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Which emotional intelligence skill matters most in effective leadership?

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THE

BR/EF

News Worth Knowing



ECB bans weekend power disconnections, introduces mandatory 24-hour notice

TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2026

MAIN STORY

ECB bans weekend power disconnections, introduces mandatory 24-hour notice

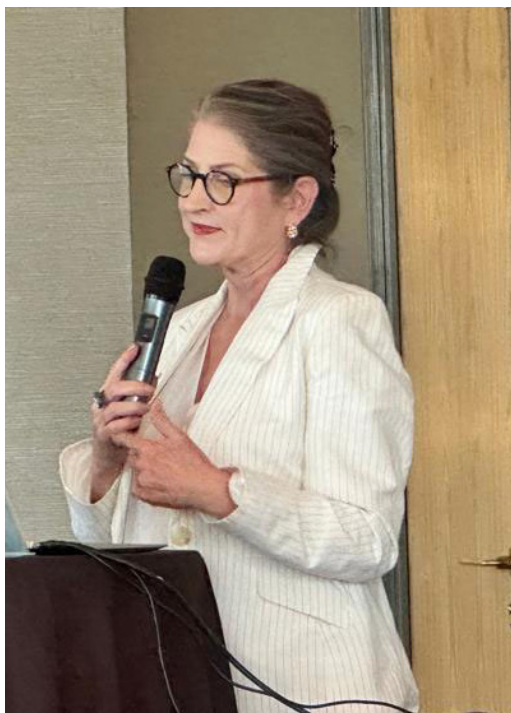
Power utilities are now prohibited from disconnecting electricity supply to the public without prior notice, while disconnections on Fridays and weekends have been banned under new rules introduced by the Electricity Control Board (ECB).

The updated regulations, which revise the 2016 regulatory framework, apply to all licensees, including Regional Electricity Distributors (REDs), municipalities and NamPower. The changes are aimed at strengthening consumer protection while improving regulatory enforcement across the electricity sector.

Under the new rules, power utilities are required to provide customers with at least 24 hours' notice before disconnecting electricity supply for non-payment.

The prohibition on Friday and weekend disconnections is intended to prevent consumers from being left without electricity at times when they are unable to settle accounts or contact service providers.

Speaking at a validation workshop for the draft tariff methodology, ECB Consultant Jackie Scholtz said the revised framework represents a shift from lengthy criminal proceedings towards a more responsive administrative penalty system designed to improve accountability in the



Crucial Dates

- **Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:**
 - * 18 February 2026
 - * 22 April 2026
 - * 17 June 2026
 - * 12 August 2026
 - * 21 October 2026
 - * 02 December 2026
- **Namibia Oil and Gas Conference 18–21 August 2026 in Windhoek**

energy sector.

“They also allow for the imposition of administrative penalties for non-compliance. This is intended to ensure a more effective regulatory response. A once-off fine for non-compliance may be imposed, which does not have to be applied in every case but can be up to N\$50,000, depending on the gravity of the breach. In addition, ongoing penalties of up to N\$5,000 per day may be imposed for as long as the non-compliance continues,” Scholtz said.

She said the penalties are aimed at addressing critical operational failures, including financial mismanagement, failure to ring-fence electricity accounts from other municipal funds, illegal customer disconnections and failure to comply with formal ECB directives.

The framework also strengthens enforcement measures available to utilities against consumer-level violations. Licensees will be permitted to incorporate ECB-approved penalties into their tariffs to address offences such as meter tampering, illegal bypassing or interference with measuring equipment, and unauthorised reconnections following lawful suspension of supply.

“Under the new, more durable and more detailed enforcement regime, the focus will shift towards administrative penalties. This will enable the regulator to issue various types of directives to customers or licensees in the event of non-compliance. It also allows for the imposition of administrative penalties for such violations,” Scholtz said.

The ECB said the new enforcement framework will enable the regulator to impose fines of up to N\$50,000 on power utilities that fail to comply with national economic and regulatory standards, as part of efforts to strengthen oversight and improve service delivery across the sector.



GIPF
Government Institutions
Pension Fund
To guard, and to grow.

INVITATION TO BID

The Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF) was established to provide retirement benefits to employees in the service of the Namibian Government and other participating public institutions. The Fund's membership includes active members and a variety of annuitants. The Government Institutions Pension Fund's mission is to safeguard and grow the Fund for the benefit of its stakeholders and Namibia.

GIPF hereby invites qualified, competent and registered companies to submit bids for the under-mentioned:

Bid Number	Bid Description	Non-refundable Document Fee	Enquiries	Closing Date
CS/RFP/ GIPF01/2026	Maturity Level of Compliance at GIPF	N/A	Julia Shipanga E: jshipanga@gipf.com.na T: +264 61 205 1745	04 March 2026 at 12:00 p.m.

Details of Bid Submission:
Sealed bids citing the bid number and detailing the services to be rendered should be posted or hand delivered to:

The Chairperson: GIPF Procurement Committee
GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS PENSION FUND
GIPF House, Ground Floor, Reception
Corner of Dr Kenneth David Kaunda and Goethe Street
P.O. Box 23500
Windhoek, Namibia

Proposals received after the deadlines will not be considered.

www.gipf.com.na



Namibia regains preferential US trade access under AGOA



Namibia has regained preferential market access for its exports to the United States until 31 December 2026 under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

The extension follows the lapse of AGOA at the end of September 2025 and reinstates duty-free and quota-free access for eligible goods from Namibia and other qualifying Sub-Saharan African countries.

According to the Ministry of International Relations and Trade (MIRT) Executive Director, Ndiitah Ngipondoka-Robiati, Namibia has welcomed the renewal, noting that it applies retroactively.

This means Namibian exporters can

once again benefit from duty-free treatment on eligible shipments made after the programme's initial expiration, provided all AGOA requirements are met.

"The Ministry welcomes the decision by the United States Government to approve a short-term extension of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) until 31 December 2026. This renewal reinstates important preferential market access for Namibia and other eligible Sub-Saharan

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VACANCIES



Namdeb Diamond Corporation invites interested individuals to be part of alluvial mining operations that offer unique challenges for professionals who wish to be part of a world-class operation.

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The closing date: 27 FEBRUARY 2026

Previously disadvantaged individuals are encouraged to apply.

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NAMDEB
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Namibia & AGOA: Restoring Trade Ties to 2026

Namibia has regained duty-free and quota-free access to the United States market through the extension of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), valid until December 31, 2026, removing significant trade barriers.

**Access Secured
Until Dec 31, 2026**

The renewal provides a short-term restoration of preferential market access for eligible goods.

**Retroactive
Duty-Free Treatment**

Exporters can benefit from duty-free status on shipments made after the 2025 expiration.

**Duty-Free &
Quota-Free Access**

Reinstates unrestricted access for eligible Sub-Saharan African products into the U.S.

Economic Impact & Industry Benefits

**Removal of
15% Tariffs**

High costs imposed during the program's lapse are now eliminated for Namibian exporters.

Priority Export Sectors

Agriculture, fisheries, and manufactured goods like diamonds regain their competitive edge.

**Stabilizing
National Earnings**

The extension is designed to support local jobs and ensure business continuity.

Trade Environment:
During Lapse vs. Under 2026 Extension

Trade Factor	During AGOA Lapse	Under 2026 Extension
Import Tariffs	Up to 15%	0% (Duty-Free)
Market Access	Restricted	Quota-Free
Business Outlook	Uncertain	Stabilized Earnings

carries benefits for Namibia’s export-oriented sectors, with key industries such as agriculture, fisheries and manufactured goods, including diamonds, regaining preferential access to the US market. During the lapse period, some Namibian exports were subject to tariffs of up to 15%, costs that are now removed under the renewed arrangement.

She said the extension is expected to help stabilise export earnings, support jobs and ensure business continuity for enterprises that rely on trade with the United States. However, Robiati cautioned that a one-year renewal does not provide sufficient long-term certainty. The government will continue engaging with US authorities and regional partners to advocate for a longer-term and more predictable trade framework that supports Namibia’s development and industrialisation objectives.

“The Government of Namibia will continue to work closely with exporters and stakeholders to maximise the benefits of AGOA during this extension period. At the same time, the Namibia Government will actively engage with US authorities and regional partners to advocate for a longer-term, sustainable trade framework that supports Namibia’s development and industrialisation goals,” she said.

African countries, following the programme’s expiration at the end of September 2025,” she said.

Robiati said the short-term extension

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FNB Namibia launches group savings account allowing up to 90 members



FNB Namibia has launched a new digital group savings account, weSave, which allows groups of up to 90 members to save collectively through a regulated banking platform, formalising existing community-based saving practices.

FNB said the account is derived from the Southern African tradition of community-based savings, better known as stokvels. weSave allows groups of between three and 90 members to commit to saving a fixed amount over a defined period towards a shared goal.

According to the bank, the product is designed to support milestones such as education, special occasions, business

ventures and other collective financial objectives.

FNB Namibia Chief Executive Officer for Retail, Mbo Luvindao, said the product builds on long-standing community saving practices while introducing security and convenience through digital banking.

“weSave is not new to us. As Africans, we have always relied on the strength of community, whether it is raising our children, supporting our families or planning for

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Applications are invited for the following positions:

☐ **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT MANAGER (Band 6) – STRATEGIC PROJECTS**
REF77193N

Interested candidates should upload CVs with supporting documents to
https://smrtr.io/x5H_F

The closing date: 27 FEBRUARY 2026

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the future. weSave formalises a practice that already exists, while giving our customers a secure, digital and interest-bearing platform to save together with confidence,” Luvindao said.

He said the product leverages mobile and online banking channels to reduce traditional barriers to group saving and increase participation in structured financial practices across different customer groups.

The bank said the account offers no monthly fees, interest earned on balances from N\$100, immediate access through FNB Digital Banking, notifications to all group members, free ATM deposits, and free balance and statement enquiries. Capital is guaranteed and returns are quoted.

“At FNB Namibia, innovation is not about creating products for the sake of it. It is about listening to our customers and responding with solutions that genuinely improve their financial wellbeing. weSave is a clear expression of our promise to meet customers where they are, honour their realities, and walk with them as they build a more secure financial future together,”

Luvindao added.

The launch follows the bank’s Collective Buying product, which enables joint property purchases, and forms part of FNB Namibia’s broader strategy to align banking solutions with existing Namibian community practices.

FNB Namibia said weSave forms part of its digital-first approach aimed at deepening financial inclusion and expanding access to formal savings solutions across the country.



Notice is hereby given in terms of section 63(2)(b) of the Local Authorities Act, 1992 (Act 23/1992), that the Municipality of Walvis Bay intends to sell, by private transaction, Portion 8 of Farm 58 to **Cleanergy Solutions Namibia (Pty) Ltd** or Nominee.

DESCRIPTION	AREA (m²)	PURCHASE PRICE
PTN 8 of Farm 58	175,0311 m²	N\$ 48 133 552,50 plus 15% VAT

Full particulars pertaining to the sale will lie for inspection by interested persons until **Friday, 20 February 2026** at **room 29, Municipal Offices, Kuisebmond**.

For more information **Mrs Selma Satchipia** can be contacted at telephone **(064) 2013232** during office hours.

Written objections, duly motivated, to the intended transaction must be received by the undersigned before or at **12:00 Wednesday, 25 February 2026**.

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GENERAL MANAGER: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Municipal Offices
Civic Centre
Nangolo Mbumba Drive
Private Bag 5017
WALVIS BAY
Fax: (064) 209 714

Which emotional intelligence skill matters most in effective leadership?

By Fenni Nghikevali

For decades, leadership was largely defined by intellect, experience, and technical competence. The assumption was simple: “the smartest person in the room would naturally make the best leader”.

In modern times, leadership success is being measured less by what leaders know and more by how they show up. Rather than debating whether emotional intelligence matters in leadership, a recent leadership poll on the FENomenal® Leadership LinkedIn page explored a more practical question:

“Which emotional intelligence skill matters most in effective leadership?”

1. 43% of respondents: Self-awareness
2. 23% of respondents: Emotional regulation
3. 20% of respondents: Relationship management
4. 14% of respondents: Empathy

A closer look at the results reveals a deeper understanding of what leadership truly demands in practice.

Self-awareness (43%): The foundation of effective leadership

That self-awareness emerged as the most valued skill (43% ranking) is no coincidence. Leaders are constantly observed in how they respond to pressure, handle conflict, make decisions, and engage with others. Their behaviour sets the emotional tone for the organisation.

A leader may possess strong qualifications and technical expertise, yet still undermine trust and morale if they lack self-awareness.



Leadership is exercised through interactions with people.

Without an understanding of their own triggers, blind spots, strengths, and limitations, leaders risk making reactive decisions and damaging relationships.

Self-aware leaders recognise when emotions such as fear, frustration, or ego are influencing their judgement. Importantly, self-awareness allows leaders to receive feedback, reflect honestly, and grow continuously.

Emotional regulation (23%): Leadership under pressure

The second-highest ranking skill (23%), emotional regulation, highlights another critical leadership reality: leadership is inherently demanding.

Leaders operate in environments characterised by competing priorities, tight deadlines, scrutiny, and constant change. Boards challenge decisions, teams make mistakes, and crises emerge unexpectedly. In these moments, leaders are not judged by their intentions, but by their responses.

Leaders who struggle to regulate their emotions may react defensively, become withdrawn, or respond impulsively. Over time, such behaviour creates uncertainty and fear, discouraging open communication and engagement.

By contrast, emotionally regulated leaders provide stability. They pause before reacting,

communicate thoughtfully, and maintain composure during difficult conversations. This does not mean suppressing emotion, but rather managing it constructively. Emotional regulation enables leaders to create environments where people feel safe to contribute, perform, and innovate.

Relationship management (20%): Leadership through influence

That relationship management (20%) ranked closely behind emotional regulation reinforces a fundamental truth: leadership is relational.

Leadership is exercised through interactions with people. Even the most capable leaders cannot succeed in isolation. Progress depends on trust, collaboration, and effective communication.

Strong relationship management allows leaders to navigate conflict productively, align diverse interests, and maintain professional respect even when disagreements arise. Poor relationship management, on the other hand, often manifests as disengagement, silos, and unresolved tension.

Leaders who invest in building and sustaining relationships create alignment and shared ownership of outcomes. In doing so, leadership becomes less about authority and more about influence.

Empathy (14%): Rethinking empathy in leadership

Empathy ranking lowest (14%) does not diminish its importance, but rather invites reflection on how it is applied in leadership. Empathy alone does not guarantee effectiveness. A leader may understand others' perspectives yet avoid difficult conversations, fail to set boundaries, or

hesitate to enforce accountability.

Effective leadership empathy is not about avoiding discomfort or being universally liked. It is about understanding people while still making principled, sometimes difficult decisions. When empathy is grounded in self-awareness and supported by emotional regulation, it strengthens leadership rather than undermines it.

The leadership imperative

The poll results point to a clear conclusion: emotional intelligence is not optional for leadership. It is a core capability that shapes decision-making, communication, and influence. In a world marked by uncertainty, rapid change, and increasing human complexity, technical competence alone is no longer sufficient. Leaders are expected to understand themselves, manage emotions responsibly, build healthy relationships, and lead with intention.

Emotional intelligence does not replace expertise, it amplifies it.

****Fenni Nghikevali is the Founder & CEO of the FENomenal® Leadership brand in Namibia. This article is written in her personal capacity as a leadership enthusiast***

Public Discussion

The National Budget at a Pivotal Moment:
Choices, Trade-offs and Economic Direction

Tuesday, 17 February 2026 | 18h00–20h00
 Hilton Hotel, Windhoek



Salomo Hei
 Managing Director,
 High Economic Intelligence
 & EAH Associate Member
 (Presenter)



Helena Mboti
 Group Economist,
 Standard Bank
 Namibia
 (Panelist)



Jesaya Hano-Oshike
 Vice-Chairperson,
 EAH
 (Panelist)



Floris Bergh
 Chief Economist,
 Capricorn Asset
 Management
 (Panelist)



Livestream:
 Economic Association of
 Namibia Facebook Page



Puma Energy, BHL to move 3 million litres of fuel monthly under new Namibia–Zambia transport deal

Puma Energy and BHL Group have signed a five-year fuel transport agreement expected to move around three million litres of fuel per month between Namibia and Zambia.

The first deliveries are scheduled to begin in March, with fuel to be transported from Walvis Bay to Solwezi and other Zambian hubs. The return leg will carry copper exports back through Namibia.

The companies said the partnership is

expected to enhance fuel supply security for industrial, mining and retail customers in Zambia, while improving operational efficiency along one of Southern Africa's key trade routes. BHL Group Chief Executive Officer Buks Jansen van Rensburg said the agreement aligns with the company's focus on providing logistics solutions that support industrial growth.

"We specialise in providing reliable logistics solutions that drive industrial

growth. Our partnership with Puma Energy is a natural extension of this vision, leveraging our logistical capabilities for both copper and fuel transport across Southern Africa,” van Rensburg said.

Puma Energy Head of Africa Ben Ouattara said the partnership would strengthen supply reliability and operational resilience.

“This partnership is a vital step forward in ensuring secure, safe and reliable supplies for our mining and retail customers in Zambia. The expanded fuel transport routes will not only strengthen our operational resilience but also reinforce the Zambia–Namibia trade corridor, an essential driver of regional economic growth,” Ouattara said.

The companies also confirmed that an In-Vehicle Monitoring System (IVMS) will be installed across the vehicle fleet to improve real-time monitoring of driver behaviour and promote safer operating practices.

Puma Energy operates in more than 35 countries worldwide, primarily across Central America and Sub-Saharan Africa, supplying fuels, aviation

products, lubricants, liquefied petroleum gas and bitumen as part of its downstream energy business.

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John Steytler and Helvi Fillipus appointed to BoN Monetary Policy Committee

The Bank of Namibia has appointed Dr John Steytler and Helvi Fillipus as new members of its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), in line with its mandate to formulate and implement monetary policy aimed at safeguarding price stability under Section 28 of the Bank of Namibia Act.

Dr Steytler has been appointed as the first independent member of the MPC for a three-year term. A former senior official of the Bank of Namibia, where he served as Chief Economist and Director of Research, he brings more than three

decades of national and international experience to the committee.

His career includes serving as Chief Executive Officer of the Development Bank of Namibia, Economic Advisor to the President and founding Statistician General and Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Statistics Agency.

Internationally, he served as Senior Advisor to the Executive Director of Africa Group 1 Constituency at the International Monetary Fund, contributing to macroeconomic stability initiatives in countries including The

Gambia, Botswana, Zambia and Sudan.

Fillipus, currently an Economic Advisor at the Bank of Namibia, joins the MPC as its youngest member. She brings experience in central banking, macroeconomic research, financial markets and public finance, having progressed through various roles at the Bank, including Researcher in the Research Department and Deputy Director for Investments and Domestic Markets in the Financial Markets Department.

She previously served as Economic Advisor to the Minister of Finance, where she contributed to fiscal policy development through the compilation of the national budget.

Bank of Namibia Governor Ebson Unguta said the additions strengthen the Bank's ability to deliver on its mandate.

"Our mandate to safeguard price stability is vital to maintaining the value

of the Namibia Dollar as it circulates in the hands of everyday Namibians. Achieving this sets a strong foundation for all economic actors to collaborate towards sustainable growth, development and diversification of our economy. The addition of the two MPC members injects new ideas and diverse perspectives into the Committee, propelling the Bank forward. Most importantly, it bolsters our commitment as we rethink and sharpen our policy tools to prepare the central bank to embrace the new economy, which will be driven by transformation in the energy sector, technological advancement and digital innovation," Unguta said.

The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for setting monetary policy aimed at maintaining price stability and supporting sustainable economic growth in Namibia.



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Part I: Cracking the code: How the code of good practice on preferences is reshaping public procurement in Namibia

By Lorenzo Iipinge

With the ushering of the 8th administration there has been a renewed call for public entities to encourage local participation in public procurement.

Recently, Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare directed all state-owned enterprises to stop importing furniture and give priority to those that are manufactured locally – the kind of pronouncements that often generate headlines but fade quietly in practice!

Once the rhetoric fades, the question that remains is whether the pronouncements by the Right Honourable Ngurare amount to genuine procurement reform or are merely declarations lacking in practical effect.

The reality is that such pronouncements are only credible when considered in the context of the Code of Good Practice on Preferences (“Code”) as issued in terms of section 71 and 72 of the Public Procurement Act, No. 15 of 2015 (as amended) (Public Procurement Act).

It may shock some, but the Code was actually already launched as far back as 2023 by the then Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises, Honourable Iipumbu Shiimi, with its intent of is to promote, facilitate and strengthen measures to implement empowerment and industrialisation policies.

Succinctly, the Code exists to ensure that public procurement is not just about buying goods and services. The



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Before we talk about the “preferences” mentioned in the Code, one basic rule to be remembered is that the Code does not operate as an automatic entitlement system for eligible bidders.

Code moreover aims to ensure that state spending serves as a tool to stimulate local economic development.

Before we talk about the “preferences” mentioned in the Code, one basic rule to be remembered is that the Code does not operate as an automatic entitlement system for eligible bidders.

A bidder must claim such preference and provide the necessary supporting documentation to prove the claim for preference and must in any event comply with all legal, administrative and technical requirements before any preference can actually be applied by any public entity.

Exclusive Preference

The first form of preference established by the Code is exclusive preference, which serves as a “gatekeeper” for public contracts. By defining exactly who is permitted to bid, the Code ring-fences

specific opportunities for targeted groups, including, women-owned enterprises, youth entrepreneurs, and businesses owned by previously disadvantaged persons.

The above categories are not mutually exclusive. A single bidder may qualify under multiple designations. For example, a business can be owned by a Namibian woman, who is a youth, as defined in the National Youth Council Act, No. 3 of 2009.

In such an instance, the bidder can bundle their “advantages” with each qualifying category attracting a specified percentage, which are then added together to determine a final “margin of preference”. While this cumulative benefit is subject to an overall cap of 10%, it provides a significant mechanical advantage during the bid evaluation phase.

It is however important to note that these targeted groups are not granted exclusive access to all public procurement. The “gatekeeper” only opens for specific, ring-fenced categories of public procurement which, when plainly viewed, relate to routine and high-volume needs. As defined in the Code, these include, but are not limited to:

- **Goods:** Office furniture, bottled

water, and school uniforms.

- **Services:** Cleaning, security, and catering services.
- **Works:** Basic construction projects and maintenance.

It is safe to say that government’s focus on these specific areas is a practical and well-considered move. These are sectors, which we can all accept that, local suppliers are already active and capable of delivering without needing highly specialised technology or massive global supply chains.

National preference

The second form of preference under the

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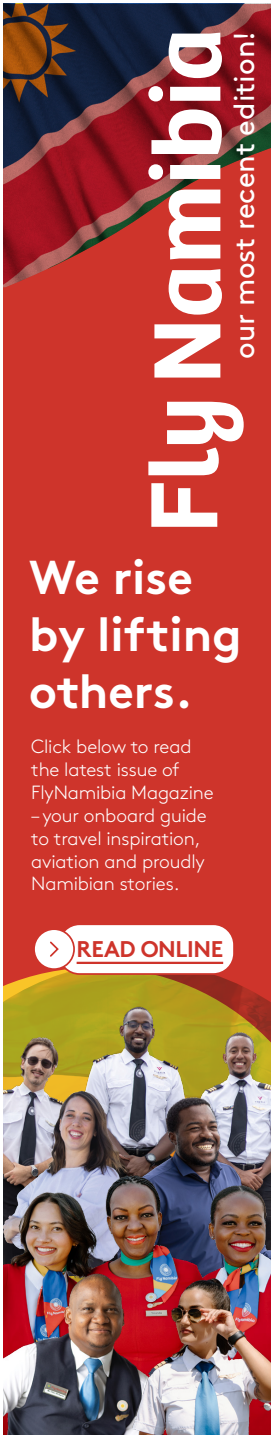
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The extent of the preference is determined by factors such as Namibian ownership and control, employment of Namibian citizens, and the use of locally produced inputs or materials.

Code is national preference where procurement is “opened up” to all bidders, including foreign and large corporate suppliers, with margins of preference being awarded at the evaluation stage through a preferential scoring system based on prescribed criteria with overall preference being limited to 10%.

The extent of the preference is determined by factors such as Namibian ownership and control, employment of Namibian citizens, and the use of locally produced inputs or materials. The specific weighting criteria differ depending on whether the procurement relates to goods, works, consultancy services or non-consultancy services. Simply, a consulting firm with foreign ownership but employs Namibian citizens still stands to benefit from the national preference system.

Ultimately, the Code reshapes public procurement through a combination of restricted access and preferential evaluation;

certain contracts are reserved for defined local suppliers, while others remain open but still reward measurable Namibian “characteristics” through margins of preference. In both instances, the system is designed to tilt competitive outcomes in favour of domestic businesses or businesses with some form of Namibian linkages, truly signalling a shift towards procurement as a tool for economic development rather than simple purchasing.

With that, the real obscurity now lies in how the “margins of preference” are practically applied and how compliance with the Code is enforced. Part II decodes this.

****Lorenzo Ipinge is a Legal Officer at a state-owned enterprise and holder of Bachelor of Laws (Hons) Degree from the University of Namibia and Postgraduate Diploma in Compliance from the University of Johannesburg.***

Standard Bank Namibia rolls out sustainability learning platform for Namibian businesses

Standard Bank Namibia has introduced the Standard Bank Sustainability Academy to the local market, an online learning platform aimed at addressing sustainability knowledge gaps and equipping businesses with practical tools to implement sustainable practices.

The bank said the initiative comes as Namibian businesses increasingly recognise the importance of sustainability but continue to face challenges in translating awareness into implementable strategies, particularly as global investors and trade partners place greater emphasis on environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance.

Gerhard Mukuahima, Head of Agribusiness at Standard Bank Namibia, said sustainability has become a critical economic consideration as the country undergoes transformation across key sectors.

“As Namibia experiences rapid transformation across key sectors such as agriculture, energy, mining and logistics, sustainability is no longer optional — it is an economic imperative. The Sustainability Academy is a timely and practical resource that empowers Namibian enterprises to future-proof their operations, reduce risk and seize new opportunities in a climate-conscious global economy,” Mukuahima said.

The academy provides training and practical insights across several priority areas, including sustainability and ESG principles, renewable energy options suited to Namibian conditions, climate-smart agriculture, water and wastewater



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management, and the use of carbon markets.

The platform has been developed in partnership with Microsoft and Philanthrosoft and is delivered through a cloud-based Community Training platform powered by Azure, enabling secure and accessible learning across the country.

Terisha Maharaj, Strategic Account Director at Microsoft, said the collaboration demonstrates how technology can expand access to learning across Africa.

“Our training platform is designed to democratise access to learning, and this collaboration perfectly exemplifies how technology can drive meaningful change across Africa. By providing Standard Bank’s clients with accessible, scalable sustainability education, we’re helping to build a more sustainable future for the continent while empowering businesses to thrive in the evolving global economy,” Maharaj said.

Standard Bank said the academy recently completed a pilot phase across several African markets, with strong uptake among business and commercial banking clients. Feedback from the pilot was used to refine the content now available to Namibian businesses.

Mukuahima said the

initiative forms part of the bank’s broader commitment to supporting businesses beyond traditional financial services.

“The Sustainability Academy forms part of Standard Bank Namibia’s commitment to going beyond traditional financial services. By providing this free learning resource, not only to our clients but to all Namibian businesses, we aim to equip users with the knowledge they need to grow sustainably, operate more efficiently and contribute meaningfully to Namibia’s nationally determined contributions,” he said.

The academy also aligns with Namibia’s broader development priorities, including green industrialisation, the energy transition, agricultural climate resilience and the Sustainable Development Goals. Standard Bank said additional partnerships with educational institutions, private sector stakeholders and public entities are planned to expand the platform’s reach.

New learning modules focusing on emerging sustainability trends, industry-specific ESG requirements and practical tools for climate resilience are expected to be introduced in the coming months.

Digital capability is reshaping opportunities in Namibia

By Willem Shikongo

Digital capability now shapes how businesses in Namibia are discovered, evaluated, and chosen. It influences which companies grow, which services gain trust, and which opportunities become visible.

Across industries, organisations that understand how people search, compare, and make decisions are outperforming those that rely on traditional reach alone.

At the same time, a large number of young Namibians are developing practical digital skills outside formal employment structures, often without clear pathways into sustainable work.

This shift is evident across the business landscape. Retailers compete for attention far beyond their physical locations. Service-based organisations, from financial services to professional consulting, are increasingly judged on clarity, responsiveness, and credibility in digital spaces.

Even companies built on long-standing relationships are first encountered online, often by audiences outside Namibia, long before a conversation takes place.

For businesses, the implications are straightforward. Understanding digital behaviour is not about trend chasing. It is about revenue.

Knowing how people search, what influences their decisions, and where friction occurs allows companies to reach customers more efficiently and refine what they offer.

Digital channels make it possible for a



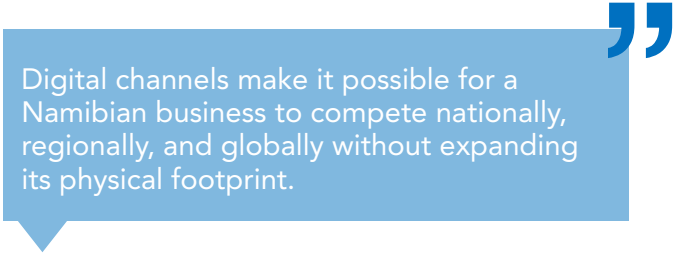
Across industries, organisations that understand how people search, compare, and make decisions are outperforming those that rely on traditional reach alone.

Namibian business to compete nationally, regionally, and globally without expanding its physical footprint. Increased relevance leads to increased demand, and demand drives growth.

This same shift is reshaping how work is created. Namibia has a young population that is already deeply engaged online. Many young people manage platforms, analyse performance, create content, and interact with audiences daily.

These skills are often developed informally and outside traditional employment pathways. What is missing in many cases is not ability, but access to organisations that know how to use these capabilities effectively.

As companies invest in stronger digital capability, new roles begin to emerge across sectors. Content creation, performance analysis, online customer engagement, platform management, and digital operations are no longer peripheral tasks. They are becoming integral to how



Digital channels make it possible for a Namibian business to compete nationally, regionally, and globally without expanding its physical footprint.

businesses function.

These roles also allow Namibian talent to contribute to organisations beyond national borders, connecting local skills to global demand.

There are wider benefits for organisations as well. Businesses that operate effectively in digital environments receive feedback faster and make decisions with greater confidence. Processes become simpler.

Customer engagement becomes more consistent. Over time, this improves efficiency and resilience, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises that must grow carefully.

None of this replaces the fundamentals of business. Retail still depends on logistics. Services still rely on trust and delivery.

What digital capability changes is the speed and precision with which businesses can connect with demand, whether that demand sits in the next town or on another continent.

For Namibia, this matters. Business growth and employment creation are closely linked.

Digital capability allows companies to scale without proportional increases in cost, while creating roles that align with skills already present in the population.

It also allows Namibian businesses and professionals to participate more actively in global value chains.

What is unfolding is not a sudden transformation, but a steady integration. Digital capability is becoming part of how businesses operate and how people participate.

Its impact is often quiet, but its effects are tangible: stronger companies, wider reach, and clearer pathways into work.

The opportunity now is to recognise this shift and act on it deliberately. The tools are available.

The skills exist. The question is whether organisations move quickly enough to turn potential into lasting value.

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