and public consultation plans related to the Education Project construction activities are developed and their implementation is supervised by the designing and supervising consultant. The constructions contractors will be responsible to implement these plans in accordance with each works contract for construction activities.

**Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance to improve school maintenance and administration**

The MoE “Minor maintenance Policy”, though well circulated, it is not widely applied by schools as there has been insufficient training with respect to appropriate procedures for the implementation of the policy. Such technical assistance is to assist the MoE to improve the use of School Development Funds (“SDF”) for local, small maintenance needs, prepare
The MCA Namibia Programme includes a technical assistance and training package aimed at:

- **Reforms to the current “Minor Maintenance Policy” and assistance with policy implementation;**
- **Enhancing management and leadership skills for school administrators; and**
- **Support for a public expenditure tracking survey.**

The training component will involve the training of managers at each school, and the establishment of a monitoring system under the control of inspectors. Following this higher-level training exercise, the managers and inspectors will then conduct separate trainings at the school-level, and will also facilitate the development of school-level maintenance plans.

**Sub-Activity 3: Equipment for Colleges of Education (CoEs)**

This sub-activity focuses on providing equipment to improve institutional capacity. A key complementary activity to upgrading primary and secondary schools is the enhancement of training quality for the teachers of general education (Grades 1-12). The procurement of equipment for computer education, laboratories, classroom furniture, communication and other specialized equipment will help to enhance learning in the Rundu, Caprivi and Ongwediva colleges of education and the Science Education Section of the UNAM Faculty of Education, to ensure these institutions are fully equipped to contribute to good quality science education graduates and teachers.

In complementing this sub-activity, the MoE will continue furthering national and ETSIP-supported reforms related to restructuring of teacher education as informed by various studies and as found appropriate within the ETSIP reform.

**Activity 2: Improving access to and management of textbooks**

Shortages of books and instructional materials are prevalent in Namibian primary and secondary schools. The current textbook system fails in many ways due to a lack of transparent procurements, ineffective distribution whereby textbooks never reach schools or are damaged due to improper storage methods, and inadequate shortage and protection of books for students. Moreover, some teachers do not use textbooks while teaching or have been improperly trained in how to effectively use textbooks in the classroom, which contributes continuously to lower levels of student learning.

A priority component within the ETSIP Phase I strategic objective of improving system quality and relevance is “improving the access to and procurement and distribution of textbooks for general education in Namibia”. Accordingly, this activity focuses on upgrading access to and management of textbooks through operational support and reforms to establish more transparent, competitive acquisition processes for new textbooks, as well as ensuring adequate distribution and management procedures. More specifically, this...
includes funding the acquisition of English, mathematics and science textbooks for grades 5-12 on a national level, improving classroom use of textbooks, addressing resource gaps and piloting an improved textbook acquisition plan. Finally, a system for monitoring of textbook supply and demand including a textbook baseline study will be implemented.

For grades 5-7, a survey of 13 primary schools found that textbook to learner ratios for core subjects of English, mathematics and science averaged nearly 1 textbook to 5 students.

Examples of the inefficiencies in textbook procurement and distribution steps include:

(i) Core textbooks often achieve ratios of between 1:1 and 1:4 but inequities in the procurement and distribution systems leave entire streams in some schools without any textbooks at all and encourage corruption, diminished transparency and reduces competition in the procurement and supply processes; and

(ii) Many Namibian teachers have become accustomed to teaching without textbooks and many do not utilize textbooks properly, despite the very substantial investments made in textbook procurement and supply over the past few years.

Acknowledging that there are widespread problems with the procurement, distribution/delivery, management, classroom use and storage of textbooks, the GRN, with the input of development partners including MCC, has adopted a new National Textbook Policy. The goal of the new policy is to “effectively and efficiently plan and manage the national selection, provision and distribution of textbooks and other Learning Support Materials (LSMs), so as to achieve the highest standards, best value and equity in the selection, procurement and delivery of all LSMS, to assist and facilitate quality learning across the curriculum for the benefit of all learners and teachers.” Select policy objectives to be addressed and effected alongside the MCA Namibia support include the establishment of a National Textbook Development Board (NTDB), creation of a Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU) within the MOE Directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance, reforms to the tendering and contracting of textbook distributors, and use of enrollment data and a standardized formula to calculate per-school financial allocations for textbooks.

ETSIP is spearheading the initiative to reform textbook development, acquisition, distribution, and utilisation management.

In support of this initiative, the MCA Namibia Programme will support a sequence of investments which are tailored to the distinct stages of system reform and policy implementation activities. Accordingly, activities to be undertaken include:

(i) A baseline study of textbook needs across Namibia’s general education schools;

(ii) 3 tranches of textbooks procurements, with the latter 2 procured and distributed in line with reformed processes resulting from the Textbook Policy; and


2 Cabinet approval in April 2008.
(iii) Technical assistance to support improved management and classroom use of textbooks by teachers.

Students in grades 5-12 will benefit from an improved textbook to student ratio, of 1 textbook per student, for all core subjects. In addition, as a result of the reform in textbook distribution, learners in grades 1-4 will have higher textbook-student ratios for vernacular readers, as well as other core subjects. This Activity will have a significant impact on improved quality of education, reduced failure rates, and improved examination results in these subjects which are critical to successful further studies.

The MOE as informed by the Textbook Baseline Study is to furnish storage facilities including metal book boxes in schools that were found not having such, to ensure that books to be delivered can be safely kept, managed and utilized by school management, teachers and learners.

This Activity, complemented by the effective implementation of the Textbook Policy will, in fact, yield greater transparency and accountability in the procurement, acquisition, distribution, and utilization of textbooks.

**Sub-Activity 1: Baseline study of textbook needs**

According to statistics on the number of textbooks procured and distributed within Namibia in recent years, the learner to textbook ratio in Namibian schools should reflect a ratio of 1 textbook per 1 or 2 learners on average. However, various informal surveys (including a field survey conducted by an MCC textbook consultant), indicate that inefficiencies in the procurement and distribution systems for textbooks leave certain grade levels missing textbooks in various subjects, in addition to low textbook to learner ratios for core subjects.

The MCA Namibia Programme will support an assessment of the current textbook distribution and outstanding needs across all general education schools in Namibia, within all subjects for grades 5-12. Importantly, the results of this initial study will be used to inform the textbook purchases to be supported with MCC funds during the life of the Compact. Typically data on the number of textbooks at each school are collected as part of the Annual Education Census (AEC) from each school and reported in the MOE Education Management Information System (EMIS) system.

To ascertain the accuracy of this counting, recording, and reporting process, MCA Namibia will conduct a baseline study of the actual textbook allocations for the select subjects, and to review the current data collection and reporting system. In addition providing comprehensive and up-to-date textbook counts, this exercise will assist in establishing processes for reliable school-level data collection and reporting, and will facilitate the efforts of EMIS staff to conduct data entry and keep the national EMIS system informed.

**Sub-Activity 2: Procurement of English, mathematics and science textbooks**

The objective of this sub-activity is to achieve a ratio of one textbook per student in key subjects of English, mathematics and science, for all Grade 5-12 students in Namibia. Over the term of the Compact, an estimated 391,155 students will receive new textbooks at this enhanced textbook to student ratio. To achieve these goals, MCC funding will support 3
tranches of textbook procurements, and notably will enable the first demonstration of the new textbook policy guidelines and procedures.

MoE’s current textbook acquisition cycle covers the five year period from 2006-2011 now extended to 2013. Due to the start-up time required for the MoE to develop the new institutions and guidelines for textbook acquisition, the 1st tranche of textbook acquisitions to be funded by MCC – covering priority textbook needs for the short-term – will involve a sole-source procurement (conducted by MCA-Namibia) with existing suppliers for the current titles. The goal of this 1st tranche of textbook procurements, occurring early in the Compact, is to supply the remaining textbook needs for English, mathematics and science, covering all grade 5-12 students. MoE will have in place reformed structures in terms of textbook storage facilities, Textbook Development Board, and the Supply Chain Management Unit.

**Sub-Activity 3: Textbook management training**

The objective of this sub-activity is to provide capacity building at the national to school level to manage and store textbooks effectively, thereby extending their lifespan. Specific training activities will be targeted in the first year of the Compact.

**Activity 3: Investment in construction and management of Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs)**

As reflected in the ETSIP priorities framework, “the library and information service sector has been globally recognized as a critically important support structure for education, research, knowledge creation, public administration, and economic development in knowledge based economies.” Namibia has a network of 57 community libraries and 3 regional libraries (with accompanying mobile units), which serves as an important resource for low-income and marginalized community members who are upgrading their qualifications by distance study, students from upper-primary to tertiary levels, current workers and unemployed who have specific information and learning resource needs, entrepreneurs, and researchers. As such, the Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs) are designed to redress inequalities in access to knowledge and learning resources, and thus contribute to building human capital in disadvantaged regions.

It being the goal of GRN to expand through ETSIP information resources and availability to rural and underserved communities, MCA Namibia will construct 3 RSRCs in Oshakati for the Oshana region, in Helao Nafidi for the Ongangwena region and in Gobabis for the Omaheke region. These centres are ETSIP Phase One (2006-2011 extended to 2013) priorities.

The anticipated level of direct beneficiaries in the towns affected is approximately 100 000 (Oshakati: 51315, Helao Nafidi: 32061 and Gobabis: 13 174) including 50% adult population, NAMCOL learners, distance students, and learners of all levels; with an overall regional impacts of about 240 000. MCA-Namibia will further fund the development and delivery of

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3 GRN. 2007. ETSIP, p.58.
an income generation training programme at the RSRCs and to remote areas via mobile units.

**Sub-Activity 1: Construction of 3 Regional Study and Resource Centres (RSRCs)**

The new centres, constructed and equipped through the MCA Namibia Programme, will provide an alternative to the existing one-room community libraries, which have insufficient space to meet student and learner demand, as well as insufficient collections to support secondary-level and distance students.

The proposed design of the centres is based on consultations with the library staff members and library users in the disadvantaged regions, adult education and Community Learning and Development Centre (CLDC) officials, and MoE administrators. Each RSRC will provide a study area comprised of 2 rooms, which will accommodate 100-200 study places, in addition to a library hall, computer training room, TV and media room, research rooms, 2 community meeting rooms, and a librarian office, with full equipment and furnishings. In addition, the new centres will have electricity and internet access. Further, MoE will provide a full-time adult education officer from the region to the RSRC, in order to provide relevant programmes based upon community needs and employment potential. This effort will complement the new information collections to be provided in areas such as legal resources, self-help skills development, and micro-enterprise development.

The sites have been selected in consideration of household accessibility and proximity to community centres; for example, the Oshakati site is adjacent to a shopping centre and very close to the hospital. The proposed site in Gobabis is off the main road connecting two suburbs, and is closer to the concentration of households. Helao Nafidi, situated near the Namibia-Angolan border, is a new and rapidly growing town of rural settlements.

To ensure these centres are accessible to all who require the services offered, the MoE is to complement the MCA Namibia Programme support by ensuring extended opening hours those who need information most will have access even after hours and during weekends.

As the RSRCs will all be constructed on ‘virgin’ land, full environmental impact assessments will be carried out to identify potential negative environmental impacts that may result from constructions and put in place the necessary mitigation measures. The EIA will lead to the development of the site specific EMPs which will be used to monitor the identified impacts and implementation of related mitigations measures. In addition to EIA and EMPs contractors will develop public health and safety plans for each RSRC construction sites to ensure the safety of workers, learners and local stakeholders.

The MCA Namibia Programme will see to the effective implementation of these activities at the RSRCs, while ensuring that as part of the Compact provision, the HIV and AIDS prevention plans related to the Education Project construction activities are implemented by the contractor in accordance with each works contract for construction activities.

**Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance and training for RSRCs**

The MCA Namibia Programme will support technical assistance to RSRC staff focused on effective administration and programme development. The administration-focused part of
the training will allow for 6 staff of the three RSRCs to attend a 2-day workshop in Windhoek being designed and delivered by the four teacher colleges and UNAM, with the assistance of technical consultants. The training will address 4 areas key to success of RSRCs in terms of administering quality programmes and resource acquisition: (1) fund raising, (2) acquisition of in-kind donations, (3) developing local public-private partnerships, and (4) developing and sustaining twinning relationships with similar institutions in other countries.

The programme development training, in conjunction with the MoE Directorate for Adult Education and COSDEF staff, will involve technical assistance to develop and deliver an income-generation training programme that provides key skills to rural communities. The focus of the programme will be to assist individuals, families and communities in expanding existing knowledge base for operators of small and medium enterprises/activities. The RSRCs will serve as information knowledge resource. An external consultant team, comprised of a training and income generation specialist, an IT consultant for ICT maintenance, and a trainer to design materials and deliver a training program, will field test the programme at each RSRC, both at fixed facilities and through mobile training. The consultant team will conduct immediate follow-on evaluation to assess the impact on programme participants, which will influence follow-on programme design and implementation.

**Activity 4: Expanding vocational and skills training**

The objectives of this Activity are to help alleviate skills constraints to enterprise growth and productivity and to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, school leavers, and adult learners acquire competencies that are needed for gainful employment and income-earning opportunities.

Historically, the majority of Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) in Namibia have been supply-driven, with most programming delivered by four state-owned VTCs. Despite nominal entry requirements of grade 10 completion for admission to VTCs, most students must have completed grade 12 to gain entry. Due to limited capacities at these centres in terms of space and resources, majority of young Namibian do not get entry to these centres. Recognizing these constraints, the Namibia Parliament passed a new “Vocational Education and Training Act” during March 2008. The Act has resulted in several policy and institutional reforms affecting the management and financing of vocational education and training (VET) programmes. Of note, the Act has established a new National Training Authority (NTA), prescribing that all state-owned VTCs shall be transferred to the NTA, with the intention that they either undergo transformation into self-managing, financially self-sufficient entities (that compete with one another and other private sector training providers) or the operations and conducting of vocational education activities are terminated by the Board as per Section 49, Subsections 4. (b) of the NTA Act.

The MCA Namibia Programme support is necessitated by the experience that both the current lack of skills and supply-driven training are constraining enterprise growth and development in Namibia. The recent Global Competitiveness surveys ranked inadequate
The skills and education of the workforce as the single “most problematic factor for doing business” in Namibia with 21% of enterprises surveyed.

The MCA Namibia Programme will:

(i) Support the improvement and expansion of Namibia’s network of Community Skills and Development Centres (COSDECs);  

(ii) Assist the recently-created National Training Authority (NTA) to establish and manage a new National Training Fund (NTF); and  

(iii) Provide Competitive Grant Funding for priority training that would include vocational training programs and tourism training, as transitional support prior to the NTF having sufficient operational capacity and resources.

**Sub-Activity 1: Improvement and expansion of Namibia’s network of COSDECs**

**Construction and renovation**

As an alternative approach to the VTCs, the COSDECs – managed by the Community Skills Development Foundation (COSDEF) – provide VET services to clients from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly to those who do not have the academic credentials required for entry to the VTCs. In particular, the overall mission of the COSDEF is to increase the income-earning capacity of Namibia’s marginalized populations – unemployed youth, women and low skilled adults – by developing their entrepreneurial and essential skills and enhancing their participation in micro and small enterprises. In 2006, COSDEF operated 7 training centres for 470 trainees, 54% of whom were women. Tracer studies of recent COSDEC graduates have shown that almost 60% of all trainees were employed following completion of COSDEC training courses, representing nearly 35% with formal employment and 22% with self-employment.

The COSDECs are currently financed by a combination of a MOE budget allocation, private donations, and course fees. With the 2008 “Vocational Education and Training Act” in place, COSDECs will receive financial support from the National Training Fund in future years.

The MCA Namibia Programme provides for the:

(i) Construction of four new COSDECs centres in Erongo (New Arts and Craft Centre, Swakopmund, New COSDEC Centre, Swakopmund), Kavango (New COSDEC Centre, Rundu), Omaheke (New COSDECs Centre, Gobabis);  

(ii) Upgrading of five existing COSDECs in Kunene (Opuwo town), Oshana (Ondangwa town), Oshakati (Tsumeb town), Otjozondjupa (Otiwarongo town) and Khomas regions (Windhoek City);  

(iii) Provision of two COSDEC “mobile units.” The five COSDECs to be renovated are located in northern Namibia (Tsumeb, Ondangwa, Opuwo, Otjiwarongo, and Rundu), and the four new COSDECs are located in southern, east and western part of the country.
(iv) Renovation of a new SME Support Unit, to be added to four of the renovated COSDECs.

These Units will make possible specialized training in value-added production, mentoring on development and marketing of products, and advice in securing start-up capital. In addition, a new SME Support Unit will be added to four of the renovated COSDECs.

The specific site locations are motivated by employment potential. The Community Development Support Foundation (COSDEF) Management Support Unit, responsible for managing the operations and finances of all COSDECs, undertakes routine market analyses to determine whether there is sufficient employment demand to establish a centre or open a new training programme within an existing centre.

Since the construction and upgrading of new COSDECs will take place in already built up areas, no comprehensive EIA will be required. MCA Namibia will however develop site specific detailed EMPs to monitor and ensure the mitigation of the identified negative environmental impacts.

The COSDEC mobile units are intended to provide equipment and an instructor in areas for which a full COSDEC cannot be justified but where demand exists for specific sets of skills.

Training programmes currently offered by the COSDECs include skill areas such as computer literacy, welding, building maintenance, bricklaying, food preparation, and needlework. However, limited space currently restricts the number of trainees in a particular course and reduces the cost-effectiveness of the training. It has been observed that overcrowding in numerous COSDECs has led to insufficient space (classrooms and working areas) for learning and practicing trades in an adequate manner, in addition to a lack of room for proper “SME Support Units” with production facilities.

The largest enrolment increases are anticipated in the areas of business entrepreneurship, bricklaying, building maintenance, and food preparation. The investment in COSDECs will respond to the identified overcrowding and programming constraints, and will facilitate increased enrolment and training opportunities.

The MCA Namibia Programme will see to the effective implementation of these activities at the COSDECs, while ensuring that as part of the Compact provision, the HIV and AIDS awareness and prevention plans related to the Education Project construction activities are developed and implemented by the contractor in accordance with each works contract for construction activities.

**Training of COSDEF Management Support Unit Staff**

To effectively meet the expansion of COSDEC training programmes at 10 centres, the number of staff in the COSDEF Management Support Unit is projected to increase from 3 to 10, while the number of instructors is projected to increase from 38 to 72.

At the administration level, the MCA Namibia Programme will support the training of COSDEF managers, administrators, and financial officers, in the areas of financial administration, and controls, database management, and performance assessments.
Sub-Activity 2: Technical assistance to establish a National Training Fund

The overall objective of the NTF as provided for in the 2008 VET Act 2008 is to enable the NTA to achieve three primary objectives: (i) to achieve an effective and sustainable system of skills formation; (ii) to establish a stable organisation and management system; and (iii) to establish and maintain a sustainable partnership between government, the private sector, and civil society. The immediate objectives of the Fund are to mobilize additional resources for skills development and to rationalize spending on skills development. In the medium-term, the Fund seeks to stimulate a higher quantity and quality of enterprise-based training, facilitate the development of a market for training provision, enhance the capacity of private training providers, and instil incentives for better performance by public and state-owned providers.

The Programme will complement two on-going initiatives, linked to the proper functioning of the NTF, namely the putting in place of a financial management system financed by Lux Development and the establishment of an IT system. It is expected that parallel to these activities, various standing councils of the NTA, including the Industrial Council, will be established. Once these councils are established, the NTF will be required to have its regulations in place to give way to making the NTF operational.

To achieve financially-sustainable operations of the NTF, the VET Act provides for a levy on payrolls (the “training levy”) to finance high priority vocational education and training programmes. At present, the levy system has yet to achieve final design and commencement of implementation. The levy will be based on defined rates as per the outcome of a Feasibility Study, conducted by NTA, including rate of collection, size of establishments levied, and mechanisms for collecting the levy. Implementation procedures for the levy system will need to be developed, inclusive of reporting procedures for communicating the revenues raised and an accounting system for tracking and managing the contributions and use of levy proceeds.

To support the start-up process of establishing NTA and NTF operations, the MCA Namibia Programme will provide a Technical Advisor to the NTF Council and Board whose principal focus of assistance will be on:

(i) Designing the criteria and procedures for accessing the NTF; and
(ii) Designing of the training levy system.

Sub-Activity 3: Competitive grants for high-priority vocational training programmes

In order to cover the funding of high-priority vocational training programmes during the interim period, in which the NTF is becoming operational so that its levy system can yield funds for self-sufficiency, the GRN and MCA-Namibia will establish a Training Grants Facility that will be managed by MCA-Namibia in close collaboration with NTA staff.

As a complement to the Tourism Project of the MCA Namibia Programme, the first round (and “call for proposals”) of funding through the Training Grants Facility will focus exclusively on tourism-related training proposals. Using the results of the tracer studies and demand analyses (conducted by Lux Development), the second phase of funding from the Grants
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Facility will support proposals addressing a broader range of high-demand skill areas and sectors.

Under the Grants Facility, the proposals will be screened for “reform readiness and commitment” (responsive to reform in initiatives and should promote competition) as well as cost-effectiveness and quality. The Fund will support a limited number of winning proposals per round with technical assistance to support improved management, training in new curricula, and equipping and/or refurbishing training facilities. In addition, the Fund will also consider required matching of funds, in-kind contributions, and public-private partnerships. After a certain period of time, these entities would have to re-compete for further funding.

Given the current and forecast growth in Namibia’s tourism industry, one of the highest priority training needs in Namibia pertains to well-trained and qualified workers and managers in the tourism and hospitality sector. The Grants Facility will support the improvement and scaling up of a recent pilot tourism training activity. The successful and sustainable scaling-up of the pilot will provide additional well-trained staff for the Namibian hospitality and tourism sector and create conditions for the continuous upgrading of the skills of workers and managers at all levels of the employment structure (semi-skilled, skilled, supervisory, and management tiers).

Activity 5: Expanding and improving access to tertiary finance

The ETSIP, Medium term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), and other analyses have indicated that, in its current form, Namibia’s education sector is not financially sustainable. A key priority of ETSIP Phase I is the reform of the tertiary finance system to increase distribution and access while ensuring greater cost recovery. As noted in a World Bank Sector Study4, “public spending on tertiary education is distinctly pro-rich. Students from the richest 20 percent of the households share nearly 60% of public subsidies.” Compounding the distributional inequities, approximately 80% of the total cost of tertiary education is directly funded through annual appropriations from GRN to institutions.

In order to support financially disadvantaged students who are unable to meet fees and other related costs, the MoE administers the Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF), which provides primarily loans and a limited number of bursaries (scholarships) to students who provide proof of acceptance at a tertiary institution or VTC and evidence of financial disadvantage. GRN has indicated its intention to decrease the number of bursaries and the World Bank Sector Study (which provides the basis for ETSIP) notes that, “the government’s initiative to transform the previous bursary scheme into a loan scheme is a step in the right direction.”

NSFAF receives about 15,000 applications a year, of which it is able to support about 3,000, suggesting that about 12,000 financially disadvantaged students per year are unable to

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receive assistance in pursuing further education. There has not been a systematic verification of the needs and characteristic of students supported under the current assistance fund arrangement.

With support of UNDP, GRN has developed a draft NSFAF re-engineering plan. NSFAF is also exploring options for coordinating loan collection with the Social Security Commission and the direct deduction of loan repayments from salaries of public employees. MoE undertook a benchmarking effort in relation to Botswana, South Africa and some other countries in relation to allocation practices, recovery and costs of administration. The finding of such effort will be vital to the future of NSFAF and tertiary education financing.

Some studies and effort can be useful source of information to this Activity:

(i) Teacher Education Reform Programme Study, commissioned by the Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and the Advisory Council on Teacher Education (ACTED);

(ii) A study on funding formula for higher education to be commissioned by the NCHE; and

(iii) MoE Report from the 2008 study of South Africa and Botswana experiences on tertiary finance.

The MCA Namibia Programme provides for technical assistance to MoE to fast-track the NSFAF re-engineering. A comprehensive analysis of various aspects of the scheme will encompass

(i) A supply-side forecast analysis of graduates across the regions and by economic status;

(ii) A demand-side labour market analysis of projected needs for trained workers at the technical, professional and managerial levels across high priority sectors;

(iii) An analysis of colleges and universities outside of Namibia across Africa and Asia that offer high quality and affordable programmes that meet forecasted labour market needs;

(iv) An analysis of different options practiced globally that meet a pro-poor scholarship/loan programme;

(v) Projected redesign options to support a redesigned and consolidated tertiary financial assistance programme;

(vi) A capacity analysis and plan to build capacity for implementing an efficient and effective programme; and

(vii) Review and design of a public awareness campaign to increase availability of resources and add value to a new GRN programme.

The final outcome of these studies will inform a designed strategy and implementation plan for a tertiary financial assistance scheme, including, as needed, new regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines for implementation of the new strategy.

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Cross Sector Support: Strengthening the MOE HIV/AIDS Management Unit

Despite Namibia’s national HIV prevalence rate of 19.6% of the adult population in 2005, only about 15% of students were reached by programmes specifically designed to educate youth and adolescents about the epidemic and prevent infection. Furthermore, at the 47 target schools, only 11% of learners on average were participating in 2 standard MOE HIV/AIDS programmes (“My Future is My Choice and Window for Hope”), with schools in Ohangwena region reporting less than 7% participation rates, including three schools without any HIV/AIDS awareness activities in 2007.

At present, the HIV/AIDS Management Unit (HAMU) operates as a stand-alone unit but its work is insufficiently integrated across all MOE institutions, directorates and activities especially at the regional and school levels. There is therefore a need for strengthening and improving the management and mainstreaming of HAMU activities to regional education offices, down to the schools level. In support of the goal of increased HIV/AIDS awareness amongst youth, adolescents, and adult learners within Namibia, the MCA Namibia Programme will provide technical assistance to HAMU focused on (i) developing and implementing core programmes, and (ii) expanding HIV/AIDS planning and support to teachers into all education activities. Annex 2 explains environmental and social assessment implications for the implementation of this Project.

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5 Roche Report, Environmental and Social Assessment. 2008
Annex 2: Summary of MCC Environmental & Social Assessment for Education Project

The Education Project is considered a Category B project under the MCC Environmental Guidelines due to the site-specific and mitigable impacts that will result from the Project activities.

**Environmental Issues:** The construction activities are anticipated to result in site-specific and mitigable environmental impacts that will be identified and assessed through environmental assessments completed with the detailed design studies during the CIF period. For the General Schools Project Activity, an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be developed to identify impacts related to construction activities and for use in developing site-specific environmental management plans (EMPs) for each school site. MOE will be able to utilize the ESMF as guidance for future construction activities related to education infrastructure works. Since construction at the school sites will be on-going during the school year, the construction contractors will be required to establish temporary housing away from the school sites. For the COSDECs and RSRCs, site-specific EMPs will be developed for each facility during the final design phase and incorporated into the construction contracts. If necessary, EMPs will include assessment of any potential adverse environmental impacts resulting from the construction of pipelines and electricity lines necessary for the utility connections of respective educational facilities.

**Resettlement Issues:** Limited resettlement impacts may result from the Education Project activities, due to acquisition of land for construction of school facilities and teacher housing. MCA-Namibia and MoE have been coordinating with local communities on the acquisition of land in compliance with World Bank Operational Policy 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement in advance of the MCC investments. For the COSDECs and RSRCs, negotiations on compensation of the land acquired for the construction of Education Project facilities will need to be documented by MCA-Namibia to demonstrate compliance with OP 4.12, including the purchase of land at market value through a transparent process. In particular, this documentation will include information on (i) the land owner, (ii) size and description of land acquired, (iii) description of structures on, improvements to, and economics uses of land, (iv) the negotiation process, and (v) market value paid. No resettlement impacts are anticipated to result from the infrastructure investments at the 47 general schools, with the exception of potential land acquisition and related resettlement issues for the construction of teacher housing at Etayi and Ekangolinene schools.

**Gender and Social Issues:** The Education Project is expected to lead to beneficial gender and social impacts by providing improved services and facilities to targeted communities. The COSDECs will benefit unemployed youth, women, and low-skilled adults by providing training in entrepreneurship, business management, and other vocational skills critical to the local labour market. The MCA-funded investments, as well as ETSIP more generally, will reduce the recent declines in enrolment at primary, upper primary and secondary schools by improving the physical conditions, teacher training, and school management. The proposed improvements at the 47 general schools, including the provision of water, sanitation facilities, and disability access, should facilitate increased enrolment of female and disabled learners. A school hygiene program will be implemented by MoE at the general schools,
which will stress the link between hand washing after toilet use and elimination of diseases. MoE currently requires disability access in all new school buildings, and the provision of access at the 47 schools will further enforce this MoE policy. The proposed 47 schools will also benefit the indigenous San population, especially at the Uukumwe Combined School in the Oshikoto region where 38.9% of learners were San in 2007. MoE has stood out in its attempts to meet the San’s educational needs, and the MCA-funded investments will further support these initiatives.

However, potential adverse social impacts could also result from the Education Project activities and will need to be adequately identified and addressed during project implementation. For the 47 general schools and COSDECs, the HIV/AIDS education needs strengthening as the guidance and support to teachers and trainers providing this education is limited. The MoE HIV/AIDS Management Unit (HAMU) will receive targeted management strengthening support, which will include activities intended to mainstream HIV/AIDS education and training across all MOE directorates, associated institutions, and planning activities. The contractor working with HAMU will also develop and implement HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention plans for the school populations and communities where each educational facility is located for the 47 schools, COSDECs, and RSRCS activities.