



**NamPPF**  
Namibia Public-Private Forum

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, WORKFORCE READINESS & INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT

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Hosted by:



**Republic of Namibia**  
National Planning Commission

Secretariat:



**NIPDB**  
Namibia Investment Promotion  
& Development Board

# POWERING NAMIBIA'S PROGRESS THROUGH PEOPLE

Harnessing Namibia's talent to strengthen skills, improve workforce readiness, and align training with industry and national priorities, building a future where Namibians are not just employable, but indispensable.







# WORKING GROUP 7 SCOPE AND FOCUS

- Working Group 7 focuses on advancing Namibia's human capital through practical, industry-driven approaches to skills development.
- Our mandate is to identify solutions that connect education, training, and employment, ensuring alignment between national priorities and private sector needs.
- The group's objective is to propose immediate, actionable reforms and long-term structural changes that enable Namibia's workforce to be globally competitive.

## Key points:

- Namibia's youth unemployment rate remains critically high despite strong FDI inflows.
- Skills training remains largely academic, with limited workplace integration.
- Private sector investments in training are not fully recognised or incentivised.
- Public-private coordination on workforce planning is fragmented.



# WORKING GROUP 7 SCOPE AND FOCUS

## WHY THIS MATTERS NOW

- Namibia's economic transformation depends on its people, skilled, adaptable, and ready for the demands of new industries.
- The Oil and Gas, Green Hydrogen, Logistics, Tourism, Agriculture, and Digital sectors all require talent pipelines that can evolve with technology and global market needs.
- If current gaps persist, Namibia risks importing skills instead of exporting expertise.
- The challenge is not the absence of talent, it's the absence of coordinated, hands-on, and industry-led training.

# ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES





# ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

01

- **Vision 2030, NDP6, and the SWAPO Manifesto Implementation Plan (SMIP 2025–2030)** collectively reaffirm *human-centred development* as the foundation of Namibia's growth strategy.

02

- The **President** continues to emphasise that *people development* is the cornerstone of sustainable and inclusive prosperity.

03

- Record **FDI inflows** must translate into **job creation, enterprise competitiveness, and productivity gains** across all sectors.

04

- **Skills transformation** supports national goals including:
  - **AfCFTA participation** and regional trade readiness.
  - Transition to a **Green and Digital Economy**.
  - Expansion of **industrial value addition**

05

- The **SMIP** further commits to:
  - Expanding **youth apprenticeship and internship programmes** (10,000+ placements annually).
  - Providing **free higher and vocational education by 2028**.
  - Strengthening **TVET infrastructure** and aligning curricula with emerging industries.

06

- Establishing **regional entrepreneurial centres** and a **National Youth Fund** to advance innovation and employability.



# PRIVATE SECTOR REALITIES & CASE STUDY





# PRIVATE SECTOR REALITIES & CASE STUDY

## The Role of Business in Workforce Readiness

The **private sector** remains a key driver of Namibia's human capital formation through training, bursaries, mentorship, and internships.

**Employer-led training** builds industry-specific competencies faster and more effectively than traditional classroom models.

Companies invest heavily in building **job-ready talent**, yet these contributions often fall outside formal recognition or incentive structures.

However, Namibia's **training ecosystem** remains fragmented with few structured partnerships linking **industry, academia, and regulators**.

Many firms operate **internal training academies**, graduate programmes, and technical upskilling initiatives, yet they face limited support through the current **VET Levy** and skills policies.

Greater recognition and incentivisation of private-sector training would expand Namibia's capacity to **train locally, retain talent, and reduce dependency on imported skills**.



**Businesses continue to highlight challenges including:**

- Limited credit for internal training expenditure under the VET Levy framework.
- Slow recognition of new qualifications and outdated curricula.
- Difficulty attracting technical experts due to restrictive short-term work permit processes.





# PRIVATE SECTOR REALITIES & CASE STUDY

## Case Study : The Chartered Accountancy (CA) Model

- The **Chartered Accountancy (CA) profession** offers a proven example of how private-sector leadership, supported by professional oversight, can produce globally recognised skills.
  - Accounting firms such as **PwC, Deloitte, EY, KPMG, BDO and many others** run formal trainee programmes that recruit **10-30 graduates per firm annually**, creating a sustainable talent pipeline - about 80% have done their undergraduate degree at UNAM or NUST.
  - These firms follow a **structured, competency-based training framework**, integrating theory with real work exposure.
  - Each trainee completes **supervised rotations** across audit, tax, and advisory functions, guided by experienced mentors.
  - Oversight and quality assurance are provided by the **Institute of Chartered Accountants of Namibia (ICAN)** and the **Public Accountants and Auditors Board (PAAB)**, ensuring alignment with international standards.
- The model embodies the **70-20-10 principle** of learning:
    - **70%** practical on-the-job experience.
    - **20%** mentorship and peer learning.
    - **10%** formal coursework and professional exams.
  - **Results:**
    - Namibia has grown from fewer than **50 qualified CAs at Independence** to **over 1,000 today**.
    - Firms have a total annual intake of about 150 with 360 trainees currently registered under training
    - The model demonstrates how structured, employer-led training produces work-ready professionals and sustained local expertise.
    - It exemplifies how **business and regulators** can co-create scalable training ecosystems applicable to other sectors, such as **manufacturing, ICT, logistics, tourism, and energy**.



# PRIVATE SECTOR REALITIES & CASE STUDY

## Case Study : The TalentBridge (Germany–Namibia) Programme

- The **TalentBridge Programme**, developed under the *Cooperation for Professionals 2025–2035 | Germany–Namibia* framework, is a bilateral initiative between **IHK Berlin, NIPDB, and the Namibia Training Authority (NTA)** aimed at addressing Namibia's high youth unemployment rate and Germany's projected shortage of over **7 million skilled workers** by 2035.
- The partnership is establishing a **Training Hub in Namibia** at the **value of N\$2 billion** to implement a **dual vocational training model** aligned with **German IHK standards**, ensuring internationally recognised quality and certification.
- The programme combines theoretical training with **structured company-based practical learning**, targeting key trades such as **mechatronics, industrial mechanics, hospitality, logistics, renewable energy, and ICT**.
- Language and cultural integration form part of the preparation phase, with the **Goethe-Institut** providing German language training (up to B2 level) and intercultural readiness for participants preparing for placements in Germany.
- The initiative also includes a **skills exchange component**, allowing Namibian trainers and TVET institutions to benefit from German technical mentorship and capacity development.

### The model applies the dual training principle:

- **70 %** practical workplace-based learning; **20 %** mentorship and intercultural coaching; **10 %** classroom-based instruction and assessment.

### Current Status and Expected Outcomes:

- The TalentBridge programme is in its **pilot and establishment phase** in Namibia, with the **first cohort of trainees** expected to commence in 2026.
- Once operational, it will provide a **structured pathway for 3,000 Namibian youth annually** to acquire internationally recognised skills applicable both locally and abroad.
- The model positions Namibia as a **potential regional training hub** and provides a replicable template for **bilateral apprenticeship cooperation** and **skills mobility** under Namibia's National Skills Compact.
- The Training Hub is expected to attract about **100 German Businesses to establish operations** in Namibia and create **total employment opportunities of about 2,000 people**. These companies will then operate on the German dual-training program model.



# PRIVATE SECTOR REALITIES & CASE STUDY

## Case Study : NTA-PetroFund-NIMT Skills Development Model

- The **Namibia Training Authority (NTA)**, in collaboration with **PetroFund** and the **Namibia Institute of Mining and Technology (NIMT)**, has developed a practical, industry-anchored model for **technical and vocational training in high-demand sectors** such as mining, energy, and engineering.
- The model emphasises **partnerships with employers** to ensure that training is directly linked to occupational demand, with PetroFund supporting bursaries, equipment, and infrastructure at NIMT campuses.
- NIMT delivers **hands-on technical instruction** in trades including **fitting, boilermaking, electrical, and instrumentation**, aligned to National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels 1-5.
- Graduates from NIMT record among the **highest employment absorption rates in Namibia's TVET sector**, with consistent demand from mining and industrial employers.
- The NTA and PetroFund partnership also facilitates **work-integrated learning**, allowing students to complete **practical placements** with participating companies prior to certification.

### Model Principle:

- Employer-driven, competency-based training.
- Funded by industry through the **VET Levy and PetroFund bursary scheme**.
- Strong alignment between curriculum design and labour-market needs.

### Results:

- Over **15,000 artisans trained** across NIMT campuses since inception.
- **85 % employment absorption rate** among graduates in core industrial sectors.
- Demonstrates how **industry-funded partnerships** can sustain long-term skills development in technical fields.
- Provides a scalable model for future **sector-based training partnerships** across Namibia's green-industrial and energy corridors.



# KEY CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS





# KEY CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS

## Strategic Priorities for Aligning Skills, Training, and Industry Needs

### **Constraint 1: Recognition & Incentivisation of On the Job Training**

Namibia VET Levy framework does not adequately recognise or refund in-house corporate training. Refunds are limited to 50% and only apply to external programmes, excluding workplace-based training, mentorship, and internal academies. This does not incentivize firms to invest in structured internal capacity-building and succession planning.

### **Constraint 2: Structural Misalignment Between Education, Training & Industry**

Training curricula remain largely academic, with limited industry participation in curriculum design and weak alignment to current labour-market needs. The absence of a coordinated national skills framework results in fragmented interventions across ministries, industry bodies, and training institutions.

### **Constraint 3: Limited Support for Apprenticeships, Mentorships & Emerging Skills**

Namibia lacks incentives for labour intensive industries and Innovative investment structures needed to optimise transaction costs and maximising socio-economic value locally. Such structures can attract foreign institutional investors, ensure transparency and align financing with Namibia's development goals.



# KEY CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS

## Constraint 1: Lack of Recognition & Incentivisation for Private-Sector Training

### What is the Constraint

The current VET Levy system restricts refunds to 50% for external training only, excluding structured internal training and mentorship. This limits private-sector investment in in-house skills development, despite strong demand for workplace readiness.

### What is the Root Cause

1. Outdated refund criteria that exclude employer-designed training programmes.
2. Lack of a performance-based approach to recognise verified internal outcomes.
3. Lengthy reimbursement cycles that discourage timely skills investment.
4. Weak alignment between levy collection and national productivity outcomes.
5. Limited monitoring systems to measure the impact of levy-funded training.
6. Absence of incentives for companies offering scholarships and in-house learning academies.

### Strategic

Revise the VET Levy structure to recognise and refund verified internal training programmes; introduce performance-linked refunds (up to 100%) and early claim cycles; and reward firms demonstrating job placements and succession planning outcomes.

### Response:





# KEY CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS...

## Constraint 2: Limited Support for Apprenticeships & Emerging Skills

### What is the Constraint

Apprenticeship systems remain underdeveloped, and funding for practical learning is limited. The absence of structured mentorship, coupled with restrictive short-term work permit policies, constraints knowledge transfer from global experts to local trainees.

### What is the Root Cause

1. Lack of financial incentives for firms to host apprentices or interns.
2. NTA funding restricted to lower NQF levels, excluding graduate and mid-career trainees.
3. Weak policy recognition of mentorship and practical learning outcomes.
4. Limited collaboration between training providers and industry mentors.
5. Visa and work permit delays for short-term technical trainers.

### Strategic

Reform the national apprenticeship framework to enable joint public-private training schemes; integrate apprenticeships into VET and university pathways; revise immigration rules to ease access for short-term trainers; and expand funding to support mentorship and reskilling in priority sectors.

### Response:



# KEY CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS...

## Constraint 3: Structural Misalignment Between Education, Training & Industry

### What is the Constraint

Namibia's education and training system remains fragmented, with limited coordination among ministries, industry, and academia. Graduates are produced without the competencies required by employers, leading to high graduate unemployment and persistent skill shortages.

### What is the Root Cause

1. Lack of a unified skills development strategy linking industrial policy to education planning.
2. Minimal industry input in curriculum design and qualification reviews.
3. Weak feedback mechanisms between employers and training institutions.
4. Insufficient data on national and regional skills demand.
5. Overemphasis on academic training over practical and vocational exposure.

#### Strategic

Establish a **National Skills Council** to coordinate planning, integrate labour-market data, and drive the co-creation of curricula with industry. Introduce **sectoral skills forums** to align training outputs with economic priorities (energy, logistics, manufacturing, tourism, ICT, and creative industries).

#### Response:

# RECOMMENDATIONS & PROPOSED ACTIONS







# RECOMMENDATIONS & PROPOSED ACTIONS

## Constraint 1: Limited Recognition & Incentivisation of Private-Sector Training

### Recommended Solutions

#### VET Levy Reform

- Recognise **scholarships, in-house, on-the-job, and mentorship training** as eligible refund categories under NTA.
- **Increase refund ceiling from 50 % to 100 %** for accredited, outcome-based company programmes.
- **Allow mid-year disbursements** to support continuous training cycles and ease cash-flow pressure.
- **Extend refund eligibility** to company-funded scholarships, internships, and structured apprenticeships aligned with national demand.
- Introduce a **Skills Development Tax Deduction (up to 150 %)** for accredited private-sector training investments.
- Require **annual VET Levy Utilisation Reports** by sector to enhance transparency and accountability.
- Establish a **National Skills Fund** to pool public and private resources for industry-driven training initiatives.



# RECOMMENDATIONS & PROPOSED ACTIONS...

## Constraint 2: Limited Support for Apprenticeships, Mentorship & Skills Transfer

### Recommended Solutions

#### Apprenticeship Expansion Programme

- Launch a **National Apprenticeship Expansion Programme** co-funded by government, industry, and development partners.
- **Standardise certification and quality assurance** under NTA to ensure national and regional recognition of apprenticeships.
- Introduce **structured mentorship networks** connecting experienced professionals with trainees across sectors.
- Implement a **Reciprocal Skills Exchange Mechanism** allowing Namibians to gain exposure in partner institutions abroad while hosting global experts for short-term training.
- Replicate and scale successful **industry-led models** such as the Chartered Accountancy (CA) Programme, PetroFund, NIMT, and TalentBridge (Germany–Namibia).
- Embed the **70–20–10 learning model** (70 % on-the-job training, 20 % mentorship, 10 % formal learning) to strengthen job-readiness and local expertise.
- Prioritise **youth, women, and TVET graduates** for apprenticeship placements in strategic sectors.



# RECOMMENDATIONS & PROPOSED ACTIONS...

## Constraint 3: Weak Coordination Between Education, Training & Industry

### Recommended Solutions

#### Skills Visa Reform

- Establish a **dedicated Skills Visa category** to facilitate the entry of technical experts for short-term mentorship, training, and capacity building.
- Tie visa approval to **knowledge-transfer and localisation plans** endorsed by NTA and NIPDB.
- Form a **joint oversight platform (MHAISS – MEIYSAC - MJLR - NTA – NIPDB)** to coordinate skills identification, visa approvals, and monitoring.
- Integrate the Skills Visa into a **National Skills Compact Database** for tracking, transparency, and labour-market intelligence.
- Enable **reciprocal secondments** between Namibia and partner countries, for each Namibian seconded abroad, one foreign expert may be hosted locally.
- Link visa eligibility to **critical-skills lists** informed by sectoral data and employer input.
- Streamline **work-permit processing** for approved mentorship and training assignments to reduce delays.





# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

**Namibia's future workforce competitiveness will be defined by how effectively we turn policy into practice.** Beyond designing frameworks and incentives, the real impact will come from **execution, alignment, and collaboration** between government, industry, and academia.

Fragmented planning and siloed implementation weaken training outcomes and limit how effectively national investments translate into jobs and productivity. Establishing a **National Skills Compact** can align priorities, clarify institutional roles, and ensure that reforms deliver measurable impact.

Workforce readiness must therefore be recognised as a **national competitiveness goal**, requiring predictable funding, consistent policy support, and a shared commitment to equip Namibians for an evolving economy.



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## THANK YOU

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