

UPDATE ON STATE OF PREPAREDNESS 2024 PRESIDENTIAL & NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

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Mercure Hotel | Windhoek

Mandate:

❑ Established in terms of Article 94B of the Namibian Constitution read with section 4 of the Electoral Act No.5 of 2014 as the *only exclusive authority* to:

➤ direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections and referenda processes as an independent, transparent and impartial body in executing its mandate.

Commission:

- *is fully funded* by National Treasury- Government of the Republic of Namibia.
- provides strategic and policy directives and oversight to the ECN

Commissioners' Appointment:

- ❑ Five members appointed by the President with the approval of the National Assembly out of eight names recommended by the Selection Committee through a rigorous public recruitment process.
- ❑ Chairperson is appointed on a *full-time capacity*, while other four members are appointed on a part-time basis.
- ❑ A minimum of two members must be women.
- ❑ A member holds office for a period of *five years* – eligible for reappointment upon re-application – but can only *serve a maximum of two terms*.

Four Committees:

- ❑ Responsible for policy and standard operating procedures formulation.
- ❑ Report and make recommendations to the Commission.
- ❑ Each Committee is comprised of two Commissioners and relevant managers.
- ❑ *Established committees:*
 - **Human Resources Committee**
 - **Research, Voter, Civic Education and Media Liaison Committee**
 - **Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee**
 - **IT, Security and Legal Affairs Committee**

Secretariat:

- ❑ CEO appointed by the Commission on a *five-year fixed-term contract* supported by members of Management.

Electoral Performance Review:

- ❑ Conducted review post 2019 & 2020 National Elections in preparation for 2024 and 2025 Electoral Cycle.
- ❑ Review guided by institutional performance reports and observer missions reports.
- ❑ *Key reform initiatives:*
 - Review of 2017-2022 Strategic Plan (SP), development and adoption of *2022-2027 SP*
 - Review and Amendment of the Electoral Act No.5 of 2014
 - Development and adoption of administrative frameworks
 - *Review, upgrading and enhancement of elections management systems*
 - Review, development and adoption of 2024 Electoral Calendar – *Electoral Roadmap*.

Key Legal Instruments:

- ❑ **Namibian Constitution -Article 94B** - establishment of the Electoral Commission of Namibia as constitutional body [“Commission”].
- ❑ **Electoral Act No.5 of 2014 [As amended]** - *prescribes the conduct of electoral processes [scheduled national elections and by-elections] and referenda processes.*
- ❑ **Regional Council Act No. 22 of 1992**, read together with relevant provisions of the Electoral Act – *regulates the conduct of scheduled Regional Council Elections and by-elections.*
- ❑ **Local Authority Council Act No. 23 of 1992**, read together with relevant provisions of the Electoral Act – *regulates the conduct of scheduled Local Authority Elections and new local authorities elections.*
- ❑ **Public Procurement Act No.15 of 2015** - *prescribes various methods of procurement of goods and services, procurement structures and processes including election materials and electoral related services*
- ❑ **State Finance Act No.31 of 1991** - *prescribes the management of the budget and disbursement of appropriated funds.*

Execution Progress : **On Track**

- ❑ Commission made significant process with the preparations for the PNA Elections following official launch of the EC on the **7th March 2024**.
- ❑ Premised on *Three Electoral Phases*:
 - **Pre-Election phase** [*April 2023 – September 2024*] – **100% Completed**
 - All related electoral activities and timelines successfully ticked off.
 - **Election Phase** [*October – November 2024*] – **Execution On Track (85%)**
 - Execution of all related electoral activities timelines well on course.
 - **Post-Election Phase** [*December 2024 – March 2025*] - **Execution To Start (0%)**

Key Statutory Dates And Electoral Activities:

□ Recommended by the Commission and approved by the President as *cornerstone* of the Electoral Calendar:

- **3 June – 1 August 2024: GRV (52 Days)** (*Inside Namibia and Namibian Diplomatic Missions Abroad*) – **Completed**
- **14 October 2024: Nominations (Independent Candidate)** – **Completed**
- **16 October 2024: Nominations (Political Parties – Final Day and Public Sitting- Commission)** - **Completed**
- **13 November 2024: Voting** (*Inside Namibia and Abroad*) - **Completed**
- **27 November 2024: Voting** (*Inside Namibia*) - **On Track**

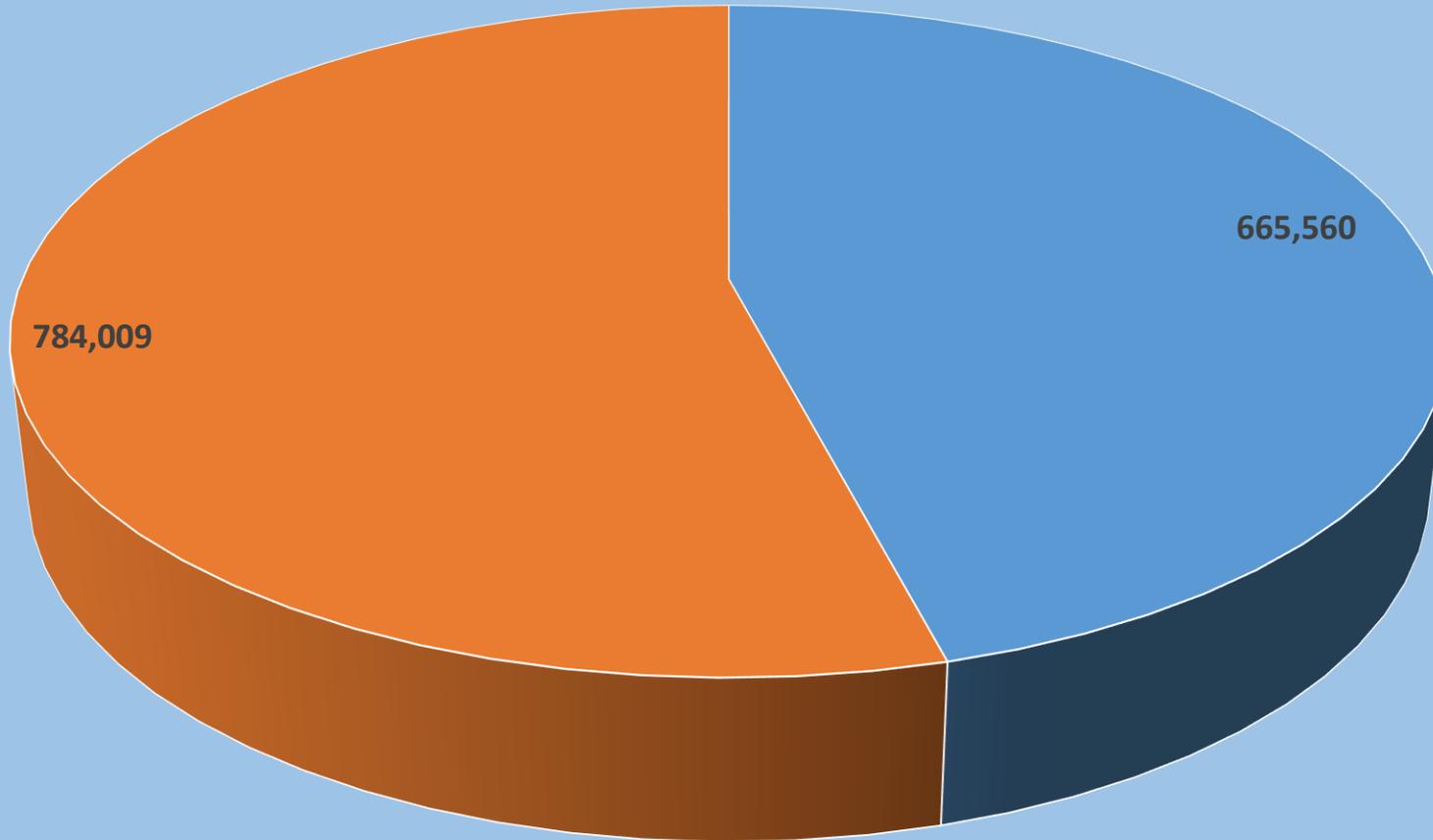
Final Statistics:

- Provisional Voters Register* published & released, with *copies provided to political parties* as required and scheduled on **29 August 2024**, and *displayed with no objection*.
- Final Voters Register* - published & released with *copies provided to political parties* as required and scheduled on **30 September 2024** following successful conclusion of GRV.
- 1,449,569** registered voters representing **90%** of **1,615,910** eligible voters with *desegregated demographic data*.

NATIONAL GENDER BREAKDOWN: 1,449,569

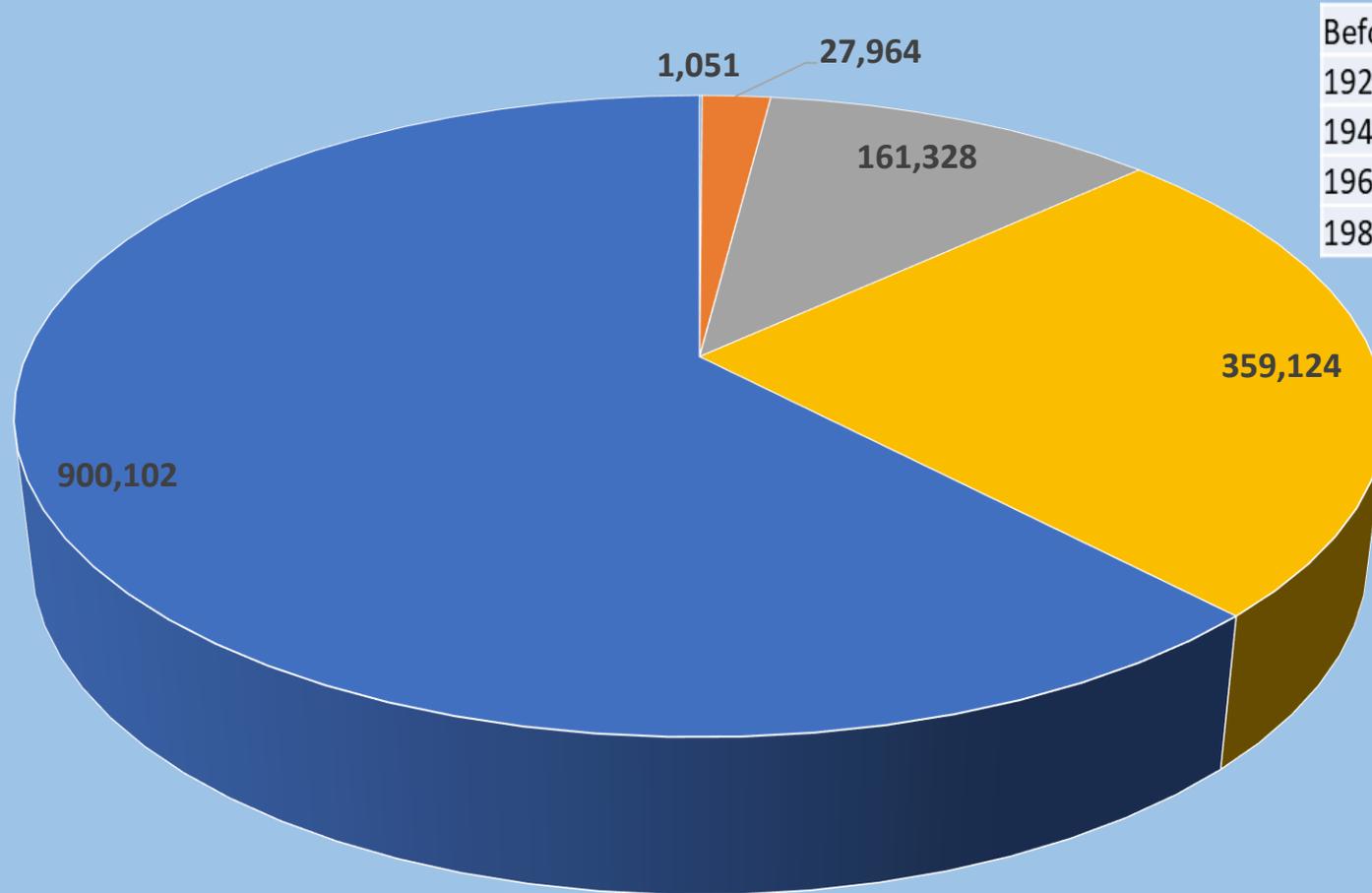
54% Female

46% Male



Male Female

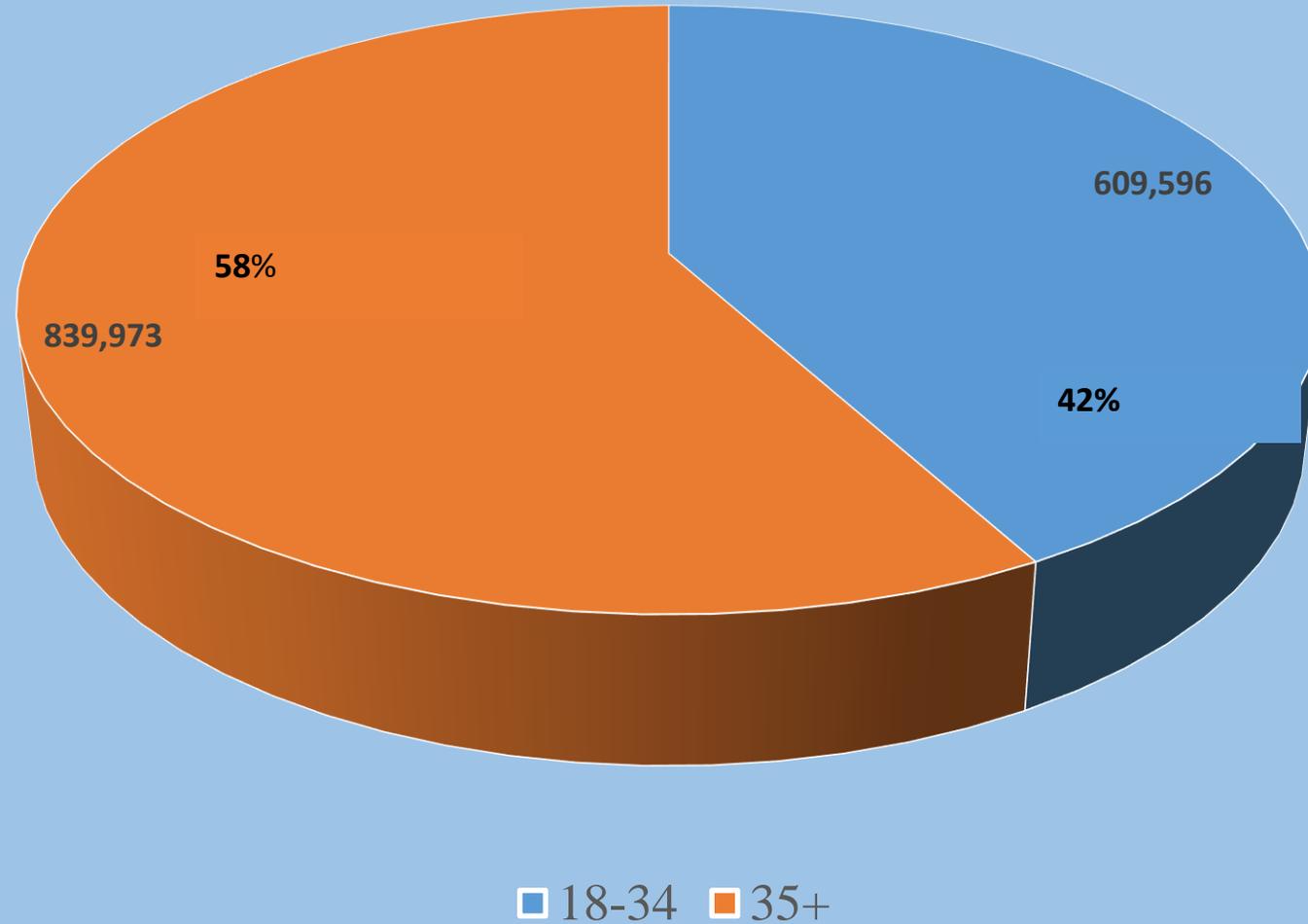
GENERATIONAL COHORTS



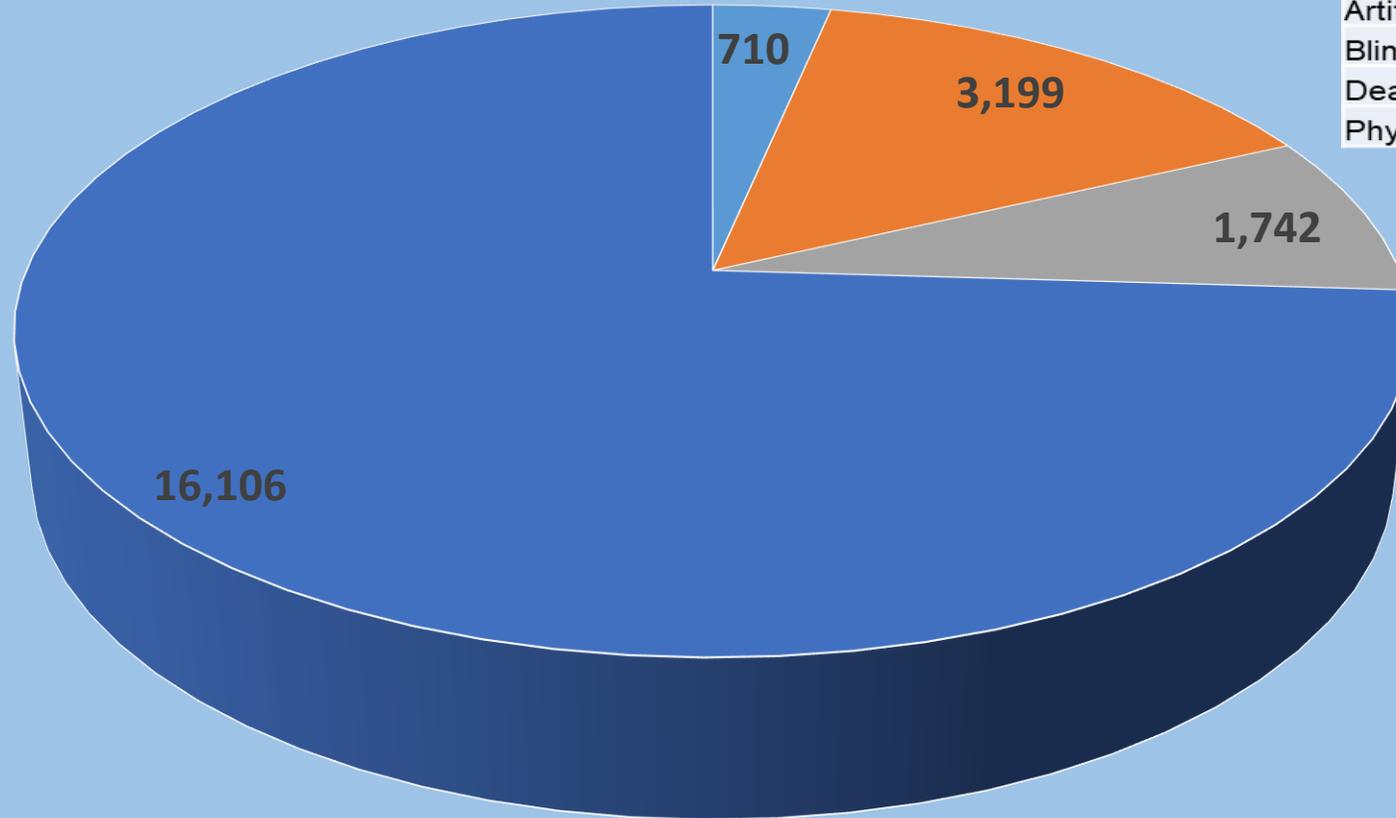
Before 1925	1,051
1925 - 1944 (Silent Generation)	27,964
1945 - 1964 (Baby Boomers)	161,328
1965 - 1981 (Generation X)	359,124
1982 - Present (Generation Y)	900,102

■ Before 1925 ■ 1925 - 1944 (Silent Generation) ■ 1945 - 1964 (Baby Boomers) ■ 1965 - 1981 (Generation X) ■ 1982 - Present (Generation Y)

YOUTH AND ADULT TURNOUT



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS)



Voter Breakdown	
Disability	Total Voters
Artificial Limb	710
Blind	3,199
Deaf	1,742
Physical Disability	16,106

Artificial Limb
 Blind
 Deaf
 No Restrictions
 Physically Disabled

Election Materials and Equipment:

- ❑ Procuring of *sensitive materials and equipment* (voting inks, voter verification devices, ballot papers) has been **completed as scheduled**.
 - 1,611,000 ballot papers (Presidential and National Assembly Elections respectively) printed at a cost of N\$6,200,000.
 - All 21 political parties contesting elections invited to observe printing, packaging and delivery of ballot papers in Johannesburg, South Africa at the cost of the Commission of which 3 opted to withdraw from observing the process.
- ❑ Procuring and production of *non-sensitive materials* (stationeries, administrative forms, training manuals, polling station signages) has been **completed as scheduled**.
- ❑ Securing of **additional equipment** (tents, generators, tables and chairs) from members of the public , *where applicable*, scheduled for **18-23 November 2024** in accordance with approved ECN Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Regional Staff:

- 14x Permanent Positions (Regional Electoral Officers)** - established and filled *w.e.f 1st December 2023 - first time.*
- Before 2023, the Commission has been employing temporary staff during peak period as regional heads.

Polling Officials:

- 17,684 polling officials** - intensive training scheduled at established *cluster training centres* in all regions: **15-23 November 2024 (9 days).**
- Police Officers and Election/Counting Agents** - trained at established *cluster training centres* in all regions: **09 - 12 November 2024.**

Election Officials – *Critical Selection Criteria:*

- Disability and Marginalized Communities (5% each)
- Certificate of Conduct – Namibian Police plus Police Declaration.
- Unemployed Namibians Only.**

Transport:

- ❑ Process of securing required **3,000 vehicles** from Offices, Ministries and Agencies of the Government and members of the public commenced with **22-24 November 2024** scheduled for allocation to teams.
- ❑ **3x Helicopters** (2 for Kunene Region and 1 for Zambezi Region) secured from Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs.

Dispatch of Election Materials:

- ❑ *Sensitive materials* - packed and dispatched to all regions under police escort and currently stored at regional police stations in accordance with approved ECN SOPs *and standing collaboration with the Namibian Police.*
- ❑ *Non-sensitive materials* - packed and dispatched to all regions currently stored at ECN regional stores in accordance with approved ECN SOPs.
- ❑ *All 21 contesting political parties* provided with:
 - **Packaging and Distribution Schedule** detailing the *serial number of ballot papers and the region, constituency and polling station* where the ballot books will be used.
 - **Sample of Ballot Papers** as part of voter education.

Polling Stations:

- ❑ **4,677 Polling Stations** have been established (*1,621 fixed polling stations and 3,056 mobile polling stations*).
- ❑ Polling stations finalised, gazetted and shared with stakeholders including political parties and media and also available on ECN media platforms. - *part of the election observers' pack.*
- ❑ **2,521 Polling Teams** (*1,621 fixed teams and 900 mobile teams*) have been established for deployment.
- ❑ **Deployment of teams including police personnel** (*2 police officers per team*) scheduled for the **25-26 November 2024** in all 14 regions.

System Evolution:

- **2010-2013** - migration from manual paper-based voter's registration system to a biometric voters register system - *Mobile Voters Register System (MVRS)*.
- **2014 – 2023-** Introduction of *Biometric Mobile Voter Registration System*:
 - uniquely designed and developed for Namibia's voter's registration and not readily available on the market ("*Customer-Made- System*").
 - comprised of Laptops and Printer Kits & accessories (cameras, fingerprint-readers, voter cards, voter-signature pads and the Operating System).
- **2023 – Current** - Upgrading and enhancement of *Biometric Mobile Voter Registration System*:
 - migration from a *Laptop-based technology* to *Tablet-based technology*;
 - *Integrated Solution-* interfacing of Stand-Alone-Systems (*Five Modules*) - *Integrated Mobile Voter Registration System (IMVRS)*

Integrated Solution (*All-in-one Solution*):

- ❑ ***Voter Registration Module (existed)*** – register eligible voters & operationalised during GRV.
- ❑ ***Voter Verification Module (existed)*** - verify voters during voting & operationalised on *Special Voting Day*.
- ❑ ***Candidate Management Module (new)*** – migration from manual to digital submission of nominations by political parties and organizations/associations – *operationalised during nomination period*.
- ❑ ***Elections Results Management Module (existed)*** – manage transmission of election results – *ready for operationalisation*.
- ❑ ***Registration of Political Parties and Organisations/Associations (new)*** – migration from manual to digital submission of applications – *ready and to be implemented only for 2025 RCLA elections*

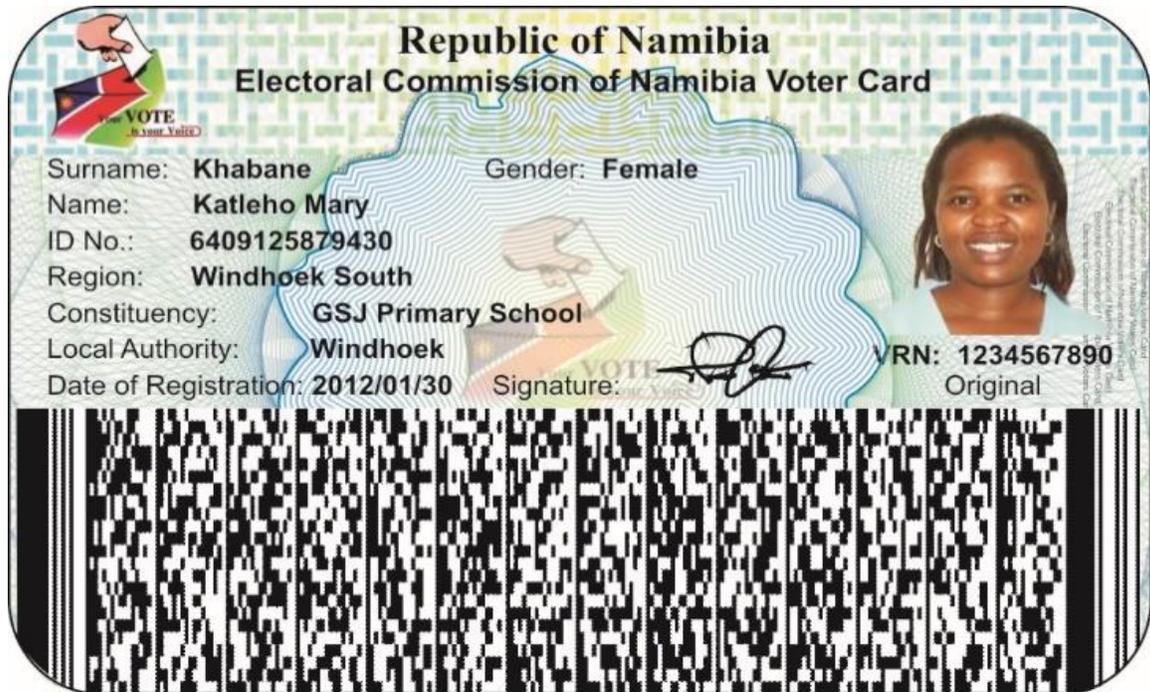
Key Software Enhancements Benefits:

- ❑ Instant voter turn-out statistics - voter registration/polling process.
- ❑ Scanning and pre-populating voter information from ID documents (New QR ID) - reducing human error capturing (Barcode retrieving ID Number;– Name, Surname, DoB and ID Number).
- ❑ Enhanced biometric validation and capturing (fingerprint scanning and facial capturing).
- ❑ *Enhanced user log-in capability (voter registration and voter verification)- use of biometrics.*
- ❑ *Enhanced security features – capability to trace and remotely lock or locate devices in cases of lost or theft.*

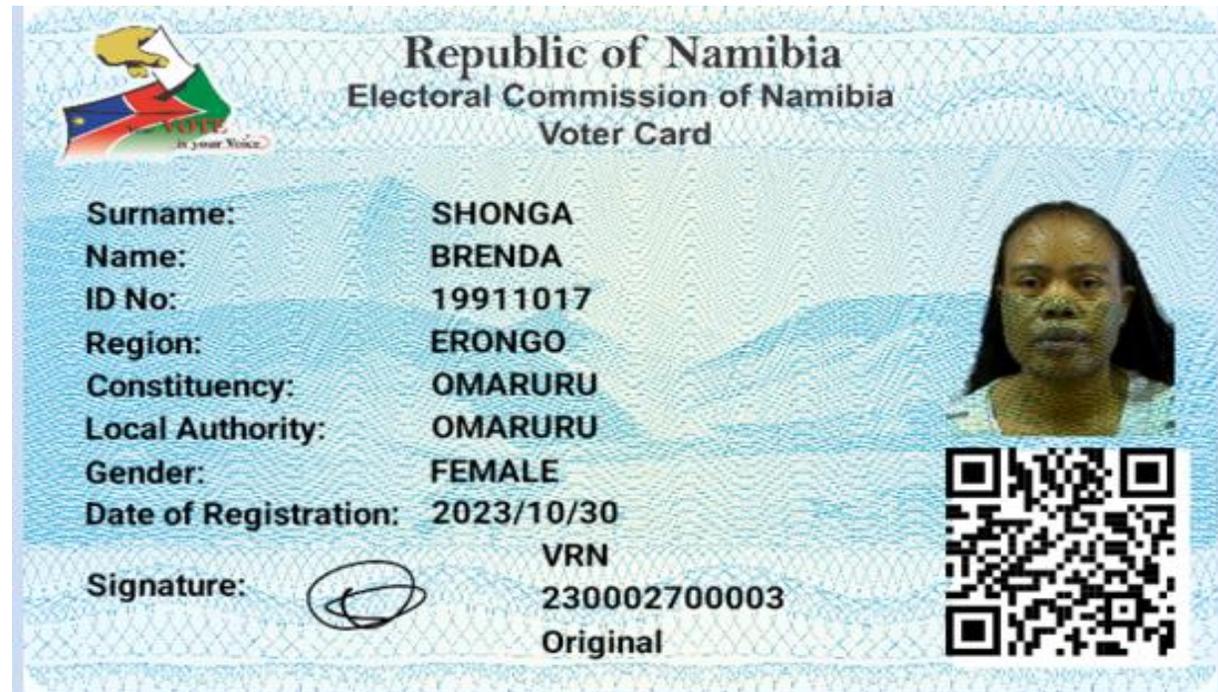
IMVRS CONT...)



VOTER REGISTRATION CARDS

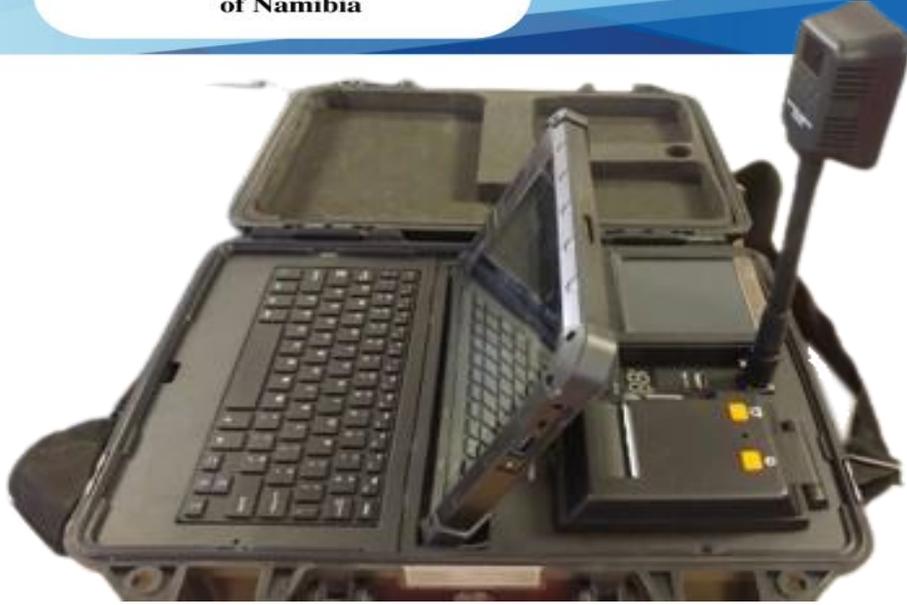


OLD VRC



NEW VRC

IMVRS CONT...)



Initiatives Introduced - *Youth Engagement:*

- ❑ Introduction of “*Lead Youth Ambassador*”- Ms. Teen Namibia 2023 –*first time*
- ❑ Recruitment of **70 Youth Ambassadors** countrywide.
- ❑ *Mobilising and encouraging* the youth peers to register to vote and participate in national elections.

Inclusiveness and Access to Information:

- ❑ Materials and training manuals reproduced in Braille, Audio and sign language - *persons with visual and hearing impairment.*
- ❑ *Braille and Tactile Ballot* covers- produced to ensure the Secrecy of the Vote for persons with Visual Impairment.

POLLING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

□ *Polling Slogan*

- **“Put your voice in the *BOX*”** - a call to take action for ^{all} registered voters to vote on election day.
- **“Put your voice in the *BOX*”** - a concept of the **“B  X”** introduced to emphasise and create awareness, and remind all eligible citizens to participate.

□ **14 Mascot Ballot Boxes** secured to facilitate election campaign countrywide

□ **Polling Campaign: 02 August - 27 November 2024 - *Ongoing***

The ECN Mascot Ballot Box



Information Dissemination Channels:

- ❑ *Print Media* – Posters, flyers, newspaper supplement placed in all newspapers countrywide
- ❑ *Electronic and digital media* - websites, radio, and television.
- ❑ *Radio Stations* - NBC Radio station, private radio and community radio stations.
- ❑ *Physical Sessions* - One-on-One sessions with voters by voter education teams across the country.
- ❑ *Social Media*.
- ❑ *Information Pamphlets* - shared through *Nampost Post Office Boxes*- countrywide.
- ❑ *Digital Bill Boards* - secured at strategically located localities.
- ❑ *Static Bill Boards including Banners*- installed in all 14 regional capitals at strategically located area.
- ❑ *Namibians Abroad* - engaged via ECN and MIRCO social media platforms and websites.

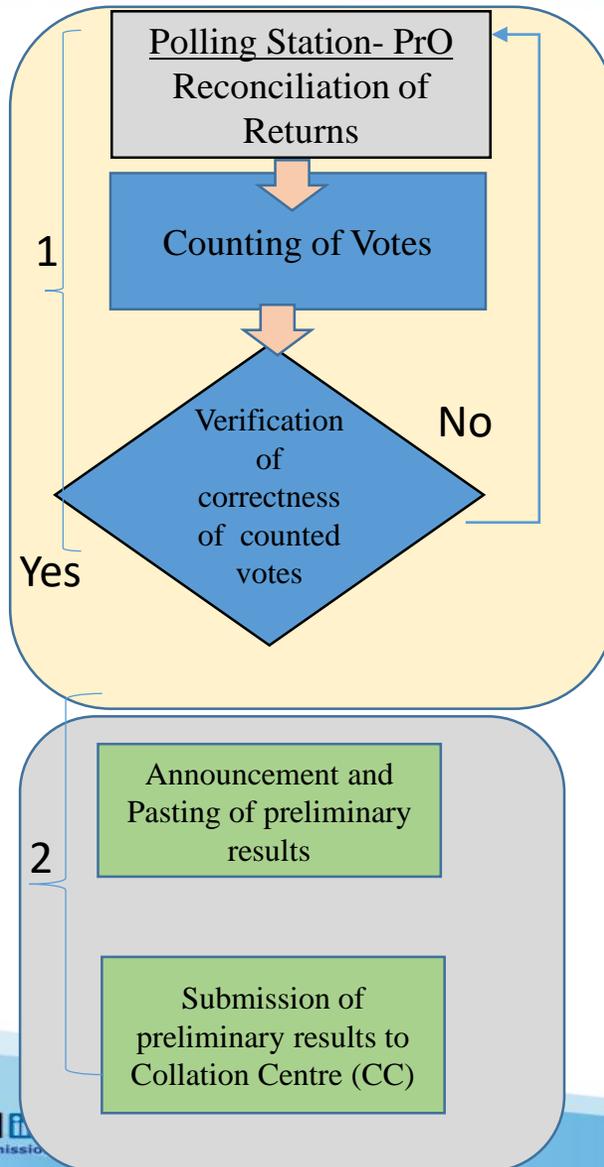
Political Party Liaison Committee (PLC):

- ❑ *Functional platform* - link between the Commission and political parties and organisations
- ❑ Chaired by the ECN Chairperson and established to:
 - Discuss electoral related matters, update political parties and associations on elections related activities *including Electoral Calendar execution.*
 - Present reports/proposals for consideration and deliberations.

Other Electoral Stakeholders:

- ❑ OMAs of Government; Ambassadors/High Commissioners accredited to Namibia; Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC); Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA); Academia; Media Houses; Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

VOTING & COUNTING PROCESS - POLLING STATIONS



- **The following protocols shall apply:**

- After close of the poll, Presiding Officer shall account for all returns in respect of spoilt & rejected ballot papers, unused & used ballot books vs. total issued ballot papers using prescribed Election Results forms.
- Counting of votes shall only commence upon completion of the returns-reconciliation by the Presiding Officer.
- The presiding officer with the assistance of designated assistant (i.e. result verifiers) shall verify the correctness of the votes counted.
- Upon verification, the Presiding Officer validate the preliminary election results and allow election agents sign before announcing and posting at the polling station.
- Upload the results to the Collation Centre for collating of constituency returns by the Returning Officer (part of enhancement), followed by delivery of original polling station returns to the RO.

VERIFICATION AND COLLATION PROCESS-COLLATION CENTRES (CCS)



Electoral Commission of Namibia

CC- RO

Receipt of Returns and preliminary results from PrOs

Reconciliation of Returns
Tallying of preliminary results and completion of prescribed Forms

Preliminary results Audit
(Tally Sheet, RC Form 30 & 37 and 30 or LA Form 32 & 37)

No

Yes

Announcement and pasting of preliminary results

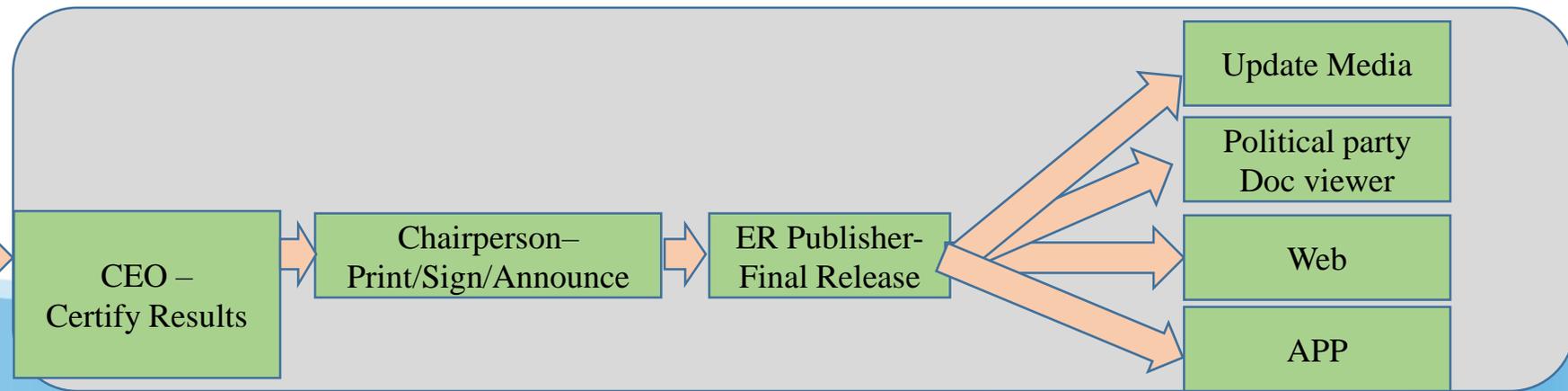
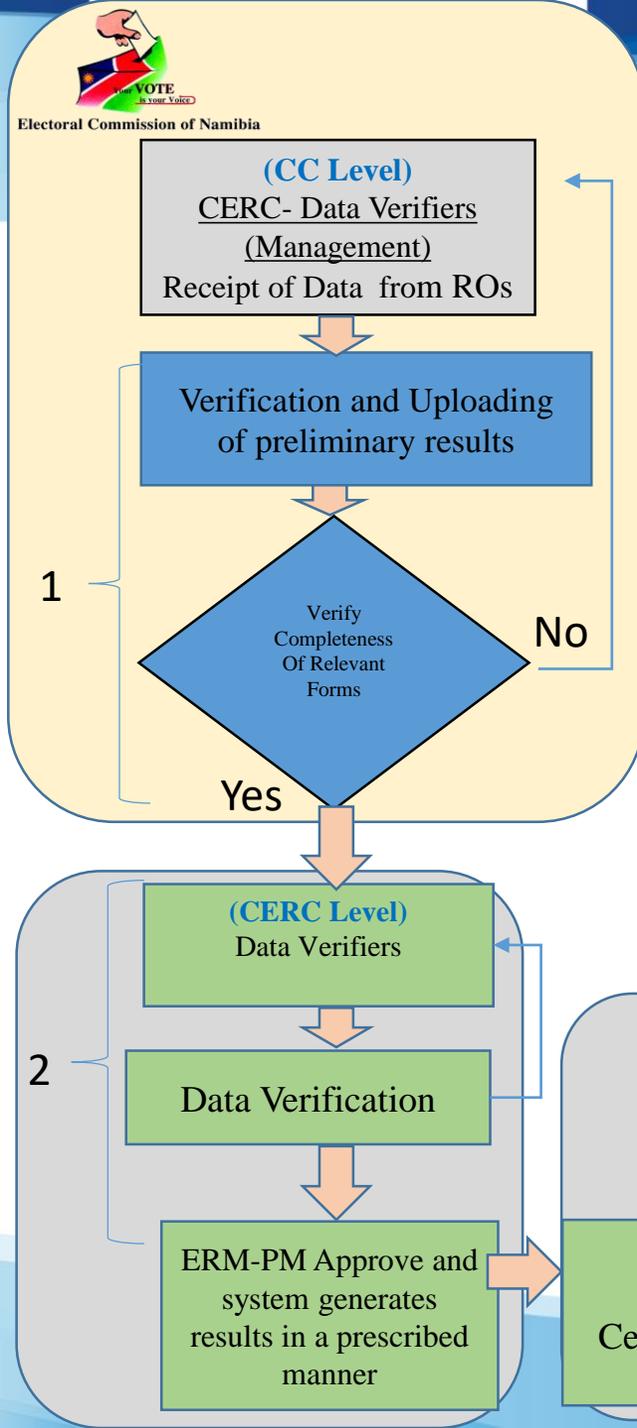
Transmission of preliminary results to CERC

b) *The following protocols shall apply:*

- i) After receipt and reconciliation of the election returns, the Returning Officer shall verify all preliminary election results from all polling stations in a **pre-populated spreadsheet** before completing the prescribed Elect Forms.
- ii) Before announcement and pasting of tallied preliminary election results, the auditor designated at each CC shall verify and validate results to ensure quality assurance in managing preliminary election results.
- iii) In the event an error is detected during auditing, the Returning Officer shall ensure that such error is rectified by the Presiding Officer concerned and re-pasted at the polling station with the signatures of the election agents.
- iv) Upon rectification, the Returning Officer must validate preliminary election results and allow election agents to sign all copies before announcement and pasting at Collation Centre.
- v) Returning Officers must keep all documents as directed and provide paper-trail from stage of verification, auditing and releasing of preliminary election results.

VERIFICATION PROCESS - CERC

- a) *The following protocols shall apply:*
- i) The Data verifier of each team per region shall receive and verify all preliminary election results [(i.e. Tally Sheet, Relevant Forms transmitted by the Returning Officer.
 - ii) The designated Verifiers will submit the verified preliminary election results to the ERM Project Manager, as a Releasing Officer, for validation before certification by the CEO.
 - iii) Upon certification, the CEO will digitally submit the certified preliminary election results, upon clearance by audit team, to the Chairperson approval and announcement as final election results.
 - iv) **Upon final announcement by the Chairperson, the designated Election Results Publisher(ERP), as a Final Release, will digitally release the final election results by:**
 - Publishing on the website and Mobile Apps
 - Populating political party document-viewer
 - Updating result screen in Result Centre
 - Updating Media



Delay in finalization of Electoral Amendment Bill:

- ❑ Extrapolation of section 25 - conduct of GRV 3 June – 1 August 2024 (**52 days**).
- ❑ Extrapolation of section 77 to allow remunerated public servants not to resign upon nomination but rather after election.

Delay in the finalization of the National Population and Housing Census 2023:

- ❑ Preliminary National Statistics of eligible voters released by NSA on the 13 March 2024 resulted in the need to make vital adjustments on the number of required resources for 2024 PNA elections
- ❑ Increase in requisite resources (election officials, teams, equipment, vehicles) necessitating requesting for additional funding from National Treasury which was granted.

Procurement of Ballot Papers:

- Open International Bidding was cancelled due to potential risks associated with timelines (7 days Standstill and 14 days Review Period) that had a potential to jeopardize timely delivery of ballot papers.
- Public Procurement Act's statutory timelines*, combined with the *Electoral Act requirements*, underscored the urgency to act decisively to meet key electoral deadlines, including the scheduled voting on 13 and 27 November 2024
- Provisional Voters Register serves a key determinant of required quantity of ballot papers
- Given these constraints, alternative procurement options were deemed necessary of which emergency procurement was found appropriate

Political Parties Compliance:

- None compliance by two political parties led to de-registration by the Commission.
- One political party approached the Court which ruled in its favour.
- Though the other political party did not seek any recourse, the Commission approached the Court for self-review application which was granted
- Both political parties have been re-registered.

Thank you