The Zambezi Vocational Training Centre inaugurated a brand new guesthouse training facility at its Katima Mulilo campus, on the 13th of March 2017.

Officiating at the event, CEO, Jerry Beukes appealed to businesses in the Zambezi region, especially those in the tourism and hospitality sectors, to become the NTA’s job attachment partners. “There is not enough job attachment opportunities available in the local training market,” he said, adding that job attachment opportunities make up an integral part of training, as trainees are required at specific intervals of their programmes to gain practical work experience at relevant industry employers.

“Such opportunities substantially increase the chances of graduates finding employment because for an employer, a candidate who has spent time working in a particular industry shows dedication and enthusiasm for a particular job. Most importantly, job attachments boost self-confidence, entrepreneurship and create positive attitudes,” he said.

Beukes noted that the support of the relevant industry stakeholders will prove that what they are doing at the vocational centres is producing productive members of society. “Indeed, the real test in our country’s Vocational Education and Training sector is the employability of our graduates. Therefore, our plea to employers is to become meaningful partners in our quest to deliver graduates of a high quality and high calibre, whose skills will allow them to add value to any employer, or to start their own businesses,” he added.

Meanwhile, ZVTC Centre Manager, Richard Kambinda welcomed the new facility saying that it enabled the institution to provide much-needed practical training for trainees. “As a training institution, we have an obligation to provide practical hands-on training to our trainees. This facility now positions us to do so in giving our Tourism and Hospitality trainees both the theoretical and practical knowledge right here at the institution”, he explained.

Zambezi Governor, Hon. Lawrence Sampofu, unveiled the plaque to the facility and called on inhabitants of Katima Mulilo and the broader Zambezi region to take full ownership thereof.
The NTA has dispatched two groups of VET trainers, selected from public and private training institutions countrywide, to Bremen in the Federal Republic of Germany, to undergo upskilling courses.

A first group of 15 Automotive Mechanic VET trainers left for Germany on Saturday, 18 February 2017, while a second group, consisting of 22 trainers in the Electrical and Plumbing fields left on Monday, 27 February 2017. They are to undergo a two-week training course that forms part of the implementation of the Training of Trainers (ToT) partnership between the NTA and the Esslingen State Academy Esslingen, established in 2016.

Manager: VET Curriculum Implementation, Ernst Eixab explained that the partnership made provision for five two-week training sessions, of which two will take place at the University of Bremen and three at the Valombola Vocational Training Centre. "This programme is tailor-made to suit the Namibian context by considering crucial issues such as our unit standards and the qualification level on the National Qualifications Framework", he noted. "Upon completion, participants will be awarded diplomas by the Bremen Institute of Technology and Education. The trainers will also be engaged in our Technical Working Groups (TWGs) that revise our curricula and develop our assessment instruments. Additionally, this group of trainers will act as mentors to their trainer peers at both public and private institutions, where learning platforms has been created for skills, knowledge and experience sharing”, he added.

Meanwhile, at a sending-off ceremony held at NTA Village, CEO, Jerry Beukes said the training interventions under the partnership formed part of a comprehensive response to national development objectives, as outlined in Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4), the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) and the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP). "Grab this opportunity with both hands to infuse new ideas into our local training curricula to the benefit of our trainees and industry partners", he said.

Participants for the two groups were drawn from a number of public and private training institutions, namely Mapac Technical Training Institute (Ongwediva); Namibian Institute for Mining and Technology (Tsumeb & Arandis); Rundu VTC; Windhoek VTC; Okakarara VTC; Valombola VTC; Eenhana VTC; Nakayale VTC; Osona Military School; NamWater Human Resource Development Centre (Okahandja); Namibia Vocational School (Rundu & Okakarara); KAYEC (Katutura); Namibian Maritime Fisheries Institute Namibian College of Open Learning (Katima Mulilo); and National Youth Service - Rietfontein. The training is sponsored by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), through its Promotion of Vocational Education and Training (ProVET) Project.

The NTA has appointed Kornelius Mpande Lukas as the Centre Manager for the Rundu Vocational Training Centre (RVTC), effective 01 April 2017.

Lukas holds an N6 Mechanical Engineering Diploma from the College of Cape Town and a Vocational Instructor Qualification from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

He joins the NTA from the Pupkewitz Group, where he worked as a Principal Dealer for its Toyota franchise at Rundu. Lukas also served as a Control Artisan Foreman, and later as an Acting Deputy Director: Government Garage at the Ministry of Works and Transport. He also worked at RVTC before as an Automechanics trainer.

Lukas succeeds the late Erkki Tjandja, who succumbed in a tragic road accident last year. The NTA Board, management and staff wish Lukas all the best in his new position.

EAGER PARTICIPANTS
CEO, Jerry Beukes pictured with Automotive Mechanics course participants at NTA Village, before their departure to Germany
COMMERCIAL ADVANCEMENT TRAINING SCHEME (CATS) INVITES INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS TO BECOME MEMBERS

The Commercial Advancement Training Scheme (CATS) is calling on more employers in the VET sector to join its fray.

CATS Programme Coordinator, Twitileni Nyamu-Cockburn said although candidate applications for the 2017 intake closed on the 31st March 2017, there still exists a serious need for more companies to come on board as CATS members in order to gain equilibrium between the number of available candidates for training and the number of companies with capacity to train these future leaders. “It is imperative that Namibian companies invest in skills development by actively engaging with and making use of focused programmes such as CATS. "The benefits both on a national level and those that are direct to the company are extensive”, she noted.

Nyamu-Cockburn also highlighted some of the benefits to being a CATS member company as being able to gain productive and employable staff following an intensive practical training period – which can be customised to individual member requirements. “We shape and align high potential youngsters to the culture and expectations of the organisation, while also developing a sustainable foundation for a competent and motivated workforce. It is an intensive practical training period, which can also enhance overall succession planning at employers”, she noted. “CATS active member companies may also benefit from the reimbursement of up to 50% of the training costs under the NTA’s VET Levy Employer Training Grant scheme”, Nyamu-Cockburn added.

The CATS programme provides member companies with an opportunity to train potential future employees and provide them with the necessary skills to ensure that they are competent in their jobs after they have completed the two years of training.

Students receive a fully funded tertiary education, while applying theoretical contents in practice through on-the-job training.

By rotating through various departments, students get a clear understanding of how the business works and how different functions in the organisation are interlinked. Upon completion of the programme, they become qualified industrial management assistants with two years of relevant work experience and are also considered to be sought-after employees. Graduates are awarded an Industrial Management Assistant Diploma, which is recognised by the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce as well as an Applied Business Process Management Certificate, issued by the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), equivalent to an accreditation level of NQA Level 4.

“The CATS programme has now been recognised as an industry leader of dual education and has seen to the successful graduation of over 120 apprenticeship students to date, which aligns strongly with the CATS mission to promote economic growth through skills development and to create skilled and reliable workforce that is well equipped to lead Namibia towards Vision 2030”, Nyamu-Cockburn explained.

“More companies joining the fray will allow us to make solid progress towards establishing the CATS programme as a programme of choice for school leavers and employees who wish to further their education in the wider business area”, she added.

CATS is a Section 21 company. Its dual-training programme is targeted at Grade 12 graduates who are interested in a career in business, but also employees within its member companies that have shown potential to climb the corporate ladder. Founded in 2005 by a group of visionary business leaders, CATS is currently partnering with 24 Namibian industry leaders.

INDUSTRY SKILLS COMMITTEE STAKE-OUT

Namibia, until 2009, when I decided to venture into business. I served as a member of the NTA’s Technical Working Group, which assisted with the development of unit standards for the Agriculture and Forestry sector. Later I was appointed to the ISC, which I’ve been chairing since October 2016.

SH: Were you surprised by your appointment as Agriculture and Forestry ISC Chairperson? Yes, I was. The terms of our longest serving members, Manfred Rukoro and Helmut Stehn came to an end in July 2016 and the remaining members nominated me to take over the chairmanship. In fact, they insisted that I do. I know that with their support we will take our ISC very far.

SH: What are your plans for the Agriculture and Forestry ISC? Since its establishment in 2010, the ISC has been providing guidance and advice on the status of training and the availability of skills in our sector. Agriculture remains a key priority area for funding through the VET Levy, and we anticipate Agriculture training courses to be launched at a number of public and private training institutions over the short to medium term. The unit standards and qualifications are ready and we look forward to credible institutions to commence with training and skills transfer to trainees. Regrettably, we still need to do much more in catering for the needs of the Forestry sub-sector within the NTA constellation.

What more can the NTA do, to achieve an effective and sustainable system of skills formation aligned with the labour market? To achieve such a system aligned with our industry labour market, the NTA needs to address a number of issues. Continuous stakeholder engagement will be crucial to ensure increased participation and understanding of industry needs and in the formulation of appropriate actions to meet labour market demands. I would suggest that the NTA look into arranging exposure visits for ISC members to learn and expand their horizons and serve their ISC and industry sectors better. We should also foster closer relationships and coordination between the ISCs, Technical Working Groups (TWGs), training institutions and other roleplayers in the mainstream education system.

As a commercial farmer, what advice can you give to other farmers with regards to skills development? Any successful farmer managing a productive farm understands that skilled labour leads to improved productivity and efficiency. We need to invest in our human capital as a key aspect of our farming business to achieve maximum production, profit and prosperity.

What more can you share with us? Personally, I appreciated the Skills Competition held in September 2016. I am looking forward to the day when our sector will have the opportunity to showcase its skills in the same fashion. I also want to convey my best wishes to all the training institutions and trainees who have taken the challenge of engaging themselves in training courses relating to the Agriculture and Forestry sector.
 DEADLINE LOOMS FOR VET LEVY EMPLOYER TRAINING GRANT CLAIMS APPLICATIONS

Eligible employers have until the 30th of April 2017 to submit claims under the Employer Training Grant Funding Window of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Levy, for training conducted during the 2016/17 financial year. The Stakeholder spoke to the General Manager: National Training Fund, Joseph Mukendwa, to share more information with employers about the criteria to be considered in the preparation of employer claim applications.

SH: What is the Employer Training Grant?
JM: All levies collected by the NTA in a financial year are to be disbursed at the end of that particular financial year, in line with the following allocation: 35% for Key Priority Training Grants; Up to 50% for Employer Training Grants; and Up to 15% for the NTA’s Administration costs. In line with this formula, all eligible levy-paying employers may submit applications under the grant to the NTA within 31 days after the end of the financial year.

SH: What is the Employer Training Grant?
JM: The regulations relating to the application of the VET Levy define training as “training related to vocational training provided by a private vocational training provider accredited by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA), or a State-owned Vocational Training Centre”.

In line with this definition, the NTA is to consider the following training interventions under the Employer Training Grant:
a) All NQA accredited VET courses; and b) Training courses not accredited by the NQA, but related to accredited VET courses. This may include short courses, in-house training and training outside of Namibia.

SH: Tell us more about the eligibility criteria.
JM: Employers must meet the following eligibility criteria to submit a claim under the Employer Training Grant: a) Up to date with the payment of the VET Levy payable by the employer; b) Does not have any interest referred to in Section 38 of the VET Act or any penalty referred to in Section 39 of the VET Act, outstanding in respect of the VET Levy; and c) Has submitted to the NTA evidence of the implementation of training i.e. completed and submitted a claim form together with relevant documentation.

SH: What about costs? What qualifies for grants?
JM: Where training is conducted in-company, eligible costs include: a) Facilitator training costs for the duration of training; b) Cost of training materials used in the training process; c) Assessment and certification costs; and d) Subsistence and travelling (S&T) allowance costs and expenses, for both facilitators and trainees.

GM: NATIONAL TRAINING FUND
JOSEPH MUKENDWA

Where training is procured from, or conducted by an external service provider, the following line items will be regarded as direct training costs: a) S&T allowance costs to and from the training venue; and b) Invoiced/receipted costs from the service provider.

SH: Tell us more about the types of evidence.
JM: Evidence may include the following: a) Signed attendance register or certificates of attendance; b) Proof of payment/receipts from the training service provider; c) Tax invoices for training materials procured; d) S&T records in accordance with company policy; e) Accommodation receipts; f) Assessment and certification records; and g) Any other supplementary records and receipts applicable to the training.

For inspection purposes, employers are to maintain all records and any other relevant supporting information, in line with the Directorate of Inland Revenue’s prescribed five-year retention period. Employers who comply with the above criteria must submit claims within 31 days after the end of the financial year.

SH: How do employers submit applications?
JM: Employers should complete and submit claim applications online at the NTA’s corporate website, www.nta.com.na

SH: Why is it important for eligible employers to keep to the set deadline of 30th April 2017?
JM: It is important that they do. It gives us the time we need to evaluate applications and ensure that reimbursements are done timely. Those who do not make the deadline risk losing their 50% allocation.

SH: Who can employers contact should they have questions?
JM: They are welcome to contact our Helpdesk at 061-2078542 or 061-2078 566.

WORLDSKILLS NAMIBIA CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

WorldSkills Namibia celebrated International Women’s Day on the 8th of March 2017, by endorsing the HeForShe Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality, led by the United Nations and aimed at engaging men and boys as advocates to break the silence and take action for the achievement of gender equality. WorldSkills Namibia submitted profiles of local female VET practitioners that were published on the WorldSkills International website.

Below, a profile of Namibian Plumber, Albertina Shitengw.

An African proverb sums up Albertina Shitangwa’s outlook on the importance of women being provided with the same opportunities to learn, work, and contribute as men, “If you educate a man, you educate an individual. If you educate a woman, you educate a family”.

For “family”, she says, read “nation”. And in her own nation of Namibia, she is practicing what she believes in, with her recognition of the value of vocational education seeing her embark on an internship in plumbing and heating – she was the only female Competitor in Plumbing and Heating at the Namibian National Skills Competition last year.

“It encouraged me to show the world that women are equally capable, and break the stereotype that claims only men can do certain trades,” she said. “Women are underestimated in some trades, but I feel I proved that we can also deliver quality work. As much as the focus of skills competitions is on the youth, I strongly believe that society as a whole benefits. These competitions help students to achieve excellence, and are crucial to career progression as they support us in developing our technical skills”, she said.

Women have more hurdles to overcome in pursuing a trade and a career, according to Albertina; hurdles which should be irrelevant today.

“At a young age, girls can be made to believe that men are superior,” she said. "Low self-esteem and motivation, and a lack of career coaching in schools, also represent barriers to females entering male-dominated trades. But this is the 21st century, where physical strength no longer matters – strength is measured in intelligence, experience, and capability. The message of the proverb is that if we know the value of education to men, women should have equal access to it. Women should be as engaged as men in all spheres of life, earn competitive salaries, and should be given leadership opportunities, making important decisions. There is nothing men can do that women can not”, she added.

As much as the focus of skills competitions is on the youth, I strongly believe that society as a whole benefits. These competitions help students to achieve excellence, and are crucial to career progression as they support us in developing our technical skills"
Join us on a Journey into the World of Technical and Vocational Skills!

Follow the camera over 25 episodes into the workshops, offices and field activities of graduates of the Vocational Education and Training system, across Namibia. We share the inspiring stories of young Namibians who have defied the odds and have succeeded in a domain often frowned upon as dirty, low paying and low-status.

Their inspiring stories challenge the unfair societal stereotyping and lift the lid on technical and vocational career options that are worthwhile, meaningful and empowering. Theirs are stories of hope, inspiration and vision. New episodes air every Tuesday on NBC1 at 18h45. All episodes are also available on our dedicated YouTube channel. [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuAQJR2RgeAFNlrBNvu7k1w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuAQJR2RgeAFNlrBNvu7k1w)
International VET Opinion

Why TVET is a Game-Changer for Kenya’s Manufacturing?

The devaluing of the so-called ‘blue-collar’ work is a mentality borne out of a contorted notion of education’s function in the society. One which gives priority to examinations and assessment scores over comprehensive learning of diverse disciplines. Further, the perceptions of boring old machines, dirty greasy overalls and smoke-filled factories have been sustained over time by more than just a rigid education system. The politics of national investments, value placed by corporates on college degrees, prestige bestowed upon white collar jobs, the ‘mystery’ of industry, and assumed complexities of its functions and functionality have all greatly contributed to these myths.

The misconceptions about manufacturing have been compounded by society’s tendency towards a false dichotomy that is pegged on gendered occupations and privileged career spaces. These lock out many young people from readily available employment which are lucrative and accessible. Yet the truth of the matter is, outside of these long-held prejudices lies not only productive jobs for the thousands of graduates per year, but a proven solution for the economic and social advancement for our country towards industrialisation.

However, manufacturing is, in reality, not in competition with the services sector, but its foundation and backbone. The relationship between manufacturing and services sector is more than symbiotic because, the former is quite critical to the commercial innovation in the latter.

Kenya’s TVET Act 2013 was designed to address the job skills issue and, more so, to ensure an increased and sustained enrollment ratio of 20 per cent by the year 2030. This is a ground-breaking move on the part of government to revamp our entire education system with a view of making the lives of our youth better. Industry needs to step in and demonstrate the worthiness of programmes that integrate on-the-job training and lifelong learning will go a long way in reshaping the thinking around manufacturing sector as a whole.

Industry needs to introduce cutting-edge technologies to their day-to-day processes to shun the image of traditional, obsolete, hard-labour machines and illuminate the tech-savvy aspect of manufacturing jobs. Some members of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) are already doing this through the association’s newly launched TVET programme in partnership with the government. Additionally, companies need to be vigorously involved in shaping the future of the industry by playing key roles in the planning and design of TVET programmes to include a global perspective of manufacturing trends, in line with our unique needs as a country.

We should be involved in the development of occupational standards, invest in building the skills that we would like our graduates to possess, make these jobs more lucrative and host open-days where we demystify our work and educate parents on the benefits of a thriving industry for their children. Investing in TVETs is not just about providing a few opportunities for some – TVETs are the only sure way to secure the future of this country, guaranteeing long-term productivity, economic sustainability and inclusive growth.

This article was written by Phyllis Wakiaga, CEO of the Kenya Association of Manufacturers.

Source: http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2017/01/31/why-tvet-is-a-game-changer-for-kenya_c1496949

Columbia University (USA) Delegation Visits NTA

A delegation of the Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs paid a courtesy visit to the NTA on Friday, 17th March 2017, as part of a project facilitated by the Office of the President. The delegates form part of a group of experts who are expected to produce a useful and actionable report that ‘brands’ Namibia internationally as a gateway to Southern Africa and positions the country as the primary logistics and administrative hub of the sub-region.

Sharing Expertise
Experts, Mariko Haneda, Felix Tan and Marie von Haffen pictured with CEO, Jerry Beukes and Manager: Research & Planning, Indongo Indongo

On his part, the CEO, Jerry Beukes told the delegation that TVET has been highlighted in the HPP as a key project with a high premium assigned to it, because of its potential to equip citizens with job and work-ready skills and deal with the global challenges of youth employability and unemployment.

Stakeholder Diary

07 April 2017
Post & Telecommunication ISC Consultation, NTA Head Office, Main Hall

11 April 2017
National Stakeholder Consultation: Agriculture Farm Management - Levels 4 and 5
Windhoek: NTA Hall (09h00 – 13h00)

21 April 2017
Health Care & Social Services ISC Consultation, NTA Head Office, Main Hall

25 April 2017
National Stakeholder Consultation: Agriculture Farm Management - Levels 4 and 5
Oshakati: Oshakati Guest Hotel (08h30 – 13h00)

27 April 2017
National Stakeholder Consultation: Agriculture Farm Management - Levels 4 and 5
Rundu: Rundu VTC (08h30 – 13h00)

28 April 2017
Wholesale and Trade ISC Consultation, NTA Head Office, Main Hall

30 April 2017
Deadline for Online Submission of VET Levy Employer Training Grant Applications
**Gender Equality in VET**
Plumber, Albertina Shitalangaho, whose story featured on the WSI website, under the HeforShe campaign

**Engaging Speaker**
ZVTC Head of Training, Robert Ndana, pictured at the inauguration ceremony

**Independence Celebrations**
Head Office employees celebrating Independence Day in style

**Successful Deliberations**
Participants at a recent Hospitality & Tourism Stakeholder Meeting held at NTA Village

**Germany, Here We Come!**
CEO, Jerry Beukes pictured with Electrical and Plumbing Mechanics course participants at NTA Village, before their departure to Germany

**Busy Team**
Acting VET Standards Manager, Ruusa Itula-Hango (right) and members of her team pictured on Independence Day

**Loyal VET Servants**
CEO, Jerry Beukes and employees who have completed five years of continuous service in the employ of the NTA, Ruusa Nafuka, Sieglinde Owos-Oas, Jimmy Dax, Tuwilika Shilongo, Mildred Wolf, Francis Mutonga, Richard Ndjahera and Mornay Louw