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THE

BRIEF

News Worth Knowing



About 70% of Namibians locked out of formal housing market as prices surge

THURSDAY 21 MAY 2026

MAIN STORY



About 70% of Namibians locked out of formal housing market as prices surge

About 70% of Namibians can no longer afford formal housing as soaring property prices, weak income growth and limited access to mortgage finance continue to push home ownership beyond the reach of most households.

The warning emerged during a housing research seminar hosted by the Bank of Namibia, where policymakers, economists and banking executives painted a bleak picture of a housing market increasingly dominated by wealthier and cash-backed buyers.

Deputy Director of Policy Research at the central bank, Abigail Nainda, said Namibia's housing backlog has exploded from around 80,000 households in 2007 to approximately 300,000 housing units by 2025, particularly affecting low and middle-income earners.

Nainda said average house prices have risen sharply over the past two decades,

climbing from below N\$200,000 in 2000 to around N\$783,000 in 2010 before surging further to between N\$1.3 million and N\$1.4 million in recent years.

"Approximately 70% of the population cannot afford formal housing due to low incomes and limited mortgage access. That was the finding back then," Nainda said.

The latest First National Bank Namibia

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**

Housing Index presented during the seminar showed that the national weighted average house price rose to approximately N\$1.44 million during the first quarter of 2026.

Chief Executive Officer of Retail Banking at FNB Namibia, Mbo Luvindao, said affordability pressures have intensified as wages continue to lag behind property price growth.

According to FNB Namibia, about 75% of the country's workforce earns less than N\$5,000 per month, effectively excluding the majority of Namibians from the formal housing market.

"The data indicates that approximately 75% of Namibia's workforce earned less than N\$5,000 on a monthly basis. This basically places most Namibian households outside the formal housing market," Luvindao said.

He said the market is increasingly being driven by equity-backed, cash-rich and foreign buyers, particularly in the central and coastal regions.

FNB Namibia data further showed that houses priced below N\$500,000, which once accounted for more than 80% of registered mortgage bonds in 2007, now make up only about 25% of the market.

"The average value of small-segment houses now stands at around N\$900,000, while medium-segment homes average N\$2.1 million. Large-segment houses average N\$4.4 million and luxury homes nearly N\$8.7 million," Luvindao said.

Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Ebson Uanguta, warned that formal home ownership is rapidly becoming unattainable for ordinary Namibians.

"The latest FNB Housing Index shows that the average

house price in Windhoek has surpassed N\$1.4 million, placing formal home ownership increasingly beyond the reach of many Namibians," Uanguta said.

The affordability crisis is also pushing more households into the rental market, increasing pressure on already stretched urban housing systems.

Executive Director at the National Planning Commission, Sylvester Mbangi, said rapid urbanisation, rising construction costs and continued migration to towns and cities are worsening the crisis.

"Rapid urbanisation, rising construction costs, affordability constraints, and sustained migration to urban centres are placing increasing strain on housing delivery systems across the country," Mbangi said.

Government aims to construct 55,000 houses and service 50,000 plots under the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), while reducing the proportion of households living in informal settlements from 28% to 14% by 2030.

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Urbanisation and oil sector growth increase pressure on Namibia's housing and infrastructure

Governor of the Bank of Namibia, Ebson Uanguta, has warned that rapid urbanisation and the expansion of Namibia's emerging oil and gas sector are placing growing pressure on the country's housing delivery systems, serviced land supply and municipal infrastructure.

Uanguta said urbanisation, now estimated at around 50%, together with industrial growth linked to the energy sector, is already straining infrastructure systems and could worsen if planning and service delivery fail to keep pace. "If urbanisation continues to outpace infrastructure delivery, serviced land provision and integrated spatial planning, Namibia as a

country risks a future marked by expanding informal settlements, widening inequality, increased pressure on public services, and rising social and economic vulnerability," Uanguta said.

He said industrial expansion linked to the oil and gas sector is expected to further increase housing demand in coastal towns and key economic centres, adding pressure to already constrained urban systems.

Deputy Director of Policy Research at the Bank of Namibia, Abigail Nainda, said the country's housing supply gap continues to widen as demand accelerates.

Data presented by Nainda showed that about 217,000 households, representing

roughly 30% of the population, are currently living in informal dwellings, affecting an estimated 650,000 people nationwide.

“Housing supply has not kept up with demand unfortunately. The backlog has widened significantly,” Nainda said.

She said around 40.2% of informal dwellings are located in urban areas, with approximately 11,000 new shacks added every year.


According to the data, Namibia’s national housing backlog has increased from about 80,000 households in 2007 to nearly 300,000 housing units by 2025.

Executive Director at the National Planning Commission, Sylvester Mbangi, said affordability challenges, rising construction costs and continued migration to urban centres are placing increasing strain on housing delivery systems.

“Rapid urbanisation, rising construction costs, affordability constraints, and sustained migration to urban centres are placing increasing strain on housing delivery systems across the country,” Mbangi said.

Project Lead for Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Development at Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit Namibia, Martin Jimmy Namupala, said municipalities remain constrained by inadequate funding structures and limited implementation capacity.

“Another important finding is that increasing funding alone is not enough to scale housing and upgrading initiatives. The research consistently highlighted the importance of implementation capacity, especially at local authority level,” Namupala said.



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Managing client wealth – the only way is the right way!

A Blueprint for Protecting and Growing What Matters Most

By René Olivier

Wealth management is a term frequently used liberally. In practice there is a difference between firms that manage wealth and those that in reality primarily administer assets. The first requires a disciplined, end-to-end process built around the individual client.

The second is a completely different type of business model more high-volume focussed.

Royale Wealth Management has been operating in the Namibian market since March 2023. From the outset, we built the business around a firm belief that high net worth clients in Namibia are entitled to the same standard of personalised, transparent wealth management one would expect from a top-tier boutique practice anywhere in the world. That belief has not changed.

What Wealth Management Looks Like in Practice

True wealth management is not a single conversation. It's a structured process with clear disciplines at each stage. Some of the key areas where Royale Wealth Management invests the most time and care are set out below.

1. Understanding goals in depth. Every engagement begins with people not with portfolios or products. We take time to understand what a client is actually trying to achieve: retirement at a specific point, business succession, providing for dependants, philanthropic ambitions, or some combination of all of these. Goals are given time horizons, prioritised, and stress-



Every engagement begins with people not with portfolios or products.

tested against realistic life scenarios.

2. A complete picture of existing assets. Before any recommendation is made, we map the full landscape of a client's current position. This goes well beyond a list of unit trust holdings. It includes listed assets such as equities, bonds, cash, and funds, as well as unlisted assets such as property portfolios, private business interests, deferred compensation, pension and provident fund entitlements, foreign assets, and insurance structures. This complete picture determines what is missing, where concentration risk sits, and what needs restructuring.

3. Strategic asset allocation on the efficient frontier. With goals defined and the full asset picture understood, we construct a strategic asset allocation, the target mix of asset classes to achieve the required return at the minimum level of risk. Grounded in modern portfolio theory and the efficient frontier, we also distinguish between permanent capital loss and volatility, managing each appropriately. The result is a bespoke allocation built for each client, revisited as market conditions and circumstances evolve.

4. Identifying and blending the right fund

managers. We run a structured process to identify which fund managers and investment vehicles best fill each role in the portfolio. This covers both qualitative and quantitative assessment such as investment philosophy, consistency of process, team stability, track record, and cost. Equally important is how managers are combined. Correlation between strategies matters as much as individual quality, and blending managers that do not simply move in tandem under market stress requires a level of analysis most investors do not receive.

5. A tactical implementation plan. Even a well-constructed portfolio strategy can be undermined by poor implementation. For clients transitioning from an existing position, we design a phased plan that manages sequencing risk, controls transaction costs, and accounts for the tax consequences of realising existing holdings. Each step is explained in advance, and at no point during the transition is the client exposed to unintended risk.

6. Identifying the right structures for multi-generational planning and tax efficiency. Wealth management at this level requires thinking beyond the immediate portfolio. We identify the right legal and financial structures to protect and pass on wealth efficiently. These could include using discretionary trusts,

preservation funds, endowment policies, special purpose vehicles, offshore structures, and more. The right structure depends on residency, family circumstances, business interests, jurisdictions involved and getting it right materially affects what the next

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Independent Advice, Global Reach

Royale operates a hybrid model built on strategic partnerships across Namibia, South Africa, and global markets. These give us access to institutional-quality research, investment platforms, and capabilities that

would otherwise sit exclusively with much larger firms, while Royale remains fully independent in the solutions it recommends. We are not tied to any product provider, fund house, or platform.

Where partner solutions form part of the investment mix, and they often do because they offer proven quality at a competitive cost, this gives clients more affordable access to markets. The result is the best of both worlds, the depth of a global network combined with the accountability of an independent adviser.

Every element of this model is disclosed to clients. All fees, all partnership arrangements, and any instances where partner solutions are included are communicated clearly and in writing. Our clients know exactly what they are paying, to whom, and why.

Keeping Your Money Safe: What Every Investor Should Ask

Building wealth takes years of discipline and hard work. Protecting it requires the same level of care. The questions below are ones every investor should be putting to their adviser regularly, not just at the start of a relationship. They are the practical safeguards that stand between a client's capital and risks that are often only discovered when it is already too late.

Do you know where your assets are actually held? Your investments should be held by an independent, regulated

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custodian or platform, a party entirely separate from your wealth management firm. Client assets must be legally and operationally separated from the advisory firm's own money. When the two are held together without clear legal separation, clients become exposed to the firm's financial risks. If your adviser's business faces difficulties, your assets are then ring-fenced from any creditors of the firm. Ask your adviser to explain specifically how this separation is maintained.

Is your adviser properly licensed and regulated? In Namibia, wealth management and financial advisory activities are regulated by NAMFISA. Before entrusting your capital to any firm, verify that they hold the appropriate licence for the services they provide. Ask directly what that licence covers. The answer should be specific, verifiable, and given without hesitation.

Do you have direct, independent access to your own portfolio information? You should not have to rely solely on your adviser to know what you own. Statements and reporting should reach you directly from the custodian or fund administrator, independently of your adviser. If the only view you have of your portfolio comes through your adviser's own reporting, that is a gap worth closing.

Are all fees and compensation arrangements fully disclosed? You have every right to know exactly how your wealth manager is compensated, and by whom. This covers advisory fees, platform fees, fund management costs, and any commissions or placement fees paid by third-party product providers. Undisclosed commissions create conflicts of interest that can influence the advice you receive, whether consciously or not. A transparent adviser will provide a complete written breakdown without hesitation.

Does your adviser make promises about

returns? No well-regulated wealth manager will guarantee investment returns or quote fixed yields on market-linked investments. Any representation suggesting otherwise is either a misunderstanding of what is on offer or a misrepresentation of how your money is invested. Implausibly consistent or above-market return projections should be seen as a potential red flag, rather than a selling point.

What happens to your portfolio if the firm ceases to operate? Every investor should understand the continuity arrangements at their wealth management firm. What happens to your assets and your financial plan if the firm or your specific adviser can no longer operate? A well-run firm will have documented succession and continuity plans and can explain clearly how clients would be protected. If no clear answer is available, that is a governance concern worth taking seriously.

Three Years On

Since opening in Namibia in March 2023, Royale has been built around one commitment, to offer wealth management in Namibia that is of a global standard and decades of experience. That means a thorough process, real personalisation, full transparency, and an independent perspective that places the client's interests above everything else.

Namibia's high net worth community has built serious wealth. It deserves an advisory relationship that takes it seriously, one that combines the depth of global expertise with the personal attention that only a focused, independent practice can provide.

We look forward to the years ahead and continuing to raise the standard of what wealth management in Namibia can look like.

**** Royale Wealth Management, serving Namibia's high net worth community with decades of experience***



Conservation sector contributes N\$109 million to Namibia's economy in 2025

Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme contributed approximately N\$109 million to the national economy in 2025, according to

Prime Minister Elijah Ngurare.

Ngurare said the sector has expanded significantly over the years, with 87 communal conservancies and 48 community forests now operating across

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the country.

“These institutions collectively employ more than 2,500 people, including over 700 game and forest guards who play a critical role in wildlife monitoring and data collection. In 2025 alone, the programme contributed approximately N\$109 million to the national economy,” he said.

The programme generates income through tourism activities, sustainable wildlife use, timber and non-timber forest products, helping to strengthen rural livelihoods while contributing to economic growth.

Ngurare said the figures highlight the growing importance of conservation as a driver of inclusive development, particularly in communal areas where economic opportunities remain limited.

“Beyond empowering rural communities, the CBNRM programme contributes significantly to Namibia’s Gross Domestic Product through tourism, conservation hunting, timber and non-timber forest products, and other natural resource-based activities,” he said.

The CBNRM programme, which has been in operation for more than three decades, allows rural communities to manage and benefit directly from wildlife, forestry and tourism resources. It has become one of Namibia’s best-known conservation and rural development models.

The programme currently covers approximately 186,000 square kilometres, representing about 60.7% of Namibia’s communal land, and supports

an estimated 244,000 people.

It also includes specialised community associations operating in protected areas such as Bwabwata National Park, Etosha National Park and Namib-Naukluft National Park.

“Similar support is provided by the !Gobaob Hai//om Community Association in Etosha National Park and the Aus Community Association. Beyond empowering rural communities, the CBNRM programme contributes significantly to Namibia’s Gross Domestic Product through tourism, conservation hunting, timber and non-timber forest products, and other natural resource-based activities,” Ngurare said.

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Trust is becoming the only real digital currency

By Willem Shikongo

For years, digital success was measured in reach, followers, and clicks. Brands built entire strategies around vanity metrics, numbers that looked impressive on reports but rarely translated into actual business outcomes.

The assumption was simple: visibility creates growth. Today, that assumption is falling apart.

The internet is completely saturated. Content now blends in tone and intent, as AI-generated posts sit right next to human writing, and paid promotions try hard to look like organic voices.

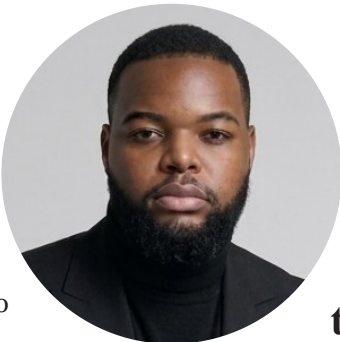
We live in an era where algorithms reward whatever holds attention the longest, not what earns belief. Because of that, visibility is no longer the challenge. Credibility is.

Trust has become the single deciding factor in whether attention leads to business, or just a quick scroll past.

Attention is abundant, but belief is scarce. It has never been easier to reach massive audiences, yet reach without trust just produces weak signals, inflated engagement, and audiences that never convert into paying customers.

Look at it in economic terms: distrust has become a “friction tax.” It makes every single click more expensive and every lead harder to close.

People are smarter and more skeptical now. They see right through polished corporate messaging. Instead, they rely on quieter indicators, such as consistency over time, real-world experience, peer validation, and how a brand shows up



We live in an era where algorithms reward whatever holds attention the longest, not what earns belief.

when it isn't actively selling something.

The question has fundamentally changed from “Have I seen this brand before?” to “Do I actually believe them?”

In Namibia, this shift is incredibly sharp. Our platforms function less like marketing channels and more like reputation networks. In a smaller, intricately connected market, trust spreads fast, but doubt spreads even faster.

Because our business communities are so tightly linked, digital credibility is not about having a curated profile. It is about the lived experience people share with each other. One bad or inconsistent experience can instantly undo months of careful positioning.

Surface credibility just does not work anymore. There was a time when high production quality automatically signalled authority.

A sleek website and glossy branding were enough to look legitimate, but that signal is broken. Anyone can assemble a high-end look in five minutes now, from clean layouts to neat testimonials.

As appearance loses its weight, real behaviour takes its place. Consistency matters far more than polish. Transparency

“
A brand that shows up steadily over time, even with a few rough edges, always earns more respect than one that appears perfectly refined but has no history.

beats positioning. Longevity matters more than the energy of a new launch.

A brand that shows up steadily over time, even with a few rough edges, always earns more respect than one that appears perfectly refined but has no history. Modern

audiences do not care about claims, they want proof.

They want to see how something works in practice, not how it sounds in theory.

This is exactly why raw, unscripted content often outperforms polished corporate messaging. Screenshots, real conversations, and a traceable reputation carry infinitely more weight than a slogan. Accountability matters.

Building digital equity is a slow, gradual process, which stands in sharp contrast to the fleeting nature of algorithmic attention.

Reach spikes and fades overnight, but real credibility compounds. When that authority is established, transaction friction disappears, because recognition completely replaces hesitation. In a crowded digital environment, real credibility is not a marketing tactic. It is the foundation that everything else relies on.

**Willem
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Telecom Namibia to roll out 19 more mobile base stations by year-end

Telecom Namibia says it plans to expand its mobile network infrastructure through its subsidiary Powercom, which is expected to roll out 19 additional mobile base stations before the end of 2026.

The expansion follows the deployment of 11 new mobile base stations this year and upgrades to eight existing sites as part of the company's broader network modernisation programme. Telecom Namibia said the rollout forms part of efforts to improve connectivity coverage, network reliability and digital access in underserved and high-demand areas across the country.

The company said the infrastructure upgrades are being implemented under its 2027 Integrated Strategic Business Plan, which focuses on strengthening network capacity and improving customer experience.

Telecom Namibia said it is also upgrading its mobile and fixed broadband

infrastructure, including the migration from 2G and 3G technologies to 4G and 4.5G networks.

"The ongoing modernisation programme reflects Telecom Namibia's dedication to meeting the evolving connectivity needs of individuals, businesses and communities. We are confident that these investments will result in measurable improvements in network performance and customer satisfaction in the months ahead," the company said.

The operator said fibre expansion remains central to its strategy, with new long-distance fibre routes being deployed to strengthen national backbone connectivity and improve redundancy between major urban centres.

Telecom Namibia added that it is reinforcing backup power systems through upgrades to generators, batteries and solar hybrid systems to reduce service interruptions during power instability.



OL unveils major rebrand as group targets N\$2.5bn EBIT by 2029

Olthaver & List Group (OL) has unveiled a new corporate identity as the company pushes ahead with an ambitious transformation strategy targeting N\$2.5 billion in earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) by 2029.

The rebrand, one of the biggest changes in the group's more than 100-year history, introduces a unified "One OL" identity aimed at bringing the company's operations under a single culture and corporate structure.

Speaking at the launch, OL Executive Chairman Sven Thieme said the rebrand follows years of internal restructuring and repositioning across the group.

"The identity reset follows several years of deliberate internal transformation, built on the core characteristics of our OL Persona - Authentic, Caring and Passionate - which guide the way the organisation shows up in every interaction, every decision and every experience it creates for its people, its customers and its communities," Thieme

said.

“We have strengthened our leadership, deepened our organisational culture and repositioned our operating companies for the next chapter, building towards our world-class ambitions with discipline, courage and care.”

The company said the new identity forms part of its Vision 2029 strategy, which targets industry-standard returns across all operating companies while positioning OL among the world’s top 10 best workplaces.

Thieme said companies that fail to adapt risk becoming irrelevant.

“Standing still was the riskiest move any leader could make as business history was full of organisations that refined what worked and, slowly, became irrelevant. We have chosen a different path. Over the past few years, we have moved, transformed and reinvented. And tonight, we are aligning the outside with the inside,” he said.

As part of the rebrand, OL has removed the ampersand historically associated with the Ohlthaver & List name and replaced it with a single integrated OL logo.

The redesign also introduces a new colour palette and typography while retaining “Est. 1919” as a reference to the company’s founders Herman Ohlthaver, Carl List and Werner List.

The group also announced the renaming of its headquarters in Windhoek’s central business district to OL Haus.

“Our pioneers gave us the foundation. What we build on

it is our responsibility and our honour,” Thieme said.

“We are an organisation that strives to be world-class while staying true to our heritage and authentically Namibian. I have never been more excited about what comes next. One OL. One Persona. One Future.”

Founded in 1919, OL is one of Namibia’s largest privately held companies, with operations spanning fishing, aquaculture, retail, hospitality, property, renewable energy, engineering, information technology and marketing services.



VACANCY

CATALOGUE CONTROLLER
LOCATION: TWIN HILLS GOLD MINE SITE

JOB SUMMARY
 This position is responsible for the control and maintenance of the inventory catalogue at Osino Gold Exploration and Mining (Pty) Ltd in accordance with company specifications, standards, and compliance requirements relating to items, end users, and suppliers.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Grade 12 with a good level of computer literacy.
- Valid driver's licence.
- A diploma in Supply Chain or Materials Management as a minimum
- Alternatively, a relevant combination of formal procurement-related experience and additional relevant studies.
- Three to five (3-5) years' experience in material control and inventory management.
- Sound knowledge of classification and coding of materials
- An artisan or engineering trade qualification will be an added advantage

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Eliminates unnecessary variety and improves specifications and descriptions on an ongoing basis.
- Scrutinise stock reports and promote standardisation of equipment and spares by investigating deviations, consulting with users and the warehouse and materials manager, and implementing corrective actions where necessary.
- Act as a resource to warehouse staff with regard to standards, specifications, and technical information by liaising with technical personnel from relevant departments and suppliers.
- Assists the Receiving Controller with the inspection of incoming goods, material and equipment for compliance with order specifications.
- Reviews daily the binning reports, including physical checks, to ensure no duplicate binning and/or material binning without bin numbers. Immediate corrective action should be taken on all deviations, and both the deviations and the corrective actions must be recorded.
- Reviews of all new stock applications and amendments for completeness.
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Osino Gold Exploration and Mining and Shanjin International are an equal opportunity employer, committed to fostering diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Preference given to suitably qualified Namibian citizens. People with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

Namibia's job initiatives falling short due to poor coordination, UN warns

The United Nations Resident Coordinator for Namibia, Hopolang Phororo, says poor alignment between employment programmes and the absence of shared systems to measure impact are limiting Namibia's efforts to tackle unemployment.

Phororo said that while government, the private sector and development partners have introduced various programmes aimed at addressing unemployment, concerns remain over whether these initiatives are producing results at the scale required.

She argued that the challenge is no longer a lack of ideas, but rather how existing initiatives are coordinated, monitored and expanded. "A central constraint is the absence of a coordinated view of the employment landscape. Despite the number of initiatives in place, there is limited shared tracking of outcomes, limited visibility on what is working, and insufficient alignment to ensure that efforts complement rather than duplicate one another. As a result, promising initiatives are not consistently scaled or replicated, and the collective impact remains below its potential," she said.

Phororo said Namibia must place greater focus on helping small and medium enterprises grow into stable long-term employers rather than simply increasing the



number of start-ups.

She warned that recent policy developments, including the expansion of free tertiary education, have added urgency to the employment challenge.

While the policy is expected to strengthen Namibia's human capital, she said it will also increase the number of graduates entering the labour market each year.

Without stronger economic growth and improved job absorption capacity, Namibia risks

producing growing numbers of educated but unemployed young people, she warned.

According to Phororo, sustainable job creation will depend not only on launching new initiatives but also on building an economy where SMEs can survive, expand and create employment at scale.

"At the same time, Namibia's employment story cannot be told without recognising the role of micro and small enterprises. Across the country, thousands of such businesses sustain livelihoods every day, often outside the formal policy spotlight. Yet many do not survive beyond the first few years," Phororo said.

Her remarks come as Namibia targets the creation of 500,000 jobs by 2030, while youth unemployment stood at around 44% in 2023, according to the Namibia Statistics Agency.

The best supply chain will win, and Africa knows it

By Ronald Mlalazi

In an era defined by profound geopolitical volatility and persistent macroeconomic disruptions, the traditional ambit of Supply Chain Management (SCM) has been irrevocably altered – requiring it to become an inherent part of the business strategy.

In fact, the global economic landscape of the 2020s exposed the fragility of hyper-optimised “just-in-time” global value chains.

Rising trade protectionism, localised conflicts disrupting vital maritime routes, and post-pandemic realignments forced boards of directors and national governments alike to confront the stark reality that supply chain resilience is synonymous with corporate survival and national security.

As a result, organisations have to abandon the outdated notion of SCM as a mere cost centre, instead needing to reposition it as the nucleus of corporate strategy, empowering SCM professionals to navigate these geopolitical complexities through strategic pivoting, risk mitigation, and localised capacity building.

Supply chains compete

In a stable environment, organisations may have been able to compete through product differentiation or marketing. That is no longer enough as an organisation’s market share and profitability are entirely dependent on the agility and resilience of its supply chain network.

The strategic response to geopolitical uncertainty requires moving away from sole reliance on distant, low-cost manufacturing hubs. With government and corporate



In a stable environment, organisations may have been able to compete through product differentiation or marketing.

backing, the modern supply chain strategy must now aggressively explore and implement sourcing strategies such as:

- Nearshoring and Friendshoring: Relocating critical supply chain nodes to geographically closer or geopolitically aligned regions to mitigate risk.
- Local Sourcing: Building domestic supplier capacity to buffer against international transit shocks.

When supply chain strategy is rightfully placed at the apex of the organisation and adequately resourced, it provides the agility required to manage these transitions without compromising the end consumer’s experience and brand promise.

The Supply Chain Executive

Because supply chain leaders manage the most complex, financially consequential, and globally integrated facets of modern enterprises, they possess the holistic operational purview required to lead the entire business.

Take, for example, the Dangote Group strategy in which Aliko Dangote boldly restructured his industrial empire by

AfCFTA’s core objectives, creating a single liberalised market, boosting intra-African trade, and enhancing competitiveness, cannot be achieved without resilient supply networks.

repositioning the supply chain at the heart of corporate succession and strategy. Recognising that logistics and commercial operations are the lifeblood of his \$33 billion conglomerate, Dangote entrusted these critical nodes to executives that understand the supply chain dynamics.

A similar move occurred in Malawi, when

Feston Kaupa, former CEO at the Malawi Institute of Procurement and Supply, was appointed as the Minister of Defence, proving that this is not just a private sector priority.

In South Africa, the tax authority is leveraging supply chain compliance to combat the shadow economy through integrating supply chain mapping with inter-agency collaboration including the Border Management Authority and the National Consumer Commission.

These are but a few of many examples of how SCM skills extend far beyond their conventional logistics-focused role and can be applied to areas of the business that would previously have been seen as distinct from the job of moving products from point A to point B.

Growth driver

For the African continent, competent SCM is the fundamental engine for macroeconomic development. The successful implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) relies

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entirely on seamless cross-border logistics, harmonised procurement, and integrated regional value chains.

AfCFTA’s core objectives, creating a single liberalised market, boosting intra-African trade, and enhancing competitiveness, cannot be achieved without resilient supply networks. Supply chain professionals with broader strategic competencies are uniquely positioned to drive Africa’s beneficiation strategies to benefit from adding value to raw materials before they are exported.

By developing resilient, localised sourcing networks, SCM leaders can catalyse domestic manufacturing and foster job creation, an area in which the African Supply Chain Confederation (ASCON) is actively working to help establish standardised logistical frameworks. These are required to eliminate non-tariff barriers, ensuring that the theoretical free trade area becomes a functional reality.

Africa is at a pivotal moment. Even though the continent is young, resource-rich and filled with entrepreneurial energy, its growth depends on more than potential. Economies are built on the ability to move goods efficiently, connect markets and deliver reliably and at scale.

At its heart, that is a supply chain challenge.

Today’s supply chain leaders are doing far more than keeping shelves stocked or improving delivery times. They are helping build the foundations for African growth by developing the cross-border trade routes that could turn AfCTA into a practical reality, supporting local suppliers that strengthen

domestic industry, and creating resilient networks that allow African businesses to compete globally.

The era of the supply chain CEO has arrived, and it is poised to be the catalyst for Africa’s industrial renaissance.

ABOUT ASCON

The African Supply Chain Confederation (ASCON) unifies professional African supply chain standards and networks. Through collaboration, education, and advocacy, ASCON fosters a cohesive ecosystem that empowers professional bodies and drives continental impact.

** Ronald Mlalazi, President of the African Supply Chain Confederation*

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Green hydrogen projects face scrutiny over community inclusion and transparency

Concerns over transparency, consultation and community inclusion in Namibia's emerging green hydrogen sector are intensifying as local communities and civil society groups question whether large-scale projects are benefiting ordinary Namibians.

The warning was issued by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) during the launch of the latest Green Hydrogen Monitor, where researchers cautioned that growing tensions around project implementation could escalate if communities continue to feel excluded from decision-making processes.

IPPR Research Associate Frederico Links said communities in areas targeted for green hydrogen development are not rejecting investment or economic development, but are increasingly concerned about how projects are being rolled out.

“I think it needs to be made clear, as we have stated in previous editions of the Green Hydrogen Monitor, and as he also highlights quite clearly here, that communities in Daures and other parts of the country are not opposed to progress. The concerns are centred on how development is implemented and whether it reflects local



realities. Communities are seeking approaches that are inclusive, transparent, and respectful of both environmental systems and cultural heritage. Ultimately, it comes down to transparency, inclusion, and respect for people's environments and livelihoods,” Links said.

He warned that poor communication between project developers and local communities is creating unnecessary mistrust and tensions on the ground.

The concerns were amplified during an international seminar hosted earlier this year at the Namibia University of Science

and Technology (NUST), where researchers, academics, indigenous leaders and civil society representatives from countries including Brazil, Colombia, Chile and South Africa shared experiences linked to large-scale energy and extractive projects.

Participants highlighted similarities between Namibia's green hydrogen ambitions and experiences elsewhere, particularly concerns over the exclusion and marginalisation of local and indigenous communities.

Links said while Namibia has so far avoided the violent conflicts seen in some countries linked to mining and energy developments, warning signs are beginning to emerge.

“Namibia’s situation remains comparatively peaceful, and we do not see widespread violence or intimidation linked to these projects. However, there are concerns and whispers of growing tensions, and nobody wants the situation to escalate

further,” he said.

At the same time, concerns are mounting over whether Namibia’s education system is capable of supplying the specialised skills needed to support the country’s planned green industrialisation drive.

Links cited findings from the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) State of Skills Demand and Supply report, which found that Namibia’s education and training systems are not adequately prepared to meet the future labour demands of sectors such as green hydrogen, oil and gas, artificial intelligence and digital industries.

He warned that without major reforms to education and skills development, many specialised positions in emerging industries could ultimately be filled by foreign expertise rather than Namibians, limiting local participation in sectors expected to drive future economic growth.

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