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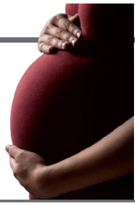

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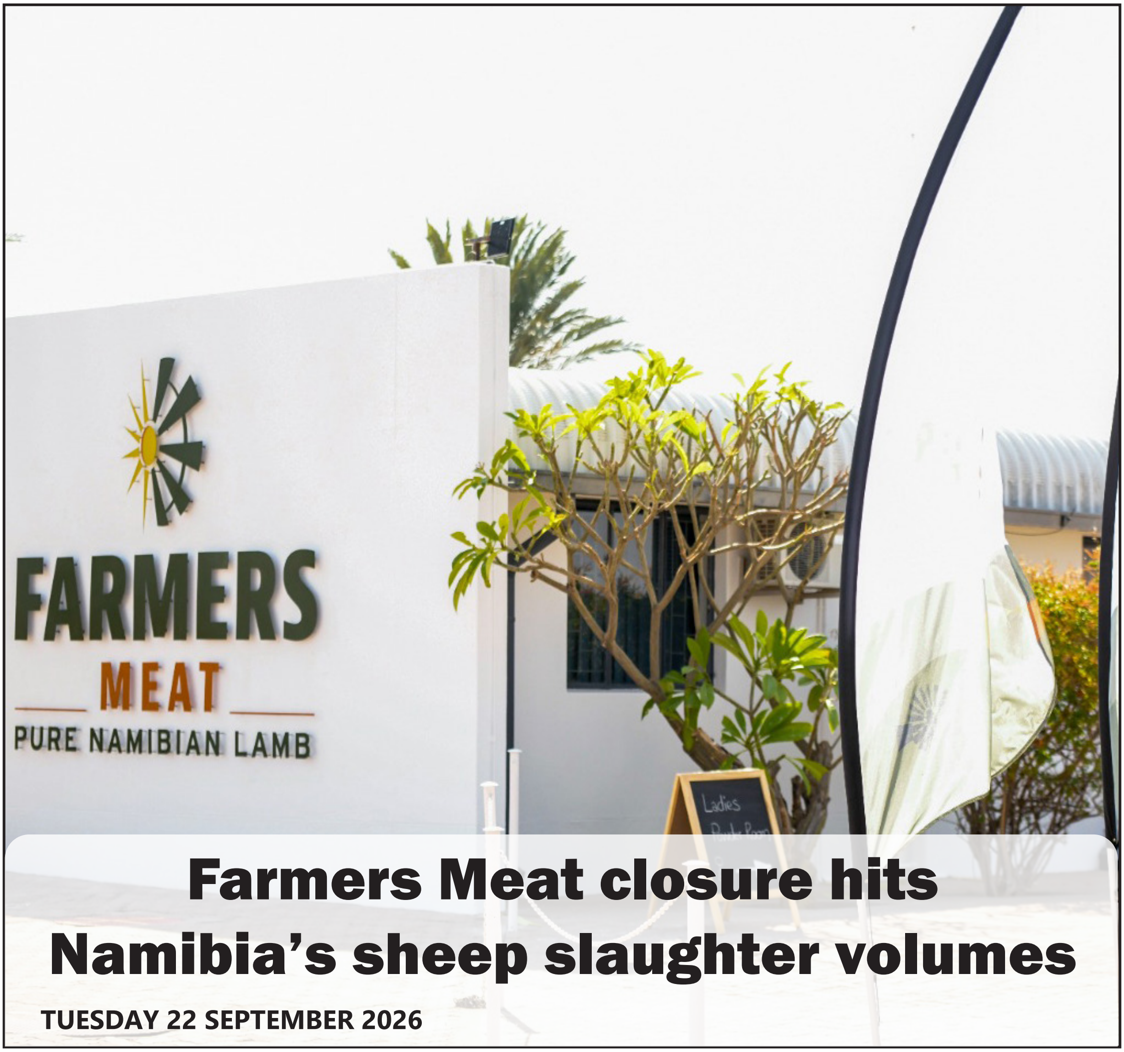
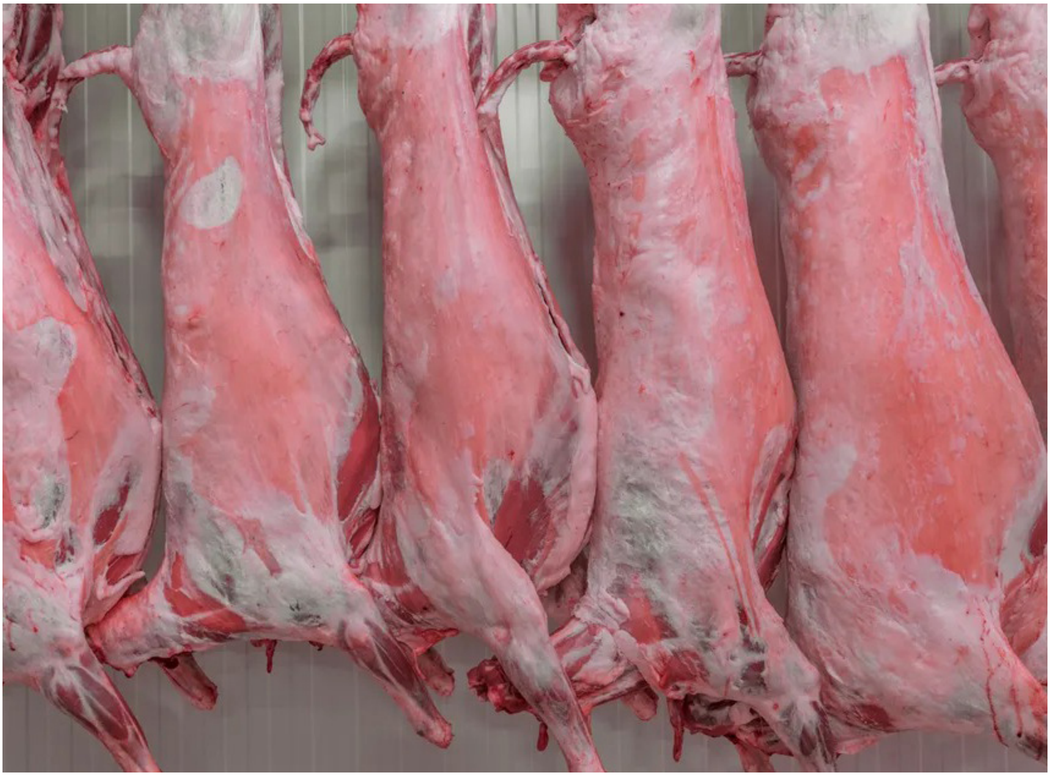


Farmers Meat closure hits Namibia’s sheep slaughter volumes

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2026

MAIN STORY



Farmers Meat closure hits Namibia's sheep slaughter volumes

The wind-down of Farmers Meat Mariental has hit Namibia's sheep slaughter volumes, with throughput at export-approved abattoirs plunging 78.78% month-on-month to just 814 head in August 2026.

The decline comes after Hartlief announced in August that the Mariental export abattoir

Crucial Dates

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

would permanently cease operations by the end of September 2026.

According to the Livestock and Livestock Products Board of Namibia's September Mutton and Chevon Market Report, the reduction in export-abattoir activity contributed to a 36.06% month-on-month decline in total sheep slaughtering to 7,535 head.

"The sharp reduction in export-abattoir throughput coincided with the wind-down of operations at Farmers Meat Mariental following Hartlief's announcement in August that the export abattoir would permanently cease operations by the end of September 2026," the LLPB said.

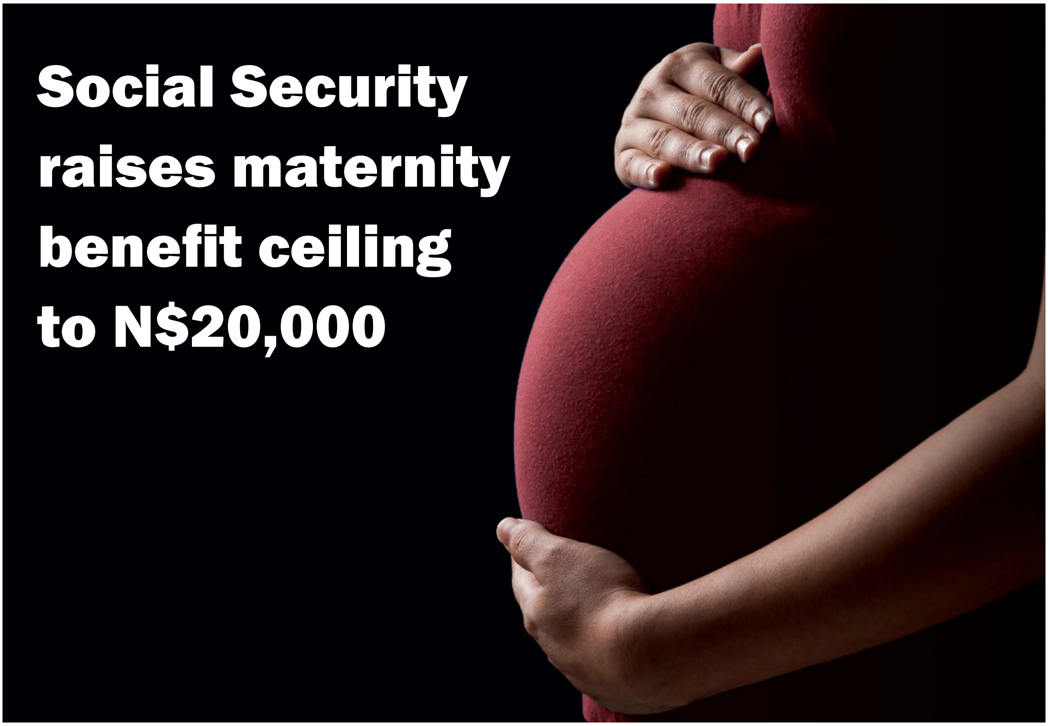
Slaughtering at B&C class abattoirs also declined, falling 15.44% month-on-month to 6,721 head. The LLPB expects the closure to continue weighing on the export-abattoir channel, with sheep likely to be redirected towards live exports and domestic abattoirs.

Overall sheep marketing fell 20.43% month-on-month from 68,233 head in July to 54,289 head in August. Despite the decline, volumes remained 43.43% higher than in August 2025.

Live exports continued to account for the bulk of sheep marketed during the month, with 46,754 head exported, down 20.35% from July.

South Africa absorbed almost all Namibia's live sheep exports, receiving 46,669 head, equivalent to 99.82% of the total. Of these, 41,243 were destined for slaughter, 5,028 for feedlots and 398 for breeding. Producer prices were mixed during August, with the A2 sheep price falling 5.99% month-on-month to N$92.82 per kilogram.

The C2 price increased 2.42% to N$62.61/kg, while the all-grade carcass price rose 0.99% to N$68.38/kg.



The Social Security Commission (SSC) has increased the maternity benefit ceiling from N$15,000 to N$20,000, effective 1 October 2026, as part of a broader increase in benefits under the Maternity, Sick Leave and Death (MSD) Fund.

SSC Acting Executive Officer Ben Nangombe said qualifying members will receive 100% of their basic salary during maternity leave, subject to the new maximum benefit of N$20,000.

This means a member earning a basic salary of N$10,000 will receive N$10,000, while a member earning N$20,000 or more will receive the maximum N$20,000 benefit.

Nangombe said the changes are aimed at strengthening social protection and providing greater financial support to members and their dependants.

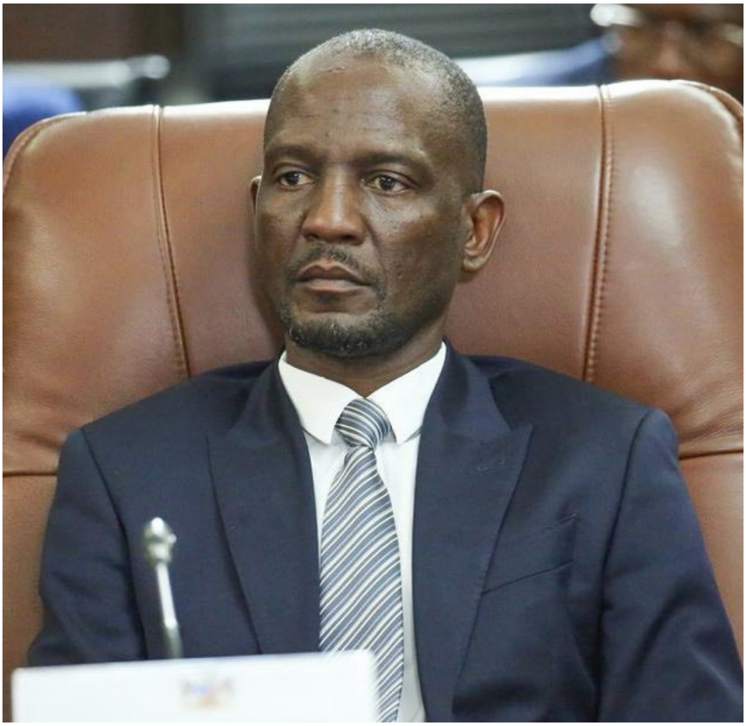
The Commission has also increased sick leave benefits. The maximum benefit for the first 12 months will rise from N$11,250 to N$15,000, while the benefit for the second 12 months will increase from N$9,750 to N$13,000.

Death and disability benefits will each increase from N$12,000 to N$15,000, while the retirement benefit will also rise from N$12,000 to N$15,000.

Nangombe said the increases are intended to improve the adequacy of benefits available to Social Security members during significant life events.

"These enhancements reaffirm the Commission's commitment to improving benefit adequacy and ensuring that members continue to receive meaningful financial support during important life events," he said.

The revised benefits will take effect on 1 October 2026



Works Ministry targets overhaul of ageing state fleet, properties

The Ministry of Works and Transport has prioritised improved management of government properties and the state vehicle fleet over the next five years as ageing assets and constrained funding continue to weigh on its operations.

Works and Transport Minister Veikko Nekundi said ageing infrastructure and the government fleet are among the major challenges facing the Ministry, alongside shortages of technical skills and procurement delays.

Speaking at the launch of the Ministry's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan and Customer Service Charter ,Nekundi said improving the management of state assets would form a key part of the Ministry's five-year programme.

The Ministry is responsible

for government properties and other state assets in addition to its wider mandate covering roads, railways, aviation, maritime affairs, transport systems, logistics and meteorological services.

"We must equally acknowledge the challenges confronting us, including constrained funding, ageing infrastructure and fleet, shortages of technical skills, procurement delays, climate change, poor work ethics and coordination gaps," Nekundi said.

The strategic plan seeks to improve the management and maintenance of state assets while ensuring the provision of safe, modern and reliable public infrastructure.

Nekundi said limited resources should not prevent the Ministry from improving the condition and management of government assets.

"It must be our collective duty to find solutions, improve systems, strengthen institutional capacity and inexcusably deliver within the limited resources available," he said.

The Ministry is also targeting stronger organisational performance, improved regulatory frameworks and greater compliance over the 2025–2030 period.

Under its new Customer Service Charter, the Ministry has set turnaround times for infrastructure-related services, including attending to certain urgent repairs within five working days and emergency infrastructure matters within one day, subject to applicable requirements.

The Ministry has also committed to responding to internal and external enquiries within five working days.

Nekundi said the Ministry would need stronger implementation, discipline and technical competence to meet its targets while addressing the deterioration of state assets and other operational constraints.

The real digital divide may begin before a child ever touches a screen

By Dr Etuna Simon

"Namibia is right to embrace technology. AI, digital learning platforms and online resources can widen access to information and help teachers personalise learning.

A child sits in a classroom.

A question appears on the board.

Before the child has finished thinking, an answer can already appear on a screen.

It is fast. It sounds confident. It may even be correct.

But can the child read it properly?

Can the child question it?

Can the child recognise when it is wrong?

That is where Namibia's conversation about artificial intelligence in education should begin.

This week, the country is marking the 2026 National Readathon, held from 21 to 25 September under the theme, "Read Namibia: Embrace Technology Within the Education Sector." The theme could hardly be more timely. Namibia wants children to read. Namibia also wants them to participate confidently in a digital future. Those ambitions should not compete. They must reinforce each other.

Are we digitising before we have built the foundation?

Namibia is right to embrace technology. AI, digital learning platforms and online resources can widen access to information and help teachers personalise learning. But technology cannot compensate for weak foundations. Government's 2026/27–2028/29 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework records that, in the 2024/25 actual performance period, only 28% of Grade 3 learners achieved basic literacy skills and only 32% achieved basic numeracy skills. Those numbers should make us uncomfortable. They are not simply Grade 3 statistics.

They tell us something about the learning journey that follows. A learner who struggles to read in the early grades may later struggle to interpret a science question, understand instructions, evaluate an argument or make sense of a complex problem. Learning gaps do not disappear because a learner moves to the next grade.

Now add AI to that picture.

AI can provide answers. But can learners question them? A learner can ask an AI tool to summarise a chapter, solve a problem, draft an essay or explain a difficult concept. Within seconds, something appears. That convenience is impressive. But receiving an answer is not the same as learning. If comprehension is weak, how will a learner judge whether the answer makes sense? If vocabulary is limited, how will that learner identify misleading language? If critical reading is weak, how will the learner recognise when an AI system produces something that sounds convincing but is inaccurate?

This is why Namibia's AI conversation cannot focus only on access.

The deeper question is readiness. We could give every learner access to powerful technology and still fail educationally if learners have not developed the ability to read, reason and question what the technology produces. The risk is not only plagiarism. It is dependence. We may raise a generation that becomes good at asking machines for answers but less confident in constructing answers for themselves. That would not be digital transformation. It would be digital dependency. Technology should strengthen literacy, not bypass it.

The answer is not to keep technology away from children. The better approach is to use it to strengthen the foundations they already need. Digital platforms can help learners practise reading at the right level. Audio tools can support pronunciation.

Digital books can reach children where physical resources are limited. Teachers can use digital assessment tools to identify learning gaps earlier. AI can also help generate differentiated learning activities where learners progress at different speeds.

But the sequence matters.

Technology should support the teacher and the learner. It should not quietly replace the intellectual work that learning requires. At the 2026 National Readathon pre-launch, held at M.H. Greeff Primary School in Windhoek on 15 September 2026, Sarah Negumbo, Director of the Namibia Library and Archives Service, captured this balance clearly when she said: "Technology complements, rather than replaces, the value of reading."

That is a principle worth carrying into Namibia's AI era.

The teacher still matters

One of the easiest mistakes in conversations about educational technology is to become fascinated by the tool and forget the person using it.

The teacher remains central.

A strong teacher knows when a learner is guessing. A teacher can hear uncertainty in a child's voice. A teacher can ask another question when the first answer sounds memorised.

A teacher can connect a story to a learner's language and lived experience. Technology can assist. It cannot fully reproduce that human judgement. That means investment in digital education must be matched by investment in teachers.

Teachers need training in responsible AI use. They need guidance on assessment. They need access to appropriate digital resources. They also need continued support in teaching foundational literacy and numeracy effectively. We cannot place new technology into old systems and assume transformation has happened.

Reading is infrastructure for the digital age

UNICEF's 2025 Foundational Learning Action Tracker shows both progress and unfinished work in Namibia. Early Grade Reading and Mathematics assessment tools have been developed in 12 local languages. Yet the same country scorecard records an early-grade textbook-to-student ratio of roughly one textbook for every three to five learners.

That contrast matters.

A national conversation about AI taking place alongside shortages of basic learning materials should force us to think carefully about priorities. This is not an argument for choosing books instead of technology. It is an argument for getting the foundation right while introducing technology intelligently. Reading is not an old skill that becomes less important because AI exists.

It becomes more important.

The more information a machine can generate, the more human beings need the ability to evaluate it. The more convincing synthetic text becomes, the more important comprehension becomes. The more automated answers become, the more valuable independent judgement becomes.

What kind of digital citizen are we trying to produce?

Namibia's education system should not aim merely to produce young people who know how to use digital tools. It should produce young people who can think with them and, when necessary, think against them. That requires literacy. It requires curiosity. It requires the confidence to ask a simple but powerful question:

How do I know this is true?

These are educational questions before they are technological ones. This is why Readathon Week should be more than a celebration of books. A child who reads well can learn independently.

That child can search for information, compare sources, understand instructions and enter new fields of knowledge.

Later, that same child can use AI as a tool rather than as a substitute for thinking.

The real digital divide may therefore become more than a divide between those who have devices and those who do not.

It may become a divide between those who can critically interrogate technology and those who simply accept what it gives them.

Namibia should embrace AI.

Our learners should know how to use it. Our teachers should know how to teach with it. Our institutions should prepare for it. We should not confuse access to intelligent machines with the development of intelligent citizens.

A country can put technology in every classroom and still fail to educate if learners are not able to read deeply, reason independently and question what they are given. That is why Namibia's AI future must begin with more than devices, platforms and connectivity.

It must begin with the mind.

A child opens a page.

Reads it.

Understands it.

Questions it.

Connects it to another idea.

And forms an independent thought.

That may sound simple. But it is the foundation of everything that follows. AI can assist a learner. It can explain, summarise and generate. But it should never become a substitute for curiosity, judgement or intellectual effort.

The real measure of Namibia's success in the age of AI will therefore not be how quickly our children learn to prompt machines.

It will be whether they can challenge the answers those machines produce. Whether they can recognise what is true, what is doubtful and what deserves another question.

Whether they can use technology without surrendering their own ability to think.

That is the kind of digital citizen Namibia should be preparing.

Before we teach our children to rely on intelligent machines, we must first give them the literacy, confidence and critical thinking skills to remain intellectually independent.

Because the future does not only need children who know how to use AI. It needs children who know when not to believe it.

**** 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***

Hyphen secures N$106m AfDB grant for green hydrogen project

Hyphen Hydrogen Energy has secured a prospective US$5.93 million (about N$106 million) reimbursable grant from the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) to advance the development of its green hydrogen project in southern Namibia towards a final investment decision (FID).

The funding, provided under the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa's Africa Green Hydrogen Programme, will support project development activities leading up to FID.

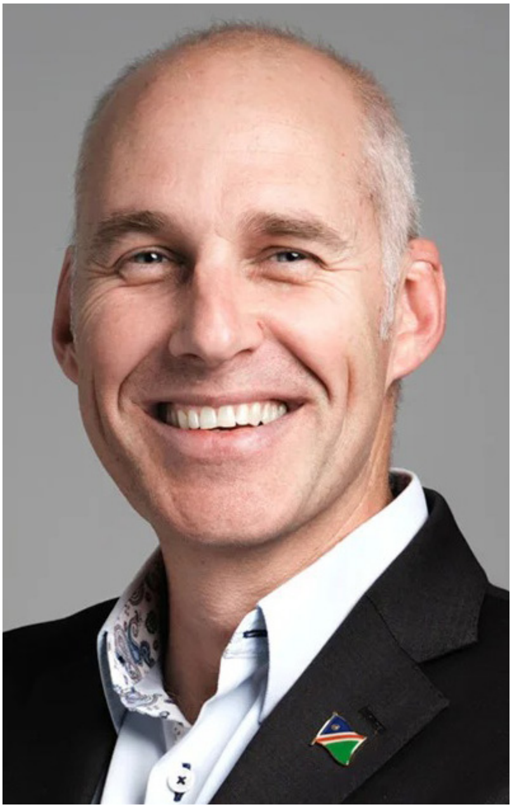
The latest grant follows a US$10 million reimbursable grant awarded to Hyphen in December 2025, increasing development funding support for the project.

Hyphen was one of four projects selected under the Africa Green Hydrogen Programme following a call for proposals that attracted 81 submissions from 18 African countries. The company said its allocation was the largest among the selected projects.

The planned project is expected to comprise about seven gigawatts of renewable energy generation capacity and three gigawatts of electrolyser capacity at full scale.

Hyphen is targeting production of two million tonnes of green ammonia annually for regional and international markets, including sustainable fuels for the shipping and aviation sectors.

The company aims to reach FID for the first phase, which will have annual production capacity of one million tonnes, by the end of 2027.



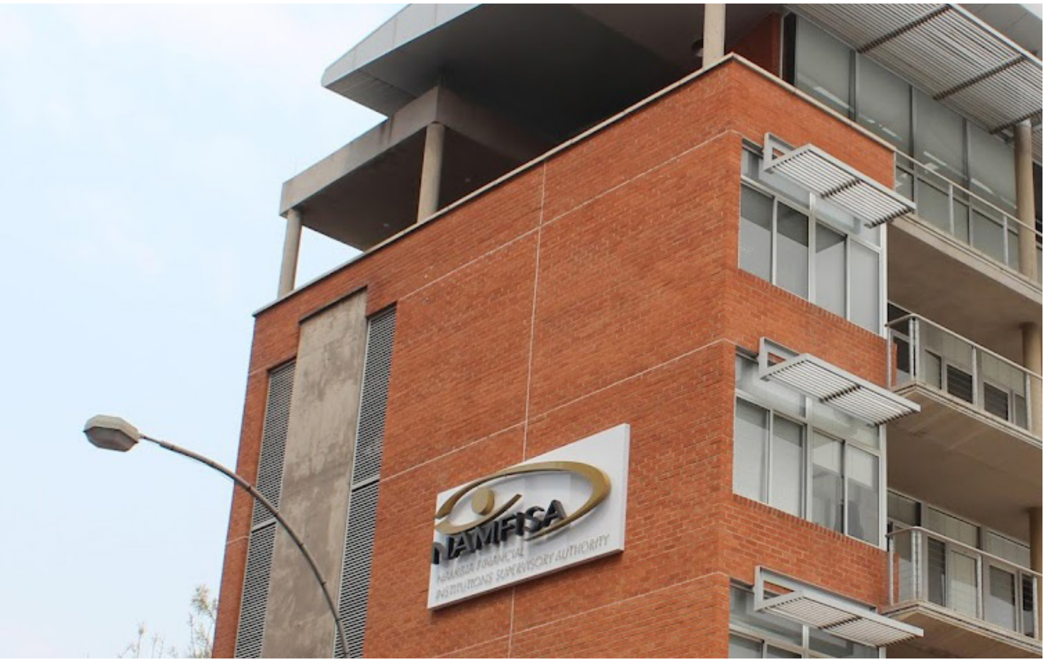
"Hyphen is delighted to have been selected under the African Development Bank's Africa Green Hydrogen Programme. This selection is a major endorsement of our project's quality, rigour and advanced maturity," Hyphen Chief Executive Officer Marco Raffinetti said.

According to Hyphen, construction could create up to 15,000 jobs, while the completed project could support about 3,000 permanent operational positions. The company is targeting 90% Namibian employment, with 20% of jobs reserved for young people.

AfDB Director for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Daniel Schroth said the programme was designed to move high-potential African green hydrogen projects closer to investment readiness.

"Africa's exceptional renewable energy resources give the continent a unique opportunity to become a competitive player in the emerging global green hydrogen and derivatives market," Schroth said.

Hyphen estimates that the project could avoid between five million and six million tonnes of carbon emissions annually once fully developed.



Financial institutions face new inspection requirements under FIMA

Financial institutions and intermediaries may now be inspected or investigated by both NAMFISA officials and external inspectors, under new rules that formalise who can carry out regulatory inspections and how they must be authorised.

The Namibia Financial Institutions Supervisory Authority (NAMFISA) has issued Standard GEN.S.10.29 under the Financial Institutions and Markets Act (FIMA), setting out appointment and certification requirements for inspectors and people assisting them.

In practical terms, the standard means that an inspector arriving at a financial institution must have formal certification showing the authority under which they are acting. Where the inspector is not a NAMFISA employee, the certificate must identify the institution, intermediary or person being inspected or investigated and specify the period for which the appointment is valid.

The standard does not, based on the information provided, introduce a new general power to inspect institutions. Rather, it sets out the certification framework for inspectors appointed under section 419 of FIMA and clarifies how those appointments must be documented.

NAMFISA employees appointed as inspectors under section 419(1) will receive certificates confirming their appointment and authorising them to exercise the powers, perform the functions and discharge the duties assigned to inspectors under FIMA and its subordinate instruments.

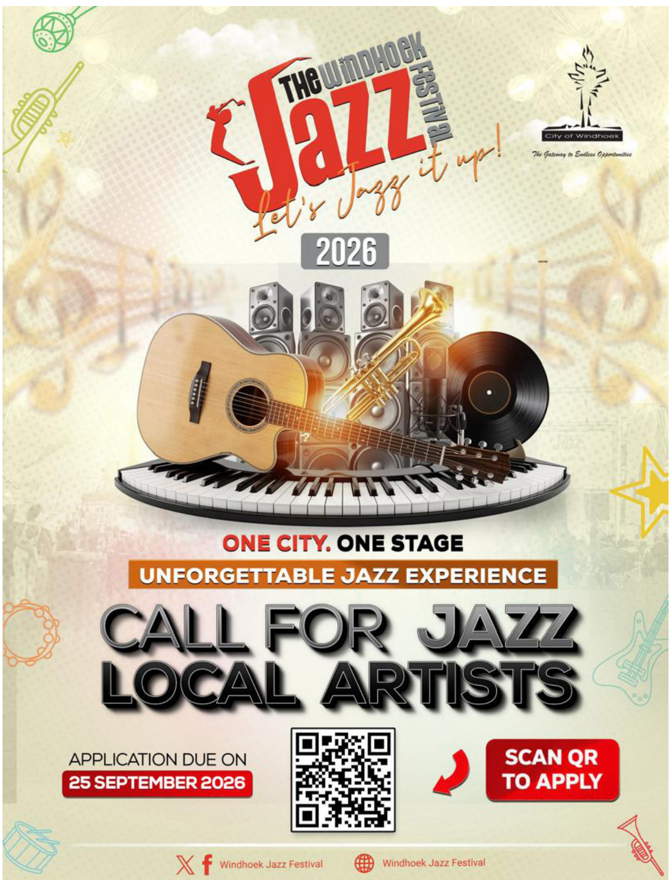
The framework also allows NAMFISA to appoint inspectors who are not employees of the authority. This means an institution undergoing an inspection or investigation could encounter an externally appointed inspector rather than a NAMFISA staff member.

However, an external inspector's authority is tied to the institution, intermediary or person identified on the certificate and to the specified appointment period, unless NAMFISA withdraws or extends the appointment.

The standard further provides for people to be appointed to assist inspectors. Their certificates must state which inspector they are assisting and identify the institution, intermediary or person involved in the inspection or investigation.

Standard GEN.S.10.29 was published in Government Gazette No. 9027 on 15 September 2026 and came into effect on the same day. NAMFISA said it was issued on an urgent basis under section 409(1), read with section 409(4), of FIMA.

Despite already being in force, the standard remains open to industry representations. NAMFISA



has invited financial institutions, financial intermediaries, industry associations and self-regulatory organisations to submit comments by 22 October 2026.

The regulator said submissions could result in the standard being amended.

"Such representations will be taken into account in determining whether to re-issue the Standard as originally published or in a modified form," the gazette states.

NAMFISA also urged stakeholders affected by FIMA's implementation to review the gazetted subordinate legislation published on its regulatory frameworks page.

Why global capital is paying attention to Namibia

The country's investment story is becoming much bigger than oil.

By Kirsty Watermeyer

> “
> **Recent figures from the Bank of Namibia point to continued foreign direct investment inflows, supported by activity across energy, mining, financial services and related sectors.**

Investment stories rarely begin with headlines. They begin when capital starts moving.

As investors search globally for stable jurisdictions, new sources of energy, critical minerals and long-term infrastructure opportunities, Namibia is increasingly appearing on their radar.

While global attention remains focused on the country's offshore oil discoveries and the timing of future Final Investment Decisions (FIDs), many investors are already looking beyond the next project milestone.

The more significant story may be what is happening around it.

Recent figures from the Bank of Namibia point to continued foreign direct investment inflows, supported by activity across energy, mining, financial services and related sectors.

At the same time, businesses are establishing local operations, forming partnerships and investing ahead of major project sanction decisions. In many respects, capital is beginning to position for a broader economic transformation rather than a single resource opportunity.

Those numbers tell one story. What is happening on the ground tells another.

RMB Namibia notes that international investors are increasingly engaging on these issues. While FID remains an important milestone, sophisticated investors are asking a more fundamental question: what does Namibia look like if multiple industries scale simultaneously?

They want to understand where capital is already flowing, whether infrastructure is keeping pace with opportunity, how local supply chains are evolving and whether today's investment environment can support decades of future growth.

Those answers cannot be found in headlines alone.

"The strongest signals are rarely the announcements themselves," says Angelique Peake, Group Head of Oil & Gas Strategy at RMB Namibia. "They are what companies do before certainty exists. When businesses begin investing ahead of major project decisions, it tells you they have confidence in what comes next."

Across Namibia, those signals are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore.

In Walvis Bay, logistics providers are expanding capacity, port-related infrastructure continues to evolve and shore-base facilities are positioning for increased offshore activity. In Lüderitz, investment is reshaping demand for accommodation, commercial property and support services.

International recruitment and specialised service providers have established local footprints, while Namibian businesses are forming partnerships with experienced global operators to build capability ahead of future demand.

Viewed individually, these developments may appear incremental. Collectively, they represent a market beginning to prepare for scale.

"What we're seeing is businesses positioning themselves for an industry that is moving closer to reality," says Peake. "Nobody invests in infrastructure, skills and partnerships for a single opportunity. They're preparing for a market they believe is going to grow."

This is where Namibia's story becomes far more compelling than a conventional oil narrative.

Sophisticated investors rarely assess projects in isolation. They evaluate the environment in which those projects will operate.

They look at the quality of institutions, the maturity of supply chains, the availability of skills, the resilience of infrastructure and the likelihood that today's investment will be reinforced by tomorrow's.

By those measures, Namibia is building a compelling investment proposition at a time when investors are becoming increasingly selective about where they allocate capital.

Around the world, governments and businesses are seeking reliable sources of energy, secure supply chains, access to critical minerals and investment destinations supported by political stability and credible institutions. Namibia is increasingly aligning with each of these themes.

Oil and gas development is progressing alongside continued expansion in mining, growing interest in renewable energy and green hydrogen, investment in logistics corridors and industrial infrastructure and increasing demand for supporting services.

Rather than competing with one another, these sectors are beginning to reinforce each other, creating opportunities across engineering, fabrication, transport, technology, professional services and trade.

"The conversation is often framed as an oil and gas story," says Peake. "I think it's much bigger than that. We're seeing the emergence of an industrial ecosystem, where investment in one sector creates opportunities across many others."

What increasingly captures investor attention is not simply the resource base, but the operating environment around it.

Namibia combines political stability, strong legal institutions, a respected financial sector, a long history of working with international investors and established industrial capability developed through decades of mining activity. In an increasingly uncertain global investment landscape, predictability carries significant value.

Perhaps Namibia's greatest advantage is that it is not building this ecosystem from the ground up.

For decades, mining has helped shape the country's industrial capability. It has developed technical expertise, strengthened regulatory frameworks, supported financial sector growth and created experience in delivering complex, capital-intensive projects alongside international partners. Those foundations now provide an important platform for emerging industries.

"Mining didn't just build an industry," says Peake. "It helped build institutions, technical capability, financial depth and a culture of partnership between government, communities and international investors. Those foundations become incredibly valuable as new sectors begin to scale."

For international investors, success in Namibia will depend on more than identifying attractive projects.

It will require understanding how regulation, infrastructure, financing, partnerships and local capability intersect to support long-term development.

It also requires recognising that many of the most valuable opportunities may sit beyond the resource itself, within the supply chains, industrial services and supporting sectors that enable growth.

"We're seeing increasing interest from international companies looking for local partners," says Peake. "Namibia is a relatively small market with strong institutions and well-established relationships.

Investors who engage early, understand the operating environment and build the right partnerships are often far better positioned to navigate the market successfully."

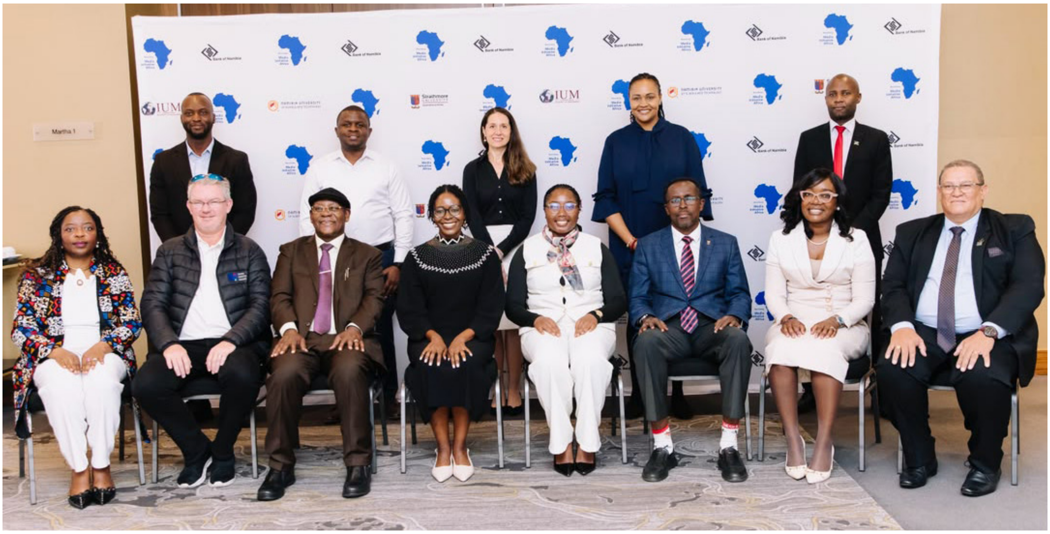
For many investors, the question is no longer whether Namibia will attract international capital, but where the most attractive entry points will emerge across the broader value chain.

The broader perspective underpins the bank’s approach to supporting international clients. In addition to financing, RMB Namibia assists investors in understanding local market dynamics, forging strategic partnerships and navigating an operating environment that continues to evolve.

The most significant opportunities are rarely obvious at the point of maximum attention.

In Namibia, many investors are beginning to recognise that the story is no longer only about hydrocarbons beneath the seabed. It is increasingly about the industries, infrastructure, partnerships and capability being built around them.

Those who understand that distinction may be the ones best positioned to participate in Namibia's next decade of growth.



60 selected from over 800 applicants for Bloomberg financial journalism programme

Sixty participants have been selected from more than 800 applicants for Namibia's first Bloomberg Media Initiative Africa (BMIA) Financial Journalism Training Programme, which will run for seven months and focus on strengthening business, economic and data-driven reporting.

The programme was officially launched in Windhoek on Tuesday through a partnership between Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), the International University of Management (IUM) and Strathmore Business School.

NUST Executive Dean of the Faculty of Commerce, Human Sciences and Education Professor Efigenia Semente said Namibia is the 10th African country to host the programme, following previous editions in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Zambia, Tanzania, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Ethiopia.

"These 60 participants were selected from more than 800 applicants. They come from various local media houses, such as the Namibia Broadcasting Corporation, newspapers, community radio stations, banks, ministries and regulatory institutions," Semente said.

The Namibian cohort comprises journalists, communications professionals and participants from financial, government and regulatory institutions. The programme is expected to conclude in May 2027.

According to Semente, more than 1,000 journalists have graduated from the programme across Africa.

"Read data first, then write a story. Financial journalism demands much more of this discipline," she said.

International University of Management Vice Chancellor Professor Osmund Mwandemele said the programme comes as

Namibia's economy becomes increasingly data-driven, creating a need for stronger financial reporting and analytical skills.

"The long-term benefits of this programme extend beyond increasing the number of highly trained business and financial journalists. It enhances financial and data reporting skills and creates a lasting network of professionals," Mwandemele said.

Bank of Namibia Technical Advisor to the Governor Romeo Nel said financial journalism plays a role in improving public understanding of economic developments, monetary policy decisions and financial risks. "Financial journalism is part of the infrastructure of financial stability, not by carrying the central bank's narrative, but by turning data into understanding, building financial literacy and subjecting institutions to scrutiny," Nel said.

He urged participants to prioritise accuracy, context and verification when reporting on financial and economic matters.

"Numbers tell us what happened. Good journalists tell us what it means," he said.

Information and Communication Technology Minister Emma Theofelus said a gap remains between the economic information being published and the public's understanding of how it affects their daily lives.

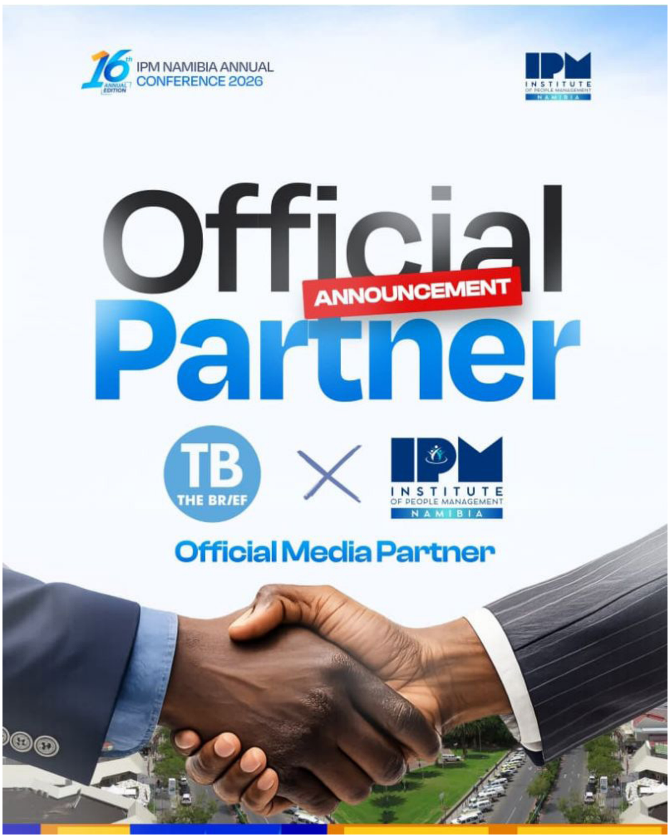
"There is a gap between the number being published and the number being understood. All 60 of you become an integral part in being asked to close that gap," Theofelus said.

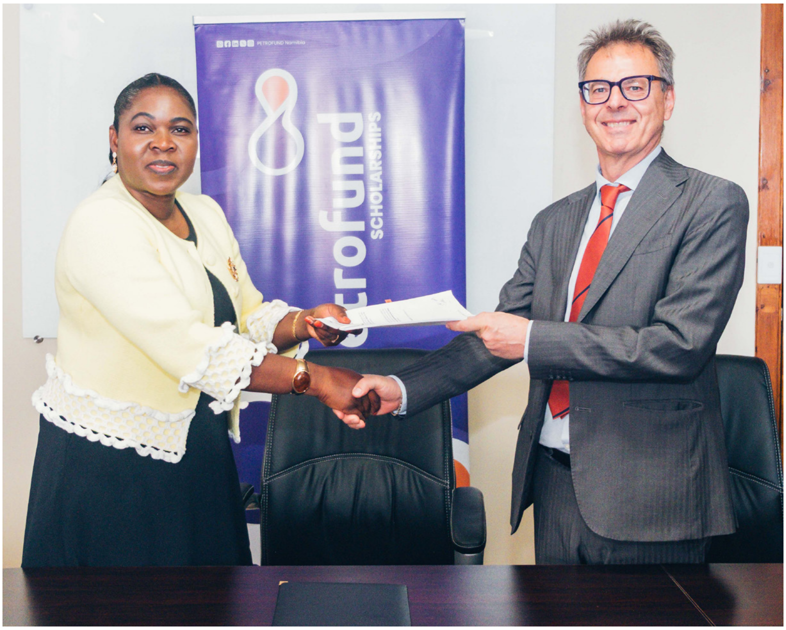
Bloomberg Program Manager for Corporate Philanthropy in Africa and the Middle East Ndivhuwo Nemukula said the BMIA programme was established in 2014 to strengthen data-driven financial journalism across Africa.

"Today, Namibia becomes the 10th country across the continent to deliver the Financial Journalism Training Programme," Nemukula said.

She said the initiative has equipped more than 1,000 journalists from 21 countries with skills to report on business, finance and economic issues.

The curriculum covers economics, finance, public policy, financial markets, data analysis, climate reporting and financial journalism. Participants will also have access to Bloomberg Terminal resources and industry practitioners





Saipem, Petrofund partner to develop Namibia's oil and gas skills

Saipem and the Petroleum Training and Education Fund (Petrofund) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop local skills and expand training opportunities for Namibians in the country's emerging upstream oil and gas sector.

The agreement, signed on 22 September 2026, establishes a framework for the two organisations to collaborate on workforce development, knowledge transfer and initiatives aimed at preparing Namibian professionals for opportunities in the petroleum industry.

Under the MoU, Saipem and Petrofund will cooperate on on-the-job training, internships, scholarships, technical training, career fairs, supplier development and support for educational institutions.

The partnership will particularly target young Namibian professionals, university graduates and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates, providing opportunities to gain practical industry experience.

"A central element of the collaboration is the creation of opportunities for young Namibian professionals, university graduates and TVET graduates to gain practical industry experience," the parties said in a joint statement.

Participants are expected to gain exposure to technologies, processes, equipment, safety standards and professional competencies used in the international oil and gas industry.

The agreement also covers mentoring and coaching programmes, technical knowledge sharing, curriculum development, research and innovation, as well as engagement with education and training institutions.

"By combining Petrofund's mandate for skills development with Saipem's international expertise, the parties aim to contribute to building a sustainable pipeline of talent capable of supporting Namibia's rapidly expanding upstream oil and gas industry," the statement said.

Saipem, a global engineering and construction company, said Namibia's developing energy sector provides an opportunity to invest in local skills and workforce development.

"For Saipem, the growth of Namibia's energy sector represents a significant opportunity to invest in local talent and skills development. Through the collaboration with Petrofund, the company intends to support workforce development, knowledge transfer and professional training initiatives," the statement said.

The MoU comes as Namibia seeks to develop local technical capacity and increase Namibian participation in the upstream petroleum industry following a series of offshore oil discoveries.

The parties said the agreement builds on ongoing collaboration between Saipem and Namibian stakeholders and is intended to strengthen professional capabilities and support efforts to maximise the long-term benefits of the country's developing oil and gas sector.

Govt pushes farm mechanisation drive ahead of 2026/27 cropping season

The government is stepping up efforts to improve farmers' access to machinery ahead of the 2026/27 cropping season, extending applications for subsidised agricultural equipment while allocating N$8 million to return hundreds of tractors to service.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform has extended the deadline for eligible farmers and other applicants to apply for subsidised agricultural machinery and equipment to 16 October 2026.

The extension follows what the ministry described as an overwhelming number of requests from applicants who said they needed more time to complete the process.

Acting Executive Director Petrus Canisius Nangolo said the ministry wants to ensure successful applicants receive their equipment in time for the upcoming cropping season.

"While the process is underway, we have received an overwhelming number of requests that the timeframe is too short," Nangolo said.

"We have agreed to extend the deadline to give people enough time. The new date by which this process is expected to be completed is 16 October 2026."

The subsidised equipment includes walking tractors and associated implements, hand-operated seedling transplanters, jab seed drills, weeding cultivators and knapsack sprayers.

Diesel chipper hammer mills, veterinary cold-chain and drug kits, and animal weighing scales are also being made available.

Applications are being processed through ministry offices across all 14 regions, as well as regional councils and constituency offices.

Alongside the equipment programme, the ministry has identified 508 tractors for servicing and repairs as it prepares for the rain-fed cropping season, which runs from 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2027.

Of the tractors identified, 385 require minor servicing and 112 require major repairs.

The ministry has allocated approximately N$8 million to cover service parts, major repairs, fuel, transport and other logistical requirements. Repairs will be undertaken by ministry-employed diesel mechanics at Agricultural Development Centres, while major repairs will, where necessary, be handled at the Agricultural Technology Centres in Ongwediva and Rundu.

The programme will also employ 15 qualified graduate artisans on one-year contracts and attach 45 vocational training trainees as assistant artisans.

The interventions are aimed at increasing the availability of agricultural machinery as farmers prepare for the new production season.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