

MANDATED TO
EMPOWER YOUR
TOMORROW



Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) geared towards education for all

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Director of NAMCOL

The subject of the relevance of NAMCOL in Namibia's educational space is perennial. In the context of the socio-economic challenges facing Namibia, the brand of educational offering by NAMCOL is a panacea for development as it deepens the quality of the educational effort to adequately support the national development agenda and thereby contribute towards constructing the narrative of the nation we seek to build.

NAMCOL's founding Act, (Act 1 of 1997) is a mirror of our nation's legislative foresight in introducing changes in the educational environment by creating institutions that would offer relevant educational experiences consistent with the needs and aspirations of a newly independent Namibia. Therefore, with independence in 1990, our nation has witnessed the creation of the University of Namibia in 1992, the Polytechnic of Namibia, now Namibia University of Science and Technology, in 1995 and, the Namibian College of Open Learning, NAMCOL, in 1997.

Pursuant to the mandate from its founding Act, NAMCOL continues to make significant strides in creating alternative pathways for Namibians to enhance their levels of general, professional and entrepreneurial competencies in order to improve the social and economic landscape of Namibia. The College has grown in stature and reach by growing a significant footprint in its training programmes as well as creating access to learning experiences through the establishment of 4 regional offices, 6 sub-regional offices and 97 tutorial centres in all 14 regions of Namibia. As a way of setting an improved trajectory for the future, quality assurance and effective service delivery are paramount for continuous improvement of our throughput across all programmes.

I hold the belief that the Government recognised education as a central enabler to national development, hence adopted a blended approach of education delivery through a mixture of conventional and open and distance learning (ODL) approaches, which led to the establishment of NAMCOL to offer ODL programmes. The establishment of NAMCOL was aimed at creating a choice for Namibians to upgrade their levels of general education through Junior Secondary (Grade 10) and Senior Secondary (Grade 12) certification, professional and vocational training whilst having an opportunity to continue working towards economic stability and security for their families and communities. This choice, flexibility and convenience can only be provided through ODL.

The programmes offered by NAMCOL through the ODL mode of delivery have a number of attributes, such as; the separation in time and space of tutor and learner, the use of technology to enhance learning, flexibility, increased accessibility as well as scalability and cost efficiency. Knowing that individual and social development is centered on knowledge and skills acquisition as well as social justice, the intention with the establishment of NAMCOL was to contribute towards that outcome. Therefore, I cannot escape the conclusion that national development would be hampered if all in need of academic enhancement would be required to join the conventional education system. There is a general perception that ODL is complimentary to the conventional system, but it should be recognized that ODL is rather a mode of choice and a critical player in the delivery of education. ODL increases access and creates opportunities for a diverse group of people, such as women, out-of-school youth, the marginalized or less

privileged, the displaced and others whose circumstances deny them the opportunity to attend the conventional system. This mode of education delivery helps students to cross the boundaries created through the traditional brick and mortar institutions. Owing this capacity, ODL is significantly flexible to adapt with the changing needs of the ever-evolving society and to therefore produce a graduate who is well adjusted to contribute to the relevant needs and aspirations of the communities.

While there is always more that can be done to improve the educational levels of our people, it cannot be forgotten that the Namibian educational landscape after independence was extremely unequal and that attempts to redress this inequality would require strategic thinking, planning and patience.

NAMCOL has a lot to celebrate as we have produced some of the country's shining professionals and business personalities whose presence is found in many developmental spaces across Namibia.

NAMCOL IS TRULY THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGE, MANDATED TO EMPOWER YOUR TOMORROW, TODAY.



"TAKING EDUCATION TO THE PEOPLE"