

CRAN DONATES LAPTOPS TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) donated 28 laptops valued at over N\$ 150,000 to eight (8) identified schools through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to bridge the digital divide through the expansion of universal access. The Schools identified as beneficiaries are Kaisi !Gubeb Combined School, !Karas Region; Otjiperongo Junior Primary School, Erongo Region; W.J.D Cloete Junior Secondary School, Hardap Region; Kangongo Primary School, Kavango East; Kandjimi Murangi Secondary School, Kavango West; Welwitchia Junior School, Kunene Region; Vergenoeg Primary School, Omaheke Region; and Okomakwiya Primary School, Omusati Region.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Mrs. Emilia Nghikembua, CRAN's Chief Executive Officer, said *"In August 2021 CRAN issued radio frequency spectrum bands to Mobile Telecommunications Limited (MTC) for the provision of broadband services with a minimum downlink data speed of not less than 2 Mbps, subject to the rollout obligations imposed as licence conditions. CRAN, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, identified twenty-five (25) schools in remote/rural areas with either no services or only 2G mobile services to be provided with broadband services by MTC as part of the rollout obligations. The schools are situated in Kavango East, Kavango West, !Karas, Kunene, Hardap, Erongo and Omaheke Region."*

The rollout conditions were met by MTC, however, there was uptake of the services due to a lack of devices. It is therefore that CRAN intervened and purchased 15 new laptops to the amount of approximately N\$150,000. We refurbished 13 used laptops that are in excellent condition to donate to the schools for use. CRAN will at our own cost personally deliver the laptops to the identified schools and ensure that the rightful beneficiaries personally receive these laptops.

During her keynote address, Honourable Anna Nghipondoka, Minister of Education, Arts and Culture said *"The goal of the Ministry is to ensure that our common commitment to progress in education, arts and culture is oriented towards ensuring that our combined efforts and resources have the maximum possible impact in areas that are of significance. CRAN's donation aims to empower teachers and learners through access*

to information and communication technology. Our Ministry is truly grateful for this donation as these tools will assist in ensuring that our learners and teacher gain critical ICT skills and have access to valuable information through ICT services. This will go a long way in enabling a conducive environment for e-learning purposes."

CRAN's mandate and strategic goal of expanding coverage for ICT is to improve performance and service delivery through various efforts, one of which is digitalisation; and to promote infrastructure development as a catalyst for economic growth, social progression, and a contributor to global competitiveness and investment attraction.

Honourable Nghipondoka added that empowering young citizens to enter the workforce starts with providing them with the necessary education, knowledge and skills. Namibia has made great progress in providing access to education to just over 95% of the student age population. In the most remote, rural areas, drop-out rates are also an extreme concern due to various reasons and the Government of the Republic of Namibia is addressing this concern.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia, through the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) plans to develop and maintain the education infrastructure by introducing a comprehensive integrated e-learning school programme for all learners. This will assist learners to have access to equitable inclusive quality education that qualifies them to pursue higher education.

"The Authority is very pleased that our strategic stakeholder the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture embraces our noble Corporate Social Investment initiatives and that we truly hope this donation will benefit the Namibian child to have access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics through donations such as ours," concluded Mrs. Nghikembua.

"Ends"

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