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THE BRIEF

News Worth Knowing

BoN grants Access Bank Namibia third provisional licence extension

TUESDAY 21 JULY 2026

MAIN STORY

BoN grants Access Bank Namibia third provisional licence extension

The Bank of Namibia (BoN) has granted Access Bank Namibia a third extension to its provisional banking licence, giving the lender until 10 August 2026 to meet the outstanding conditions required to obtain a full banking licence.

The extension, granted under Section 12(6) of the Banking Institutions Act, 2023 (Act No. 13 of 2023), follows the expiry of the bank's previous provisional authorisation on 15 June 2026.

BoN Deputy Director for Corporate Communications and Sustainability Naufiku Hamunime said the additional time was intended to allow the institution to satisfy the remaining regulatory requirements before commencing full banking operations.

"The Bank granted an extension of Access Bank Namibia's provisional authorisation until 10 August 2026, in terms of Section 12(6) of the Banking Institutions Act, 2023 (Act No. 13 of 2023), to enable the institution to satisfy all remaining conditions of its provisional authorisation to the Bank's satisfaction," Hamunime said.

The central bank stressed that Access Bank Namibia has not yet been issued with a full banking licence and remains under provisional authorisation.

"Access Bank Namibia has not yet been granted a full banking licence and therefore remains under provisional authorisation. The status has not changed," Hamunime said.

Crucial Dates

- **Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:**
  * 12 August 2026
  * 29 October 2026
  * 10 December 2026
- **Namibia Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Mukopano**
  11 August 2026 at the Hilton Windhoek.
- **Namibia Oil and Gas Conference**
  18–21 August 2026 in Windhoek

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> Access Bank Namibia has not yet been granted a full banking licence and therefore remains under provisional authorisation.

The latest approval marks the third extension since Access Bank Namibia received its provisional banking licence on 4 October 2024, when it was granted six months to establish its operations before applying for a full licence.

After failing to meet the initial timeline, the central bank granted a first extension in April 2025, followed by a second six-month extension in December 2025, which remained in effect until 15 June 2026.

The repeated extensions mean the bank has now spent more than 21 months operating under provisional regulatory approval while working to meet the central bank's licensing requirements.

Access Bank Namibia forms part of Nigeria-based Access Bank Plc's pan-African expansion strategy. The banking group identified Namibia as one of eight priority African markets as it sought to strengthen its continental footprint and position itself to benefit from opportunities created by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Access Bank Plc operates more than 600 branches and service outlets across 18 countries on three continents, serving over 49 million customers and employing approximately 28,000 people. Its international network spans Sub-Saharan Africa, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, with representative offices in China, Lebanon and India.

Namibian banks grow assets to N$195.1bn as bad loans decline

Namibia's banking sector expanded its asset base to N$195.1 billion during the first quarter of 2026, while maintaining strong capital and liquidity buffers and recording an improvement in asset quality, the Bank of Namibia (BoN) has said.

The Bank's Macroprudential Oversight Committee (MOC) said total banking sector assets increased by 3.8%, driven primarily by growth in net loans and advances, supported by higher holdings of short-term negotiable securities.

Bank of Namibia Governor Ebson Uanguta said the sector remained well-capitalised, profitable and liquid despite a moderation in earnings.

"The banking sector remained well capitalised, profitable and liquid during the first quarter of 2026, with notable improvement in asset quality. Total banking sector assets increased by 3.8% to N$195.1 billion, driven mainly by growth in net loans and advances, supported by higher holdings of short-term negotiable securities," Uanguta said.

The central bank also reported an improvement in credit quality, with the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio declining from 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2025 to 4.2% in the first quarter of 2026. The improvement was largely attributed to

write-offs and recoveries in the mortgage loan portfolio.

While profitability remained strong, key returns softened during the period. Return on assets (ROA) declined from 2.8% to 2.3%, while return on equity (ROE) fell from 21.8% to 18.1%, reflecting lower net interest income and weaker net trading income.

"Although profitability remained strong, the return on assets declined from 2.8% to 2.3%, while the return on equity decreased from 21.8% to 18.1% during the first quarter of 2026, mainly reflecting lower net interest and net trading income. Credit risk continued to improve, with the non-performing loan ratio declining from 4.3% in the fourth quarter of 2025 to 4.2% in the first quarter of 2026, largely owing to write-offs and recoveries in the mortgage loan portfolio," he said.

Despite the moderation in profitability, the MOC said banks remain well positioned to absorb potential shocks.

Liquidity indicators continued to strengthen, with both the Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) and the Net Stable Funding Ratio (NSFR) remaining comfortably above minimum regulatory requirements.

The sector's capital adequacy ratio remained broadly stable at 17.2%, while the latest macro-stress tests confirmed that banks would remain adequately capitalised even under severe macro-financial scenarios.

"Liquidity remained adequate, with both the liquidity coverage ratio and net stable funding ratio improving further while remaining comfortably above the minimum regulatory requirements. This confirms that banks have sufficient liquidity buffers to withstand potential funding pressures and continue to meet funding obligations. Capital levels also remained strong, with the capital adequacy ratio broadly stable at 17.2% in the first quarter of 2026. Moreover, the latest macro-stress testing results confirmed that the banking sector remains resilient under severe macro-financial scenarios, with capital adequacy remaining above the prudential requirement," Uanguta said.

Property Hub NAMIBIA

BoN says housing market recovering despite affordability pressures

Namibia's residential property market showed signs of recovery during the first quarter of 2026, although housing affordability and structural constraints continue to pose risks to the sector, the Bank of Namibia (BoN) has said.

The assessment forms part of the Bank's latest financial stability review following the first 2026 meeting of the Macroprudential Oversight Committee (MOC), which concluded that risks to the residential property market remain contained and do not warrant changes to existing macroprudential measures.

Bank of Namibia Governor Ebson Uanguta said housing market activity strengthened during the first quarter, with mortgage credit growth rebounding to 1.4% from a contraction of 0.06% in the previous quarter.

However, he said household mortgage

lending remains below its long-term historical average, reflecting persistent affordability challenges.

House price growth also moderated to 7.3% during the review period, although affordability pressures remained elevated.

"Financial stability risks emanating from the domestic residential property market remained contained during the review period; however, market developments warrant closer monitoring. Housing market activity improved during the first quarter of 2026, with mortgage credit growth increasing to 1.4% from a mild contraction of 0.06% in the previous quarter. Nevertheless, household mortgage credit growth remains below its historical long-term average, reflecting persistent affordability constraints," Uanguta said.

The central bank identified limited land delivery, rising housing demand and the emergence of alternative housing finance channels as structural challenges that continue to weigh on the property market and require closer monitoring.

Despite these pressures, the MOC concluded that current conditions do not justify additional macroprudential policy interventions.

The committee also reported that Namibia's national payment infrastructure remained stable during the first half of 2026, with the Namibia Interbank Settlement System (NISS) operating without significant disruptions.

"Risks to the national payment infrastructure remained well contained during the review period. During the first half of 2026, the Namibia Interbank Settlement System remained stable and operated efficiently, supporting the financial sector and the broader economy. Payment obligations continued to settle efficiently, with no material operational disruptions affecting system operations," Uanguta said.

The committee noted that global financial conditions remain challenging amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, persistent inflationary pressures, tighter financial conditions, rising bond yields and increased capital outflows from emerging markets.

Global economic growth is projected to slow to 3.0% in 2026, from 3.5% in 2025, with advanced economies expected to expand by 1.7% and emerging market and developing economies by 3.8%.

Despite the uncertain global outlook, the MOC said Namibia's financial system remains sound, stable and resilient, with existing macroprudential measures, supervisory actions and regulatory frameworks considered sufficient to safeguard financial stability.

The Bank said it will continue monitoring global and domestic developments and stands ready to introduce additional macroprudential measures should systemic risks intensify.

Blame is not a transport strategy - Windhoek's congestion debate

By Levy Hamukoto

> That traffic queue is the most honest meeting room in Windhoek.

There is a particular kind of silence that settles in a car at 07:20 on a weekday morning in Windhoek.

Not an angry silence. A resigned one. The radio is on but nobody is listening. Somebody in the next lane is eating breakfast off the dashboard.

A taxi noses in from the left and nobody hoots anymore, because hooting assumes the queue can move.

That traffic queue is the most honest meeting room in Windhoek. Everybody attends. Nobody chose to be there. And every morning it tells us something we keep declining to hear.

We are having the wrong argument

The argument we are having in public is about roads. Whose roads, whose potholes, whose budget, whose fault.

The municipal case is reported on the media and it is not trivial.

The city says it needs roughly N$384 million a year simply for routine road maintenance for which, it points out, no revenue is collected from road users through tariffs or levies plus a further N$353 million to repair damage from the 2024/25 rainy season, which affected some 650 streets.

It says it receives only 5% to 10% of the road maintenance support it requires from national road funding. It has also conceded, candidly, that the capital spent some 35 years doing surface-level patching rather than proper maintenance.

The national funding side has its own defensible case, and makes it. Both can be true at once.

And while that argument runs, roughly 20,500 vehicles continue to enter the capital every day about 16,000 through the northern corridor, 4,500 through the south and the queue does not move a metre.

Here is what I think we are missing. Even if that argument were settled tomorrow, entirely in the city's favour, the traffic would not clear.

The city itself has said as much. Its position, stated plainly, is that congestion is a symptom rather than the underlying challenge and that no major city in the world has ever successfully built its way out of congestion simply by expanding roads or upgrading intersections.

That is not a critic speaking. That is the institution that builds the roads.

The actual problem is a shape we have no cheque for Windhoek's situation is genuinely unusual, and it is worth stating precisely, because most of the commentary gets it backwards.

Car ownership here is relatively low. The overwhelming majority of residents including in the northwestern suburbs where congestion has become most visible, rely on some form of public transport. But there is no modern mass transit system. So that demand is met almost entirely by four-door sedan taxis and "Okalefas", the fastest minibus on Windhoek roads: an essential public service, delivered by operators doing necessary work, which by the city's own account contributes significantly to traffic volumes at peak.

Read that carefully. The congestion is not primarily caused by too many private cars. It is caused by tens of thousands of people who do not own cars being moved, one to four at a time, in vehicles designed to carry a family to the shops.

That is not a road problem. It is an absence where a bus network should be.

And this is where the funding question stops being an excuse and starts being the entire story.

Roads are a capital expense. You budget, you build, you cut the ribbon, you maintain.

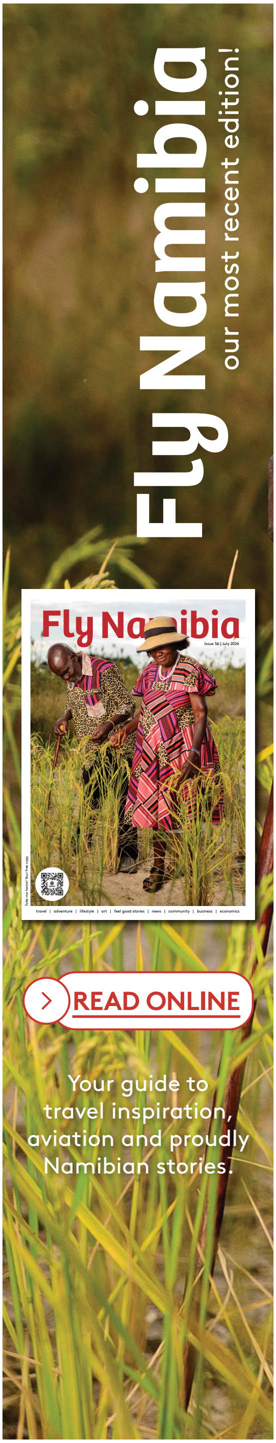
We know how to fund that imperfectly, contentiously, but the machinery exists. A billion dollars went into the Windhoek–Okahandja dual carriageway. Hundreds of millions more are committed to the Western Bypass, with additional costs now on speed humps and the Rehoboth road.

Public transport is an operating expense. Buses do not merely need to be bought; they need to be run every day, on unprofitable routes, at fares people can actually afford, forever. Every functioning transit system on earth is subsidised in this way. It is not a Namibian failing. It is the nature of the thing.

And Namibia has never established a mechanism to provide that subsidy. Not an inadequate one.

So we have a plan without a payment method.

That is why the sustainable urban transport master plan of 2013 did not become a bus network. Not because nobody knew what to do, the technical work



has been done repeatedly, competently, and is being done again now in a new integrated transport master plan, modelling how this city will move over the next twenty years.

Its preliminary finding is already public: on current trends, without significant improvement in public transport, congestion will worsen drastically as Windhoek grows.

The forecast is not a surprise. It is a warning we commissioned, paid for, and received.

What we count, and what we don't

Notice which numbers we know by heart.

Between February 2025 and May 2026, the city repaired 85,074 potholes and completed 68,765 square metres of patchwork. That figure is reported diligently. It grows every time it is quoted 67,000 in March, 76,000 in May, 85,000 in June.

Now try to recall the other number. What would it cost, per year, to run a functioning bus network in Windhoek?

You cannot recall it, because it has never been put in front of you.

We count potholes because potholes come with a budget line. The absence of a bus network has no budget line, so it has no number, so it never appears in the argument. And an ask that has never been priced is very easy to refuse and impossible to be held to.

That is the gap. Not vision. Not analysis. Not willingness. A funding framework and a number attached to it, in public, that somebody has to answer for.

To be fair, that conversation has finally started: the city says it has spent the past year engaging the responsible ministries to build consensus on a sustainable funding framework for urban public transport.

Good. It should have started in 2013 and been resolved then. It cannot take another thirteen years, because the modelling tells us exactly what the waiting costs.

The point Congestion is a symptom. So, I would argue, is the blame.

Both are what a system produces when the real question has no home.

And the real question is not who owes whom money for potholes. It is this: who pays to move a person who does not own a car, and by what mechanism, starting when?

Until that question has an answer with a rand figure and a name against it, we are not debating transport strategy. We are just taking turns explaining the queue.

Roads matter. They are necessary and they will remain necessary, and the argument about maintaining them is a legitimate argument worth having.

But we will not build our way out of this.

The city has said so itself. The future of this capital will not be decided by how many roads we build.

It will be decided by whether we ever work out how to pay for the alternative.

Levy Hamukoto is a Data Scientist, Analyst and Strategist. The views expressed are his own.

Namibia, South Africa to adopt digital scorecard to track bilateral commitments

Namibia and South Africa have agreed to explore the introduction of a Digital Balance Scorecard to monitor the implementation of bilateral agreements, as the two countries seek to improve accountability and accelerate delivery of key projects agreed under the Fourth Session of the Namibia-South Africa Bi-National Commission (BNC) held last week.

President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said officials from both countries will engage the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat on adapting the digital monitoring system to track progress on decisions taken by the commission.

The initiative forms part of a broader effort to shift the BNC's focus from signing agreements to ensuring they are implemented.

"The key word in my statement is implementation. It is no longer business as usual for those responsible for implementing the decisions of our Bi-National Commission. We must deliver, account for, and address the needs of our people," Nandi-Ndaitwah said.

She said the outcomes of the Fourth Session of the BNC have the potential to help address shared socio-economic challenges, including youth unemployment, economic inequality, climate vulnerability and food insecurity, provided they are effectively implemented.

As part of the renewed implementation agenda, the two countries agreed to fast-track several strategic projects, including the completion of the Presidential Drought Relief Programme, the expansion of the Trans-Kalahari Corridor, and continued collaboration on regional energy initiatives.

Nandi-Ndaitwah also thanked South Africa for its R100 million Presidential Drought Relief Programme, confirming that the remaining R27 million will fund the second phase of borehole installations in Namibia.

"The remaining R27 million is earmarked for the second phase. By expanding access to clean, reliable water in an arid country like Namibia, this project strengthens livelihoods and reaffirms our responsibility to one another," she said.

The President further acknowledged that the Orange River boundary dispute remains unresolved despite progress made by technical experts, expressing confidence that the two countries would continue working towards a mutually acceptable solution.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa echoed the call for stronger implementation, saying the effectiveness of the commission would be measured by the delivery of agreed projects rather than the number of agreements concluded.

"The true measure of our success, however, will not be the number of agreements we sign, but the effectiveness with which we implement them. Implementation must now become our foremost priority," Ramaphosa said.

He added that Namibia and South Africa should continue strengthening cooperation in trade, investment, infrastructure, industrialisation and regional value chains to unlock economic opportunities and deepen regional integration.

Be smarter than your lunch

By Onesmus Joseph

Every afternoon during lunch I noticed dozens of people crossing the road to look for lunch and the luck one waring their food rightly so to ultimately have lunch.

It is an ordinary routine, one so familiar that we hardly give it a second thought. Yet this hour, I invite you to think about lunch differently today.

Imagine for a moment that lunch is not the meal on your table, but a metaphor for survival. In the natural world, every living creature is either searching for its next meal or doing everything possible not to become meal.

The lion cannot afford complacency because hunger never rests and equally so, the kudu cannot afford carelessness because danger never sleeps. Take it from me, nature is unforgiving to those who fail to adapt.

I put it to you that the same principle governs our lives, our careers, our businesses and even our nation. The only difference is that today's predators do not have sharp teeth.

They arrive disguised as artificial intelligence, technological disruption, changing customer behaviour, climate change, economic uncertainty, shifting consumer preferences, demographic changes and new ways of working.

They quietly reshape industries while many of us continue believing that tomorrow will look remarkably similar to yesterday.

> **“ Imagine for a moment that lunch is not the meal on your table, but a metaphor for survival.**

That assumption has become one of the greatest strategic risks of our time. As you read this article, I invite you to ask yourself this question: What is your lunch? More importantly, are you becoming smarter than it every single day?

The future it rarely announces its arrival with loud noises. Instead, it whispers through trends, weak signals and subtle changes that many dismiss as temporary inconveniences. Unfortunately, by the time those signals become obvious, they have often matured into irreversible realities.

Those who prepared early describe the moment as an opportunity, but the one that ignores it; call the same moment a crisis. Trust me the situation may be the same, but the difference lies in preparation.

Remember when people would queue to withdraw cash or request bank statements. Those scenes are bygones and mobile phone performs tasks that once required an entire department of employees.

Banks have not necessarily become smaller; they have become different. Their value increasingly lies in technology rather than the number of tellers behind the counter.

I invite you to think about what this means for someone entering the labour market today.

Many young people continue searching for employment exactly as their parents did twenty years ago, while employers increasingly look for digital skills, critical thinking, innovation and adaptability.

The unemployment challenge is therefore not only about the shortage of jobs; it is also about the growing mismatch between what the economy demands and what many people are prepared to offer and for me this is uncomfortable reality deserves honest conversation.

The same is in organisations, there are individuals who genuinely believe that years of service should naturally translate into promotion. Experience certainly matters, but experience alone has never guaranteed relevance.

Organisations are increasingly rewarding those who demonstrate foresight, embrace change, solve emerging problems and continuously develop themselves. Remaining in the same position for years is not always evidence of organisational injustice.

Sometimes it reflects a widening gap between what an organisation needs tomorrow and what an individual continues to offer today. I appreciate that this observation may be uncomfortable. However, strategy has never been about comforting people. Strategy is about confronting reality before reality confronts us.

To further it, there are professionals who proudly display qualifications obtained twenty years ago without asking whether those qualifications still speak to today's economy.

Imagine manager who continue leading teams using methods developed for a generation that no longer exists. The world is changing too rapidly for any qualification, title or previous achievement to become a lifetime guarantee of relevance; the era demand thinking and contextual intelligence as a skill.

Omuwambo ohati, "Omunhu ohakulupa tete pamadilaadilo, ndele hakomido." A person grows old first in their thinking, not in their age.

I have met young professionals who stopped learning immediately after graduation, just as I have encountered older professionals who remain curious, continually reading, questioning and reinventing themselves. The difference between them is not age but the mindset.

As a strategist, I have come to appreciate that strategy is not primarily about writing impressive documents or facilitating colourful workshops.

Strategy is fundamentally about developing the discipline to see what others overlook and preparing for what others dismiss. It requires learning, unlearning and relearning.

It demands intellectual humility; the willingness to admit that what made us successful yesterday may not be sufficient tomorrow. I invite you to pause for a moment and reflect on your own life.

What are you learning today that will still matter ten years from now? Which of your current skills will remain valuable when artificial intelligence becomes an everyday colleague rather than a futuristic concept?

When was the last time you deliberately studied an emerging trend outside your profession? Which books are shaping your thinking?

Which assumptions are you challenging? More importantly, if your current job disappeared tomorrow, would the market compete for your capabilities, or would you begin competing for opportunities that fewer and fewer employers require?

The future is always looking for its next meal. The question is whether it will find an opportunity in you or a victim.

The future does not discriminate between governments, businesses, universities or individuals. It eventually visits all of us.

It quietly examines whether we remained curious or became complacent, whether we anticipated change or merely reacted to it, whether we invested in tomorrow or remained imprisoned by yesterday. Those who prepared recognise the future as progress. Those who neglected preparation often experience the same future as adversity. So, what exactly is your lunch? Whatever your answer may be, remember this.

The world is asking each of us to become a new version of ourselves far more frequently than previous generations ever experienced. Those who embrace that reality will not merely survive; they will shape the future.

Those who ignore it will gradually discover that relevance is never a permanent possession; it is something we earn continuously. So, as you sit down for your next lunch, just remember the future is already searching for its next meal.

The only question is whether it will find you prepared or whether it will find you as its next lunch.

Onesmus Joseph is a Business Strategy and Chartered Corporate Governance Practitioner with a strong focus on strategic foresight and futures literacy. He is currently the Manager for Intellectual Property Enforcement and Frameworks at BIPA. He writes in his personal capacity. Connect with them at josephonesmus@gmail.com

Oshana's 5MW solar project reaches 80% completion

Construction of a 5-megawatt solar power plant in Namibia's Oshana Region has reached 80% completion, with the project creating 169 temporary jobs as the region expands renewable energy generation and electricity access.

Oshana Governor Hofni Iipinge said the solar project forms part of broader investments to strengthen energy security and improve access to electricity across the region.

The region has also invested N$15.6 million in rural electrification projects, connecting approximately 420 households to the national grid to improve living standards and support economic activity in underserved communities.

"Access to electricity continued to expand across the region. Rural electrification projects valued at N$15.6 million progressed, providing electricity to approximately 420 households. The 5-megawatt solar plant reached 80% completion and created 169 temporary jobs, contributing to energy security and renewable energy generation," Iipinge said.

He said additional electrification projects have been implemented in business centres and other localities to support economic growth and improve access to reliable electricity.

The region has also invested N$6.5 million in electricity distribution infrastructure to improve the reliability of power supply, while public lighting has been expanded in Ondangwa and Ongwediva to enhance public safety and service delivery.

> Rural electrification projects valued at N$15.6 million progressed, providing electricity to approximately 420 households.

Iipinge said Oshana continues to benefit from the government's Free Electricity Connection Programme, which has connected more than 2,900 low-income households since its introduction.

"The Free Electricity Connection Programme continues to improve access for low-income households, with over 2,900 households connected since inception," he said.

According to Iipinge, the investments are aimed at accelerating rural electrification, improving energy reliability and supporting Namibia's transition to a more sustainable and resilient energy sector while driving regional economic development.

EAN engages Presidency to align oil conference with national petroleum strategy

The Economic Association of Namibia (EAN) and its partners have engaged the Office of the President's Upstream Petroleum Unit ahead of the 2026 Namibia Oil & Gas Conference, with discussions focusing on aligning the event with Namibia's petroleum development priorities and increasing local business participation in the emerging sector.

The delegation, led by EAN Chairperson Jason Kasuto, met with Kornelia Shilunga, Special Advisor and Head of the Upstream Petroleum Unit, on 21 July 2026, as preparations continue for the fourth Namibia Oil & Gas Conference, scheduled to take place in Windhoek from 18 to 20 August 2026.

During the engagement, the delegation highlighted the planned participation of government representatives, international oil companies, energy executives, investors and industry associations, while seeking strategic guidance to ensure the conference programme remains aligned with national objectives.

Shilunga confirmed her attendance at the conference and said continued collaboration between government, industry and strategic partners would be critical as Namibia advances the development of its petroleum resources.

"The conference presents an important platform to bridge the information gap between industry and local businesses by facilitating practical discussions on supplier readiness, certification requirements and opportunities for greater local participation," Shilunga said.

She added that local enterprise development must remain central to Namibia's oil and gas ambitions, highlighting the need for businesses to understand supply requirements, certification standards and opportunities across the petroleum value chain.

"Namibian entrepreneurs are eager to participate in the sector but often lack practical information on how to access opportunities within the industry. There is a need to equip local businesses with a clearer understanding of the goods and services required by oil and gas operators, the certification and compliance standards expected by international companies, and the pathways to supplying offshore operations and vessels," Shilunga said.

She added that local businesses would need to become more competitive, investment-ready and capable of participating across the petroleum value chain.

Kasuto said the engagement with the Upstream Petroleum Unit was intended to ensure the conference remains aligned with Namibia's strategic direction for the oil and gas industry.

"The Namibia Oil & Gas Conference is one of the country's premier platforms for dialogue on the oil and gas sector. The scale of the conference reflects the growing interest in Namibia's energy industry. We have placed significant emphasis on local participation, making it important to engage with the Office of the President to receive strategic guidance and ensure that the conference aligns with the national vision for the sector," Kasuto said.

The conference comes as Namibia advances preparations for the development of its petroleum resources, with stakeholders expected to discuss investment opportunities, supplier development and mechanisms to increase domestic participation in the sector.

The engagement was also attended by EAN Chief Executive Officer Cons Karamata and Shakwa Nyambe, Managing Partner of SNC Incorporated, a strategic partner of the conference. The meeting provided an opportunity to update the Upstream Petroleum Unit on the conference programme, international participation and the key issues expected to shape discussions.

The 2026 conference will be held under the theme "From Decision to Dividend: Making Namibia's Oil Work for Namibians" and will focus on Namibia's transition from petroleum discoveries to value creation. Discussions are expected to cover policy, investment, local content, infrastructure development and economic transformation.

The conference is expected to attract more than 1,400 delegates from over 35 countries, alongside 29 sponsors and 42 exhibitors, positioning it as a key platform for government, industry, investors and development partners to discuss the future of Namibia's petroleum sector.

NTF, NIFA partner to help Namibian MSMEs unlock AfCFTA opportunities

The Namibia Trade Forum (NTF) and the Namibia Investment and Finance Academy (NIFA) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen the capacity of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to access regional and continental markets under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The agreement, signed in Windhoek by NTF Chief Executive Officer Rodney !Hoaeb and NIFA Head of Business Development and Strategy Morris Kalunduka, establishes a framework for collaboration on trade readiness, market access, policy translation, market intelligence and enterprise development.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, !Hoaeb said the partnership seeks to bridge the gap between Namibia's continental trade commitments and the ability of local businesses to benefit from them.

"Architecture alone does not create competitiveness. Frameworks alone do not deliver market access. The gap between what Namibia has signed at continental level and what our enterprises are equipped to act upon is, principally, a translation gap. This partnership is designed to close it," !Hoaeb said.

Under the agreement, the two institutions will work together to translate AfCFTA and Southern African Development Community (SADC) trade provisions into practical guidance for businesses, including compliance with rules of origin, addressing non-tariff barriers, trade facilitation measures and regional market access procedures.

The partnership will also support the development of trade readiness programmes, joint policy research and the sharing of market intelligence to improve the competitiveness of Namibian enterprises.

Kalunduka said the MoU provides a framework for coordinated initiatives that will support MSMEs from capacity development to market participation while strengthening Namibia's enterprise development ecosystem.

"This Memorandum is the guiding framework for specific aligned initiatives and, more broadly, a conduit for optimal ecosystem development. Its value will be measured not by the ceremony that establishes it, but by the initiatives it enables and the tangible improvement in the trade readiness and competitiveness of Namibia's MSMEs," Kalunduka said.

He said the agreement is non-binding and non-exclusive, with individual projects to be implemented through separate annexures to be agreed upon by both organisations.

The first implementation annexures are expected to be finalised during the third quarter of 2026.

The partnership supports Namibia's commitments under the AfCFTA and the SADC Protocol on Trade, while contributing to the objectives of the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6) and Vision 2030.

Both organisations said the memorandum is intended to serve as a practical implementation framework, with a focus on delivering measurable outcomes that improve the export readiness and regional competitiveness of Namibian MSMEs.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