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# THE BRIEF

News Worth Knowing



## Medicine pricing under scrutiny as Namaf advances reform

MONDAY 15 JUNE 2026

## MAIN STORY

# Medicine pricing under scrutiny as Namaf advances reform

Medical aid members in Namibia are increasingly coming under pressure from rising medicine costs, with concerns growing that pharmacies are charging higher prices for medicines claimed through medical aid than for the same products purchased with cash.

The issue has come under renewed scrutiny as the Namibia Association of Medical Aid Funds (Namaf) moves to introduce a medicine pricing benchmark aimed at improving transparency in a pharmaceutical market worth more than N\$3 billion annually.

The pricing disparity has become a major concern for medical aid members, many of whom report exhausting their annual medicine benefits long before the end of the year despite purchasing routine prescription medication.

Namaf Stakeholder Relations and Communication Manager Uatavi Mbai told The Brief that medicine expenditure remains one of the largest healthcare costs in the country.

According to Namaf, the Ministry of Health and Social Services spends at least N\$1.2 billion annually on medicines for 80% of the population through public procurement channels, excluding medical devices.

Registered medical aid funds spend a further N\$800 million annually on



## Crucial Dates

- **Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:**
  - \* 17 June 2026
  - \* 12 August 2026
  - \* 29 October 2026
  - \* 10 December 2026
- **Namibia Oil and Gas Conference 18–21 August 2026 in Windhoek**

medicines for about 8% of the population, while the Public Service Employees Medical Aid Scheme (PSEMAS) spends at least N\$1 billion on medicines for another 12% of Namibians.

"However, the cost of medicines represents the second-largest component of healthcare expenditure in Namibia at about N\$3 billion annually," Mbai said.

The concerns stem from long-standing complaints by medical aid members who say medicines often cost substantially more when processed through medical aid than when purchased directly with cash at pharmacies.

Higher claim values mean medical aid benefits are depleted more rapidly, leaving some members having to pay for medicines out of their own pockets once annual limits are reached.

In response, Namaf is implementing the Namibian NAPPI Benchmark Price File, which is intended to establish a standard benchmark tariff for medicines and medical consumables.

"This is how Namaf ensures that a transparent and fair process is followed for medicines and consumables," Mbai said.

She said the proposed framework draws on South Africa's Single Exit Price model while being adapted to Namibia's healthcare and regulatory environment.

The Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA) said it does not regulate pharmacy tariffs directly but oversees the conduct of medical aid

funds and reimbursement practices.

NAMFISA Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Matomola, in response to an inquiry from The Brief, said the introduction of the Financial Institutions and Markets Act (FIMA), 2021, strengthens the regulator's ability to intervene where reimbursement outcomes unfairly affect consumers.

"Although tariffs themselves are not directly regulated, NAMFISA will be better positioned to intervene where pricing practices or reimbursement outcomes result in consumer detriment," Matomola said.

The Namibian Competition Commission (NaCC), however, said it has not received any complaints relating to anti-competitive practices involving pharmacy claims.

NaCC Corporate Communications Practitioner Dina //Gowases said the commission's mandate includes investigating anti-competitive conduct such as price-fixing and imposing sanctions where necessary.

"The role of the Commission is enshrined in its mandate of investigating anti-competitive practices, including price-fixing, and imposing penalties and relevant sanctions," she said.

The commission is also considering its next steps following the Supreme Court ruling in the Pharmaceutical Society of Namibia matter, which centred on medicine pricing.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Namibia, when contacted regarding the concerns, declined to comment.

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## Low salaries push civil servants into hands of loan sharks

Low salaries are driving thousands of lower-grade civil servants into debt and forcing many to rely on micro-lenders and loan sharks to survive, Executive Director in the Office of the Prime Minister Shivute Indongo has

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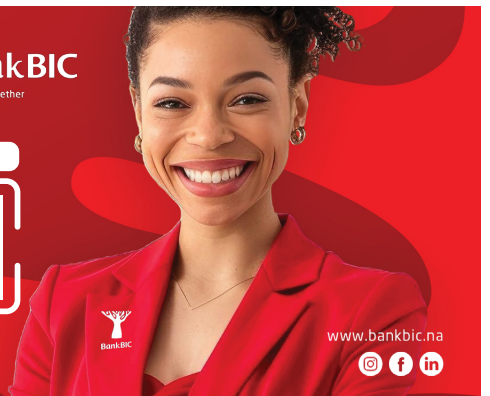
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warned.

Appearing before Parliament's Standing Committee on Economy and Industry, Public Administration and Planning, Indongo said employees in Grades 15 to 18 are struggling to meet basic living costs, leaving them trapped in a cycle of borrowing and debt.

"These income levels are pitiful. Many employees in the lower grades simply cannot survive on their salaries, which forces them to rely on micro-lenders even for basic necessities," he said.

Indongo warned that growing debt levels among public servants are becoming a serious concern, with many employees increasingly excluded from formal banking services because of poor credit records.

"Because they are over-indebted, formal banks will not assist them. They end up going to micro-lenders, asking for more money and more time and, in the process, they fall deeper into debt. Many are also turning to unregistered loan sharks," he said.

The remarks come amid growing concern in Parliament over the rising debt burden carried by civil servants and the impact it is having on their financial wellbeing.

Committee Chairperson Ipumbu Shiimi questioned whether the government's payroll deduction system may be contributing to the problem. The system allows micro-lenders to access deduction codes and recover loan repayments directly from salaries before employees receive their monthly pay.

Shiimi noted that while the arrangement was intended to simplify loan repayments, it may also be encouraging excessive borrowing among public servants.

The discussion comes as government

## NAMIBIA'S CIVIL SERVICE: BREAKING THE DEBT TRAP

FOCUS ON SALARY GRADES 15 TO 18

**Vulnerable Workforce**

Employees in these specific lower grades struggle to meet basic daily necessities.

**THOUSANDS TRAPPED IN DEBT**

Executive Director Shiwute Indongo warns public servants are unable to survive without credit.

**THESE INCOME LEVELS ARE PITIFUL.**

Official statement from the Office of the Press Officer

### THE CYCLE OF FINANCIAL EXCLUSION

- STEP 1: FORMAL BANKING REJECTION**  
Over-indebtedness leads to poor credit, resulting to exclusion from formal, regulated banking services.
- STEP 2: RELIANCE ON MICRO-LENDERS**  
Denied by banks, employees turn to micro-lenders, often asking for more money and extended time, deepening the debt.
- STEP 3: THE 'LOAN SHARK' EXTREME**  
As debt becomes unmanageable, many employees resort to unregistered loan sharks operating outside legal regulations.

#### THE PDMS MECHANISM (THE 'TRAP')

**ENCOURAGING EXCESSIVE BORROWING**

While intended to simplify, ease of access to deduction codes encouraged public servants to take on more debt than they could afford.

#### NATIONAL REFORM & PATH FORWARD

**THE BOTSWANA MODEL**

Namibia is looking toward Botswana's public policy of mandatory financial wellness monitoring for state machinery stability.

**MANDATORY WELLNESS MONITORING**

Officials call for financial health to no longer be treated as a "private matter" but as a critical public sector priority.

undertakes major reforms to the Payment Deduction Management System (PDMS) following the termination of its contract with Avril Payroll Deduction Management Company. The Ministry of Finance is now bringing all payroll deduction operations fully under government control.

Indongo also called for the introduction of mandatory financial wellness monitoring for civil servants, arguing that government has a responsibility to monitor the financial health of employees who form part of the country's administrative machinery.

"I don't know why financial wellness has not been made mandatory in our country. I previously spent time in Botswana, and they have an explicit public policy there. They continuously monitor the financial stability of their public workers because

these are the people running the state machinery," he said.

"In our case, there is no one watching over the financial health of our staff; it is treated as a private matter. That needs to

change." The warning highlights growing concern that financial distress among government employees is no longer merely a personal issue but an emerging public sector challenge.



FRANS INDONGO GROUP

## Chief Financial Officer (CFO) - Vacancy

Visions Consulting was appointed by the Frans Indongo Group to independently administer the executive recruitment process in compliance with company policy and governance principles.

### The Frans Indongo Group:

The Frans Indongo Group is a proudly Namibian-owned investment entity with a diversified portfolio across various sectors in Namibia. Founded by Dr. Frans Aupa Indongo, a visionary entrepreneur, the Group is built on a strong foundation of sustainable growth and long-term success.

### Primary Purpose of the Job:

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO), together with the CEO and COO, is responsible for providing strategic leadership to drive financial sustainability, governance excellence and long-term value creation across the Frans Indongo Group's diversified investment portfolio. Furthermore, to oversee the effective management of the Group's financial strategy, treasury, risk, reporting and governance functions by supporting sound capital allocation, portfolio optimisation, commercial viability, regulatory compliance and stakeholder confidence, while serving as a strategic business partner to the CEO, COO, Board and Investment Committees.

### Key Performance Areas:

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- Financial Management and Reporting
- Financial Control, Governance and Compliance
- Treasury, Liquidity and Capital
- Investment and Transactional Support
- Risk Management
- Information Technology Oversight
- Company Secretarial
- Leadership and Team Development

### Minimum Requirements:

- A Chartered Accountant (CA) qualification or equivalent professional financial qualification
- Strong understanding of IFRS, financial governance and financial management principles
- A valid Code B Driver's License is required

### Experience Required:

- Seven (7) to ten (10) years' post-articles experience, of which five (5) years should have been in a relevant commercial and/or financial leadership role.
- Experience in one or more of the following areas will be an added advantage:
  - a) Diversified group or investment holding company environments
  - b) Strategic finance, treasury and capital allocation
  - c) Financial modelling, investment evaluation and funding structures
  - d) Corporate finance activities

### Application Procedure:

- A cover letter, providing a detailed motivation for the position, signed by the applicant
- An updated detailed curriculum vitae, including at least two professional references (including the name, position, organisation, email address and contact number of the reference)
- Certified copies of the highest academic qualifications attained
- Certified copies of Identity Documents and all other supporting documents
- Preference will be given to Namibian citizens
- Vetting will be conducted on all shortlisted candidates

Scan the below code or follow the link to access online applications via the recruitment portal:

<https://foresight.visions.com.na/>

Only online applications via Visions Foresight will be accepted. No emailed or manual applications will be accepted.

Closing Date: Friday, 19 June 2026 at 16:00



Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Kindly note that submitted documents will not be returned to applicants.

Kindly note: For any technical or application-related support regarding the Foresight online platform, the Visions Helpdesk is available on workdays, Monday to Friday, during office hours (08:00 – 17:00). For assistance, please contact us on [recruitment@visions.com.na](mailto:recruitment@visions.com.na)





## Govt urges 'Order With Me' entrepreneurs to move into manufacturing

The government is pushing entrepreneurs operating under the growing "Order With Me" business model to move beyond importing goods and begin manufacturing products locally as part of efforts to boost industrialisation, create jobs and strengthen economic self-reliance.

Prime Minister Elijah Ngurure said the sector has demonstrated the entrepreneurial potential of young Namibians but argued that the next stage of growth should focus on producing goods within the country rather than relying primarily on imports.

Speaking during an engagement with entrepreneurs, Ngurure said Namibia must increasingly build local value chains capable of supplying both consumers and public institutions.

"If we can find a way to dress ourselves, it is halfway through self-reliance. If we

find a way to feed ourselves, we are halfway through self-reliance. And if we do that, then independence also means something," he said.

The Prime Minister encouraged entrepreneurs to develop Namibian brands and invest in local production, arguing that manufacturing would create wider economic opportunities than simply importing finished products.

"If any of you here, as well as the others that have registered with us as Order With Me, can design this and then some other young person can maybe plant cotton from where we can do these things, their own materials, I will buy local before I can buy what comes from outside the borders of Namibia. And that is how jobs are created," Ngurure said.

According to the Prime Minister, around 400 entrepreneurs have already registered

under the Order With Me initiative, which has emerged as a growing platform for youth entrepreneurship and e-commerce.

He said government wants locally produced goods to increasingly replace imported products and capture domestic procurement opportunities.

"School uniforms should not be coming from outside Namibia. They should be coming from Order With Me. We have the market and we can be able to support one another by giving this business to ourselves and by supporting Namibian brands," Ngurare said.

To support the transition from trading to production, Ngurare highlighted the National Youth Development Fund, which he said has been allocated N\$500 million annually to finance youth-owned businesses.

He said the fund provides collateral-free financing to entrepreneurs who would otherwise struggle to access conventional funding.

"We have availed N\$500 million annually towards the National Youth Development Fund. Five hundred million dollars is going to go to youth entrepreneurs, but collateral-free, because some young people do not even have a chicken to their name.

So where are they going to get collateral from?" he said.

Ngurare said the fund can support business proposals ranging from approximately N\$60,000 to N\$2 million and urged entrepreneurs to take advantage of the facility to expand and formalise their operations.

"This fund is available to you and your business model is part of that business idea. You should be able to come forward and say this is my business and this is the amount I need so that we can support you to grow and expand," he said.

The Prime Minister said the engagement forms part of government's broader youth empowerment agenda and signalled that consultations with entrepreneurs will continue as authorities seek to grow local enterprise and reduce dependence on imported goods.

# NOTICE



## Meatco Annual General Meeting scheduled for 3 July 2026

By virtue of Section 14 (8) of the Meat Corporation of Namibia Act, Act 1 of 2001, notice is hereby given to all registered Members of the Meat Corporation of Namibia, that Meatco's 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) **for the financial period that ended 31 January 2026**, will be held on Friday, 3 July 2026, at 09:00 in Windhoek, NIPAM.

**Date:** Friday, 3 July 2026

**Time:** 09:00

**Venue:** NIPAM (Executive Conference Hall)

**Submission of Motions:**

**Deadline:** (09h00, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026)

A member can submit a motion to be included on the Agenda on/or before the above mentioned date and time, either hand-delivered to Meatco Head Office, or via the e-mail below:

**Attention:** The Deputy Chairperson - Board of Directors

**E-mail:** [chairperson@meatco.com.na](mailto:chairperson@meatco.com.na)

**Hand-delivery:** Meatco Head Office, 1 Simataa Khama, Northern Industrial Area, Windhoek

Consistent with Sections 13 and 14 of the Meatco Act, Act 1 of 2001, only registered Meatco Members may attend and vote at the AGM. By virtue of a resolution passed at the 37<sup>th</sup> AGM, to qualify for registration as a member of the Corporation as per Section 17(1) of the Meatco Act 2001, a Producer must at least sell one unit of livestock to the Corporation during the period immediately preceding three (3) years for Members South of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (SVCF) and five (5) years for Members North of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (NVCF/NCA) from the date of which his/her membership is determined. Accordingly, SVCF Producers who were Meatco Members as of **03 July 2023**, and NCA producers who were Meatco Members as of **03 July 2021**, are eligible to register between **07:30 and 08:30** before the AGM starts.



# If Namibia has no highways, what have we been building all these years?



For years, Namibians have been told that billions of dollars are being invested in modern road infrastructure.

We have celebrated the construction of dual carriageways, upgraded trunk roads and major transport corridors designed to move people and goods faster across the country.

Yet now, in a court affidavit defending the installation of speed humps on Windhoek's Western Bypass road, Minister of Works and Transport Veikko Nekundi argues that Namibia has no highways or freeways because no road has ever been formally declared as such under existing legislation.

If that is indeed the case, then a far bigger question emerges: what exactly have we been building all these years?

The issue goes beyond speed humps. It exposes a disconnect between infrastructure development, transport planning and the legal framework governing the country's roads.

For decades, government has promoted roads such as the Windhoek-Okahandja, Windhoek-Rehoboth and Trans-Kalahari corridors as strategic national transport

routes.

These roads have been designed to accommodate high traffic volumes, long-distance travel and economic activity. Motorists naturally assume they are highways by any practical definition.

The contradiction is difficult to ignore. Presidents, ministers and senior government officials have officiated at the opening of roads that were publicly presented as highways, freeways or key national transport corridors.

At these events, the country was told that Namibia was expanding and modernising its highway network.

Yet today, some of the same institutions are arguing in court that no highways or freeways legally exist in Namibia because they were never formally declared as such.

If that is true, then government must explain why this legal status was never addressed despite decades of road construction and billions of dollars in public investment.

Road classifications are not merely administrative labels. They influence speed limits, access control, pedestrian safety, law enforcement and infrastructure planning.

They help determine whether a road should have intersections, traffic lights, speed humps or direct property access.

A country seeking to position itself as a regional logistics hub cannot afford uncertainty over the legal status of its most important transport routes.

The argument also raises concerns about planning consistency.

If roads that function as highways have never been formally recognised as such, then policymakers, engineers and road users may not have been operating under the same understanding of how those roads should be managed.

The controversy surrounding the Western Bypass speed humps highlighted public frustration over decisions that many believe compromise the purpose of major transport routes.

Instead of debating whether speed humps belong on a highway, Namibia now finds itself debating whether highways exist at all.

This should serve as a wake-up call.

Government must urgently review the legal classification of the country's strategic road network and align legislation with the realities on the ground. Infrastructure development cannot outpace the regulatory framework that governs it.

Namibia's roads are among its most important economic assets. If they are intended to function as highways, then they should be formally recognised as highways.

If they are not, then government owes the public an explanation of what standard has guided decades of road planning, public messaging and investment.

Because if Namibia has no highways, then the question remains: what have we been building all these years?

*\* Briefly is a weekly column that is opinionated and analytical. It sifts through the noise to make sense of the numbers, trends and headlines shaping business and the economy with insight, wit and just enough scepticism to keep things interesting. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT OUR OWN, we simply relay them as part of the conversation.*

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# MTC expands beyond telecoms with Huawei enterprise partnership

**M**obile Telecommunications Limited (MTC) has secured Huawei Enterprise Partner status, a move that will allow the company to provide advanced digital solutions to businesses, mines, banks and government institutions.

The partnership gives MTC access to Huawei's enterprise technology portfolio, including cloud computing services, networking infrastructure, connectivity solutions and digital transformation platforms.

The development marks MTC's



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**Closing date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

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The partnership gives MTC access to Huawei's enterprise technology portfolio, including cloud computing services, networking infrastructure, connectivity solutions and digital transformation platforms.

continued push to diversify beyond its traditional telecommunications business and grow its presence in the enterprise technology market.

MTC Chief Brand, Marketing, Communications and Sustainability Officer Tim Ekanjjo said the partnership strengthens the company's ability to support sectors that are driving economic growth.

"This new development expands our partnership and allows MTC to have access to Huawei's globally recognised enterprise portfolio, including connectivity solutions, cloud technologies, digital infrastructure, intelligent networking, and business transformation platforms," he said. According to Ekanjjo, the partnership will improve MTC's ability to design and deploy technology solutions for industries such as government, mining, oil and gas, financial services and the broader corporate sector.

The agreement means MTC will be able to market, implement and support a wider range of Huawei enterprise products and services in Namibia, potentially opening new revenue streams beyond mobile and data services.

The company said the partnership combines MTC's local market presence with Huawei's global technology expertise and is expected to contribute to Namibia's digital transformation agenda.

The move comes as businesses and public institutions increasingly invest in digital infrastructure, cloud services, cybersecurity and intelligent networking solutions to improve efficiency and competitiveness.

MTC said the partnership supports its ambition of becoming an end-to-end technology solutions provider while helping to drive the country's long-term economic development.

# Namibia is entering an exciting period of economic development

By Melanie Meiring

**G**rowing interest in oil and gas, mining, renewable energy, logistics, infrastructure, fisheries, and technology is attracting attention from investors both locally and internationally.

New opportunities create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and contribute to national development.

Yet every investment decision carries a fundamental challenge.

How do you distinguish between a promising opportunity and a preventable risk?

For many investors, the problem is not a lack of information. It is the opposite.

Today, businesses can provide websites, presentations, company profiles, financial information, marketing materials, registration documents, and references. The volume of information available has never been greater.

The challenge is understanding what that information actually means.

Around the world, due diligence professionals have long recognised that organisations can appear successful, compliant, and well-managed while important risks remain hidden beneath the surface. Ownership structures may be unclear. Operational capabilities may be overstated. Key relationships may create unforeseen exposure. Public records may tell only part of the story.

This challenge becomes even greater



**Today, businesses can provide websites, presentations, company profiles, financial information, marketing materials, registration documents, and references.**

when investors enter a new market.

An international investor may have access to documents and reports, but often lacks something equally important: local context.

Questions arise quickly.

Who are the real decision-makers behind a business?

How established is the organisation within its industry?

Are there warning signs that deserve closer attention?

How do several opportunities compare when each comes with different strengths and risks?

These questions are not unique to Namibia. They are common challenges in investment environments across the world.

One recurring frustration within traditional due diligence processes is that investors often receive lengthy reports but still struggle to reach a clear conclusion.

A report may be technically accurate and professionally prepared, yet decision-makers are left asking a simple question:

Which opportunity presents the most balanced combination of potential and risk?

The Namibia Investment Intelligence Score (NIIS) was developed in response to this challenge.

Rather than replacing professional judgement, the NIIS is designed to provide a structured framework that helps bring consistency to investment reviews and business assessments.

Importantly, the NIIS is not a credit score, investment recommendation, legal opinion, or guarantee of future performance.

No framework can predict success.

Markets change. Leadership changes. Economic conditions change.

What the NIIS seeks to provide is a disciplined and consistent approach to evaluating factors that influence confidence, transparency, operational credibility, and potential risk exposure at a specific point in time.

The objective is not to eliminate uncertainty. That is impossible.

The objective is to reduce uncertainty through a structured methodology that helps investors identify areas requiring deeper attention, further verification, or additional discussion before capital is committed.

This is particularly relevant for Namibia as international investment activity continues to expand.

Strong investment decisions support more than individual investors. They contribute to sustainable economic development, stronger business relationships, improved governance, and greater confidence in the market as a whole.

When investors have access to better information, capital can be allocated more effectively. Businesses that operate transparently are more likely to attract long-term partners.

Risks can be identified earlier, reducing costly surprises and strengthening trust between stakeholders.

Ultimately, the most expensive investment mistakes are often not caused by a lack of opportunity. They are caused by a lack of reliable information.

The Namibia Investment Intelligence Score was developed to provide investors with a structured framework for understanding potential opportunities, identifying areas of risk, and supporting informed decision-making in one of Africa's most promising investment destinations.

Because informed decisions begin with reliable information.

[www.ethicalconsulting.com.na/investment-intelligence](http://www.ethicalconsulting.com.na/investment-intelligence)

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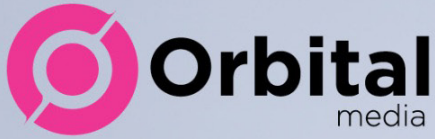
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## Namibia considers relaxing used car import restrictions

Government is reconsidering Namibia's long-standing restriction on the importation of vehicles older than 12 years, with Finance Minister Erica Shafudah admitting that the policy may have failed to achieve its intended purpose and instead made vehicles more expensive for consumers.

The review forms part of a broader assessment of customs regulations, import policies and trade rules following concerns raised by entrepreneurs during an engagement with government officials.

Shafudah said authorities have concluded that older vehicles continue to enter the country despite the restrictions, raising questions about the effectiveness of the policy.

"What we have realised is that the vehicles we do not allow to come directly into the market found their ways into Namibia anyway. Now we are asking ourselves what

do we do. We only made these cars more expensive. We would have just allowed them to come straight. This is an old policy and we need to change it," she said.

The restriction was originally introduced following concerns from vehicle dealers seeking protection from an influx of older imported vehicles.

However, Shafudah indicated that government now believes the policy may have increased costs without preventing the importation of older vehicles.

Her comments suggest a significant policy shift that could have far-reaching implications for consumers, vehicle dealers and the broader automotive market.

The review comes as government reassesses several trade and customs-related regulations that entrepreneurs argue are outdated and no longer aligned with modern business models.

Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare said

government is committed to listening to concerns raised by entrepreneurs and finding solutions through engagement.

"What we must do in government is not to harass our own people. What we must do is to listen to our own people," Ngurare said.

Shafudah also indicated that government is willing to revisit laws, regulations and even regional agreements where they no longer support economic development.

"When we put up our laws and rates, they served their time. The feedback that we are getting from you is saying to us revisit your policies, revisit your laws, revisit agreements," she said.

The review is expected to include customs duties, valuation methods and regulations affecting e-commerce businesses, with government signalling a willingness to modernise rules that entrepreneurs believe are increasing costs and limiting growth.

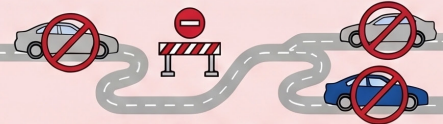
# Namibia's Automotive Policy Shift: Moving Beyond the 12-Year Import Ban

## POLICY PERFORMANCE METRICS

**12**  **12-YEAR IMPORT THRESHOLD**

**Supporting Detail:** The current age limit for imported vehicles now undergoing official government review.

**LOW POLICY EFFECTIVENESS**



**Supporting Detail:** Prohibited vehicles continue to enter the Namibian market via indirect, unregulated channels.

### Policy Objective vs. Actual Outcome

 POLICY OBJECTIVE	 ACTUAL OUTCOME
 Protect Local Dealers	 Vehicles entered market anyway
 Control Vehicle Age	 Restrictions bypassed via indirect routes
 Market Stability	 Prices increased for local consumers

**HIGH PRICE INFLATION**



**Supporting Detail:** The restriction served to increase vehicle costs rather than preventing older imports.

## STRATEGIC REFORM ROADMAP

**REGULATORY MODERNIZATION**



**Supporting Detail:** Reassessing customs duties, valuation methods, and rules affecting e-commerce growth.

**ENTREPRENEUR-LED GROWTH**



**Supporting Detail:** Shifting focus from protectionism to supporting modern business models and consumer access.

**“ Revisit our laws. ”**



**Supporting Detail:** Minister Shafudah expressed willingness to update regional agreements to support economic development.



## **NOGC 2026 targets 2,000 delegates as programme expands local participation focus**

The Namibia Oil and Gas Conference and Exhibition (NOGC) 2026 is expected to attract close to 2,000 delegates when it convenes in Windhoek from 18 to 20 August, according to organisers, as the event expands its programme to strengthen local participation, industry collaboration and workforce development in the country's emerging petroleum sector.

The Economic Association of Namibia (EAN), in partnership with the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) and the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), said the fourth edition will build on previous attendance levels and broaden engagement among government, operators, investors, SMEs and civil society as Namibia advances its oil and gas agenda.

The pre-conference programme will place a strong emphasis on youth participation

and skills development, with a structured "Future Generations" engagement aimed at linking training pathways with industry demand across coastal and operational hubs.

"The conference will once again provide a platform for strategic discussions. Namibia's energy future will be shaped through collaboration. It requires partnerships between local and international stakeholders, between established operators and emerging enterprises, and between policymakers and communities," said Jason Kasuto, Chairperson of the Economic Association of Namibia and Managing Director of Monasa Advisories and Associates.

Kasuto added that the sector's development must be anchored in domestic capacity building and local workforce participation as the industry scales up.

The conference will once again provide a platform for strategic discussions.

"This year's conference will be the catalyst for taking real training capacity to where the work will be and to the towns along our coast, so that our young people are equipped, on their own doorstep, with the technical skills this industry demands," he said.

Meanwhile, Economic Association of Namibia Chief Executive Officer Cons Karamata said the conference theme reflects a shift towards measurable developmental outcomes linked to resource extraction.

"It will be measured by the opportunities created for young Namibians entering the workforce. It will be measured by the growth of local businesses and entrepreneurs. It will be measured by stronger skills, stronger institutions and stronger communities," Karamata said.

Organisers said NOGC 2026 is positioning itself as a structured platform to align investment, policy and skills development, with a stronger emphasis on localisation, supplier development and long-term participation by Namibian enterprises in the oil and gas value chain as the sector moves closer to commercial production.

For the 2026 edition, organisers have introduced an expanded exhibition floor, additional networking formats and pre-conference engagements designed to deepen industry linkages and improve access for local businesses. These include a golf networking event, masterclasses,

speed networking sessions and dedicated local content pitching platforms.

The 2025 edition attracted close to 2,000 delegates and featured 73 exhibition stands, reflecting growing participation across the petroleum value chain.

"The 2025 Namibia Oil and Gas Conference was held in Windhoek under the theme 'From Exploration to Action: Positioning Namibia as the Next Frontier'. The conference brought together government officials, regulators, international oil companies, investors, financiers, service providers, local businesses, academia and civil society stakeholders to discuss the next phase of Namibia's rapidly growing petroleum industry," said Utaara Hoveka, Communications and Public Relations Specialist at NAMCOR.

Hoveka noted that the 2025 conference expanded its technical and policy engagement platform, with structured discussions on procurement, skills development and supplier participation, alongside exploration updates and operational developments from industry specialists.

"The conference also featured an expanded technical programme, where industry specialists presented updates on exploration activities, offshore development plans, trading technologies, production systems and environmental management practices," Hoveka said.



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## FNB, CPBN move to cut procurement delays through faster performance guarantees

**F**NB Namibia and the Central Procurement Board of Namibia (CPBN) have stepped up efforts to reduce delays in public procurement projects by improving the issuance of performance guarantees required for government contracts.

The two institutions recently held a strategic engagement in Windhoek focused on strengthening collaboration around performance guarantees, which are mandatory before the awarding of public contracts under the Public Procurement Act.

The discussions come as concerns persist over project implementation delays and the challenges faced by businesses in meeting procurement requirements.

CPBN Chief Executive Officer Idi Itope led the board's delegation, while FNB Namibia was represented by Head of Enterprise Banking Leonard Hamunyela and Manager of Public Sector Priscilla Akudhenga.

During the engagement, FNB outlined the process involved in obtaining performance guarantees, including application requirements, credit assessments and processing timelines. The bank also highlighted common challenges encountered by bidders and measures that could help speed up approvals.

The two organisations agreed on the need for closer cooperation between financial institutions and procurement authorities

to reduce bottlenecks that can delay the commencement of public sector projects.

Hamunyela said performance guarantees play a far greater role than simply meeting regulatory requirements.

"Performance guarantees are often seen as a compliance step, but in reality they are a critical enabler of economic participation. When these processes are unclear or delayed, it is not just paperwork that is affected, but the pace at which projects move and opportunities are realised," he said.

He added that improving the process would give businesses greater certainty while helping government projects proceed more efficiently.

Performance guarantees serve as a safeguard for public funds by ensuring contractors meet their obligations once awarded a tender. Under the Public Procurement Act, they are a prerequisite for the awarding of many government contracts.

The engagement forms part of broader efforts by the CPBN to strengthen cooperation with financial institutions and improve efficiency, transparency and accountability within Namibia's public procurement system.

Both organisations said better coordination would help ensure local businesses are able to access procurement opportunities more effectively while supporting the timely delivery of public infrastructure and services.

## NUST business school appoints Katarina Kamari as Communications Head



The Harold Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business (HP-GSB) at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) has appointed former Oshakati Town Council Public Relations Officer Katarina Kamari as Head of Marketing, Corporate Communications and Stakeholder Engagement.

Kamari assumed her new role on 1 June 2026 and will be responsible for leading the school's marketing, communications and stakeholder engagement functions.

The appointment forms part of HP-GSB's efforts to strengthen its brand presence, expand stakeholder partnerships and enhance its position as a leading provider of business and executive education in Namibia and the region.

Kamari brings extensive experience in strategic communications, stakeholder

relations, public affairs, brand management and media engagement gained in both the public sector and regional institutions.

She holds a Master of Communication Science degree and is a Certified Chartered Public Relations Practitioner (CPRP) accredited through the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA).

According to the school, Kamari will focus on increasing the visibility of HP-GSB, supporting student recruitment initiatives and strengthening engagement with key stakeholders. The graduate school said her appointment comes as it continues to advance its strategic objective of positioning itself as a centre of excellence in business and executive education.

Prior to joining HP-GSB, Kamari served as Public Relations Officer at the Oshakati Town Council.

# A critical examination of the legal framework regulating transport and logistics in the SADC region: Strengthening regional integration and trade efficiency

By Mushoke Sibeya & Bruce Liswani

## PART I: Transport and Logistics Perspective

The SADC region is particularly vulnerable to these dynamics as transport and logistics are also at the center of regional trade and economic integration.

Across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) this system is expected to underpin industrialisation, value chain development under both provisions of the SADC Trade Protocol and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

However, long-term regional cooperation and infrastructure planning have not improved the fact that moving goods across SADC from one end of the region to another is slow, costly and fragmented. It is increasingly hard to overlook this contradiction.

SADC is well located with major ports Walvis Bay, Durban and Beira and extensive road and

rail networks, as well as recognised corridors such as the North–South Corridor and Walvis

Bay Corridor Group. But not all these advantages have made regional connectivity seamless.

Furthermore, higher transport costs, extended border delays, insufficient intermodal integration, and unmet regulatory requirements prevent regional



trade efficiencies among these operators (SADC, 2012; World Bank, 2020).

Although gaps in infrastructure are often identified as the central constraint, the deeper reason is the fact that transport and logistics systems operate from a fragmented

institutional and regulatory context. This reality is acknowledged in regional master plans, although implementation is patchy.

Southern Africa's problem, as presented in my article posted in 2023, of the untapped logistics value from the Zambezi Region, is not a loss of opportunity, but a lack of transformation of geographic advantage into aligned logistics systems for trade and development (Liswani, 2023).

The majority of freight movement in SADC is by road transport, which makes up over 70% of regional cargo. Rail, as an inexpensive and environmentally friendly alternative that is still not fully utilised, faces both long existing infrastructure problems and competing transport requirements as well as a lack of rolling stock and poor cross-border collaboration.

Despite the evident acknowledgement established within regional logistics master plans with respect to modal balance and asset management, implementation remains structurally stalled.

Crucially, contemporary steps are being taken to address this modal imbalance. The revitalization of cross-border rail initiatives

most notably the ongoing bilateral commitment between Namibia and Botswana to accelerate the Trans-Kalahari Railway project serves as a vital template for connecting landlocked mineral wealth directly to the Atlantic coast.

Similarly, expansions along the Walvis Bay–Ndola–Lubumbashi Development Corridor emphasize the growing urgency to balance asphalt with iron. Yet, these multi-billion-dollar physical networks will stall if the underlying operational systems remain archaic.

Border management remains one of the most significant bottlenecks in regional logistics.

Although initiatives such as One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) have been introduced conceptually, transit times across many SADC borders remain highly unpredictable.

Delays are frequently driven not by

physical infrastructure constraints, but by procedural friction: overlapping inspections, manual documentation, inconsistent enforcement of rules, and limited coordination between border agencies.

For modern supply chains, unpredictability is often more damaging than physical distance. Unreliable transit times discourage investment, disrupt production planning, and weaken regional value chains.

Digitalisation presents another missed opportunity. Globally, logistics systems are data-driven, relying on real-time information sharing between customs, ports, transport operators, and regulators. In much of SADC, however, freight movement remains stubbornly dependent on paper-based processes and siloed ICT platforms.

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digital systems undermines visibility, traceability, and risk management, despite overwhelming evidence that digital trade facilitation can significantly reduce clearance times and logistics costs.

Rising operational costs further compound these challenges. Fuel prices, toll fees, permit charges, and compliance costs continue to escalate across the region. For transport operators particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) these pressures erode profitability and limit fleet renewal.

At a regional level, high logistics costs reduce competitiveness and make it difficult for SADC producers to integrate into regional and global markets. This is exacerbated by a severe lack of effective intermodal integration; ports, rail systems, road networks, and inland terminals often operate in isolation rather than as components of a singular, fluid logistics system.

Corridor management institutions exist, but their influence is frequently advisory rather than legally enforceable. As a result, corridors designed to promote integration often function as disconnected national segments rather than cohesive regional trade arteries.

The cumulative impact of these weaknesses is profound. High transport costs increase the price of goods, lengthen delivery times, and reduce the competitiveness of regional industries.

More importantly, inefficient logistics undermines SADC's broader integration agenda. Industrialisation strategies, special economic zones, and cross-border investments cannot succeed in an environment where supply chains remain unreliable and fragmented.

From a practitioner's perspective and as a member of the Chartered Institute

of Logistics and Transport (CILT) it is increasingly clear that infrastructure investment alone will not resolve these challenges.

Logistics efficiency depends on coherent systems, predictable rules, and coordinated institutions. Without a harmonised and enforceable legal and regulatory framework to support transport operations, even the most ambitious regional master plans will struggle to deliver meaningful integration.

## **PART II: Legal and Regulatory Perspective**

### **1. Overview of the SADC Legal Framework**

Transport and logistics play a central role in regional integration within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), primarily attributable to the movement of goods that are essential for trade, economic growth, and cooperation among member states such as natural rare earth minerals as well as agricultural products, amongst others.

It is thus prudent to outline and understand the existing legal framework that governs the possibility and reality of regional trade and integration in SADC in order to bear the capacity making it possible to appreciate advancements made thus far, as well as to be in a position that enables the identification of bottlenecks and recommendations therefrom.

In acknowledgment of the current regional development, SADC has developed a legal framework intended to support coordinated transport governance across the region.

The grass roots of this legal framework being embedded in the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community (1992) signed in Windhoek, Namibia, on August 17, 1992, which treaty seeks to

establish regional economic integration, cooperation, and the progressive removal of barriers to trade as core objectives (SADC, 1992). In this context, transport is not merely an administrative concern but a critical legal and economic instrument for both regional development and harmony.

A pivotal legal instrument is the SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology (1996). This Protocol provides for a fertile legal foundation for cooperation in road, rail, maritime, aviation, and inland transport systems. Critical to note is that its purpose is to promote harmonised transport policies, improve infrastructure connectivity, and facilitate the movement of goods and persons across borders (SADC, 1996a).

In the premise, the Protocol recognises that regional integration cannot succeed where transport systems remain legally fragmented and operationally inefficient, again reemphasising the relationship between logistics and law.

Another legal instrument within the SADC framework is the SADC Protocol on Trade (1996) which seeks to reduce trade barriers and encourage freer movement of goods within the region (SADC, 1996b). Objectively, the realisation of trade liberalisation in practical terms depends heavily on whether goods can move efficiently across borders.

For this reason, transport and trade law are once again deeply interconnected. Similarly, the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment (2006) supports infrastructure development and regional investment, both of which are necessary for modern transport and logistics systems.

Apart from the SADC legal instruments, transport governance in the region is further influenced by broader continental and sub-regional arrangements.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community and Southern African Development Community (COMESA-EAC-SADC) Tripartite Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme was introduced to improve coordination across overlapping regional blocs by simplifying transit procedures, strengthening corridor management, and promoting transport harmonisation (COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite, 2015).

In a similar manner, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement (2018) increasingly shaped regional trade and transport governance by encouraging trade facilitation and customs cooperation across the continent (African Union, 2018).

There are also specialised legal arrangements dealing specifically with cross-border transport. These include the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Agreement (2002), which facilitates customs cooperation among certain SADC states, as well as bilateral road transport agreements concluded between neighbouring countries.

Corridor-based governance initiatives, such as those supporting the Walvis Bay transport corridors, have also emerged as practical legal mechanisms to improve access for landlocked states.

Despite this extensive framework, transport regulation remains heavily dependent on national law. Each SADC member state continues to regulate transport through its own and unharmonized domestic legislation, covering issues such as vehicle standards, road safety, customs procedures, freight licensing, and transit permits. Save to state, Namibia regulates road transport through the Road Traffic and Transport Act 22 of 1999, while South Africa applies the

National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996, where upon perusal the said disparities become manifest.

Although national regulation is necessary, the lack of consistency between these legal systems creates barriers to regional integration.

## 2. Legal and Regulatory Challenges

Although SADC has developed an ambitious legal framework for transport cooperation, significant regulatory challenges continue to undermine efficiency. One of the most persistent problems is the lack of harmonised transport standards among member states.

This includes varying vehicle dimensions, different axle load limits, inconsistent licensing requirements, and non-uniform traffic regulations. This variation forces operators to adjust their loads or operations at national borders to comply with different rules, leading to processing delays and added operational costs.

Furthermore, cross-border operators encounter multiple transit permit systems and customs procedures, rather than a single unified regional standard.

This stands in sharp contrast to regions like the European Union (EU), where road freight transport is largely governed by harmonised, directly applicable instruments such as EU Regulation (EC) No 1072/2009, allowing operators with a community license to access international markets across all member states without needing separate national transit permits.

Within SADC, operators face a labyrinth of distinct bilateral and multilateral permit processes, each governed by separate pieces of national legislation.

The crux of the failure, however, lies in the weakness of SADC's enforcement mechanisms.

SADC's legal structure relies almost

entirely on cooperation between sovereign states, meaning implementation is dictated by shifting political willingness rather than strict, binding legal accountability.

Because institutional enforcement mechanisms are comparatively weak, regional commitments frequently falter at the desk of local border officials.

The uneven domestication of regional obligations allows some member states to prioritize domestic administrative control over regional efficiency, creating a fragmented legal environment that erases certainty for cross-border businesses.

## 3. Recommendations and the Way Forward

To strengthen regional integration and enhance trade efficiency, SADC must pivot toward deeper legislative and administrative harmonisation.

First, member states should systematically align their national transport laws with regional benchmarks. This requires moving beyond non-binding guidelines to formal protocols that establish uniform axle-load limits, standardised vehicle specifications, and a single regional transit permit valid across all corridors.

Second, the region must institutionalise digital transformation within its legal structures.

This involves passing domestic laws that explicitly recognise electronic signatures, digital custom declarations, and regional e-logistics platforms, thereby eliminating archaic paper-heavy systems that cause delays.

Crucially, these legal reforms must leverage strategic regional trade gateways. Namibia's Zambezi Region, for instance, occupies a uniquely vital geographic position, offering a direct conduit to Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Angola.

As argued in previous conceptual

frameworks regarding the Zambezi Region's untapped potential, this corridor serves as a natural gateway for regional trade and presents a prime opportunity for SADC to implement coordinated border management and transit facilitation.

Similarly, the Port of Walvis Bay provides a critical trade route for landlocked SADC member states. With stronger, legally binding coordination in customs cooperation, multimodal transport regulation, and enforceable corridor governance, Walvis Bay can fully realize its role as a premier regional trade artery.

SADC does not need to reinvent the wheel. It can draw lessons from the European Union's deep regulatory integration or look closer to home at the East African Community (EAC).

The EAC offers a highly practical model reflecting African realities through its functional Single Customs Territory and successfully implemented One-Stop Border Posts.

A gradual, legally mandated transition toward harmonised permits, simplified customs procedures, and integrated digital networks is the only pathway to move SADC from an aspirational trade bloc to an operational economic powerhouse.

Physical infrastructure is only half the battle; without a unified legal framework to govern how goods cross borders, our grand regional master plans will remain stuck in transit.

**Co-Author Acknowledgement:**  
**This article is a co-joint initiative combining distinct analytical disciplines to evaluate regional integration. PART I: Transport and Logistics**

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