Minister Appoints Two New Board Members

The Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Dr. Itah Kandjji-Murangi has appointed two new members to the NTA’s Board of Directors.

The new appointees are Higher Education, Training and Innovation Deputy Permanent Secretary, Dr. Raimo Ndapewa Naanda, and First National Bank of Namibia Head of Treasury, Michelle van Wyk.

Dr. Naanda is a trained boilermaker, who has worked at Consolidated Diamond Mines, now known as Namdeb, as well as at the Windhoek Machinen Fabrik.

He has over 30 years of extensive experience in Vocational Education and Training (VET), having served the sector in various capacities, which included a long stint at the Windhoek Vocational Training Centre as an Instructor, Head of Training, and later Principal.

Dr. Naanda was also employed at Telecom Namibia as its Senior Manager: Training and Development and holds a doctorate degree in Education from the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

He is a registered member of the Institute of Commercial Management in South Africa and a member of the Institute of People Management (IPM) Namibia. Dr. Naanda has served on various boards, both in the public and the private sectors.

Michelle van Wyk, in turn, is a chartered accountant who holds a number of degrees and professional accreditations, which include a Bachelors of Accounting (Honours) degree; CA (SA) (Nam); and ACT - Corporate Treasury.

She possesses vast financial management knowledge and experience in the banking environment, after having spent, amongst others, four years at FirstRand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Board Chairperson, Otto Nakasole Shikongo, has welcomed the appointments. “The Board is happy to welcome the new directors. They are people of calibre and we look forward to them adding further value to our work”, he said.

Dr. Naanda and van Wyk replace Melissa Shanyengange and Adelheid Awases who resigned as Board members.

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## Compliance Inspectors for VET Levy

The NTA’s National Training Fund Department is making good progress towards the appointment of VET Levy Compliance Inspectors.

General Manager, Joseph Mukendwa, told The Stakeholder that interviews were conducted recently and that it was now only a matter of time before the inspectors can assume duty.

“We are very happy about this development as the inspectors will aid the National Training Fund in ensuring compliance insofar it relates to the collection and disbursement of the VET Levy. They will have powers to enter workplaces at any reasonable time to monitor and enforce compliance”, he said.

Mukendwa highlighted that initial delays were experienced in the recruitment of the Compliance Inspectors, who in line with Section 43 of the VET Act of 2008 had to be appointed by the Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, in line with the laws governing the public service.”As the appointments had to be done in line with the laws governing the public service, the Public Service Commission Secretariat (PSCS) advised the NTA to engage relevant Ministries, for the identification and nomination of persons to be considered for appointment and secondment to the NTA as Compliance Inspectors. However, this did not yield any results”, he said.

“In finding a solution to the impasse, our line Ministry approached the PSCS, who in turn approved temporary positions on the Ministry’s organisational structure. We re-advertised in the local media in February this year, whereafter shortlisted candidates were interviewed and subjected to psychometric tests”, Mukendwa added.

The approval is for four officers and one Deputy Director (which could be activated at any time should there be a need) for a period of two years.

Meanwhile, Mukendwa has announced plans by the National Training Fund to soon embark on a national engagement and sensitisation drive to encourage more eligible employers to register as VET Levy payers. “We had a very successful registration drive when the VET Levy was launched, circa 2014, which resulted in more than two-thousand employers registering as VET Levy-payers. As registration remained an ongoing process, this number has been growing to 2,632 at the end of the last financial year. But, we feel it necessary to go out there, once again, and share this message with employers who are supposed to have registered, but are yet to do so. It is important that they too become part of this very important national programme”, he stressed.

### INDUSTRY SKILLS COMMITTEE STAKEOUT

Tell us more about yourself? I currently serve as the General Secretary of the Namibia Wholesalers and Retail Workers Union, which is an affiliate of the Trade Union Congress of Namibia (TUCNA).

Not only am I passionate about labour issues, I also feel strongly about the development of training opportunities that are industry-relevant and have the potential to add value to our sector, and the country at large. Other than representing TUCNA in various capacities, which included an ad hoc committee of the National Planning Commission Committee that developed the National Human Resources Plan, and which was aimed at skills needs identification and mismatches in various sectors, I am a humble servant of my sector and my people.

What are your responsibilities as a chairperson?

As the chairperson of the Wholesale and Retail ISC, I am tasked to chair meetings and represent the committee on the Technical Committee of the Board. I am also expected to act as a link between our sector’s stakeholders and the NTA’s management and present issues pertaining to our sector. Overall I am responsible for ensuring that the ISC, at all times, acts in conformity with its Terms of Reference.

Let us focus on the activities of your ISC. What are your plans? We have a responsibility as a collective to ensure that the sectors needs are covered in the NTAs business and implementation plans. We are working around the clock to ensure that relevant courses are registered on the National Qualifications Framework for current employees and those aspiring to take up careers in the Wholesale and Retail sector.

Another key objective is to see how we can fast track the development of industry-relevant unit standards and qualifications for employees working in our sector to get certified through Recognition of Prior Learning. We are very excited by the news that two such courses are soon to be registered on the NQF, namely, Wholesale Buyer and Merchandiser.

What more can the NTA do, to achieve an effective and sustainable system of skills formation that is aligned with the labour market? Not only should the NTA continue its exemplary work in building the capacities of existing training institutions, it should also empower these institutions to prioritise offering courses for the wholesale and retail sector. We need to aggressively grow the numbers of certified practitioners in our sector.

Is the Wholesale and Retail industry well equipped with skilled employees to meet the growing market? No. Currently, there are more than 75-thousand employees in our sector, with less than 300 employees currently participating in skills upgrade programmes. As I’ve alluded to earlier, the NTA needs to identify and support institutions to provide Wholesale and Retail courses, especially in the regions of Omuashi, Ohanguena, Otjozondjupa, Khomas and Oshana.

What more can you share with us?

I would like to call on all stakeholders in our sector to continue supporting the NTA and our ISC in addressing the challenges we face. Furthermore, we are encouraged by the recent good work the NTA has been doing in promoting technical and vocational careers and we call on the organisation to take this message to schools in all corners of the country, and to encourage learners to consider such career options.

We’ve also observed a need to better engage VET Levy employers and to share more information about this programme, and how it works, especially as far as it pertains to the administration of the Employer Training Grant.
INDUSTRY FORA REVEAL OCCUPATION TRENDS AND GAPS

A recent round of industry-specific discussion fora, spearheaded by the Research and Planning Division in collaboration with the NTA’s ten Industry Skills Committees, has revealed a number of new occupation trends and gaps. Speaking to The Stakeholder, Research and Planning Manager, Indongo Indongo said the main purpose of the sessions was to not only expose a wider audience to the NTA and its activities, but to also generate intelligence insofar as it pertains to skills requirements and trends. “At the same time, the meetings also served as a platform to expose training institutions to the relevant industry sectors and to encourage them to network and collaborate”, he added.

According to Indongo, the NTA now needs to act on the new and emerging occupational trends identified during the discussion and feedback sessions. “Training is all about industry-currency and relevance. Many of these areas cut across industries and include fields such as Information Management; Automation; Financial Management; Marketing; and Soft Skills Development. There’s an expectation that we now need to align ourselves accordingly, especially as far as our prioritisation of funding and programme development are concerned”, he highlighted.

Thanking the Industry Skills Committees for their support and participation in the series of meetings, Indongo expressed hope that future sessions will be better attended. “Attendance and participation remain of concern. Some sectors such as the Fisheries and Maritime sector and the Post and Telecommunications sector responded well, while attendance from other sectors such as Mining and Manufacturing was not very good”, he concluded.

International VET Opinion Embracing Innovative Strategies in Rebranding TVET in Ghana

The rebranding of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to make it attractive to the youth is a topical, though not a new, issue in Ghana.

TVET is widely perceived as a preserve for dropouts or underperforming students. In fact, less than 5% of secondary and post-secondary students enroll into TVET. Furthermore, the 2014 Ghana Living Standards Survey puts the labour underutilisation rate for 15-35 year olds at 42.6%. Reasons for this vary, but a key factor is the lack of employable graduate skills as our educational system remains more academic than vocational skills-oriented and does not provide the skills required for Ghanaian industrial growth. Equipping the youth with employable skills encourages the creation of employment and prosperity. Skills that are essential prerequisites of the growing economy; skills that are highly marketable; skills that enhance productivity; and skills that lead to economic prosperity.

Rebranding TVET and making it an attractive option for the youth is challenging, however, because of largely outdated curricula, ineffective modes of delivery and accompanying low graduate incomes. The Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), through the Ghana Skills and Technology Development Project has been supporting training institutions like the Ghana Technology University College and ZEPTO (a local television manufacturer), just to mention a few, to develop competency-based training modules in innovative TVET disciplines like the repair and maintenance of LED TVs, iPads, laptops and other gadgets. The development of such modules has facilitated the training of thousands of youth in hardware, software and networking required in fixing these gadgets.

Similar examples exist in the renewable energy sector where COTVET has supported the development of an innovative training module that equips the youth with skills relevant for the installation and maintenance of solar panels. Over a thousand people have so far been trained across the country.

Such short-term skills-oriented marketable training programmes are attractive to the youth who readily engage with the market. These innovative skills development interventions with potential of immediate income can also be seen as one way of attracting the youth into TVET for the purpose of employment, wealth creation and prosperity. It is innovative and responsive in the sense that it equips one with skills that hitherto would have taken two to three years to acquire or skills that were not available for instruction in any training institute in Ghana. This novelty has been driven by the policy initiative being championed by COTVET to align all TVET and skills development with the concept of Competency-Based Education and Training. This case amplifies how developing short term competency-based, innovative and market-led training modules can help change the perception and patronage of TVET among the youth, thereby increasing potential for job, wealth creation and prosperity.

This notwithstanding, the need to scale up such modules in all training institutions nationally, provide relevant instructional equipment, train trainers, improve and adopt competency-based assessments and integrate such innovative modules onto the National TVET qualification framework remain challenging hurdles to clear.

This article was written by Sebastian Deh, Executive Director of the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), Ghana.

The long serving Centre Manager of the Ongwediva-based, Valombola Vocational Training Centre, Titus Malangu called an end to an illustrious career, when he retired in May, this year.

At a farewell ceremony held at Ongwediva, Chief Operations Officer, Richwell Lukonga described Malangu as a selfless and humble servant of the VET sector. “You are a true veteran who have taught us how to climb the ladder through dedication, commitment and hard work; and by sharing your passion for empowering the youth as the leaders of tomorrow, with technical and vocational skills”, Lukonga said.

He added that Malangu’s legacy would continue to inspire others in the VET fraternity to continue to do their utmost to secure the future of the Namibian child.

“On behalf of the NTA and all the VTCs under our supervision, I would like to thank Mr. Titus Malangu for his dedication, commitment and sacrifice of 23 years to the VET sector. Without him, we could have never gotten to where we are today. Mr. Malangu, we could never repay you for your sacrifice. We wish you a very healthy, wealthy and stealthy post-retirement life”, Lukonga said.

During his tenure, Malangu has been instrumental in the establishment of key partnerships aimed at improving the quality of training delivery at Valombola VTC. Through networking with donors, notably the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany and Books Aid International, he also established a library and resource centre. Malangu is also credited for the key role he played in the introduction of a wide array of short courses at Valombola VTC, aimed at empowering the wider community with relevant and current business skills.

He has also been a founding member of other training institutions, including DAPP VTC, Ondangwa COSDEC and Oshikuku VTC.

In his retirement message, Malangu thanked the NTA and the VET fraternity at large for the support given him throughout his illustrious career. He also called on his counterparts at other VTCs to continue doing their utmost in ensuring that their trainees benefit from quality training, at all times.

Hinandjovo Muashekele, who was the Eenhana VTC Manager, takes over from Malangu. In turn, Eenhana VTC’s Head of Career Programmes, Isak Ndipwashimwe takes over from Muashekele in an acting capacity.

Meanwhile, NTA CEO, Jerry Beukes has also reassigned other employees in the Operations Department. Mariane Hará-Gaes now serves as Manager: VET Curriculum Implementation, taking over from Ernst Eixab, who has been reassigned as Acting Gobabis VTC Manager.

Senior Assessment Officer and Recognition of Prior Learning Coordinator, Moses Tjiirare takes over from Hará-Gaes as Acting Manager: Assessment and Certification. Eenhana VTC Plumbing Trainer, Albina Ususki is now that institution’s new Head of Career Programmes, albeit in an acting capacity.

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The operation to promote and enhance skills among young Africans has been highlighted at the inaugural “International Skills Excellence Forum” which was held from 2 to 5 May, 2017 in Livingstone, Zambia.

Key stakeholders from education, industry, and government in Africa visited the conference and mini skills competition, which showcased the importance of skills for the career prospects of the continent’s youth. WorldSkills also held its Board of Directors meeting in Africa for the first time.

Given the presence of the WorldSkills Board of Directors, the participants, including Zambia’s Minister and Permanent Secretary of Higher Education, had the opportunity to learn about WorldSkills and its impact on the global and national levels.

David Chakonta, the Director General of Zambia’s Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) – the parent institution for WorldSkills Zambia - said the highlight of forum was the way it brought together local and international stakeholders who advocate for the skills of excellence. “The Competition went very well, and a memorable highlight was that the students excelling in skills were being able to personally shake hands with Simon Bartley, President of WorldSkills, and the Minister of Higher Education, Nkandu Luo”, he noted.

At the same event, WorldSkills International Vice President for Special Affairs, San-Quei Lin heaped praise on Zambia for being very proactive in improving the country’s Technical and Vocational Education and Training system and raising skills standards. Lin also stressed the ‘Skills Development in Africa’ project as one of the top priorities within WorldSkills’ Vision 2025 Strategy. Its focus is on improving skills among all young African men and women, rather than just increasing the numbers of African Members of WorldSkills”, he said.

Francis Mwape, Technical Delegate of WorldSkills Zambia, said his country, as a young Member of the WorldSkills family was honoured by the grand historical opportunity by the Board of Directors of WorldSkills to host the first Board meeting on the continent of Africa. “The event has given our partners impetus to invest in smart partnerships with stakeholders in the VET sector to enhance opportunities for the youth in terms of productivity, employability, and innovation”, he noted.

Other ongoing projects that are part of Skills Development in Africa, include ‘Skills on the Move’, a programme where WorldSkills Champions and Experts pass on their knowledge to local trainers, and skills competitions that profile the opportunities for young people in skilled careers. These have been established in Côte d’Ivoire, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia.

The Okakarara Vocational Training Centre invites the public to share in the celebration of its 40th anniversary. Come one, come all and let’s celebrate!

Dates: 07th and 08th July 2017
Place: Okakarara Vocational Training Centre

For more info, contact us at 067-317069

Official: Manasseh Mbusi, NTA CEO

Trailblazing Valombola VTC Manager Retires

WorldSkills First Board Meeting in Africa

Okakarara Vocational Training Centre 40th Anniversary Celebration
The NTA’s ‘Live Your Passion’ advocacy campaign, implemented in partnership with the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and the New Era newspaper, has been described as a huge success.

The Stakeholder sat down with the NTA’s Public Relations, Marketing and Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Mornay Louw (photo) to share his insights into this campaign.

SH: The campaign had as a key objective the challenging of negative stereotypes associated with technical and vocational career options. In your opinion, did you succeed in this regard?

ML: It’s never easy overturning perception, especially not in the Namibian socio-economic context, where technical and vocational career options are still frowned upon as dirty, low-paying and low-status options. We agreed, from the onset, that only through sustained awareness over time, we would be able to tackle this challenge and overturn this unfair stereotyping of VET. Not in the wildest dreams did we imagine such early success. But, it is important that we sustain this message over time, otherwise we risk losing out on all the good work we’ve done.

SH: The campaign had as a key objective the challenging of negative stereotypes associated with technical and vocational career options. In your opinion, did you succeed in this regard?

ML: In my view, ‘Live Your Passion’ became popular, because it focused on real Namibian stories. Our viewers and readers could relate to all of the individuals we profiled. These were true and inspiring stories of ordinary Namibians who overcame many obstacles and defied all odds in establishing themselves as successful VET practitioners, and who are today making a difference in the lives of others - A truly multi-platform Namibian campaign, by Namibians, for Namibians, about Namibians.

SH: The campaign, which championed 24 vocational and technical career practitioners as ‘ambassadors’ of VET, has also been very successful on social media platforms. Is social media the way to go?

ML: To date, the campaign has generated more than 48-thousand followers on Facebook, while the ‘Live Your Passion’ YouTube channel has generated more than 250-thousand views. And these numbers are growing, as we speak.

The response on our social media platforms has indeed been overwhelming. And it confirmed our initial inking that to effectively reach out to young Namibians, you need to employ those media platforms, they, as a younger audience prefer, namely television and social media.

It took us a couple of weeks to create a ‘buzz’ on these platforms, and from thereon, we didn’t have to do much. Our followers became our brand ambassadors. They started to share our posts in their own digital communities, and it just snowballed from thereon.

SH: How has the NTA’s industry stakeholders responded to the campaign?

ML: The responses we’ve been getting from our industry stakeholders have been very encouraging. Some recognise the NTA for the initiative and the excellent production quality, whereas others commend us for promoting Namibian industries as responsible employers who invest significantly in the training and upskilling of young Namibians.

Some employer umbrella bodies are also approaching us seeking permission to use the material in supporting their own career awareness and sensitisation activities. We are gladly acceding to such requests. At the end of the day, the more partners we have in sharing this important message, the better!

SH: How would you describe the public-public partnership with your two implementation partners, the NBC and New Era?

ML: The NTA has a multi-faceted mandate, of which advocacy about technical and vocational careers, is a key part. Our partnership with these two public media houses was all about synergy between our respective mandates - We have an advocacy message to share and they have a responsibility to inform and educate the Namibian public.

I think ‘Live Your Passion’ sets a benchmark for other public enterprises to aspire towards and to also partner with the NBC and New Era in reaching out to their stakeholders and building brand equity. In the case of ‘Live Your Passion’, it was a true win-win for all parties concerned: The NTA benefitted from the increased public awareness and enhanced brand equity, whereas NBC and New Era were able to share interesting and inspiring local content with their respective audiences. In fact, colleagues at the NBC informed me that their viewers are already enquiring about ‘Live Your Passion’ Season Two.

SH: What is next for the campaign?

ML: We’re now entering another exciting phase under which we are consolidating all video content on DVDs and all print content into booklets. We plan to engage the Ministry of Basic Education, Arts and Culture to become our distribution partner in handing over copies to all schools in the country, primary and secondary. We also plan to embark on a national school ‘roadshow’ to share copies with regional and community libraries, constituency offices and non-governmental organisations. We’re also looking into developing a comprehensive web portal as a platform where all content will be accessible to schools and the general public.

SH: Tell us about the theme song.

ML: Inspiring and catchy! Local artist, Arthur ‘Damara Dik Ding’ Nanub composed the song and roped in singers, Abel ‘Oompie’ Kavari and Patterson ‘Pepi’ van Wyk, who came up with the lyrics. We plan to soon produce a music video and to release the song on the airwaves. Music, too, can be a very effective marketing medium.

SH: Any final message?

ML: Nothing else, but to thank our stakeholders for their support. It is their support that has made it a success. At the same time, I also call on our industry and donor partners to become active advocates for technical and vocational careers. Marketing campaigns are expensive to implement and our industry and donor partners need to join the fray by sponsoring some of our activities. The NTA cannot do this work alone.

Manager: Public Relations, Marketing & Stakeholder Engagement
Mornay Louw

‘LIVE YOUR PASSION’ ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN CHALLENGES NEGATIVE SOCIETAL PERCEPTIONS ON VET

LIVE YOUR PASSION
PICTURE FOCUS
Around & About the VET Scene

Newly Appointed
New Board Member, Michelle van Wyk smiling for the camera

Skilled Competitor
Ellis Tjaeverua a Carpentry Competitor in the WorldSkills Namibia team to compete in Abu Dhabi in October

VET Partnership
CEO, Jerry Beukes shaking hands with his counterpart of South Africa’s Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA), Yvonne Mbane

Goodbye Colleague
Zambezi VTC Manager, Richard Kambinda speaking at the farewell function for retired Valombola VTC Manager, Titus Malangu

Colleagues & Friends
Ester Ashilungu, Monica Mattheus and Rebekka Shankondjove posing for a group picture at NTA Village

Exciting Opportunity
Isak Ndipwashimwe is now the Acting Eenhana VTC Manager

Advisory Council
COO, Richwell Lukonga, Deputy Board Chairperson, Loide Shaanika, CEO Jerry Beukes and Nakayale VTC Manager Erick Nenghwanya pictured with members of that centre’s Advisory Council

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