

The NETS Building Project

Building now for the future of gospel ministry in Namibia

NETS Vision

To equip Christians with knowledge and skills to live godly lives and serve the Church and the wider community

History of NETS

NETS was established in 1991 (shortly after Namibian Independence) by a merger of three institutions. Since that time NETS has offered ministry and theological training on Certificate, Diploma and Degree levels. NETS serves 16 different local Christian denominations as well as para-church organisations by training their people for ministry.

NETS is the only Bible school where the people of Namibia can receive accredited, evangelical theological education. This can be either full-time or part-time, done residentially or by distance, from grass-roots level to honours degree (BTh Honours). Currently, there are 23 full-time residential students studying at higher levels and more than 400 active distance students at the lower levels. NETS is the only recognized institution where students can study theology in Namibian vernacular languages.

NETS is rightly proud of its graduates who have been equipped for a variety of Christian ministries since 1991. Tremendous progress has been made over that time in improving standards and in contextualising the curricula to suit Namibia's particular needs. One area though, in which progress has been much slower than we would like, is in establishing a sustainable financial base for the ministry.

The Need - Vision and rationale

NETS has always relied very heavily on the use of overseas missionaries as lecturers, and the support of overseas donors for students scholarships. This support is a positive expression of Christian fellowship across nations and cultures and as such is to be celebrated. It also continues to be crucial in enabling the study of Namibians who otherwise would have no way of affording theological training.

An unchecked reliance on external financial support though, can lead to an unhealthy dependence. The budgeting and priorities of an organization can be

compromised by factors outside of its control. Growth and maturity can be stunted. NETS must avoid these unwanted consequences.

It is also important for the effective ministry of NETS, that the majority of staff are locals. Namibians have the capacity to understand the issues and the people in Namibia much better than foreigners do. Namibians themselves must have the opportunity to shape, develop and lead the ministry training of the next generation in this country. This means that NETS must find, train and properly support godly and able Namibians. Over recent years much has been done to find and train the right people, it is time now to ensure that they will also be financially provided for in a sustainable way.

To ensure that NETS does not stagnate in dependence on overseas money and staff, it is important that we establish a sustainable income stream from within Namibia. This will allow the seminary to train and retain more Namibian staff and to fund development in directions best suited to the Namibian context.

As we have explored various options for generating this income stream, it has become obvious to us that the remaining land on the NETS campus is our most significant untapped financial resource. Due to covenants on the land, it may not be sold for profit and can only be used for institutional or residential purposes. Given these constraints, and a chronic shortage of rental properties in Windhoek, we have decided to develop residential housing on the property to generate income in the form of rent.

Some of the key advantages to this approach in our context are;

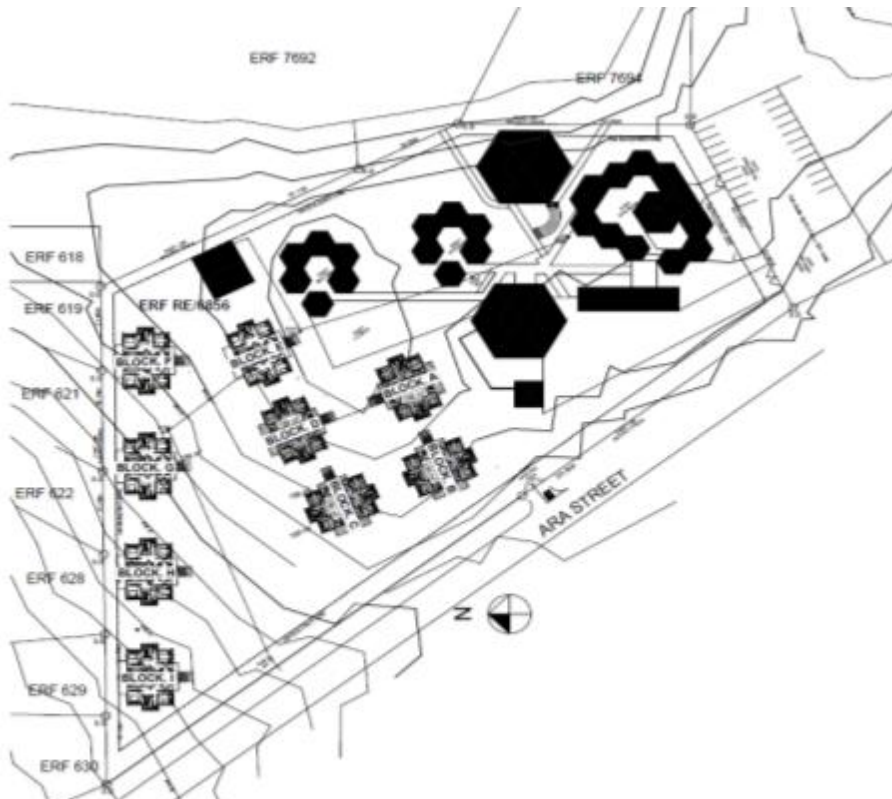
- As rental prices generally keep pace with inflation, the income stream will remain relatively constant in 'real terms', which makes forward planning easier.
- As far as investments go, property which may not be sold provides a high degree of transparency in financial management.
- In addition to securing finances for NETS, this development gives NETS an opportunity to bear gospel witness in the community that it generates.
- The blocks of housing can be built one at a time as funds become available, avoiding the need to accumulate debt.

Each block of four units that is constructed will provide sufficient rental income to cover the costs of one full-time staff member.

The first block (already under construction) will pay for a new Senior Lecturer
The second block will pay for a new Namibian Principal (replacing a missionary)
The third block will pay for a new Director of Distance Education (replacing a missionary)

The next five blocks will gradually take away the dependence on foreign income to underwrite the operations of NETS, and allow the expansion of the Seminary's programmes.

Pictures & Plans



Site plan showing existing buildings in black and the proposed developments marked as blocks A-I



Work to clear the land for the first block began in June 2103



The rental income from each one of these blocks will fund a Namibian staff member in perpetuity

The good news so far

NETS has now employed the first of the additional Namibian staff due to be funded through this building initiative. Berdian Beukes holds a Master's Degree in Pastoral Theology and has five years' experience as the national director of an organization caring for AIDS orphans. He has a passion for not only training new ministers of the gospel, but also for supporting and encouraging those already in ministry to persevere with joy. He is married to Juliet with two young children. Berdian joined the faculty in July 2013 as a Senior Lecturer.

Opportunity to partner with us

For 20 years NETS has relied on the constant drip of overseas funding for its survival. Can you help us to secure the income of a Namibian who will equip more Namibians for gospel service?

The aim of the NETS building project is to provide an effective and sustainable source of income from within Namibia to support the training of Christian men and women now and in the future.

The single biggest limitation of the ministry of NETS has been the financial inability to employ and care for godly and gifted Namibian staff.

Every building constructed will provide sufficient income to sustain one permanent staff member for the foreseeable future. This staff member's salary will therefore no longer be dependent on foreign donors or expensive tuition cost

Risk assessment

The land to be developed is part of the existing NETS Campus and has been owned by NETS without debt for more than 20 years. The plan is for the properties to be built debt free one at a time as funds become available.

Namibia is still one of the least urbanised countries in Africa and Windhoek is the only city in the country. As the population in Windhoek continues to grow, it is expected that demand for rental properties will remain strong.

The projected rental income has been calculated conservatively, but over a long period rents fluctuate in real terms and the projected income may be less than what is anticipated at some points. Over the last ten years in Windhoek rental rates have been rising at 10-17% per annum (and housing prices at even higher rates). That rate of growth cannot be expected to continue, but it is reasonable to expect rental rises generally in line with inflation.

Investment Security

NETS is situated on a large piece of land near the center of Windhoek. The land was given to NETS in 1991 and is covenanted to be used only for Christian ministries. The land cannot be sold for profit and must be used for institutional

or residential purposes. In essence this means the buildings can not be sold off at any point.

The flats can be used as accommodation for any person with a connection to NETS as an institution or any other tertiary student. NETS is allowed to stipulate that residents must be prepared to sign our statement of faith and submit to our code of conduct. NETS is within walking distance of three other tertiary institutions and a short taxi ride from the national university. As NETS grows we hope to one day, under God, fill these new flats with NETS staff and students studying the word of God. Until that time we can use the rental money from other students to employ Namibian academic staff and thereby subsidize the tuition fees for all NETS students.

Return on Investment

Each block of four units will cost N\$1.8million to build and will generate N\$24,000 per month(N\$288,000 per year) in rental income. (6.25%pa)

There is room for up to 8 of these blocks on the NETS site. If all 8 blocks were built, they would generate in excess of N\$2.3million per year, and this figure would rise with inflation. This level of income would mean that the ongoing operations of NETS could be funded without recourse to overseas donations.

Contact us

Please contact us if you have any questions or need any more information.

Rev. Simon Gillham (Principal) is overseeing this exciting project and would be very happy to share the vision and the opportunities with you
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Lynette Beukes (Office Manager) will be able to answer any questions you have regarding financial arrangements
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