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News Worth Knowing



Namibia's digital services imports triple to N\$4.5bn amid AI uptake

TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2026

MAIN STORY

Namibia's digital services imports triple to N\$4.5bn amid AI uptake

... rising demand for cloud computing, software and AI tools drives spending

Namibians are increasingly using artificial intelligence (AI) to complete coursework, automate tasks and access specialised knowledge, as the country's spending on imported computer and digital services has tripled to N\$4.5 billion.

IJG Securities Head of Research Tannan Groenewald said Namibia's AI usage patterns suggest that the technology is helping individuals and businesses overcome shortages of skills and expertise that would otherwise be difficult or costly to access.

In a report titled AI and the Namibian Labour Market: Boom, Doom, or Business as Usual?, Groenewald said spending on imported computer and digital services increased from N\$1.5 billion in 2022 to N\$4.5 billion in 2025, driven by growing demand for cloud computing, software subscriptions and AI tools.

The report draws on anonymised, aggregated data from Anthropic's Economic Index to examine how Namibians use the company's Claude AI platform.

According to the findings, coursework accounts for the largest share of Claude usage in Namibia, representing more than twice the global proportion.

Namibian users are also more likely than the global average to give AI direct instructions



Crucial Dates

- Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:
 - * 29 October 2026
 - * 10 December 2026

and use the technology to automate tasks rather than work collaboratively with it.

“The typical Namibian conversation is estimated to save more human time than the typical global one while taking less combined human-plus-AI time to complete,” the report states.

Groenewald said the findings suggest that Namibians are using AI to perform tasks that may otherwise require specialised expertise or additional human resources.

However, he cautioned that the findings reflect Claude users and cannot be considered representative of the entire Namibian population.

“Namibia's constraint is more so its supply of capability and not necessarily pure demand for cognitive labour,” Groenewald wrote.

He said the country's shortage of specialised skills means AI could help businesses and public institutions improve productivity rather than primarily displace existing workers.

The report also identifies opportunities for small businesses to reduce operating costs, develop products, reach customers and automate administrative functions.

For young people entering the labour market, Groenewald said AI proficiency, creativity and critical thinking would become increasingly important as employers adopt new technologies. Despite growing concerns about AI replacing workers, the report argues that Namibia faces a lower risk of widespread job displacement than developed economies.

Citing an International Monetary Fund (IMF) study published in July 2026, Groenewald said approximately 80% of jobs in sub-Saharan Africa have limited exposure to AI under existing technology.

About 13% fall into a category where AI could potentially replace human tasks, while roughly 10% could benefit from AI complementing existing work.

Applying the 13% estimate to Namibia's

formal employment would place the number of potentially exposed workers in the low tens of thousands, mainly in clerical, administrative and routine back-office positions.

These jobs are concentrated in sectors such as banking, insurance, government and business services.

However, a significant proportion of Namibia's workforce remains employed in physical and labour-intensive occupations, including construction, fishing, security, cleaning and domestic work, where AI has limited ability to replace human labour.

“AI only arrives in these lives as a consumer tool and as an improvement in the services they receive but not as a change in what they do at work,” the report states.

The report further identifies the public sector as a major opportunity for AI-driven productivity improvements.

The government employs approximately 107,000 civil servants, with personnel expenditure of about N\$37 billion provided for in the 2026/27 national budget.

Groenewald said AI could help contain payroll growth by automating routine processes such as document verification, database checks and application processing.

He argued that the government could improve service delivery and manage staffing levels through natural attrition rather than retrenchments.

Namibia also ranks among the five sub-Saharan African countries with the highest estimated potential productivity and economic growth gains from AI, according to the IMF analysis cited in the report.

Groenewald maintained that the country's priority should be to translate growing AI adoption into measurable improvements in productivity, business activity and employment opportunities while supporting workers whose jobs are vulnerable to automation.



Namibia, Angola target joint industries to end reliance on raw commodity exports

Namibia and Angola are pushing to establish joint industries in mining, agriculture, fisheries, oil and gas, and energy as both countries seek to reduce their dependence on raw commodity exports and increase local manufacturing.

President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said the two neighbouring countries could no longer afford to continue exporting

unprocessed natural resources while importing finished products, calling for joint investments that would create jobs, expand production and retain more economic value within the region.

Speaking at the Angola–Namibia Business Forum in Luanda on 19 October 2026, Nandi-Ndaitwah said the countries must turn their shared natural resources

and economic strengths into commercially viable industrial projects.

“Namibia and Angola have no choice, but to diversify our economies, strengthen domestic productive capacity and reduce excessive dependence on the export of unprocessed commodities,” she said.

The President identified agriculture, mining, fishing, oil and gas, and energy as priority sectors for joint investment, saying businesses should combine capital, technology and expertise to develop industries capable of supplying regional and international markets.

“While the size of our economies differs, the major economic activities are more or less the same; these are agriculture, mining, fishing, oil and gas, and energy,” she said.

N a n d i - N d a i t w a h acknowledged that economic cooperation between Namibia and Angola had not matched the strength of their longstanding political relations, despite increased business activity in banking, telecommunications, healthcare and hospitality.

She said the two countries needed to move beyond diplomatic commitments and translate their relationship into measurable trade, investment and industrial development.

“This Business Forum must lay the foundation for our bilateral trade,” she






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said.

The President called on businesses to identify bankable projects and establish joint ventures, while urging investment promotion agencies, government ministries and chambers of commerce to facilitate partnerships and track implementation.

She also pressed both governments to address barriers affecting cross-border trade, including cumbersome border procedures, logistics challenges, product standards and inadequate access to market information.

Nandi-Ndaitwah said investment should not be measured solely by capital inflows but by its contribution to employment, skills development, technology transfer and opportunities for local enterprises.

She said Namibia remained committed to improving its investment laws and policies to provide greater certainty for investors while protecting national interests.

“Our approach is therefore to encourage responsible trade and investment that creates mutual benefits for investors, host communities and the wider economy,” she said.

The President further called for small businesses and informal cross-border traders to be included in industrial

development plans, warning against economic cooperation that benefits only established companies.

She said women and young entrepreneurs should also have access to financing, technology, market opportunities and supply chains linked to larger industrial investments.

Nandi-Ndaitwah urged businesses to use regional trade arrangements, including the Southern African Development Community Trade Protocol and the African Continental Free Trade Area, to expand production and access larger markets.

She insisted that the proposed industrial partnerships must be supported by clear responsibilities, implementation timelines and regular progress reviews to prevent commitments from remaining on paper.

“Governments can establish the policy environment and facilitate cooperation, but it is businesses that must identify commercial opportunities, mobilise capital, innovate, produce and trade,” she said.

The President said the success of the Namibia–Angola economic partnership would ultimately depend on whether the two countries could turn their shared resources into operating industries, increased trade and sustainable employment.



Shafudah to table Mid-Term Budget Review on Thursday

Finance Minister Ericah Shafudah will table Namibia's 2026/27 Mid-Term Budget Review in the National Assembly on Thursday, 22 October, providing an update on government

revenue, expenditure and borrowing requirements halfway through the financial year.

The review will assess the implementation of the N\$104 billion national budget

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presented in February and indicate whether government spending and revenue collection remain in line with initial projections.

It comes against the backdrop of a projected N\$14.2 billion gap between government revenue and expenditure, placing pressure on the Treasury to contain spending while meeting its financial obligations.

The original budget, tabled on 26 February 2026, projected revenue of

N\$89.8 billion against total expenditure of N\$104 billion, with the shortfall requiring financing through borrowing and other funding arrangements.

The Mid-Term Budget Review is an assessment of the government's financial performance during the first half of the fiscal year. It allows the Finance Ministry to revise revenue forecasts, adjust spending allocations where necessary and update borrowing requirements based on economic and fiscal developments.

Unlike the main national budget, which

outlines government spending plans for the full financial year, the mid-term review measures progress against those plans and identifies areas where adjustments may be required.

For businesses, investors and taxpayers, Thursday's review will provide an indication of whether government expects to collect enough revenue to meet its targets, whether spending pressures have increased and whether additional borrowing may be necessary.

The review will also provide an indication of the government's progress towards fiscal consolidation, which involves controlling expenditure, managing debt and narrowing the gap between revenue and spending over time.

Shafudah's presentation is expected to outline the government's revised fiscal position and spending priorities for the remainder of the 2026/27 financial year.



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Namibia's hybrid and electric vehicle sales jump 127% as adoption grows

Namibia's market for hybrid and electric vehicles is showing signs of growth, with sales increasing by 127% year-on-year to 59 units in September 2026, compared with 26 units during the same period last year.

According to IJG Securities' latest vehicle sales report, electrified vehicles, including conventional hybrids, plug-in hybrids and

battery-electric models, accounted for 3.9% of the 1,498 new vehicles sold during the month.

The figures point to growing uptake of alternative vehicle technologies in Namibia, although petrol and diesel-powered vehicles continue to dominate the local automotive market.

Toyota led electrified vehicle sales in

September, recording 37 hybrid units, while Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer BYD sold 17 vehicles across passenger and light commercial categories.

The figures highlight the growing presence of Chinese automotive technology in Namibia, particularly as manufacturers expand their offerings beyond conventional petrol and diesel vehicles.

“Chinese brands hold meaningful share in the passenger segment and new-energy models from brands such as BYD are beginning to show up in the data,” IJG Securities said.

The growth in electrified vehicle sales comes as Namibia faces rising fuel costs, which could increase consumer interest in vehicles that use less petrol or diesel.

Transport inflation accelerated to 14.9% in September, while petrol and diesel prices

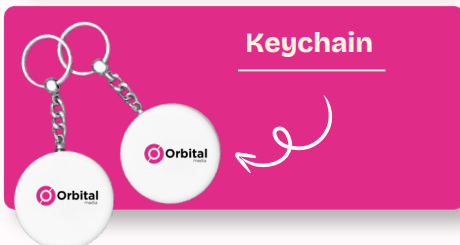
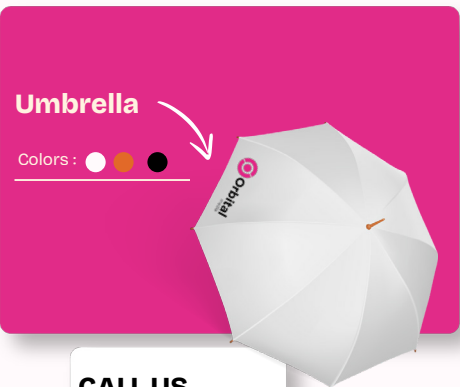
were 30.4% higher than a year earlier.

However, the latest figures do not establish whether rising fuel prices are directly influencing consumers to switch to hybrid and electric vehicles.

Despite the increase, electrified vehicles remain a relatively small segment of Namibia’s automotive market, with September sales accounting for fewer than four in every 100 new vehicles sold.

The report also does not provide a separate breakdown of fully electric vehicle sales, making it difficult to determine how much of the growth is being driven by battery-electric models rather than conventional hybrids.

The broader automotive market recorded strong growth in September, with total new vehicle sales increasing by 14.9% year-on-year to 1,498 units.



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Africa's own credit rating agency: Can it fix an unfair borrowing story?

By Lot Ndamanomhata

Africa has launched its own credit rating agency. The Africa Credit Rating Agency (AfCRA), headquartered in Mauritius, will rate governments, companies, financial institutions and other entities across the continent.

The African Union says it will be independent and private-sector driven, with African governments barred from owning shares.

It is not meant to replace Moody's, S&P Global and Fitch, but to offer an additional assessment that takes fuller account of African data and economic realities.

The launch matters because credit ratings are not neutral labels. They shape what a country pays to borrow, who is willing to lend, and how much of a national budget goes to creditors rather than to schools, clinics and roads.

For a continent that has long argued it is judged more harshly than its fundamentals justify, a homegrown rater is both a financial experiment and a political statement.

A history of expensive and unequal borrowing

Africa's debt story did not begin with today's headlines. In the 1970s, cheap petrodollar lending flooded developing economies.

When global interest rates spiked and commodity prices collapsed in the early 1980s, many African states found themselves unable to service their debts.



Africa's debt story did not begin with today's headlines.

In the 1970s, cheap petrodollar lending flooded developing economies.

The response was a generation of IMF and World Bank structural adjustment programmes, which Easterly (2001) links to the "lost decades" of stagnating incomes across much of the developing world.

Scholars such as Ndikumana and Boyce (2011) go further, arguing that a significant share of Africa's external borrowing was matched by capital flight, leaving citizens with the debt while the proceeds ended up in private offshore accounts.

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative of the 2000s cancelled large amounts of debt, but the underlying structure of dependence on external, foreign-currency borrowing remained.

The 2010s brought a new wave. Attracted by low global interest rates, many African governments issued Eurobonds for the first time, while China became a major bilateral and project lender.

Research on Chinese lending contracts (Gelpern et al., 2021) shows that terms can be opaque and sometimes include unusual clauses, though Bräutigam (2020) cautions that the popular "debt-trap diplomacy" narrative is overstated and that Chinese loans account for a minority of Africa's debt compared with private and multilateral creditors. Then came the shocks: the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy and food price spike after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the sharpest global monetary tightening in decades.

Zambia (2020), Ghana (2022) and Ethiopia (2023) fell into default, and many others saw yields climb to levels that effectively shut them out of international markets. The G20 Common Framework,

designed to coordinate restructurings, has been criticised for being slow.

The "Africa premium" and the ratings debate

The core complaint behind AfCRA is that African countries pay an "Africa premium": higher borrowing costs than their economic indicators alone would warrant.

Fofack (2021), in a widely cited Brookings working paper, argued that the major agencies' ratings of African sovereigns have been more pessimistic than the underlying fundamentals justify, and that this bias raises borrowing costs and can itself deepen debt distress.

A related literature finds evidence of home bias in sovereign ratings, with agencies tending to rate their home country more favourably (Fuchs and Gehring, 2017). Africa's own policymakers also point out that the continent has almost no seat at the table: only a few of the largest economies are rated by all three big agencies, and the analysts who rate Africa are typically based far from it.

The counter-argument is that ratings largely reflect real vulnerabilities. Classic research (Cantor and Packer, 1996) shows that factors such as income per capita, inflation, external debt, fiscal balance and past default history explain most of the variation in sovereign ratings, and many African states do carry high debt-service burdens relative to revenue.

UNCTAD (2023) has documented how many African countries now spend more on interest than on health or

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education. A fair reading is that both things can be true: genuine fiscal fragility exists, and ratings may also be amplified by limited information, herd behaviour and procyclical downgrades that hit hardest in a crisis.

What difference could AfCRA make?

1. Better data and local knowledge. A rater based on the continent can draw on local analysts, language skills and informal-sector realities, such as remittance flows, domestic debt markets and regional trade, that remote models may underweight.

2. More competition in a concentrated industry. The global ratings market is dominated by three firms. The economics literature on ratings (White, 2010; Bolton, Freixas and Shapiro, 2012) highlights that concentration, conflicts of interest and "ratings shopping" are structural weaknesses. An additional voice could add useful competition, particularly for the many African companies and banks that are unrated or only rated by small regional agencies.

3. Deeper domestic and regional capital markets. Ratings are the entry ticket to bond markets. If AfCRA can credibly rate mid-sized corporates, municipalities, banks and infrastructure projects, it could help pension funds and insurers, which hold large pools of African savings, invest locally in local currency,

reducing dependence on dollar borrowing and the currency risk that has hurt so many budgets.

4. A bargaining and signalling tool. Even if investors do not adopt its ratings wholesale, a credible second opinion gives governments evidence to challenge what they consider unjustified downgrades.

Will borrowing become cheaper?

In the short term, probably not much. Borrowing costs are set by global investors, and investors price risk using ratings they already trust, which are also embedded in regulation, benchmark indices and the investment mandates of pension funds and asset managers.

A new agency has no track record, and track record is the currency of the ratings business. Rating firms build credibility over decades by showing that their grades predict defaults.

Until AfCRA has a history of accurate, consistent calls, a favourable AfCRA rating alone is unlikely to move bond yields.

The larger risk is the opposite perception: that an African-owned rater will be seen as a cheerleader. This is why the African Union's decision to bar governments from owning shares is important, and why governance, transparent methodology, analyst independence and disclosure of how ratings perform over time will matter more than the launch



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If investors suspect that ratings are inflated, they may simply ignore them or, worse, penalise the issuers who use them.

Over the medium term, there are plausible routes to lower costs. If AfCRA's ratings are shown to be accurate and less prone to sudden, crisis-amplifying downgrades, global agencies may sharpen their own methods, as competition often prompts.

If the agency helps deepen local-currency markets, the cost savings may come not from a lower dollar yield but from avoiding dollar debt in the first place.

Could lending and financial institutions change?

AfCRA is one piece of a wider push for African financial sovereignty. Related efforts include the proposed African Financial Stability Mechanism, discussions about an African Monetary Fund, the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System that reduces reliance on dollar-based settlement, and growing use of African Development Bank guarantees to lower risk for private investors. Taken together, these could shift lending in several ways:

- **More risk-sharing instruments.**

Guarantees, debt-for-climate or debt-for-nature swaps, and climate-resilient debt clauses that pause repayments after disasters are becoming more common, and better local risk assessment makes them easier to price.

- **Greater transparency expectations.**

Ratings that explain African realities may push both borrowers and lenders toward better debt reporting, including the disclosure of collateralised and bilateral loans.

- **Stronger regional institutions.**

African development banks, regional exchanges and pension funds may increasingly lean on regional ratings, reducing the dominance of external gatekeepers.

- **Pressure on global reform.** AfCRA adds weight to calls to reform the global financial architecture, including the Common Framework and how debt sustainability is assessed.

The credibility test

The central challenge is simple to state and hard to meet: convincing investors that AfCRA is independent and credible. Success will depend on a few things: transparent, publicly available methodologies; analysts insulated from the pressure of the entities they rate; a clear policy on conflicts of interest, particularly if issuers pay for ratings; early focus on areas where it adds the most value, such as unrated corporates and local-currency instruments; and a published record of rating performance. Governments will also need to resist the temptation to lobby for favourable grades.

Conclusion

An African credit rating agency will not, on its own, make African borrowing cheap or undo decades of costly debt. Costs ultimately track fundamentals such as revenue mobilisation, inflation, growth, governance and commodity dependence, as well as global interest rates.

But AfCRA can still matter. It can broaden the information base on which Africa is judged, add competition to a concentrated industry, help rate the many African borrowers that nobody currently rates, and anchor a gradual shift toward local-currency finance and stronger regional institutions.

Whether it becomes a lasting pillar of African finance or an expensive symbol will depend less on who owns it and more on whether, over the coming years, its ratings prove right.

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



Namibia moves to link university research with industry needs

Namibia is seeking to close the gap between academic research and industry needs by encouraging universities to develop practical solutions that improve productivity, support industrialisation and create employment opportunities.

Minister of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture Sanet Steenkamp said stronger collaboration between higher education institutions, government and businesses was necessary to ensure research contributes directly to

economic development.

Speaking at the opening of the 2026 National Student Research Symposium (NSRS), Steenkamp said research should not end with academic qualifications but must help address challenges affecting local industries and communities.

She identified agriculture, healthcare, water security, renewable energy and public service delivery as sectors where scientific research and technological innovation could make a meaningful contribution.

Steenkamp said businesses needed

to play a greater role in identifying industry challenges and skills shortages that universities could address through research.

“Businesses should help identify skills gaps and practical challenges that research can address, while government should create an enabling policy environment and support collaboration,” she said.

She said the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6) recognises research, science, technology and innovation as key drivers of industrialisation, economic diversification and sustainable development.

“Namibia’s future prosperity would depend not only on its natural resources, but also on the knowledge and skills of its people,” Steenkamp said.

She also called for greater investment in research infrastructure, digital connectivity and skilled supervisors to strengthen Namibia’s ability to develop homegrown technological solutions.

Steenkamp said artificial intelligence (AI) offered opportunities to accelerate research, improve productivity and support the development of new products and services. “Artificial intelligence (AI) offers opportunities to accelerate scientific discovery, improve productivity and support the development of new products and services,” she said.

She identified local manufacturing, food

security and renewable energy as areas where research could support economic growth and help prepare young Namibians for employment in emerging industries.

However, Steenkamp warned that researchers must not rely on AI-generated information without independently verifying its accuracy.

“AI can assist a researcher, but it cannot relieve that researcher of the responsibility to think critically, verify evidence and defend conclusions,” she said.

She also raised concerns about data privacy, intellectual property, biased information and academic integrity, stressing that technological advancement must be accompanied by responsible research practices.

Deputy Executive Director for Higher Education, Training, Research and Innovation Lisho Mundia said the symposium provided a platform for emerging researchers to present their work, exchange knowledge and strengthen links with experienced academics and research institutions.

He said student research must respond to Namibia’s socioeconomic priorities and contribute to practical solutions.

The symposium is being held under the theme “Harnessing AI to Catalyze Transformative Research: Empowering the Next Generation of Innovators.”

The graphic is a promotional banner for 'THE BRIEF'. It features a central QR code with the text 'SCAN HERE' to its left. Above the QR code is a blue circle with a white icon of a building and a bar chart, labeled 'Finance'. Below the QR code is a blue circle with a white icon of a factory, labeled 'Business'. To the right of the QR code is a blue circle with a white WhatsApp icon, labeled 'for Daily Namibian News'. The background is light blue with faint icons of various objects. At the bottom left, there is a red Adobe PDF icon with the text 'Daily PDF version sent via email' and social media handles for Facebook (@thebrieflive), LinkedIn (@thebrieflive.nam), and Twitter (@thebrieflive). At the bottom right, there is a large blue text block that reads 'TO FOLLOW OUR WHATSAPP CHANNEL'.

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Namibia's luxury lodges record brisk business as occupancy tops 83%

Namibia's luxury and high-end accommodation establishments recorded brisk business during the third quarter of 2026, with tented lodges achieving an occupancy rate of 83.71%, according to the Hospitality Association of Namibia (HAN).

The strong performance comes despite concerns over a possible decline in overall tourist arrivals, as demand for premium accommodation and experience-based tourism continues to support the hospitality industry.

HAN's latest statistics show that bed-

and-breakfast establishments recorded occupancy of 77.13%, followed by rest camps at 73.56%, while self-catering establishments recorded the lowest occupancy rate at 12.19%.

National room occupancy reached 66.49% between July and September 2026, increasing by more than one percentage point compared with the same period last year and two percentage points above the corresponding period in 2019.

"The 2026 tourism accommodation figures reveal that while overall arrival numbers of travellers to Namibia may be

declining, occupancies in the more luxury and high-end establishments are stable and even growing,” HAN said.

The figures, compiled from 122 accommodation establishments, show that 162,931 of the 245,057 available room nights were sold during the quarter, while national bed occupancy stood at 58.86%.

Northern Namibia recorded the highest regional occupancy rate at 71.44%, followed by the coastal region at 66.89%, central Namibia at 63.25% and southern Namibia at 61.04%.

Leisure tourism remained the main driver of accommodation demand, accounting for 96.24% of occupancy, compared with 2.91% for business travel and 0.85% for conferences.

HAN attributed the strong performance of high-end establishments partly to changing tourist preferences, with visitors

increasingly seeking authentic experiences, interaction with local communities and conservation-related activities.

The association said tourists were placing greater emphasis on experiences offered by accommodation establishments rather than luxury facilities alone.

It noted that the trend presented opportunities for tourism operators to attract visitors through nature-based activities and community tourism initiatives.

HAN called for stronger public-private partnerships and a coordinated national tourism marketing strategy to attract more international visitors and sustain growth in the sector.

The association said tourism continued to play an important role in job creation, community development and conservation financing.

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Micro-Credentials: Rethinking higher education

By Dr Etuna Simon

There was a noticeable energy in the room. Not the kind created by a fashionable academic term, but the kind that emerges when people begin to sense that something familiar may be about to change.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) had convened the evening around micro-credentials. The conversation was about micro-credentials.

At first, the term sounded technical. Yet as the discussion unfolded, it became increasingly difficult to see it as merely another concept in higher education.

What caught my attention most came afterwards. I found myself in conversation with several professors. There was curiosity in the way they spoke about micro-credentials, but there was also excitement.

We started imagining what higher education could look like if learning no longer had to fit neatly into the traditional boundaries of a two or four-year qualification.

That was the moment the conversation became much bigger for me. We were no longer talking only about shorter courses or additional certificates. We were talking about whether universities can become more responsive without becoming less rigorous.

Whether industry can become a genuine co-creator of learning without taking over the academic space. And whether a learner can move in and out of higher education throughout a career rather than treating graduation as the final stop.

Perhaps that is the real promise of micro-credentials. They do not simply ask universities to offer smaller pieces of learning. They ask us to rethink what higher



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education could become.

Higher education is being asked to move differently

Universities have traditionally been designed around relatively stable qualifications. A programme is developed, approved, delivered over several years and periodically reviewed. That model protects depth, coherence and academic quality. But the environment around universities is changing much faster. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping professions. Green technologies are creating new competencies.

Digital systems are changing workplaces. UNESCO has noted that around 40% of today's job skills are expected to change by 2030, strengthening the case for more flexible upskilling and reskilling pathways.

The challenge is therefore not simply to produce more qualifications. It is to create credible ways for people to return to learning throughout their lives. Micro-credentials may offer one such pathway.

The real promise is not shorter learning

There is a danger that we reduce the micro-credential conversation to duration: shorter than a degree, faster to complete and more

convenient.

That would miss the point. Micro-credentials could allow universities to respond to specific learning needs without redesigning entire qualifications whenever a new competency emerges.

A teacher might need specialised learning in AI-supported assessment. An engineer may require exposure to a new renewable-energy technology. A health professional may need to update a specialised practice because technology or regulation has changed.

None of these necessarily requires another full degree. The question is whether higher education can provide smaller, rigorous and recognised learning experiences that allow professionals to remain current while preserving academic standards.

Co-creation could change the university-industry relationship

What particularly interested me during my conversations with the professors was the potential for co-creation. For years, universities and employers have spoken about stronger collaboration.

Yet the relationship often remains predictable. Institutions design programmes, students graduate, and industry later evaluates whether graduates possess the skills required in the workplace.

Micro-credentials could make that relationship more dynamic. Industry can identify an emerging competency. Universities can translate that need into sound curriculum, learning outcomes and assessment. Regulators can protect quality and recognition. Learners can acquire a focused capability without stepping completely out of employment.

That does not mean industry should dictate what universities teach. Higher education must retain its intellectual independence and broader purpose. Universities cultivate critical thinking, research capacity, ethical judgement and the ability to learn again when current knowledge becomes outdated.

Co-creation works best when each

partner brings what it does well. Industry understands how work is changing. Universities understand how meaningful learning is designed and assessed.

Namibia is entering the policy stage

This conversation is particularly timely because Namibia is already moving from discussion towards policy. On 15 October, the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) confirmed that it was consulting stakeholders on a draft micro-credentials policy intended to recognise specific competencies gained through short, targeted learning programmes.

Namibia therefore has an opportunity to determine what micro-credentials should mean in our higher education system before the space becomes crowded with programmes carrying the same label but very different levels of quality.

A micro-credential may be small, but its credibility cannot be. If employers, universities and learners are expected to trust these credentials, there must be clarity about who may issue them, what was learned, how learning was assessed and whether the credential can be recognised elsewhere. Without that trust, we risk producing more certificates rather than better education.

Can learning accumulate?

One of the most powerful possibilities is stackability. Imagine a teacher completing a micro-credential in AI literacy, another in digital assessment and another in educational data analytics. Should those remain isolated certificates, or should they eventually contribute towards a recognised postgraduate qualification?

If learning can be accumulated, recognised and transferred, higher education becomes more flexible without becoming fragmented. People could build knowledge progressively while working and update their competencies without repeatedly starting from the beginning.

But stackability requires trust between institutions. Universities must understand what another provider taught and how

learning was assessed. Regulators must establish common expectations. Employers must understand what the credential represents.

Flexibility must not create another inequality

Micro-credentials are often presented as accessible because they are shorter and more flexible. That is not automatically true. If most are delivered online, connectivity becomes a barrier. If individuals must continuously pay for additional credentials to remain professionally competitive, lifelong learning may become easier for those who already have resources and harder for those who do not.

Namibia should therefore think about affordability, digital access, recognition of prior learning and portability from the beginning. Innovation in higher education should widen participation rather than create another hierarchy of opportunity.

The degree still matters

None of this means the university degree is disappearing. It should not. Degrees provide something that short learning interventions cannot easily reproduce sustained engagement with a discipline, intellectual depth, research exposure and broader ways of thinking. Micro-credentials should complement degrees rather than compete with them. The degree can provide the foundation. Micro-credentials can help people continue building on that foundation as knowledge, technology and practice change.

Graduation should not mean education is finished

When I left the discussion last night, I was not thinking about whether micro-credentials would replace traditional qualifications. I was thinking about why we have become so accustomed to treating graduation as an ending. Perhaps that is what needs to change most.

Higher education may increasingly need to accompany people across much longer parts

of their lives. Someone may graduate at 24, return for a micro-credential at 30, acquire another specialised competency at 37 and later build those experiences into a larger qualification. In that model, the university becomes more than a place people attend once. It becomes a lifelong learning partner.

Perhaps the real disruption of micro-credentials is not that they make learning shorter. It is that they challenge higher education's relationship with time. They ask whether universities can remain relevant after graduation, whether industry can help shape learning without controlling it, and whether regulators can protect trust while allowing institutions to move faster.

Micro-credentials may be small, but the question they place before higher education is not.

Will the university of the future remain a place people pass through once on their way to work, or can it become a lifelong public infrastructure for learning? For Namibia, that is the opportunity worth taking seriously. If we can preserve academic depth while creating credible, flexible and stackable pathways back into learning, micro-credentials could do more than add another certificate to the qualifications landscape. They could redefine what it means to remain connected to higher education after graduation.

Perhaps the future university should not be judged only by how many students it graduates, but by how successfully it keeps graduates, workers and society learning long after graduation day. If that is where higher education is heading, then micro-credentials are not a small addition to the system. They are asking us to rethink the system itself.

** Dr Etuna Simon is a researcher, strategist and writer with a keen interest in education, innovation, artificial intelligence and national development. The views expressed in this article are solely those of the author. She can be reached at etunasimon@icloud.com*



The Brief amplifies its reach through key conference partnerships

Over the past week, The Brief was proud to be selected as a media partner for two leading conferences in Windhoek, reinforcing our position as Namibia's leading daily business publication.

We partnered with the 16th Institute of People Management (IPM) Namibia Annual Conference and the 3rd Africa Credit and Risk Reporting Conference, two important platforms that brought together industry leaders, policymakers, financial institutions and professionals to discuss issues shaping Namibia's

business and economic landscape.

Our role was clear: to increase awareness, provide extensive coverage and ensure that key discussions, insights and outcomes reached audiences beyond the conference venues.

Our editorial team delivered, providing timely reporting, interviews and comprehensive coverage that brought the conversations to our growing business audience.

Our digital team and platforms played an equally important role, amplifying conference content, driving engagement

and extending the reach of both events across our digital news platforms, social media channels and other distribution networks.

Our combined editorial and digital efforts ensured greater visibility, connecting conference organisers, speakers and participants with a wider audience and keeping important industry conversations alive beyond the events themselves.

Behind this delivery was a dedicated team that worked tirelessly to ensure both conferences received the attention and coverage they deserved.

This is why The Brief continues to strengthen its position as Namibia's leading daily business publication. Our strength lies in our ability to combine credible business journalism, a strong digital presence and an understanding of what our partners and audiences value.

We are proud of what our editorial and digital teams achieved and grateful to the organisers for trusting us as their media partner.

At The Brief, we don't just promise visibility. We deliver it.

We remain committed to delivering value, meaningful exposure and measurable impact for our stakeholders, partners and clients.



Planning a conference or business event? Partner with The Brief to amplify your event's visibility and reach a wider audience through credible media coverage and digital platforms.

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Old Mutual appoints Alovise Frey as Finance and Operations GM

Old Mutual Namibia has appointed former FNB Namibia executive Alovise Frey as General Manager of Finance and Operations at Old Mutual Investment Group Namibia (OMIGNAM), effective 1 October 2026.

Frey brings more than 12 years of experience in finance, risk management, credit, compliance, audit and taxation, having held several senior positions in Namibia's banking sector.

Before joining Old Mutual, she served as Head of Finance for FNB Namibia's Commercial Banking segment, where she was responsible for financial management, supporting business decisions and serving on executive and governance committees.

She also held senior positions in credit portfolio management and risk management at FirstRand Namibia.

Old Mutual Investment Group Managing Director Sepo Haihambo said Frey's appointment would strengthen the company's financial management and operational capabilities.

"Alovise brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record. Her strategic mindset and deep understanding of financial management make her exceptionally well positioned to lead our Finance and Operations function," Haihambo said.

Frey holds a Master of Business Administration from Stellenbosch Business School, a Postgraduate Diploma in Risk Management from the University of South Africa, a Postgraduate Diploma in Accountancy from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and a Bachelor of Accounting from the University of Namibia.



She is also a qualified Chartered Accountant.

Commenting on her appointment, Frey said she would focus on strengthening operations, supporting business growth and delivering value to clients.

"OMIGNAM has a strong reputation, a talented team and an important role to play in Namibia's financial sector. I look forward to working with colleagues across the business to strengthen operational excellence, support sustainable growth and help deliver value to clients and stakeholders," she said.

The appointment forms part of Old Mutual Namibia's efforts to strengthen its leadership capacity and financial operations.

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THE ASSET ALLOCATION VIEW: IN COLLABORATION WITH NORTHSTAR AND CIRRUS

	GLOBAL		SA		Namibia	
	CURRENT	TREND*	CURRENT	TREND*	CURRENT	TREND*
EQUITIES						
BONDS						
CASH						

ASSET ALLOCATION SNAPSHOT
AS AT 14 SEPTEMBER 2026

Source: Northstar Proprietary Research and Cirrus Fund Managers. Royale, Northstar and Cirrus reserve the right to amend this information, data and views presented. This document does not constitute advice.

*3 Year View



	CURRENT	TREND
GLOBAL EQUITIES	AVERAGE September's modest index decline masked broader weakness, with nine of eleven global sectors lower. Materials (-7.3%), Real Estate (-6.2%) and Consumer Discretionary (-6.0%) were the weakest, with Financials (-5.5%) and Utilities (-5.1%) also down as higher bond yields and energy costs weighed. Information Technology (+4.4%) and Communication Services (+3.5%) were the exceptions, as rapid adoption of Meta's Muse AI agent lifted semiconductor and hardware shares, with the MSCI World Semiconductor Index up 7.2% (though down 3.0% for the quarter). Momentum returned 3.6% and Value fell 2.3%, interrupting the recent broadening as resilience again concentrated in a narrow group of AI-related businesses.	AVERAGE Index valuations and growth expectations remain elevated, with optimism concentrated in AI-related businesses. Strong earnings and growing adoption, including Muse's early success, support this theme, though the sustainability of infrastructure investment and how much future growth is already priced in remain key uncertainties. Higher oil prices and bond yields pose risks to household spending, company margins and valuations. These concerns, combined with capital favouring a narrow group of AI beneficiaries, are leaving some high-quality businesses overlooked and attractively valued, creating selective long-term opportunities.
SA EQUITIES	GOOD Emerging markets weakened in September, with the MSCI EM down 0.5% in US dollar terms. The JSE fell 5.8%, reversing August's gains, with Basic Materials (-9.4%), Industrials (-4.9%), Telecommunications (-4.9%), Consumer Discretionary (-6.1%), Food Producers (-6.5%) and Banks (-4.2%) all lower. Consumer Staples fell a modest 0.6%, while listed property edged up 0.5%. The rand weakened 1.6% against the dollar, marking a broad-based reversal even in a resource-heavy market.	GOOD We remain overweight domestic SA Inc. equities on a risk-adjusted basis, favouring selective exposure to Banks, Industrials and Retailers. High interest rates and elevated oil prices have weighed on these areas, but valuations now discount a relatively stressed outcome. We see attractive medium-term return potential as conditions normalise, guided by bottom-up valuation discipline.
NAM EQUITIES	AVERAGE The NSX Local Index returned 9.6% in September, driven by various tickers reaching new all-time highs and dividend book closure. Results published in August and September showed mixed conditions. FNB and SNO saw strong growth in earnings, though credit extension remained tame. CGP's earnings fell as Bank Gaborone fell into a loss-making position and Entrepo halted new loan extensions. NBS earnings fell on the back of lower local volumes, though it gained market share. This highlights weakness in the Namibian consumer, who faces further inflationary pressures and a slowing economy.	AVERAGE Namibian Equities remain attractively valued but need a friendly investment climate to do well. Therefore, we believe it is important to actively deviate from the benchmark and select quality companies with growth prospects and high-quality management teams.
GLOBAL BONDS	AVERAGE US-Iran tensions escalated sharply in September, with no ceasefire in sight. Shipping through Hormuz remains severely limited, Brent crude moved back above \$100 a barrel and US diesel hit a record \$5.94/gallon. The Fed delivered its first hike since 2023, to 3.75%-4.00%, framing it as "removing accommodation", while a hawkish dot plot lifted the median 2026/2027 projection to 4.125%, about 50 basis points above June. Global bonds sold off further, with the US 10-year yield up roughly 53 basis points to 5.28% and the iShares Global Aggregate Bond proxy (iGLAG) down about 2.2%.	AVERAGE Over the longer term, the outlook remains largely intact: sticky inflation, a cooling but resilient labour market and upwardly revised growth forecasts should keep yields elevated, with the long end most vulnerable. A prolonged Middle East war will keep oil prices and inflation concerns elevated, causing continued volatility at the short end.
SA BONDS	AVERAGE Local bonds saw renewed volatility in September as a SARB rate hike, firmer oil prices and persistent Middle East tensions weighed on sentiment. The situation remains uncertain, but local fiscal and macroeconomic data continued to reflect relative strength, cushioning against the broader deterioration in global risk appetite.	AVERAGE Despite global uncertainty, structural elements remain supportive of local bonds, with sovereign credit-default-swap spreads narrowing meaningfully against the US this year. The key risks are whether the SARB can hold its inflation path (above 5% in late 2026 and early 2027, easing toward 3% by late 2027) and whether National Treasury can keep delivering fiscal consolidation, with markets pricing roughly two further SARB hikes over the next six months.
NAM BONDS	CONCERN Namibian bonds are expensive. We expect upward pressure on Namibian Government debt as the government's fiscal position comes under significant pressure. Underweight long duration bonds and overweight short duration bonds.	CONCERN The Namibian Government has a saturated maturity profile with sizeable upcoming redemptions, which is expected to increase funding pressures and place upward pressure on yields.
GLOBAL CASH	GOOD Over the near term, cash remains the best protection against volatility. Real cash returns have improved following September's hike, and further inflationary impulses would continue to be met with central bank rate hikes, keeping cash appealing on a relative basis.	AVERAGE On a three-year horizon, our valuation still favours bonds across the curve over cash. However, volatility is likely to persist over the medium term: September's sharply weaker payrolls print sits uneasily alongside a pickup in headline inflation, keeping the debate between labour market strength and rising inflation pressures alive.
SA CASH	GOOD Geopolitical risks kept the SARB cautious in September, with the MPC delivering the expected 25 basis point hike to take the Repo Rate to 7.25%. The market prices two further 25bps hikes within the next six months. Real rates remain elevated, with cash rates well above inflation of 4.4%, so investors can still earn a healthy real return without taking on risk.	AVERAGE If inflation expectations move credibly lower over the medium term, the SARB is expected to become less restrictive and real rates will narrow, making cash less competitive relative to other assets. It remains to be seen whether geopolitical risks will be prolonged and how elevated oil prices will filter into our longer-term interest rate assumptions and cash valuations.
NAM CASH	AVERAGE Namibia's inflation rose 5.4% in September, with the ongoing conflict adding further price pressures. The Bank of Namibia is expected to hike rates in its upcoming MPC meeting as inflation expectations are expected to remain elevated. Short-term rates have increased; however, the rise in inflation has reduced real returns, bringing them below their historical average of 2.67%.	GOOD Inflation is expected to remain sticky, prompting central banks to adopt a more hawkish stance. This should place upward pressure on short-term yields, offering more attractive short-term returns. The SARB remains committed to its 3.0% inflation target, which should support attractive real returns over the longer term.