Minister Launches
Heavy Plant
Operator Training at
NamWater HRDC

The Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, has emphasised Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as the most applicable form of education capable of meeting the vast and growing scale of global and local education and training needs.

Officially launching a Heavy Plant Operator training programme at the NamWater Human Resource Development Centre outside Okahandja on the 3rd of August 2017, the Minister said the establishment of a sustainable skills base therefore remained, and will remain, a huge challenge for Namibia, for the foreseeable future. "It is a challenge exacerbated by a lack of human capital development opportunities and the mismatch between the supply and the demand side in our labour market", she said.

Dr. Kandjii-Murangi noted that meeting the skills challenges of the future not only required new ways of collaboration among all TVET stakeholders, but also increased and intensified collaboration at national, regional and trans-national levels.

NamWater, in partnership with the Namibia Training Authority (NTA), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Roads Contractor Company (RCC), partnered in the establishment of the three-year Namibia Qualifications Authority-accredited Heavy Plant Operator training course.

Speaking on behalf of the implementing partners,

NTA CEO, Jerry Beukes said the partnership demonstrated how public institutions and development partners could pull together and create synergy in supporting the Government, in reaching its national development objectives.

"Indeed, this partnership has supported us all in our shared objective to alleviate the shortage of qualified Heavy Plant Operators in our country. And while admittedly, we still have a long way to go, the launch of this training programme today, is certainly a step in the right direction", Beukes said.

GIZ Namibia provided the initial start-up funding equivalent to EUR 100,000 to ensure the training course started, while the NTA, through its VET Levy Key Priority Funding Window allocated N$14.8 million over a two-year period towards the total capital requirement of N$21.5 million to start the training course. The RCC will support Namwater by providing trainee job attachment opportunities and plant and equipment for training purposes. The NamWater HRDC registered its first intake for this programme in March this year.
Windhoek VTC Partners NUST Solar Vehicle Project

The Innovation Design Lab at the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), along with the Windhoek Vocational Training Centre (WVTC) has been working on developing the first Namibian Solar Electrical Utility Vehicle (NSEUV), prototyped and designed in Namibia.

A solar taxi based on African needs, it is a lightweight vehicle that runs with a zero carbon footprint. It captures solar energy with solar voltaic cells and stores them in lithium-ion batteries. Director of the Innovation Design Lab, Profesor Pio Lumaga says the vehicle weighs about 200 kg, can take a load of 300 kg, and seat four people comfortably. “Its speed goes up to 50 km per hour and it can run for 100 km before it needs a charge”, he enthusiastically shares.

The NUST research team, among them 15 students, of which five are from the WVTC, was divided into five task teams for mechanical, solar panel and lithium-ion batteries, software and interfaces, electrical and electronics, and composites work. It took the teams six months to manufacture the prototype.

“It wasn’t easy, but it was very exciting. The teams actually finished a month-and-a-half ahead of schedule”, Prof. Lumaga says.

Professor Lumaga noted that over the next 30 months, the teams will be building five more prototypes in an attempt to improve on the first NSEUV version. “The strategy is to make it lighter, more user-friendly, more efficient, and to end up with a sustainable solar taxi that operates with a zero carbon footprint”, he adds. Private companies, Solar Age Namibia and Spares Centre also support the project.

INDUSTRY SKILLS COMMITTEE STAKEOUT

What are your responsibilities as a chairperson?
A key responsibility is to ensure that ISC meetings are convened according to the meeting calendar. During the sessions, the chairperson directs the meetings to ensure that discussions focus on issues presented before the meeting. More importantly, the chairperson together with members of the ISC provide guidance to the NTA on current and future skills needs in our industry sectors, with due consideration of labour market requirements.

Let us focus on the activities of your ISC. What are your plans? Our ISC is a critical contributor to the country’s technical and vocational workforce. In serving this sector better, the ISC will continue to support the NTA to provide demand-driven training opportunities. We are further facilitating the rollout of opportunities for under-serviced sub-sectors, such as oil and gas and alternative sources of energy. Across the board, the ISC supports initiatives to create more awareness of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Namibia.

What more can the NTA do to achieve an effective and sustainable system of skills formation that is aligned with the labour market? As a key link, the ISC informs and advises the NTA of labour trends within our respective sub-sectors. The NTA should continue hosting focused consultations with strategic stakeholders within the respective sectors to understand their unique labour needs, global training solutions, research and development and employment opportunities. These platforms should be used to provide the necessary data to the NTA. The NTA should further endeavor to obtain strategic plans for respective subsectors to align their training solutions to the future sector development plans.

How is the employment and skills development of Mining, Quarrying, Construction, Electricity, Gas, Water and Sanitation industry affected by the current economic situation? This industry is extremely capital intensive and driven by prevailing prices of commodities.

It is an industry with great employment opportunities on every successful project. However, initial investments are normally sourced through external or sometimes government support.

Whilst there have been great opportunities in alternative sources of energy which has observed upward investment, the other industry sectors have experienced sharp decline due to heavy reliance on government funding which has reduced a great deal in the light the adjustments introduced by the government. Construction was most affected.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the Mining, Quarrying, Construction, Electricity, Oil and Gas, Water and Sanitation sector still offers abundant exploitable opportunities and immense skills. The sector will thus continue requiring well-trained technicians to propel it to its full potential.

What more can you share with us? The Mining, Quarrying, Construction, Electricity, Oil and Gas, Water and Sanitation ISC is a very important employer of VET skills. For every technical person employed, there are a handful of able and very hard working technicians who do the job with passion and zeal. I thus would like to encourage young people who have a passion for working in this industry to get in touch with the NTA to hear more about training opportunities within the market.

Tell us more about yourself? I am an innovative, resourceful and results-oriented professional, complemented by a Masters’ Degree in Finance obtained from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and a Bachelors’ Degree in Law obtained from the University of Namibia. I have a keen interest in all aspects of solutions that deliver real impacts in people’s lives.

This month, The Stakeholder caught up with the Chairperson of the Mining, Quarrying, Construction, Electricity, Gas, Water And Sanitation ISC, Nillian Mulemi to ask her more about herself and about the work of the ISC in promoting skills development in this important sector.
New Real Estate Agent, Electronics and Instrumentation Qualifications

The Namibia Training Authority, under the auspices of its Financial and Business Services Industry Skills Committee; and the Mining and Quarrying, Construction, Electricity, Gas, Water Supply and Sanitation Industry Skills Committee, has embarked on a series of consultation and validation workshops aimed at the development of unit standards and qualifications in the domains of Real Estate Agent; Electronics; and Instrumentation and Control.

Speaking to The Stakeholder, Acting Manager: VET Standards, Ruusa Iitula-Hango said the workshops represented an important step in the development process as it serves as a platform from which to validate the coverage and structure of newly developed or reviewed unit standards and qualifications. “Industry and social partner stakeholder participation is of utmost importance. It helps us to ensure general endorsement and that the drafts we have developed indeed reflect industry relevance and currency. Input from our industry stakeholders also helps our Technical Working Groups (TWGs) in their work to refine the unit standards and qualifications, which will be send to the Standards, Assessment and Certification Council (SACC), to recommend registration on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF),” she explained. “The unit standards and qualifications are reviewed regularly, within five years of each registration. This is to ensure that they are ‘fit-for-purpose’ and that they continue to specify the requirements to be met for any candidate to be awarded the credits for that unit standard or qualification and thus receive formal recognition”, she added.

Iitula-Hango encourages industry stakeholders to attend the meetings (see meeting schedule below). The draft unit standards and qualifications can be accessed through the 'Downloads' section from the NTA website: www.nta.com.na, or alternatively, can be collected from the Standards Development Officers at NTA Village, Rand Street, Khomasdal, Windhoek.

Consultation / känsal ‚tāSH(ä)n/
the action or process of formally consulting or discussing.

NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS:
The NTA is hosting a series of validation workshops across the country, as per the schedule below, aimed at the development of unit standards and qualifications in the domains of Real Estate Agent; Electronics; and Instrumentation and Control. Stakeholders are encouraged to attend and provide input towards ensuring that the competencies so identified specify requirements that reflect the current need of the respective sector, for which they are applicable.

Real Estate Agent
15 August 2017 Swakopmund Hotel Zum Kaiser 08h30 – 13h00
17 August 2017 Oshakati Oshakati Guest Hotel 08h30 – 13h00
21 August 2017 Tsumeb Makalani Hotel 08h30 – 13h00
29 August 2017 Windhoek NTA - Main Hall 08h30 – 13h00

Electronics
15 August 2017 Swakopmund Hotel Zum Kaiser 08h30 – 13h00
17 August 2017 Oshakati Oshakati Guest Hotel 08h30 – 13h00
18 August 2017 Keetmanshoop Central Lodge 08h30 – 13h00
31 August 2017 Windhoek NTA - Main Hall 08h30 – 13h00

Instrumentation & Control
14 August 2017 Swakopmund Hotel Zum Kaiser 08h30 – 13h00
21 August 2017 Tsumeb Makalani Hotel 08h30 – 13h00
21 August 2017 Rosh Pinah Amica Guesthouse 08h30 – 13h00
22 August 2017 Oranjemund Namdeb Head Office 08h30 – 13h00
30 August 2017 Windhoek NTA - Main Hall 08h30 – 13h00

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WorldSkills China Visits NTA

A delegation of senior officials from WorldSkills China visited the NTA on 07 July 2017, to present its Shanghai 2021 hosting bid and to discuss collaboration in the area of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), in particular, the improvement of respective local and national skills competitions.

Welcoming the delegation, CEO, Jerry Beukes said Namibia has only hosted one competition and was still relatively new to the international platform. “Through collaboration, we will be able to learn from you and integrate your experiences into improving our next competition”, he noted.

Worldskills China is one of the shortlisted bidders for 2021 competition, which is held bi-annually in a different member country. The rigorous bidding process entails expressions of interest by members, validation visits by the WSI Board, comprehensive analyses of capacity and the eventual shortlisting of a maximum of three bidders, who are subsequently invited to prepare a formal bid, in accordance with a bidding template and rules, to ensure fairness and comparability of bids.

Shortlisted bidders are then allowed time to market their proposals to other members ahead of presenting their formal bid documents at a relevant WorldSkills General Assembly (GA). The rights to host the 2021 competition is to be democratically determined by a secret member vote scheduled for the GA meeting in October 2017, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

The last WorldSkills Competition was held in São Paulo, Brazil in 2015, where the Russian city of Kazan succeeded in its bid to host the 2019 event. For this year’s competition in Abu Dhabi in October, China will send 47 participants with Namibia sending seven.

The delegation also met with the Higher Education, Training and Innovation Permanent Secretary, Dr. Alfred van Kent.

STAKEHOLDER DIARY

15 - 30 August 2017
Real Estate Agent; Electronics; & Instrumentation and Control National Stakeholder Consultations and Validation Workshops

22 August 2017
Board Finance Committee Meeting, Windhoek

28 August 2017
Roundtable Discussion – Facility Maintenance Operations Management, NTA Village Hall, Windhoek

31 August 2017
Board Human Resource Committee Meeting, Windhoek
In 2012, the global Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) community met in Shanghai, China, to debate current trends and future drivers of TVET development. This global dialogue resulted in the Shanghai Consensus, which provides a vision to connect the analysis of TVET systems with intended development outcomes, and recommendations for TVET systems’ reform, as well as policy development. The key message was that TVET systems need significant transformation and revitalisation, if TVET was to realise its enormous potential as a contributor to employment and sustainable development.

The international TVET community once again met from the 3rd to the 6th of July 2017, in Tangshan, China to reflect on the Shanghai Consensus, at a conference, which took place under the theme ‘Skills on the Move - Global Trends and Local Resonance’. The meeting was designed to take stock of progress and challenges since the 2012 Shanghai conference, and identify promising policies and practices to enhance TVET’s contribution to sustainable development.

Deputy Permanent Secretary, Dr. Raimo Naanda and Gobabis VTC Acting Manager, Ernst Eixab represented Namibia, through the Ministry of Higher Education Training and Innovation. Speaking to The Stakeholder, Eixab said that Namibia attended the conference with the aim to learn and network with other well-vested and experienced countries and in return infuse such lessons and experiences into the local TVET system. “Participating at such international platforms is very important for the NTA, as it allows us to gauge current trends, business opportunities, emerging industry needs and best practice in the TVET sector”, Eixab emphasised.

According to Eixab, the conference placed significant emphasis on the need to transform and revitalise TVET. “For TVET, the stakes are high. TVET systems are valued for their links with the fast-changing demands of the labour market and world of work. A set of new skills is emerging including digital, entrepreneurial, green and innovation skills. New forms of certification, including digital credentials and open and online badges, now recognise and validate learning outcomes, including non-formal and informal learning. The timeliness with which TVET systems transform and respond to the above-mentioned trends, will result in these systems either being highly appreciated by individuals, enterprises and society at large or, will contribute to deepening the negative perception of TVET, compared to general secondary education and academic tertiary education programmes”, he added.

The conference also focused on a number of areas linked to global trends and UNESCO’s Strategy for TVET, including: youth employment and entrepreneurship; the role of skills in combating inequity and gender inequality; skills’ needs in increasingly digitised and green economies and societies; addressing supply and demand mismatches; learner and worker mobility; the role of skills and qualifications recognition; and the monitoring and evaluating the impact of TVET strategies and programmes. The conference was co-organised by UNESCO, the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). UNESCO mobilised its member states and partners, including the Inter-Agency Group on TVET members and its networks. The conference featured plenary and parallel sessions. A session was dedicated to discover, through exposure, specific aspects of the TVET system in China, as the host country.

South Africa’s Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges should be the answer to unemployment and economic woes, but instead they often drain resources. A number sums up the parlous state of South Africa’s TVET system: 2%. A mere 2% of students entering TVET colleges qualify in the minimum period of three years. Barely a third graduate and many of those who do, wait years for their certificates.

How many of them get jobs is unknown because the South African Government does not track their progress. These colleges should be the answer to the country’s twin problems of youth unemployment — which stands at more than 50% — and an artisan shortage, which has resulted in companies importing welders and carpenters from as far away as China and the Philippines. The Government has been pouring money into the system. It will spend R6.92bn on the 50 public TVET colleges in 2017 and the allocation will rise to R8.59bn by 2019.

The vast majority of students secure bursaries from the Government-funded National Student Financial Aid Scheme that they do not have to repay. The Government is therefore getting a poor return on its money, which continues to be disbursed regardless of the performance of colleges. Many colleges are out of touch with the needs of industry and few are staffed by lecturers with appropriate teaching and technical skills and industry experience.

The merger of 152 small technical colleges into 50 TVET colleges in 2002, along with the demand to increase student numbers and to implement new curricula, has also placed a huge strain on their management structures, which have often proved unequal to the task.

A recent performance and expenditure review commissioned by the Treasury lays bare some of the TVET colleges’ failings. It found the average throughput rate in National Certificate - Vocational (NC-V) courses in 2013 ranged from a dismal 0.6% in civil engineering to 5.9% in tourism; the national certification rate was just 32.5% for first-year students and the dropout rate was 28.2%. A similarly bleak picture emerged from a study published by the Swiss-South African Co-operation Initiative. It found that 33 of every 100 students who enrolled for these courses passed their first year, 15 passed their second year and six graduated on schedule.

The litmus test for the TVET colleges is the extent to which they supply the skills needed in the economy and improve young people’s prospects of finding decent work. Data is sketchy, but what little there is indicates they are failing dismally. The Government’s most recent scarce-skills list, which the Department of Home Affairs uses to determine who gets work visas, includes carpenters, joiners, boilermakers and electricians — exactly the kind of skills expected from students attending TVET colleges. Their failure to produce enough technicians and artisans has repercussions for industry and society: Chinese construction company CBMI Construction, for example, recently imported welders from China, inking the ire of COSATU, which organised a march on Cape Town’s docks.

Statistics SA’s Quarterly Labour Force Survey also raises a red flag. A surprisingly large proportion of the TVET college graduates who do find jobs are not working in industry, but in finance or the government. The most recent survey, for the last quarter of 2016, shows a quarter of employed TVET college graduates work in “community and social services”, which are largely government jobs, and a similar proportion work in finance. A mere 4.3% work in mining, 7.7% in transport and 8.8% in construction.

This article by columnist, Tamor Kahn was published on the ‘businesslive.co.za’ website. See link below: https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/opinion/2017-03-08-why-sas-colleges-are-missing-all-the-marks/
**WORLDSKILLS ABU DHABI 2017**

**INTRODUCING OUR NAMIBIAN COMPETITORS AND EXPERTS**

The 44th WorldSkills Competition will be held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) from the 14th to the 19th of October 2017.

Abu Dhabi was awarded the right to host the 2017 WorldSkills Competition at the WorldSkills General Assembly in 2013, making the UAE as the first country in the Middle East to host the competition, which takes place every two years in a different city around the world. It will be the largest event ever held at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre.

Namibia is once again to compete at this international platform, having made its debut at the 2015 WorldSkills São Paulo competition in Brazil. We wish our competitors and experts all the best in their preparation and participation.
**PICTURE FOCUS**
From Around & About the VET Scene

**Advocacy @ Work**
PR, Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Cecilia Iita sharing the ‘Live Your Passion’ message with learners at the Okuryangava Disability Resource Centre

**Industry Experts**
Members of the Manufacturing, Automotive Sales, Arts and Craft Industry Skills Committee pictured with NTA staff following a meeting at NTA Village

**Practicing Skills**
Okakarara VTC Hairdressing trainees pictured during a practical session

**Future Heavy Plant Operators**
NamWater HRDC’s first Heavy Plant Operator programme intake posing for a group picture

**Live Your Passion Ambassador**
NICE Chef, Mighty Mwashekele smiling for the camera

**Group Work**
Acting VET Standards Manager, Ruusa Iitula-Hango attending to questions from members of the Health Care & Social Services ISC

**Proud Partners**
NamWater CEO, Dr. Vaino Shivute, NTA CEO, Jerry Beukes, Higher Education Minister, Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi and German Ambassador, H. E. Mathias Schlaga pictured at the Heavy Plant Operator training programme launch

SHARE YOUR VET PICTURES AND HAVE THEM PUBLISHED IN OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER
info@nta.com.na