



Background and Overview of the Research and Experimental Development
(R&D) Survey

By

Dr. John Shoopala

Chairperson, Board of Commissioners

National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST)

The Launch of the Research and Experimental Development (R&D) Survey
Report (2013/14 fiscal year)

Windhoek

09 March 2017

Director of Ceremonies;

Hon. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation;

Hon. Tom Alweendo, Minister of Economic Planning and Director General of the National Planning Commission;

Fellow Commissioners of the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST);

Dr. Eino Mvula, CEO of the NCRST;

Dr Neo Molotja, Senior Research Specialist, Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators, South Africa;

Representatives from Government Ministries and Public Enterprises;

Representatives from Private Sector;

Representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Introduction

What the Hon. Minister is about to launch today, is the product of creative and critical interaction across disciplines, institutions and ideas. Since its inception in May 2012, and empowered by Section 18 of the Research, Science and Technology Act, 2004 (Act 23 of 2004), the NCRST has developed

a Three-Year National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI) for 2014/15 to 2016/17. The NPRSTI was the outcome of wide and deep deliberations with researchers, research institutions, Private Sector, Non-Governmental Organizations, government ministries and agencies. The NPRSTI has been designed to articulate with and support National Development Plans, notably NDP4 and Vision 2030.

Why is the R&D Census Important?

The Research and Experimental Development (R&D) Survey (2013/2014) represents an important step towards strengthening our national system of Innovation. The policy relevance of this survey is clear, and it is conceivable, that if properly harnessed by our policy-makers, could meaningfully inform the national development agenda and facilitate knowledge production and dissemination in a wide range of policy domains.

Initial Preparations for the survey

While the Research and Development (R&D) survey represented the collective efforts of the NCRST, the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) and the University of Namibia (UNAM), have formed an integral part of a process that culminated in the publication of the first Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Indicators for the country. Allow me spend a few minutes to explain the methodologies and process that was followed in conducting the survey whose report we are about to launch today.

With financial support and technical assistance from the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD's)/ African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators (NEPAD/ASTII), series of training workshops were hosted in Namibia. The first national training workshop on STI data collection and Indicators took place on 12 - 14 August 2014, to impart skills for conducting R & D and Innovation surveys among government officials dealing with scientific research and innovation programmatic activities and experts who are actively involved in STI matters and national surveys. The second workshop was Training of Trainers on STI Data Collection and Indicators which took place on 2-4 December 2014 with participants from NCRST, NSA and UNAM who formed part of the core survey team. The third workshop took place on 17 July 2015 and was conducted for enumerators as well as research and technology institutions for STI Indicators and related instruments. Furthermore, the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) located within the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) also provided human capacity assistance on the surveys' data interpretation and the STI indicators report writing as part of implementation of the action plan of Namibia and South Africa Bilateral Agreement on Science and Technology.

The survey launch

The survey was launched by Honourable Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi, Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation in September 2015 who delivered a key note speech which was reported on the National

Broadcasting Cooperation (NBC) and One Africa Television to roll out the data collection process. Further, during the data collection period, an advertisement was aired for two weeks on the Television where Honourable Dr Itah Kandjii-Murangi called on stakeholders to participate in the surveys and emphasised the importance of developing STI indicators for the country.

Data Collection

A research team consisting of senior researchers and team leader worked together to ensure that field operations started and ended without bottlenecks. Enumerators were trained to probe until they were satisfied with the response given by respondents before they recorded them on the questionnaire. Questionnaires that required further clarification were identified and handed back to enumerators for follow-up.

Data Analysis and Report Writing

A robust data capturing and verification process was followed to ensure that data is free from errors before analysis. We would like to extend our gratitude to the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII), South Africa, for providing training on data analysis and report writing and for assisting the NCRST in writing up of the Report.

Certifications Official Statistics

Following the completion of the 2013/14 R&D Survey by the Survey Team which was performed during 2015/16, aggregated data, the report and other relevant documents were submitted by the NCRST to the NSA for

certification as official statistics in terms of the Statistics Act No 9 of 2011. An assessment performed on the documentations and materials submitted revealed that they follow the set standards as well as international and regional best practices. This will allow future setting up of very specific targets as well as carrying out benchmarking studies, comparing Namibia's STI policies and performance with those of other countries. We are pleased to inform you that the report has been certified as official statistics by the Statistician General.

Conclusions

Based on the experience with this project and the achievements to date, together with our partners, the NCRST will continue to rely on your commitment and support. To all who walk this road with us, thank you, and to my colleagues at the NCRST, you have done us proud.