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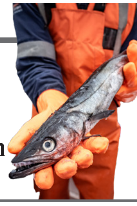

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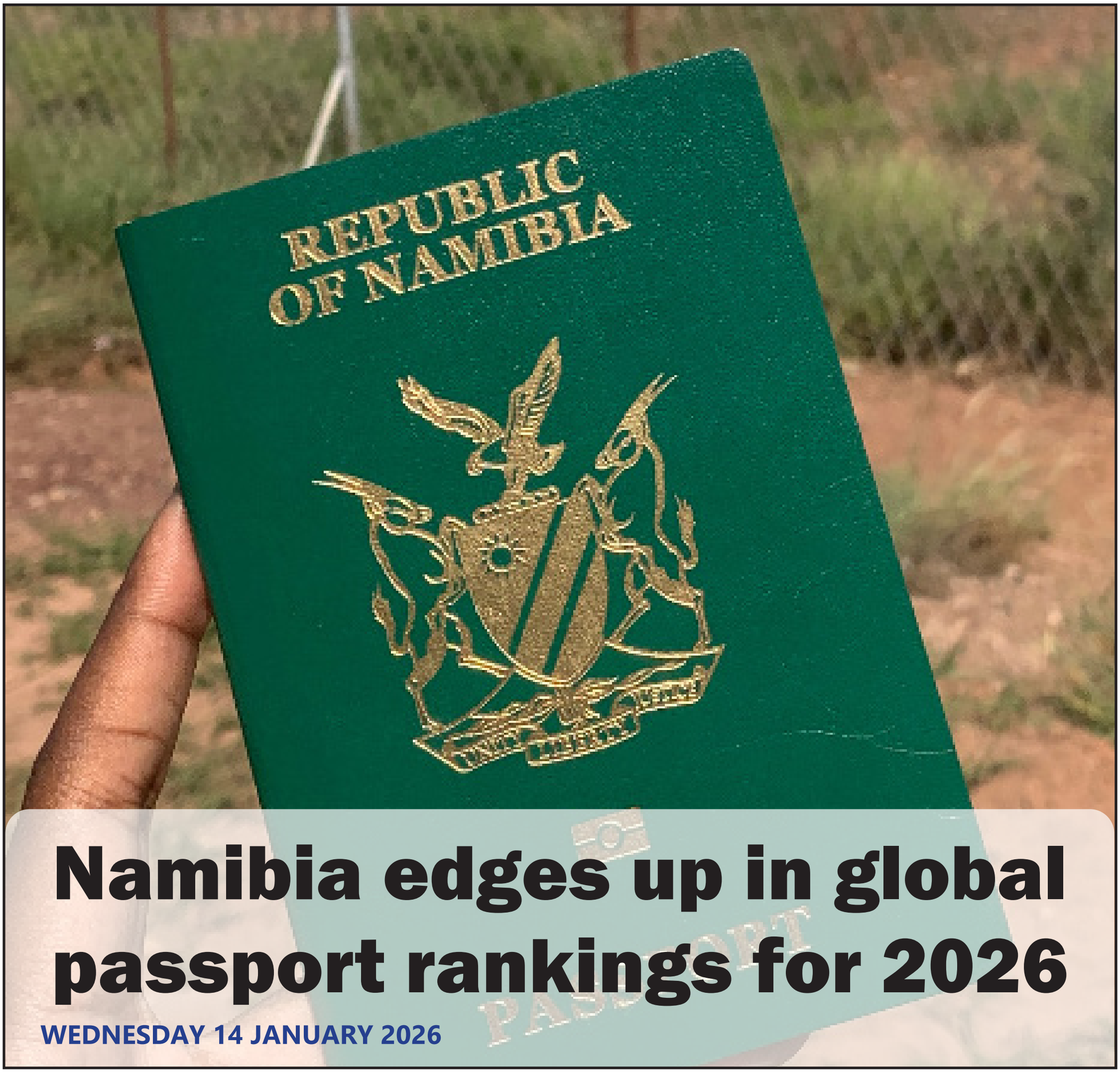
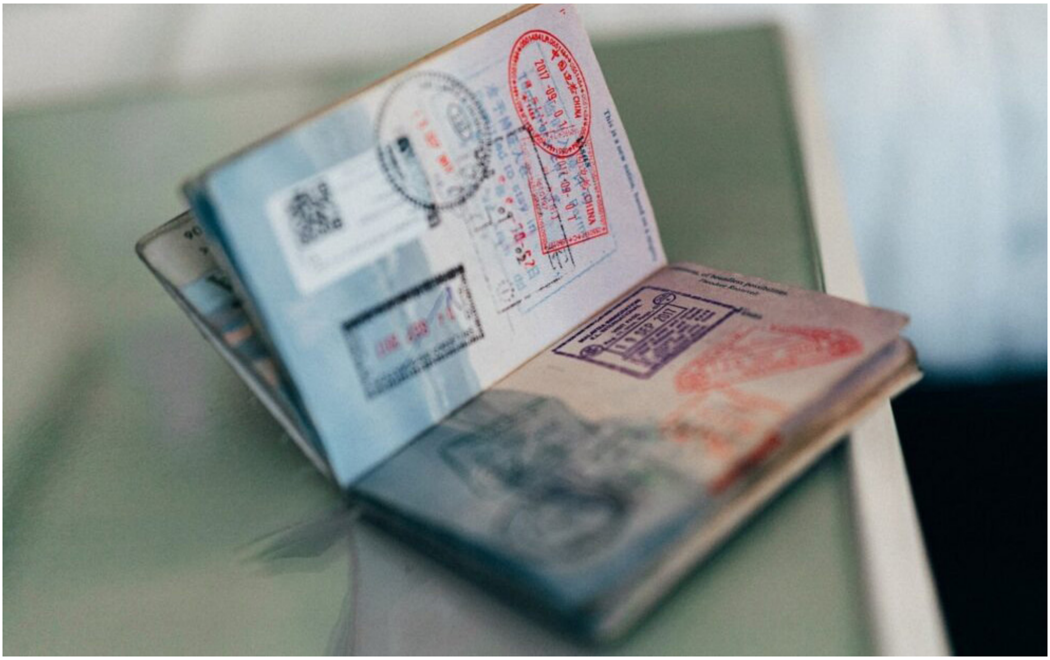


Namibia edges up in global passport rankings for 2026

WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2026

MAIN STORY



Namibia edges up in global passport rankings for 2026

Namibia's passport has improved its global standing, rising to 62nd place worldwide in the 2026 Henley Passport Index, according to data published by Henley & Partners.

The ranking gives Namibian passport holders visa-free, visa-on-arrival or electronic travel authorisation access to 76 destinations. This represents an improvement from 2025, when Namibia ranked 65th globally.

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

THE BRIEF
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Henley & Partners said Namibia ranked fifth in Africa. Seychelles remained the continent's strongest performer, placing 24th globally with access to 152 destinations, followed by Mauritius at 27th with 147 destinations.

South Africa ranked 48th worldwide, allowing access to 101 destinations, while Botswana followed at 59th with 81 destinations.

Namibia ranked ahead of Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia, but behind Africa's top four performers.

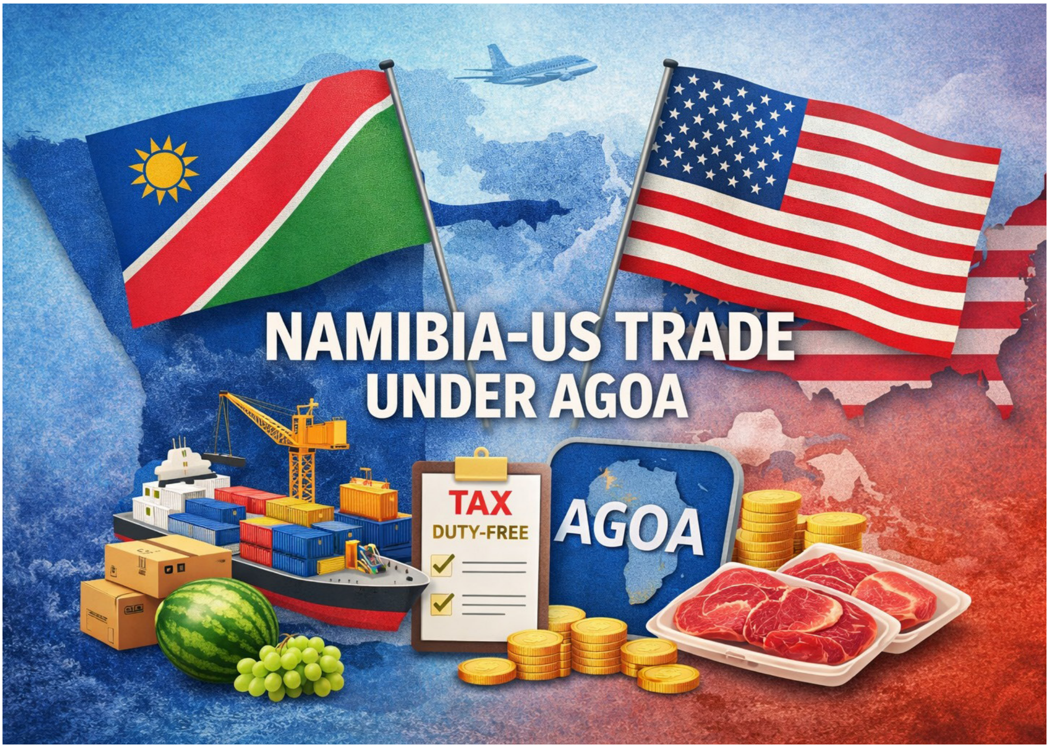
Globally, passport strength continues to be dominated by Asian and European countries, according to the index. Singapore retained its position as the world's most powerful passport for the sixth consecutive year, offering access to 192 destinations without a prior visa. Japan ranked second with access to 188 destinations.

South Korea and Denmark shared third place, each granting access to 186 destinations, while Austria ranked fourth with 185 destinations. Hungary completed the global top five, allowing entry to 184 destinations.

At the bottom of the index, Afghanistan ranked last at 101st, with access to just 24 destinations. It was followed by Syria at 100th with 26 destinations, Iraq at 99th with 29 destinations, Yemen at 98th with 31 destinations and Somalia at 97th with 33 destinations.

Henley & Partners said the Henley Passport Index is the original global ranking of passports based on the number of destinations their holders can access without obtaining a prior visa.

The ranking is compiled using data from the International Air Transport Association, which maintains one of the world's largest and most accurate travel information databases, and is supplemented by research conducted by Henley & Partners.



Namibia eyes renewed US market access as lawmakers move to extend AGOA

Namibia could be presented with a renewed opportunity to strengthen its trade relationship with the United States after the United States House of Representatives passed legislation extending the African Growth and

Opportunity Act (AGOA) through to 2028. The bill was approved by an overwhelming majority and now proceeds to the United States Senate for consideration. If enacted, the extension would preserve duty-free access to the US market for eligible products from sub-Saharan African countries, including Namibia.

The previous AGOA framework expired on 30 September 2025, after having been extended several times since 2008.

Namibia is among the designated beneficiary countries and has been working to expand its utilisation of the programme. In May 2021, the country launched its AGOA Utilisation Strategy, aimed at increasing exports to the United States, particularly value-added and agricultural products.

One of Namibia's most significant milestones under AGOA came in September 2016, when it became the first African country authorised by the United States Department of Agriculture to export raw beef and veal to the US market. Table grapes have also emerged as an important export under the programme, although both products remain subject to stringent animal and plant health requirements.

Research firm Simonis Storm previously warned that the expiry of AGOA had made it more difficult for Namibian industries such as fish processing, beef, beverages and manufactured goods to compete internationally without preferential access to the US market.

According to the firm, Namibia's direct exposure under AGOA has historically been modest, as the country's exports to the United States are largely concentrated in uranium, non-monetary gold, copper and diamonds, commodities that already attract low most-favoured-nation duties.

AGOA, formally known as the Trade and Development Act of 2000, is a unilateral US trade programme that grants preferential market access to more than 2,000 product lines in addition to those covered under the US Generalised System of Preferences.

Currently, 32 of Africa's 54 countries qualify for AGOA benefits, while 35 are actively trading under the programme.

What Namibia's grade 11 & 12 outcomes teach parents about success and failure

By Junias Erasmus

"Celebrations erupt in some households, while others are filled with silence, disappointment, and uncertainty.

Each year, the release of Namibia's Grade 11 & 12 results becomes a defining national moment. For learners, it marks the end of a demanding academic journey; for parents, it often feels like a public verdict on years of sacrifice, hope, and expectation.

Celebrations erupt in some households, while others are filled with silence, disappointment, and uncertainty.

Yet, beyond the headlines, percentages, and symbols, the Grade 11 & 12 results offer parents a deeper lesson about success, failure, and the true purpose of education.

Success, as reflected in strong Grade 11 & 12 outcomes, is often celebrated as proof of intelligence, discipline, and effective parenting. While academic achievement certainly deserves recognition, parents must be cautious not to equate results with a child's worth or potential. A good result reflects performance at a specific point in time, under specific conditions. It does not define a child's character, creativity, resilience, or future contribution to society. Parents who understand this help their children remain grounded in success, avoiding arrogance and unhealthy pressure to continuously outperform others. Equally important is how parents respond when results fall short of expectations. Failure, though painful, is not the end of the road; it is often the beginning of growth. Many successful professionals, entrepreneurs, and leaders did not follow a straight academic path. Some repeated grades, changed careers, or discovered their strengths later in life. What made the difference was not the absence of failure, but the presence of support, guidance, and belief from those closest to them. Parents play a critical role in transforming disappointment into a learning opportunity rather than a lifelong wound.

Namibia's Grade 11 & 12 outcomes also remind parents that education is not only about passing exams, but about developing well-rounded individuals. Academic results measure knowledge and exam technique, but they do not measure emotional intelligence, ethical values, problem-solving ability, or resilience. In a rapidly changing world shaped by technology, innovation, and uncertainty, these qualities are just as important as certificates. Parents who focus solely on results may unintentionally neglect the broader development of their children.

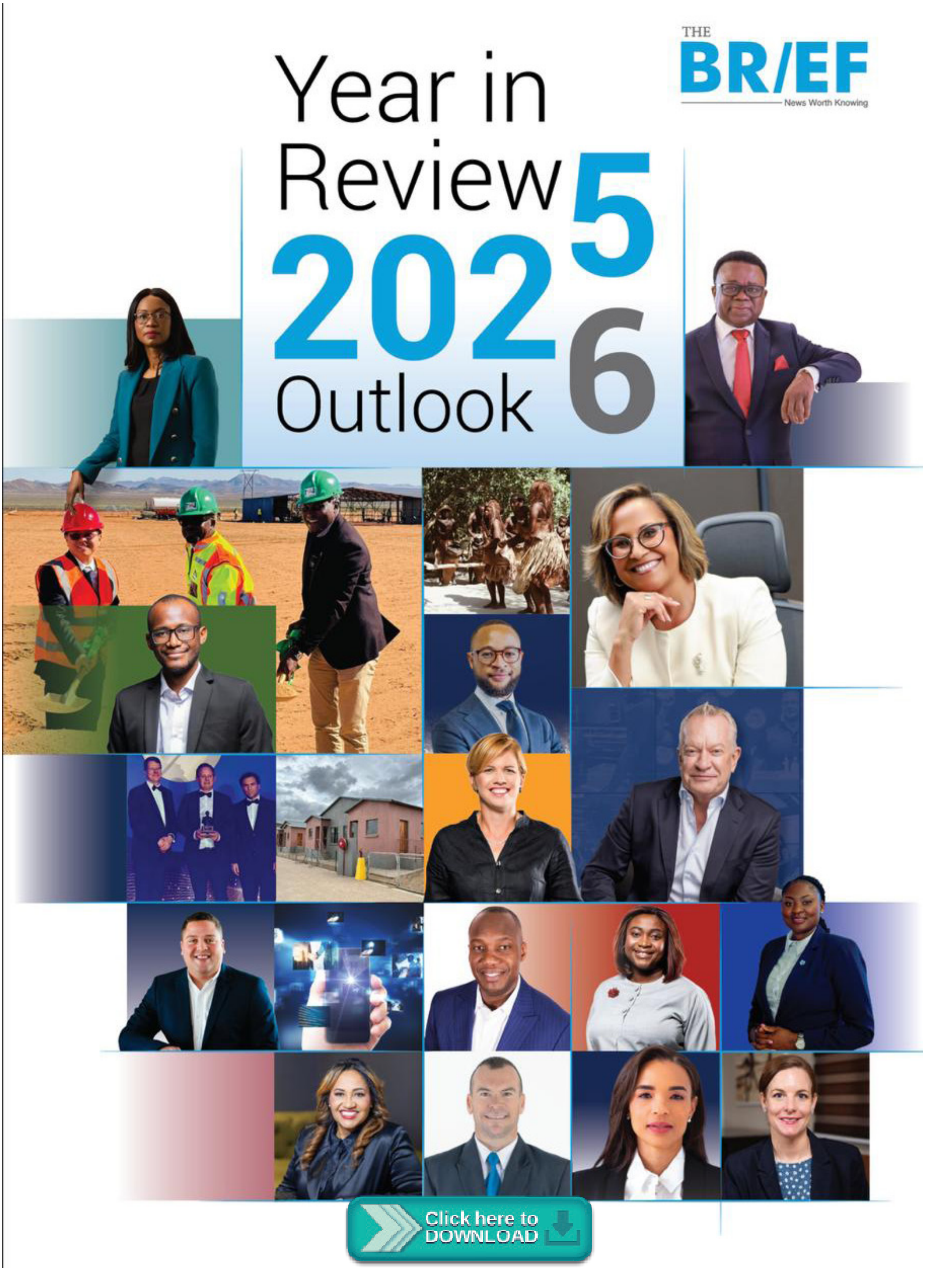
Another important lesson lies in understanding individual differences. Not every child learns in the same way or thrives in the same environment. Some excel academically, while others shine in technical skills, entrepreneurship, sports, or the creative arts. Grade 11 & 12 results should therefore be viewed as guidance, not a final destination. Parents who acknowledge their children's unique strengths help them explore alternative pathways such as vocational training, further education, entrepreneurship, or skills development, all of which are vital to Namibia's economic and social growth.

The release of results also calls for parental reflection. Beyond asking, "Did my child pass?", parents should ask, "Did I create a supportive learning environment?", "Did I listen enough?", and "Did I encourage effort more than outcomes?" Success and failure are not solely the learner's responsibility; they are influenced by home stability, emotional support, discipline, and realistic expectations. Honest self-reflection helps parents grow alongside their children.

Ultimately, Namibia's Grade 11 & 12 results are not just about learners; they are a mirror for parents and society at large. They remind us that education is a journey filled with both victories and setbacks. The true measure of parenting is not found in a results slip, but in how parents guide their children through success with humility and through failure with dignity and hope.

As parents, our greatest responsibility is not to raise perfect students, but resilient, confident, and responsible citizens. When we look beyond the results, we empower our children to believe that one exam does not define their future, character, perseverance, and support do.

****Junias Erasmus works in the Financial Sector. He is a Management Scientist and Operational Researcher, a Strategic Scholar & a Motivational Speaker. This article is written in his personal capacity. For inquiries, contact him at Junias99@gmail.com***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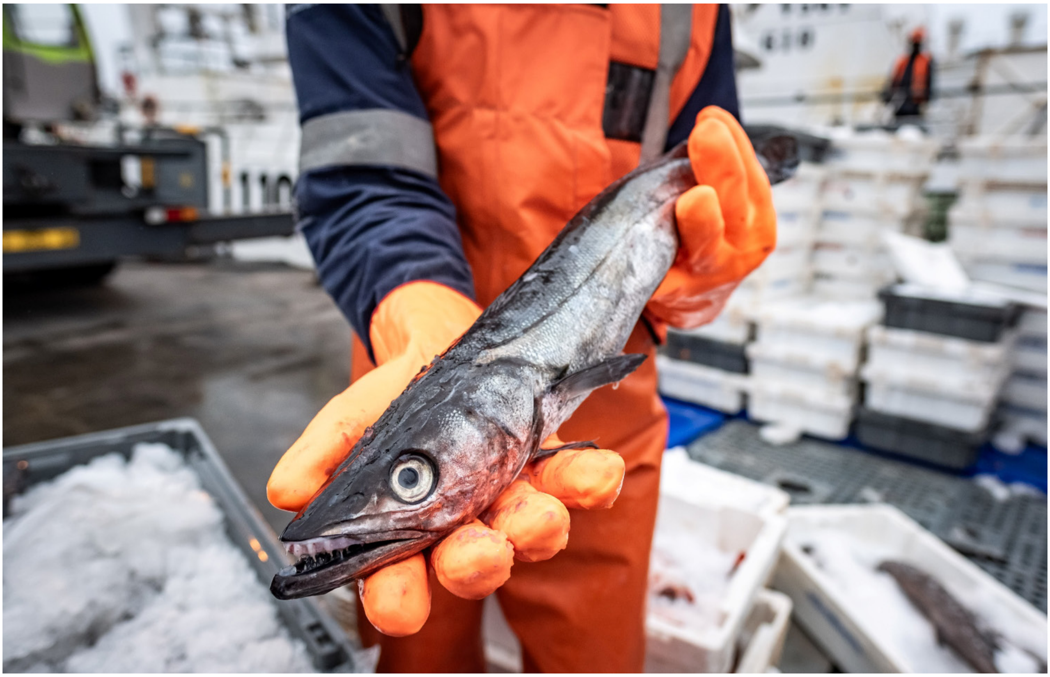


Namibia's hake fishery secures second sustainability certification

Namibia's hake fishery has secured its second certification from the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) following an independent reassessment, confirming the sector's continued compliance with international sustainability standards.

The reassessment was conducted by Control Union (UK) Limited, which found that the Namibia hake trawl and longline fishery targeting Merluccius capensis and Merluccius paradoxus continues to meet the MSC's science-based requirements for sustainable fishing.

The evaluation covered hake stock health, fisheries management systems and impacts on the wider marine ecosystem.

The fishery was first certified in 2020, becoming the first in Namibia and the second in Africa to achieve MSC status. The latest recertification reflects sustained collaboration between government, scientists and industry since Independence to rebuild hake stocks while maintaining a commercially viable fishing sector.

"Since Independence, the government, scientists and industry have worked hand in hand to rebuild the hake resource and create a profitable fishing industry that gives back to people and the environment," said Namibian Hake Association chair Matti Amukwa.

"Achieving MSC certification, first in 2020 and now again, has been a team effort and provides assurance to the world that we are committed to the sustainability of Namibian hake."

As part of its stock-rebuilding framework, the fishery operates under a defined harvest strategy, with catch limits aligned to scientific advice.

Because Namibia and South Africa exploit the same M. paradoxus stock, MSC-certified operators in both countries are required to cooperate and share stock assessment data, reinforcing regional fisheries management.

According to MSC Programme Director for Africa, the Middle East and South Asia Michael Marriott, environmental monitoring remains a key focus, supported by high levels of observer coverage at sea and effective onshore monitoring and surveillance.

The fishery also assesses risks to sensitive marine habitats and actively manages interactions with Cape fur seals and seabirds. Mitigation measures include the fleet-wide use of bird-scaring lines and the trial of acoustic deterrent technologies.

With support from the MSC Ocean Stewardship Fund, the sector is working with bio-acoustics specialist Dr Thomas Götz and technology firm GenusWave to test targeted acoustic startle technology designed to safely deter seals.

Beyond environmental performance, the sector is expanding its sustainability initiatives. In 2024, six certified hake operators helped establish the Namibia Ocean Cluster, a non-profit organisation aimed at maximising the use of the full harvest, promoting innovation and increasing socio-economic benefits for coastal communities.

"What has been very positive in the case of Namibia is not only the collaboration among stakeholders within the country, but also cooperation with external experts and others operating on the same resource," Marriott said. "There is a clear drive to improve, to explore new technological solutions and to safeguard the hake resource for the future."

Eos Capital 10 years of impact and a new chapter begins

For a decade, Eos Capital has been shaping the story of homegrown investment in Namibia. What began as a single fund with a bold idea has grown into a multi-fund platform backing businesses that feed the nation, power communities, connect households, provide homes and create jobs across the country.

Across agriculture, education, energy, digital infrastructure, and social sectors, Eos-backed companies are proving that disciplined investing and local insight can unlock extraordinary results. From blueberries exported across Europe and Asia, to fibre lines laid in Khomasdal and Rehoboth, to the poultry on Namibian supermarket shelves, Eos Capital's footprint is now woven into everyday life. And this is only the beginning.

Now, as we mark ten years, Eos steps confidently into its next phase with two new funds: NIDIF II and Euphrates II, vehicles designed to build on past successes and position Namibia for the next decade of growth.

NIDIF II — INVESTING IN THE BACKBONE OF THE NATION:

NIDIF II is Eos Capital's next infrastructure fund and the engine behind our future growth strategy. The fund will focus on:

- Energy and renewables
- ICT and digital connectivity
- Transport, logistics, and cold-chain assets
- Water and social infrastructure

NIDIF II blends stability with vision, structured to deliver long-term, inflation-hedged returns while developing the essential systems that enable Namibia's economy to thrive.

It will act as both developer and investor, building bankable projects that create jobs, support climate resilience, and strengthen national competitiveness.

EUPHRATES II — SCALING NAMIBIA'S AGRICULTURAL EDGE:

Following the success of Euphrates I, Euphrates II will deepen investment in high-value agriculture and agro-processing. The fund aims to support:

- Food security and import substitution
- Climate-smart farming

• Scaling export-ready crops
• Rural employment and youth participation
With the momentum of Namibia Berries, now a global exporter employing over 600 people, and Kadila Poultry producing over 400 metric tons of poultry a month.

Euphrates II is positioned to accelerate Namibia's transformation into a regional agricultural powerhouse.

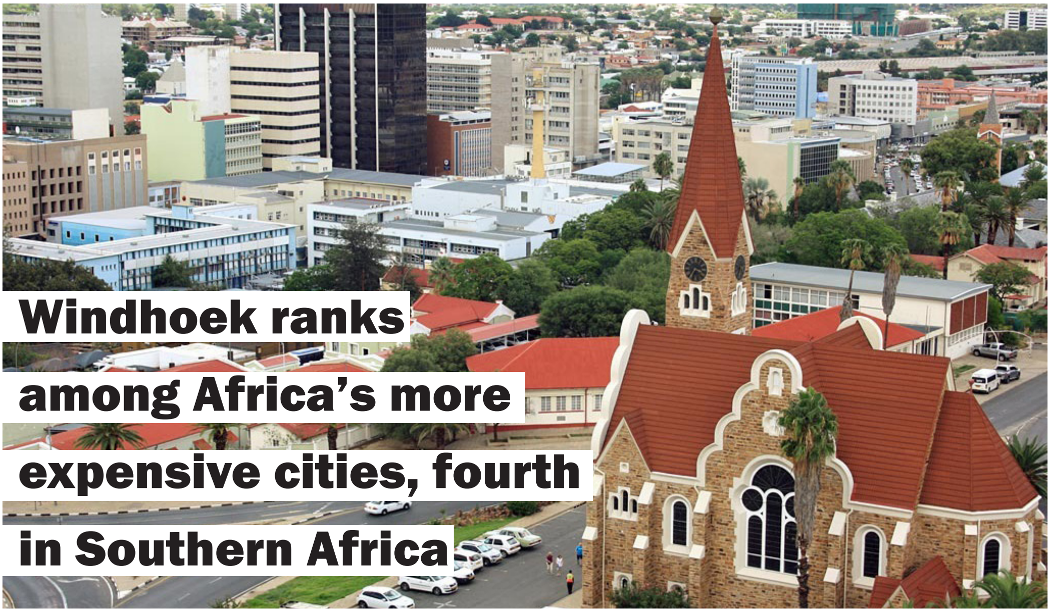
Eos Capital Advisory: Advancing Natural Resources and Infrastructure Financing Across Southern Africa

Eos Capital Advisory has recorded a year of significant milestones in 2025, underscoring its role as a trusted partner in capital raising and M&A advisory for the natural resources and infrastructure sectors across Southern Africa. The firm continued to deliver strategic, transaction-driven value to mining companies and international investors seeking credible origination, rigorous due-diligence support and efficient execution in emerging markets.

This year Eos Capital Advisory arranged a debt financing package between a Namibia-based manganese mine and a Europe-based commodity trader. This facility will assist in scaling mine production from 30 000 tonnes per annum to 100 000 tonnes per annum, positioning the operation for stronger export volumes and improved competitiveness in global manganese supply chains. This transaction will also facilitate follow-on funding for the establishment of tailings processing infrastructure and add an additional 40 000 tonnes of export volumes. The transaction reflects Eos Capital Advisory's ability to align quality African mining assets with global partners that bring both capital and long-term commercial alignment.

Further, Eos Capital Advisory closed a USD 1 million (N$18 million) revolving working capital facility and offtake agreement between a Zambia-based tin mine and a Singapore-based commodity trading house. This transaction enabled the mine to reach first production of tin and complete its inaugural tin shipments, strengthening its market position and providing stable liquidity to support continued operational development. The transaction demonstrates the firm's commitment to structuring capital solutions that enable operational stability and growth in the region.

Eos Capital Advisory remains focused on delivering impactful, investment-ready solutions across Southern Africa's critical minerals and infrastructure landscape, contributing to regional growth and strengthening the continent's position within global value chains.



Windhoek ranks among Africa's more expensive cities, fourth in Southern Africa

Windhoek has ranked among Africa's higher-cost cities in 2026, placing seventh on the continent and fourth in Southern Africa, according to cost-of-living data published by Numbeo.

Numbeo said its index compares relative living costs across cities using a basket of indicators that includes groceries, rent, restaurant prices and local purchasing power.

According to the data, Windhoek recorded a cost-of-living index of 37.4, with a rent index of 15.2 and a combined cost-of-living-plus-rent index of 27.5. Grocery prices were measured at 35.6, while restaurant prices stood at 36.4. Local purchasing power in the city was recorded at 72.0.

Numbeo said these figures place Windhoek below Abidjan in Ivory Coast, Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, and South Africa's Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town, but above cities such as Accra, Nairobi, Casablanca and Cairo.

Across Africa, Abidjan ranked highest with a cost-of-living index of 45.2, followed by Addis Ababa at 42.6. Pretoria placed third at 41.6, with Johannesburg and Cape Town close behind at 40.4 and 39.6 respectively, Numbeo said.

Within Southern Africa, Numbeo ranked Windhoek fourth, behind Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town, but ahead of Durban. Pretoria led the regional list with an index of 41.6, followed by Johannesburg at 40.4 and Cape Town at 39.6. Durban ranked fifth at 35.3.

Numbeo said its data shows that while Windhoek's overall cost levels are lower than those of South Africa's major metropolitan areas, Namibia's capital remains more expensive than several other African capitals, including Nairobi at 32.0, Tunis at 30.7 and Algiers at 29.2.

Local purchasing power remains a key differentiator. Numbeo noted that Windhoek's purchasing power index of 72.0 is significantly lower than that of South African cities, where Johannesburg and Cape Town exceeded 100, but markedly higher than many West and East African cities, where indices generally remain below 40.

Debt sustainability on African soil: Why global power structures continue to drive the debt crisis

By Lot Ndamanomhata

“ The United States alone carries a debt load equivalent to 121% of its GDP (U.S. Fiscal Data, 2025).

Debates about debt sustainability increasingly unfolded against a stark reality: for much of Africa, debt service had already been consuming resources meant for hospitals, water infrastructure, education, and energy investment.

Yet the forces most responsible for shaping African fiscal outcomes were never located within African capitals.

They resided thousands of kilometres away, embedded in global financial institutions where decision-making power remained concentrated among a small group of dominant shareholders, most notably the United States.

With the U.S. holding roughly 16–16.5% of voting power at the International Monetary Fund and around 15.7–15.8% at the World Bank’s IBRD, it continued to exercise a de facto veto over major reforms at both institutions.

This imbalance was not theoretical. It operated as the invisible hand behind the global debt trap, determining who received relief, who accessed liquidity, and who was forced to endure prolonged fiscal distress.

The central question confronting the international financial system therefore remained unresolved: will anything truly change if the governance of global finance remains untouched?

The World Is Drowning in Debt — and the Numbers Are Staggering

The starting point is scale. The Institute of International Finance has reported that global debt has reached a record high of USD 324 trillion in the first quarter of 2025, rising by USD 7.5 trillion in just three months (Institute of International Finance, 2025). That is more than three times global GDP.

For perspective, U.S. federal debt is USD 37 trillion, China sits at USD 16.46 trillion, Japan at USD 10.22 trillion, the United Kingdom at USD 3.65 trillion, and India at USD 3.23 trillion.

The United States alone carries a debt load equivalent to 121% of its GDP (U.S. Fiscal Data, 2025). That means America owes more than the entire size of its economy yet Washington remains the global lecturer-in-chief on fiscal prudence for the developing world.

Even more striking: U.S. federal debt is larger than the combined economies of China, Germany, Japan, India, and the United Kingdom.

But when Africa borrows to build water systems, rail projects, hospitals, or electricity transmission lines, Western institutions suddenly sound alarm bells about "unsustainable debt." The hypocrisy is not subtle.

Who Holds U.S. Debt? The Irony Is Global

The U.S. owes the world, too and very heavily. Foreign holders of U.S. federal debt include Japan with USD 1.1 trillion or 3.1% of the U.S.'s country debt, the United Kingdom with USD 809.4 billion or 2.2%, China with USD 756.3 billion or 2.1%, Luxembourg with USD 424 billion, the Cayman Islands with USD 419 billion, Canada with USD 379 billion, Belgium with USD 374 billion, Ireland with USD 339 billion, and France with USD 332 billion.

These figures (U.S. Treasury International Capital Data, 2025) reveal what global markets rarely admit: the world finances America's debt, and yet American policymakers routinely attack African states for borrowing far less, often for essential development needs.

In short: debt is universal. But the punishment for debt is not.

Global Financial Institutions and Structural Imbalance

The IMF and World Bank continued to reflect governance arrangements rooted in a post-World War II order that no longer aligned with contemporary economic realities. Voting power remained the decisive mechanism through which debt relief, liquidity provision, and reform agendas were controlled.

Because U.S. voting shares exceeded the blocking threshold at both institutions, no significant reform to governance structures, capital frameworks, lending paradigms, or conditionality approaches could proceed without Washington's approval. This reality explained why repeated calls for reform from Africa, Latin America, and South Asia consistently stalled despite broad rhetorical support.

The architecture of global finance did not merely reflect inequality. It produced and sustained it.

Why Poor Countries Paid More: The Cost-of-Capital Trap

Across developing economies, borrowing costs remained structurally higher than those faced by advanced economies. These disparities were routinely attributed to "market forces," yet research consistently demonstrated deeper systemic drivers: elevated risk premiums, limited market liquidity, currency volatility, exposure to U.S. monetary tightening cycles, and constrained access to concessional finance.

The outcome was both predictable and perverse. Countries with the greatest development needs paid the highest prices for capital, while those with the largest debt burdens enjoyed the lowest borrowing costs. It remained the financial equivalent of charging the sickest patients the highest medical fees.

Debt Restructuring Without Structural Reform

Efforts to improve sovereign debt restructuring continued to fall short. Processes remained slow, fragmented, and heavily politicised. Private creditors frequently delayed participation, multilateral coordination proved weak, and debtor countries—particularly in Africa—had limited influence over negotiations that directly shaped their economic futures.

Without reforms to governance and enforcement, debt restructuring mechanisms remained reactive rather than preventative, offering relief only after prolonged economic damage had already occurred.

Military Spending and the Exposure of a Double Standard

The asymmetry of the global debt system became even clearer in 2026, when the United States announced a substantial increase in military spending—from roughly USD 1 trillion to approximately USD 1.5 trillion in the next budget allocation. This expansion occurred despite the U.S. already carrying the largest sovereign debt burden in the world.

At the same time, developing countries were urged to cut social spending, delay infrastructure investment, and pursue fiscal consolidation in the name of sustainability.

The message was unmistakable: some countries retained unlimited fiscal space, while others were disciplined for borrowing to meet basic human needs.

The Hypocrisy Question: Why the West Scolds Africa While Carrying Titanic Debts

African debt is often politicised as reckless or corrupt, while Western debt is framed as benign, technical, or manageable.

Yet the numbers say otherwise. The U.S. alone owes USD 37 trillion. Japan has a debt-to-GDP ratio of over 250%. The U.K. and France juggle fiscal deficits year after year. China's public-sector debt is several multiples of African totals.

The narrative that "Africa borrows too much" is not only misleading. It is politically convenient. It shifts attention away from global interest rate cycles driven by rich countries, commodity price shocks, colonial-era trade structures, dollar volatility, multilateral governance imbalance, lack of concessionality, and rising global financialisation. And it places moral blame on the borrower rather than structural responsibility on the system.

The Unresolved Truth

You cannot solve a global debt crisis with institutions still governed like it is 1944.

The world is drowning in USD 324 trillion of debt. Countries that need the cheapest capital pay the highest rates. The United States holds decisive veto power over the institutions guiding debt relief. Debt restructuring remains painfully slow and politically skewed. And the global narrative about African borrowing remains deeply hypocritical.

Debt sustainability on African soil will remain a dream until the system itself is restructured.

Africa did not create the global debt crisis. But Africa is expected to pay its highest costs.

The global community retains the power to change this. But only if it confronts the power structures behind the problem, not just the symptoms.

Lot Ndamanomhata is from Ekoka. This article reflects his views and writes entirely in his personal capacity.