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Namibia's Upcoming Regional Councils & Local Authorities Election slated for November 2025

The Namibian Constitution establishes three levels of government: (1) central government; (2) regional government; and (3) local government.

Why do we need three different levels of government?

As part of the central government, the President and the members of the National Assembly represent the needs of all Namibians. However, because Namibia is such a large and diverse country, it is important for government to respond to the unique issues that different communities face. This is why we have regional and local governments—these government bodies are closer to the people they serve.

Regional governments focus on the particular needs of a single region which may differ from other regions. Similarly, within regions, local governments address the needs of the people who live in a specific local authority.

Therefore, it is very important that Namibians elect people who will represent their communities well. On November 26, Namibia will hold Regional Councils and Local Authorities Elections for these bodies of government.

These elections are governed by Namibian law. According to the Electoral Act No. 5 of 2014, elections must be held for regional and local government every five years and the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) organise and supervise these elections to ensure that they are free and fair.

Namibians will cast paper ballots in the November 2025 Regional Councils and Local Authorities Elections.

However, before we head to our polling stations, we must understand the role of local and regional governments so we can make informed decisions about who should represent us.

Regional Councils:

The Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcations Commission, which is appointed by the President with the approval of the National Assembly, provides recommendations for how Namibia's regions are divided. The most recent report from this Commission came in January 2025.

Right now, there are 14 regions in Namibia. Each region is divided into smaller sections called constituencies, of which there are now 121. There must be at least six constituencies per region, but not more than 12.

The voters in each constituency elect one person to represent them on their regional council. The person elected must go live in that constituency if he or she is not already resident there. This requirement helps make sure that the regional government remains close to the people and their interests.

Each regional council must select three of its members to represent the region in the National Council. Each representative to the National Council will serve for five years.

Regional Councils work together with the National Planning Commission to make a development plan which will guide growth and development in each region. Regional councils also help local governments in the region. The President or Parliament can assign other duties to regional councils as necessary.

Local Councils:

There are three kinds of local authorities: villages, towns and municipalities. Depending on the financial resources and capacity to provide services to the people, the Namibian president decides how to classify each local authority. Municipalities have the most responsibility over services, followed by towns, and then villages.

Village councils have five members, Town councils have 7-12 members and municipal councils have 7-15 members – depending on the size of the local authority. These councils are tasked with managing and maintaining the area for which they are established and addressing any issues within their jurisdictions. The local authorities are the closest tier of government to the people. They are vital to the effective administration and development of Namibia's cities, towns, and villages. Local councils represent the interests of their communities, enact by-laws, and ensure local participation in governance.

Elections for local authority councils are held every five years on the basis of party lists. This means that people cast their vote for a political party rather than an individual.

Each party or organization that receives votes will take people from its party list to fill the number of seats on the council which is proportional to the number of votes it received during the election.

Voters and individuals on party lists must have been living in that local authority for at least one year.

Both regional and local governments are essential to Namibian democracy. The division of responsibilities allows regional councils to address broader regional development while local authorities manage day-to-day service delivery to communities.

The November 26 elections will see Namibians elect new representatives to regional and local government across the country. It is important that Namibians understand the power that both regional and local government have in meeting the needs of communities across Namibia and exercise their constitutional right to vote for our leaders.

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