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# BRIEF

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## Namibia moves to enact Universal Health Coverage

FRIDAY 30 JANUARY 2026



# Namibia moves to enact Universal Health Coverage

Namibia is moving ahead with plans to launch Universal Health Coverage, with legislation intended to enact the policy now open for public consultation.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services has opened consultations on the proposed Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Bill, which aims to ensure that all Namibians can access essential health services without facing financial hardship. The ministry said the Bill is being prepared for enactment and will establish a comprehensive legal and institutional framework to support universal access to healthcare.

“The Government of the Republic of Namibia is in the process of enacting the Universal Health Coverage Bill.

## 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**

This landmark Bill seeks to establish a robust legal and institutional framework to ensure that all Namibians access essential health services without experiencing financial hardship,” the ministry said..

The proposed legislation builds on the National Policy on Universal Health Coverage approved in 2025 and incorporates ongoing health financing reforms, including the National Health Equity Fund and the National Health Micro-Contribution. These mechanisms are intended to promote pooled funding and risk-sharing to improve equity and long-term sustainability in the health system.

According to the ministry, the objectives of the Bill include strengthening equitable health financing and service delivery, clarifying governance and accountability structures, and improving efficiency and quality across public health facilities and contracted private providers. The Bill also seeks to enhance transparency and fiscal sustainability in line with national development and social protection goals.

“To ensure the final law reflects the needs and aspirations of all Namibians, the Ministry invites interested stakeholders and members of the public to submit inputs and comments on the Bill on or before 27 February 2026,” the ministry said.

As part of the proposed financing framework, the ministry has also proposed the introduction of levies as a revenue-generating mechanism for the recently approved UHC policy. The proposal follows Cabinet’s approval of the policy, which identified sustainable funding as a key requirement for its implementation.

The ministry said funds raised through the levies would be ring-fenced and channelled into the National Health Equity Fund to strengthen healthcare financing.

Currently, the national budget allocates about N\$3 billion annually to the Public Service Employee Medical Aid Scheme and around N\$11 billion to the public health sector. These allocations have contributed to Namibia achieving a UHC service coverage index score of between 62% and 64%, one of the highest in Africa.

However, the ministry said additional funding is required to expand access and improve the quality of healthcare services. About 85% of Namibia’s population relies on public healthcare, while only around 200,000 people are covered by private medical schemes, underscoring the need for broader risk pooling and financing mechanisms under the proposed Equity Fund.

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# Bank BIC Namibia appoints Erastus Hoveka as Chief Executive Officer

... Willem Marais and Anne Shilengudwa appointed to board

**B**ank BIC Namibia Limited has appointed Erastus Hoveka as its new Chief Executive Officer, with effect from 2 February 2026.

The bank said Hoveka brings more than three decades of experience in the financial services sector, with a background spanning retail, corporate and investment banking, as well as development finance and risk management.

Before joining Bank BIC Namibia, Hoveka served as Chief Lending & Client Support at the Development Bank of Namibia and was previously Managing Director of Nedbank Namibia.

Hoveka holds an MBA with distinction from Bradley University in the United States and is a Certified Public Accountant. He

A promotional banner featuring a photograph of two people, a man and a woman, smiling. The man is on the left, wearing a dark suit and tie. The woman is on the right, wearing a grey polo shirt. The background is dark with a framed picture. In the top left corner is a red circular logo with white stylized letters. In the top right corner is a blue circular logo with white text 'TB THE BRIEF'. At the bottom center is a blue button with white text.

Conversation with Martha Nangombe and James Chapman

## LEADING WITH PURPOSE IN A CHANGING BANKING LANDSCAPE

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has also completed executive programmes at Wharton Business School and INSEAD in France. Beyond his executive roles, he has served in governance and leadership capacities at several national institutions, including the Government Institutions Pension Fund, the Housing Trust of Namibia, the Namibia Training Authority, Postfin and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Commenting on the appointment, Bank BIC Namibia board Chair Jaime Pedro Galhóz Pereira said the board was confident



Hoveka would strengthen the bank's strategic direction.

"We are honoured to welcome Mr Erastus Hoveka as CEO of Bank BIC Namibia. His appointment marks a defining moment in the bank's evolution," Pereira said.

"With his strategic insight, operational leadership and understanding of the Namibian financial sector, we believe the bank is well positioned to pursue sustainable growth and deliver value to clients and communities."

The bank also announced the appointment of two new Non-Executive Directors, Willem Marais and Anne Shilengudwa, with immediate effect.

Bank BIC Namibia said the appointments form part of efforts to strengthen governance and board oversight.

In his new role, Hoveka will lead the bank's strategic agenda, with a focus on digital banking, customer service and expanding the institution's role in economic empowerment, the bank said.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

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FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2026 AT 12:00  
(NO LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED)

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## **NYDF approves N\$14.9m for youth-owned businesses through DBN**

**T**he National Youth Development Fund has approved N\$14.9 million in financing for youth-owned businesses through the Development Bank of Namibia, as the fund continues to expand access to finance for young entrepreneurs.

According to Ministry of Finance

spokesperson Wilson Shokoto, funding approvals of N\$8.6 million were granted to 30 youth-owned enterprises through DBN between 1 November 2025 and 30 January 2026. This follows an earlier approval of N\$5.3 million to 16 youth-owned enterprises announced at the official launch of the fund.

In total, 46 youth-owned enterprises have now been approved for financing through DBN, with combined approvals amounting to N\$14.9 million.

Shokoto said DBN is currently finalising disbursements to several approved enterprises, while assessing about 40 additional applications. Further approvals and an update on disbursements are expected by the end of February 2026.

He said the NYDF funding window remains open, with project approvals made on a continuous basis as applications are assessed and meet the fund's requirements.

Eligible applicants may submit applications through the Offices of Regional Governors or directly to participating development finance institutions, including DBN, Agribank and the Environmental Investment Fund.

"The NYDF remains committed to supporting viable youth-owned enterprises and strengthening their contribution to economic growth and employment creation," Shokoto said.

The NYDF is a N\$500 million initiative, with N\$257 million earmarked for disbursement in the 2025/26 financial year. The fund provides a mix of affordable loans and grants to Namibians aged between 18 and 35, supporting enterprises ranging from start-ups to expanding businesses.

Start-up enterprises can access loans of between N\$60,000 and N\$200,000 at an interest rate of 2%, while businesses seeking to scale may qualify for funding of up to N\$1 million at slightly higher rates. The fund does not require collateral, and approved loans include a grace period of up to 12 months before repayments commence.

The NYDF is managed by DBN, Agribank and the Environmental Investment Fund. Its sustainability is supported by contributions from NamibRe, DBN, NIPAM, as well as international partners including the African Development Bank and the United Nations.



**GEMHEALTH+**  
MEDICAL AID SCHEME

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**  
DEVELOPMENT OF AN INVESTMENT STRATEGY

GEMHEALTH Medical Aid Scheme hereby invites suitably qualified and experienced investment consultants, advisory firms, or professional service providers to submit proposals for the development of an Investment Strategy for the Scheme.

**BACKGROUND**

GEMHEALTH Medical Aid Scheme is a non-profit, closed medical aid fund serving employees and continuation members of Namdeb, Debmarine Namibia, and NDTC. The Scheme is governed by a Board of Trustees and regulated in terms of the Medical Aid Funds Act, 1995, under the oversight of NAMFISA.

**SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The successful bidder will be required to develop a comprehensive, compliant, and forward-looking **Investment Strategy**, including:

- An assessment of the Scheme's financial position, risk profile, and liquidity requirements;
- Development of an Investment Policy Statement (IPS);
- Asset allocation recommendations;
- Risk management and governance considerations;
- An implementation roadmap and performance monitoring framework.

A detailed **Terms of Reference (ToR)** is available on request.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Proposals are invited from firms or consultants who:

- Have demonstrable experience in investment strategy development for medical aid funds, pension funds, or similar regulated institutions;
- Are familiar with the Namibian regulatory environment, including NAMFISA requirements;
- Can demonstrate appropriate professional qualifications and capacity.

**SUBMISSION DETAILS**

Interested parties must submit:

- A technical proposal outlining methodology and experience;
- A financial proposal;
- Company profile and relevant references.

Requests for the ToR and submission of proposals should be directed to:  
**The Principal Officer**  
GEMHEALTH Medical Aid Scheme  
Email: po@gemhealth.com.na

**CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS:**  
Wednesday, 11 February 2026  
GEMHEALTH Medical Aid Scheme reserves the right not to accept the lowest or any proposal.

# Why Namibia must stop treating creativity as a side hustle

By Popiwa Hauwanga

Namibia often celebrates creative talent, but rarely treats creative work as serious work.

Music, film, design, events, and digital media are praised publicly, yet quietly handled as hobbies rather than professions. Budgets for creative work are routinely cut.

Timelines are compressed. Quality is expected without question. When results are delivered, people are surprised.

That contradiction has become normal, and it is holding the industry back.

I grew up in Tsumeb, a town shaped by extraction. Copper was taken from the ground, value was created elsewhere, and very little returned to the people who lived there. Years later, working in Namibia's creative industry, the pattern feels familiar.

Talent is developed locally, but value, recognition, and long term benefit often leave the country.

After fourteen years in the creative industry, building production capability from Namibia and delivering work across Southern Africa, one thing has become clear.

The problem is not quality. The problem is belief.

Namibian creatives consistently deliver work that meets international standards. Yet they are expected to do so on limited budgets, short timelines, and with minimal institutional support. At the same time, foreign companies are brought in and paid significantly more to deliver services local



“

**Size is often used as an excuse. Namibia is described as too small to support global ambition.**

teams already provide.

When Namibian creatives succeed, it is treated as impressive. When outsiders succeed, it is treated as normal.

This difference reveals a deeper issue. Namibia does not fully trust its own creative capacity.

That lack of trust shows up in contracts, pricing, and attitudes. Creatives are asked to justify costs that would not be questioned elsewhere. They are expected to be flexible, grateful, and patient. Sustainability is rarely part of the conversation.

The result is predictable. Many of Namibia's most skilled creatives leave. Their departure is often celebrated as success, when in reality it reflects a failure to build viable creative industries at home. Talent leaving is not inevitable. It is the outcome of an environment that does not take creative work seriously.

Size is often used as an excuse. Namibia is described as too small to support global ambition. But population has never been the determining factor. Countries with fewer people than Namibia have built globally

Namibian creatives consistently deliver work that meets international standards.

influential creative industries because they invested with intention and thought beyond their borders. This moment matters. Global demand for African stories, perspectives, and production has never been stronger. International platforms are actively looking for authentic voices. The opportunity is real and it is happening now.

If Namibia does not step forward, others will continue to tell our stories, define our image, and benefit economically from narratives that do not belong to them.

Treating creativity as an industry changes outcomes. It creates companies instead of gigs. Careers instead of side jobs. Exports instead of losses. It allows young creatives to imagine futures that do not depend on leaving the country.

The next generation in Tsumeb, Windhoek, Walvis Bay, and beyond deserves more than encouragement. They deserve proof that serious creative work can be built and sustained from Namibia.

That requires a shift in mindset. Creativity must be seen as economic infrastructure, not a passion project. Creatives must be paid properly, contracted fairly, and trusted to deliver.

Namibia does not lack talent, It lacks commitment to treating creativity as real work.

Until that changes, value will continue to leave the country quietly, one project and one person at a time and we will keep pretending it is normal.

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## Lavoro Insurance targets growth in mining, energy and agriculture sectors

Lavoro Insurance Namibia Limited says it has been established to offer specialist commercial and corporate insurance, with demand identified in sectors such as mining, oil and gas, renewable energy and agriculture.

The insurer said its entry into the Namibian market brings additional capacity, including the ability to underwrite large and complex risks, while using technology to broaden access to insurance and support financial inclusion. The comments come as Lavoro officially launched its operations, positioning itself as a locally focused short-term insurer designed to respond to Namibia's socioeconomic realities.

Speaking at the launch, Managing Director Nghikefwamendu Simon said the company's products were developed following extensive research into the lived experiences of communities across the country.

"Lavoro Insurance is fully tailored for the Namibian people. Every product has been shaped by a clear understanding of how people live, work and manage risk," Simon said.

He said the insurer is equipped to take on large risks, a capability often associated with more established players, while also leveraging technology to extend coverage to wider segments of the population.

Simon said Lavoro plans to expand its capacity in commercial and corporate insurance, while building an inclusive ecosystem that allows more Namibians to participate in the insurance sector.

He added that the company is committed to strengthening Namibia's insurance market and acknowledged the role of regulators, public institutions and stakeholders in maintaining a stable operating environment.

"A strong insurance market depends on strong institutions, clear roles and consistent supervision," Simon said, adding that locally licensed and governed insurers are essential to protecting policyholders and building market confidence.

The launch marked Lavoro's formal entry as a NAMFISA-licensed short-term insurer, registered under licence number 25ST33 in terms of the Short Term Insurance Act of 1998. Simon said the licensing framework

reflects the company's commitment to discipline, accountability and high standards.

Also speaking at the event, City & Commercial Insurance Group Executive Director Andrew Selous said the group's role is to support Lavoro to become a strong, independent and locally rooted insurer.

"Our purpose is to help Lavoro stand on its own feet and succeed as a proudly Namibian insurance company," Selous said.

He said City & Commercial has operated for 33 years, is active in 103 countries and

manages about US\$100 million in gross written premiums. The group intends to share international expertise, technical skills and systems, while continuing to learn from the Namibian market.

Selous said the group is supporting Lavoro with governance frameworks, IT capability, risk discipline and access to reinsurance, while ensuring decision-making remains based in Namibia and aligned with local regulations and national priorities.

The partnership, he said, reflects a long-term commitment to building capacity and trust within Namibia's financial sector.

Selous added that the group's experience in areas such as surety bonds and credit insurance is expected to support product innovation and market expansion.

British Commissioner to Namibia Neil Bradley said insurance plays a central role in economic resilience.

"Insurance is not only about managing risk. It enables growth, protects livelihoods and gives businesses and families the confidence to plan," Bradley said.

He said the partnership between Lavoro and City & Commercial demonstrates the value of combining Namibian and British expertise to support innovation, resilience and deeper financial inclusion in Namibia's insurance sector.

## Share opportunities

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**DUTY STATION:** WINDHOEK

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- Minimum of 5 years hands-on technical experience delivering OSS/BSS solutions, with direct involvement in system testing, integrations, and billing platforms.
- Strong working knowledge of OSS/BSS systems and reference architectures, including their interaction with core networks and value-added service platforms.
- Proven experience planning and executing SIT, UAT, and end-to-end (E2E) testing, including requirements traceability matrix (RTM) development and data migration validation.
- Demonstrable hands-on experience planning and executing OSS/BSS system integrations, leveraging industry frameworks such as TM Forum standards to ensure seamless interoperability between OSS, BSS, FMC Core, and VAS platforms.
- Proven experience planning and executing large-scale OSS/BSS and core network cutovers, ensuring minimal service disruption and adherence to technical, operational, and business continuity requirements.
- Exposure to TM Forum frameworks (e.g. eTOM, SID, Open APIs) is advantageous.
- Internationally recognised certifications such as PMP, PRINCE2, Agile, SAFe, or ISTQB will be considered advantageous.

### NOTES TO APPLICANTS:

Applicants requiring further information about these jobs should direct their inquiries to the following people:

- Laban Hiwilepo at +264 612012979

A comprehensive application supported by a detailed CV with copies of educational qualifications should be addressed in confidence to: The Senior Manager: Human Resources Business Partnering and Administration, Corporate Human Resources at email: [apply@telecom.na](mailto:apply@telecom.na)

Suitably qualified applicants from designated groups defined in the Affirmative Action Act (1998) are encouraged to apply. Only short-listed candidates will be communicated with, and no personal documents will be returned.

**CLOSING DATE:** 13 February 2026

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## How the Namibian government can use artificial intelligence to deliver better public services

By Junias Erasmus

The Government of the Republic of Namibia is increasingly challenged to deliver public services that are efficient, inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the evolving needs of its citizens.

As Namibia pursues its national development objectives under Vision 2030, the Harambee Prosperity Plans, and broader public sector reform initiatives, the demand for smarter and more citizen centred service delivery has never been greater.

In this context, Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents a strategic opportunity for the Namibian Government to modernise public administration and enhance the quality, accessibility, and impact of public services.

AI enables government institutions to harness data more effectively, transforming it into actionable intelligence for decision making.

Namibia's public sector generates vast amounts of data across ministries, offices, agencies, and public enterprises, including in health, education, social protection, finance, transport, and local authorities.

Through AI-driven analytics, the Namibian Government can identify service delivery gaps, anticipate citizen needs, and design evidence based policies.

This shift allows the state to move from reactive governance to proactive service delivery, where challenges are addressed early and resources are allocated more strategically.

One of the most practical applications of AI in Namibia lies in improving access to public



**Namibia's public sector generates vast amounts of data across ministries, offices, agencies, and public enterprises, including in health, education, social protection, finance, transport, and local authorities.**

services, particularly for citizens in rural and underserved communities.

AI powered digital assistants and chatbots can support ministries and agencies by providing real-time information on government services, application requirements, and policy processes in multiple languages.

This is especially relevant in Namibia, where geographical distances and limited administrative capacity often constrain service access. By leveraging AI enabled platforms, government can reduce long queues, minimise delays, and improve the overall citizen experience.

AI also offers significant potential to enhance efficiency and integrity within government operations.

Automated systems can streamline administrative functions such as licensing,

registrations, tax administration, and benefits processing, reducing human error and processing times.

In financial management and procurement, AI can assist in detecting irregular expenditure, monitoring compliance, and strengthening internal controls.

These capabilities directly support the Namibian Government's commitment to accountability, transparency, and prudent management of public resources.

In the social sector, AI can play a transformative role in improving inclusivity and service targeting.

In healthcare, AI tools can support disease surveillance, optimise patient management, and improve resource allocation across facilities. In education, data-driven AI systems can help identify students at risk of dropping out and inform targeted academic support.

In social protection programmes, AI can assist government in accurately identifying vulnerable households, reducing leakages, and ensuring that support reaches those most in need. Such applications align with Namibia's constitutional commitment to social justice and equitable development.

AI further strengthens regulatory oversight and governance, an area critical to public trust. Regulatory authorities and oversight institutions can use AI to monitor compliance, analyse complaints data, detect emerging risks, and improve enforcement effectiveness.

This enhances institutional credibility and supports the rule of law, particularly in sectors that directly affect citizens' financial wellbeing, safety, and livelihoods. When applied responsibly, AI becomes a tool for strengthening governance rather than replacing human judgment.

However, the successful adoption of AI by the Namibian Government must be guided by robust ethical, legal, and institutional frameworks. Issues of data protection, privacy, algorithmic bias, and transparency

must be carefully addressed to safeguard citizens' rights. AI systems should be explainable, accountable, and aligned with Namibia's legal and constitutional values.

Equally important is investment in human capital, including upskilling public servants, strengthening digital literacy, and fostering collaboration between policymakers, technologists, regulators, and academia.

AI adoption should not be technology driven alone, but purpose driven and citizen focused.

The Namibian Government can start with pilot projects in high impact service areas, learn from international best practices, and scale solutions that demonstrate tangible public value. Digital inclusion must remain central to ensure that no citizen is left behind due to limited access to technology or connectivity.

Artificial Intelligence presents the Namibian Government with a powerful opportunity to reimagine public service delivery in ways that are smarter, more efficient, and deeply responsive to citizen needs.

When aligned with national development priorities, ethical governance, and strong institutional leadership, AI can enhance service quality, strengthen accountability, and restore public confidence in state institutions. By combining human values with intelligent systems, Namibia can build a modern public service that is innovative, inclusive, and truly committed to improving the lives of all its citizens.

***\* Junias Erasmus is a financial sector professional and an Artificial Intelligence expert, serving on the AI Skills Development Advisory Committee. He is a management scientist and operational researcher, a strategic scholar, and a motivational speaker. This article is written in his personal capacity. For enquiries, he may be contacted at Junias99@gmail.com.***



## Namibian public enterprises urged to fast-track local procurement

Public enterprises have been urged to accelerate the procurement of Namibian-made goods and services, as the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) intensifies efforts to boost local industry participation in public spending.

Speaking at the MICT Year Opening Staff Engagement in Windhoek, ICT Minister

Emma Theofelus said prioritising local procurement was a practical tool to support domestic production, job creation and stronger national value chains.

She said the ministry has introduced quarterly engagements with public enterprises and their boards to identify challenges early and prevent operational delays, adding that cooperation to date

has been encouraging.

MICT and its entities will increasingly source goods and services from Namibian manufacturers and service providers where quality standards are met, she said.

“This approach supports industry growth, empowers youth-led enterprises and creates real economic opportunities,” Theofelus said.

She encouraged young entrepreneurs to scale up production, assuring them that locally produced goods across various sectors would be supported where standards are met. These include everyday items such as toilet paper and clothing, as well as electronics and specialised equipment.

The minister said local sourcing would also be prioritised in major capital projects, including the construction of regional MICT offices and the ministry’s new head office. She stressed that local

procurement must be built into every stage of large-scale projects to ensure economic benefits remain in Namibia.

She cautioned against limiting local procurement to symbolic purchases, saying it must reflect a genuine shift in public sector spending to support a sustainable and competitive manufacturing base.

Public enterprises and business units will be required to submit quarterly reports on their local procurement activities, detailing the extent to which goods and services were sourced from Namibian suppliers with the capacity to deliver.

Theofelus said the reporting requirement would strengthen transparency and accountability, while reinforcing government’s commitment to developing local producers and enterprises.



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The Brief formally handed over its Year in Review 2025 | Outlook 2026 publication to Vice President Lucia Witbooi, who penned the foreword

for the annual edition.

Her contribution reflects on Namibia's economic and policy landscape and sets the tone for the year ahead.

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# Namibia's skills gap: Confronting reality

By Ian Coffee

Let's be honest. Namibia does not welcome the notion that "the country has a skills shortage". It feels uncomfortable, even painful.

Yet the data is unequivocal. A structural mismatch exists between the skills we produce and those demanded by our evolving economy.

This is not a failure like some would lead you to believe, it is proof of growth. The question is not whether that gap exists, but how we respond going forward.

Let's take the backbone of industrialization. Engineering.

Engineering appears well represented at first glance in Namibia. Civil, mechanical, electrical, chemical, and industrial engineers populate our universities and walk our streets.

But beneath that broad classification lies a web of specialisations. Civil, mechanical, aerospace, environmental, biomedical, automotive etc. Each applies science and mathematics to deliver solutions to global problems.

Namibia produces engineers, but global industries increasingly demand specialists. That is where the gap is.

Within civil engineering the emphasis is on roads, bridges, and water systems. In mechanical engineering the focus shifts to engines, HVAC, robotics. Each field fractures further: structural, environmental, thermal, automotive. These are not distinctions for classrooms. They fuel economies. They underpin safety standards. They determine societal progression.



**Namibia's President has publicly flagged a shortage of specialised skills in oil and gas.**

Mining and offshore drilling illustrate starkly where shortages emerge. Namibian mines rely on CNC machining, on-site and off-site precision shaping of metal components.

This is a very rare qualification in Namibia, as it requires practical experience and companies like Namibia Onsite Machining provide critical services in mining, but the industry remains under-resourced globally. Similarly, offshore drilling in the Orange Basin employs specialised systems, blowout preventers (BOPs), top drives and many more.

Namibia's President has publicly flagged a shortage of specialised skills in oil and gas. A recent Deloitte analysis confirms that Namibia currently fulfills only 45 percent of sector-specific roles.

Certain certifications essential for offshore work, STCW 95 for seafarers, HUET for helicopter escape, BOSIET for survival training, dynamic positioning for offshore vessels.

These qualifications are scarce. Offshore engineers often lack these credentials that are needed to perform this important roles and on the job training opportunities are limited.

Consequently, if companies rely on

expatriates Namibia risks missing out on the full value of its natural resources.

A 2025 national report covers 73 occupations where demand exceeds supply, particularly in engineering, manufacturing, agriculture, education, transport, and health.

While tertiary attainment has improved, a reliance on fields like business, public administration, and humanities has resulted in surplus graduates in low growth sectors.

Meanwhile, foundational numeracy and literacy at secondary level remain weak. TVET outputs are low, only 14 percent throughput are reached and youth unemployment stands at 44.4 percent.

This is the context.

The concern is not talent, it is specialisation. We are graduating educated individuals capable of advancing. What we are missing are people with experience and insight into high impact specialisations.

National pride often recoils at the idea of seeking experts from outside yet knowledge transfer has always driven progress globally. Every industrialised nation has embraced it, will we be next.

Thus the imperative, we must invite specialists, not to replace local professionals but to train them. We must establish domestic and international collaborations, aligning academic curricula to sector needs.

The NIPDB recommends reforms, updating occupational classifications, developing a critical skills list, strengthening forecasting, and creating partnerships between government, academia and industry. And I agree.

What binds these efforts is resolution. We recognise the gap and we have begun responding. But the scale of challenge is greater than we often admit. It is time for the private sector and government to collaborate more deeply. It is time to integrate foreign expertise with local talent. It is time for bursaries, exchange programmes, vocational reform. The, and only then can we say “Namibia is ready to grow”.

Our skills shortage is not a weakness but rather a signal of aspiration. It says Namibia is on a trajectory that demands excellence. Our local workforce is capable, eager, and trainable. What we lack are opportunities to acquire cutting edge standards.

The choice lies ahead. Do we continue relying on incomplete systems and external solutions, or build our own through knowledge transfer and investment.

Pride must not obstruct progress.

Namibia has no shortage of talent. It has a shortage of exposure. Bridging that will define our future.

Will we step forward?



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