

# A strategy for development grounded in political and economic stability, good health care, education and employment

## INTERVIEW

### Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of Namibia

In 2011, Namibia celebrated 21 years as an independent nation. As a relatively young country, it is appropriate that its national priorities are geared towards ensuring a better future for its young people, especially through education and the provision of new job opportunities. In this exclusive interview with *Global*, President Hifikepunye Pohamba outlines his government's principal values and ambitions

**Global: Namibia has consistently scored highly in African indices of governance. Can you say how you define good governance and what are Namibia's biggest successes in this regard?**

**President Pohamba:** At independence, the Swapo [South West African People's Organisation] government inherited a social service system that was ethnically and racially fragmented. We have made great efforts to entrench peace and stability, and worked hard to maintain political and economic stability as a prerequisite for socio-economic development. We have estab-

lished institutions of checks and balances, such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Ombudsman.

The government has succeeded in increasing access to social services such as health, education, electricity, water and sanitation. We have adopted primary health care as a guiding policy to ensure health care for all. Equally, education receives the highest percentage of our national budget allocation. We have made significant progress in making primary education for all a reality, with over 95 percent of our children attending school. We have also

built development infrastructure in urban centres [and] industrial parks in rural areas to enhance commercialisation and industrialisation. Our civil society has grown both in visibility and influence. The printed media in Namibia are mostly privately owned, operating in a free and competitive environment.

Besides all these, the process of decision-making and implementation is transparent, and this is good governance.

**How does your government view the current level of political participation by Namibian**



**citizens? Do you think the system adequately protects the interests of both ethnic and political minorities?**

The active participation of Namibia citizens is essential in safeguarding democracy and achieving sustainable socio-economic development. In Namibia, public participation is provided for by our constitution, and it entails not just rights to vote, but the formulation, adoption and implementation of public policy programmes and projects, free from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, tribe, religion and gender.

**Do you expect to see a smooth and transparent transfer of power to your successor when you step down at the end of your presidential term in 2014/2015?**

Swapo has a proud history of holding free and fair elections. Our electoral college is well established. We have a strong intra-party democracy which provides for the election of party leaders in a democratic way. This includes the choice of those who will be nominated as candidates for presidential elections. We will continue to build on the successes we have recorded since the party brought freedom and independence to our country.

**Namibia has a large youth population, growing up in peace, despite the poverty that many people endure. What is your advice to Namibia's young people?**

Work and study hard and continue to engage in constructive activities, while staying away from the abuse of drugs and other anti-social behaviour. Education and training are cardinal to our youth, as the future leaders of our country. I therefore encourage them to study hard in science subjects – to become engineers, mathematicians, doctors, geologists, biologists and scientists who are capable of implementing our government programmes.

**Thanks to its enormous subsoil wealth, Namibia is heavily dependent economically on the mining industry. Do you expect to see greater local processing of these minerals in future?**



President Hifikepunye Pohamba

To counter dependency on our natural resources base, the government has increased its public expenditure. A large part of this goes to the development budget, targeting priority sectors to reduce unemployment and add value to our raw materials. We are cognisant of the fact that mining minerals and exporting them without local value-adding is a lopsided economic trend, and we are therefore exploring factors relating to the development of the primary industries, to act as catalysts for secondary and tertiary industry development. Local value-adding will not only add to industrialisation but also to employment creation and skills development.

**In view of Namibia's high levels of unemployment, does the government have plans for the creation of sustainable jobs? What skills are most relevant to the country's future?**

The application of technical knowledge is important for the socio-economic development of our country. This implies the establishment of institutions of higher learning as a source of scientific and technical skills to feed our primary, secondary and tertiary industries.

This financial year, we have introduced the Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth, aiming at stimulating growth in a number of targeted sectors, which in turn will create a conducive environment

for long-term investment.

Over the next three years, the government will spend NAD9 billion on the agriculture, tourism, transport and housing sectors, with the specific purpose of creating new employment opportunities. Our effort is therefore geared towards promoting economic growth and combating inequality and unemployment.

**How do you see Namibia's political and economic relationship with China evolving in coming years? Are you happy with the growing role of Chinese citizens in the economy and do you feel that the relationship is largely beneficial to Namibia over the longer term?**

China is one of the countries that supported Namibia during the liberation struggle and after independence, as well as one of the first countries that established diplomatic relations with Namibia. Since then our two countries continue to enjoy excellent relations in many fields [and] our trade has increased two-fold. We will continue to work together under the framework of the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation. We will continue to enhance such cooperation, which is based on mutual benefit and respect.

**Are you happy with the development of cooperation with Namibia's key neighbours: South Africa, Botswana and Angola? Do you expect to see closer cooperation in future through the good offices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other organisations?**

We have long-standing relations and continue to enjoy excellent cooperation culturally, politically and economically. As SADC member states, we are committed to harmonising key issues such as the provision of infrastructure, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers, competition policy, transport and trade, fighting corruption and access to finance. We will continue strengthening our mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the direction and pace of implementing our developmental goals. ●

# Shaping Economies for Better Living

**Groot Property Group (Pty) Ltd (GPG)** is a rapid industrial development and foreign direct investment management start-up company which was incorporated and registered in Namibia in October 2010. The Groot Group focuses on implementing applied neuroeconomics and system-dynamics solutions to efficiently explore, develop and manage self-sustained ecosystems for the slow-developing and stagnant economies of the world.

The Company's prime focus is to explore, develop and manage industrial ecosystems specifically designed to help improve and fast-track the reduction of poverty and unemployment, address income inequalities, increase economic outputs, improve the quality of life and strengthen the performance, growth and development of national economies.

GPG's initial multifarious development is Groot Town Center (GTC), an upscale community to be anchored by diverse industries to create a powerful, perpetual self-sustained economic ecosystem in Namibia.

## About Groot Town Center

Groot Town Center is being developed on 32,000 acres near Etosha National Park in the Kunene Region of Namibia. GTC will occupy more than 185,800 m<sup>2</sup> of exceptional interior shopping mall and entertainment space with an upper-class town centre featuring pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, open-air gathering spaces, fountains, children's parks, theme parks and more than 2,100 best-in-class retailers, entertainment, medical facilities, educational institutions, luxury hotels, fine dining restaurants, office spaces and residential properties.

The GTC Ecosystem comprises more than 60 interlocking industrial projects ranging from transportation infrastructure, power plants, water and waste facilities and housing developments to a research institute and health centre. All projects are planned to be developed in different regions of Namibia based on the comparative advantages of the regions. The total budget for the planning, development, engineering and construction of Groot Town Center is US\$800 million (N\$5.8 billion).

With the assistance of foreign partners and investors the development of the Groot Town Center ecosystem is tantamount to accelerating Namibia's Vision 2030 by addressing most of the current socio-economic issues within 5 years of project implementation.

Learn more about Groot Property Group at [www.grootgroup.com](http://www.grootgroup.com) and feel free to contact Peter Gwarada, CEO of Groot Property Group at **+264 81 473 8128**, or email [peter@grootgroup.com](mailto:peter@grootgroup.com).

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# Coming of age



After 21 years of independence, Namibia has healthy democratic institutions, even if broad-based development is still proving elusive

**Gwen Lister in Windhoek**

Very few events in the intervening two decades have succeeded in overshadowing the euphoria that accompanied Namibia's independence in 1990. This was the moment when a population of less than two million was finally freed from over a century of colonial rule after 24 difficult years of armed struggle. Namibians could at last prepare to embark on a new future with a new democratic dispensation, a progressive constitution and an inalienable bill of rights.

Self-determination having been realised – with UN-supervised elections leading to victory for the South West Africa People's Organisation (Swapo) – most Namibians believed the new era would bring peace, equality, justice and human rights. They hoped for a break with their apartheid past, as well as a better life for those who had suffered most. The big question was whether Namibia could become what the founding President Sam Nujoma had hoped for when he was interviewed several years earlier – the “first African success story”. But freedom came with no easy answers. While there have clearly been positive developments in



terms of the country's freedom and democracy – which were once only very dim and distant dreams – reality bites hard. Despite the best of intentions, the utopian dream that accompanied independence has not yet materialised for a broad section of the population.

Peace was the most immediate post-independence gain, although an aborted secessionist attempt in the north-eastern Caprivi Region in the 1990s briefly disturbed the tranquillity. But despite a new-found sense of democracy, as well as a vibrant and plu-

ralistic media, civil society was and remains weak and often ineffective as Swapo's dominance has increased at the polls over the ensuing years. Even the best intentions of the Swapo government haven't always had the desired effect.

In an attempt to heal the deep societal divisions resulting from the war, the new government tried to take an inclusive approach towards the multiplicity of ethnic groups and to put into effect the ‘One Namibia, One Nation’ slogan adopted during the years of struggle. Yet, despite former President Nujoma's policy of reconciliation, divisions still run deep and resentments continue to simmer.

There are those who blame the apartheid legacy for Namibia's post-independence difficulties. Others are more concerned about the problem of entitlement, which has led to a policy of ‘jobs for comrades’, as well as the elite benefiting from past and current land redistribution and resettlement initiatives.

Substantially more Namibians have had access to education since independence, but policy-makers have been forced to re-think the current system, which seems to be failing. Teaching standards are falling and examination results continue to disappoint year upon year. A recent government study revealing that some 98 percent of teachers are not proficient in the English language has added to the disquiet.

Some of the positive gains of independence ►



Photo: UN Photo (John Isaac)

Namibia, with the support of the UN, finally gained its independence from South Africa in 1990

► have also largely been overshadowed by high levels of unemployment. Although the figure is under dispute, unemployment has been estimated at over 50 percent, affecting young people in particular. This has contributed to the widening gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’. And corruption has not been successfully contained by President Hifikepunye Pohamba, despite a ‘zero tolerance’ campaign and the appointment of an independent Anti-Corruption Commission. It is widely accepted that lack of political will combined with the politics of patronage are exacerbating the problem.

Swapo’s simple majority win in 1990 has consolidated over the two decades since independence into a dominant two-thirds majority, while opposition parties remain fragmented and weak – giving voters few options when they go to the polls. The opposition parties are at times their own worst enemies, but Swapo has tended to display a degree of intolerance towards political

opposition, which is at odds with the constitutional commitment to pluralism. In view of this, it is perhaps not surprising that Swapo has largely relinquished the broad-based consultative approach that it adopted shortly after independence, and this in turn has resulted in strong feelings of marginalisation among other groups.

Even if the democratic commitment remains fragile, the so-called ‘born-frees’ (those people born after independence) are becoming increasingly vocal and more active in the debate over the country’s future, especially in the growing adherence to new social media. Free speech is now more deeply entrenched and there are a number of vibrant public discussion platforms, including SMS pages in sections of the print media, radio phone-in programmes and, to a more limited extent, Facebook and Twitter. People use these media with alacrity, and this has largely helped dissipate what was generally known as the ‘fear factor’ –

**VIEWPOINT**

**Victoria Kangombe, advertising copywriter**

Although I am a voter, I’ve also not participated in the last elections. I simply didn’t see the need to vote last time around.



I feel I can be my own change right now. I’m in a better position to make a difference in my immediate surroundings, between my family and friends. It’s like, if I were to wait for some elected official to bring the change I’m looking for, I’ll be waiting a long time around here.

As far as support for the leadership, I can’t say I have very much at present, because they don’t walk the talk. They say one thing and do the next. They say they’re taking care of people, but they’re not – not until an article appears on the front page of the newspaper, in which case things become emergencies and get attended to.

There’s just no forward planning. It’s all reactionary. And that’s no way to go about it.

a phenomenon that has lingered since the apartheid era.

While the promised fruits of independence may not yet have reached the broad spectrum of the population, and the government’s success in attracting investment has not paid much in terms of long-term dividends, there have been plenty of immediate and valuable gains. There are now regular elections – even if inefficiencies on the part of the Electoral Commission of Namibia have sometimes led to recounts and court challenges. There is much wider access to schooling. Government benefits are available for ex-combatants and war orphans, and other vulnerable groups. And the rule of law has been successfully entrenched, with the courts at times being outspoken, although they remain visibly understaffed.

Namibia may not yet have been united into ‘One Namibia, One Nation’ as the pre-independence clarion call promised, but it remains firmly on the path to consolidating its hard-won democracy. ●

Gwen Lister edited *The Namibian* newspaper for 26 years until she handed over to a new editor in October 2011; she is a dedicated press freedom activist

**VIEWPOINT**

**Bertranne Maritz, human resources manager**

While in general I don’t have a problem with the government of the day, I can’t say I agree with what I’ll call all this ‘cut-and-paste’ legislation they keep introducing and enforcing upon us. Look at laws like the Communication Bill, the Combating the Abuse of Drugs Bill. Who are these things meant to be benefiting?

I’d be surprised if any member of parliament, after coming from their international conventions and calling for these laws, actually checked whether these

things go together with our constitution. Do they even consult our constitution before going into the house and proposing laws that give minimum prison sentences of 20 years for petty crimes, and to intercept private communication – to invade our privacy.

That’s my only trouble with our system at present.



# How to share the wealth

Although investors are attracted by Namibia's minerals and good economic management, the country is still struggling to overcome the challenges of widespread poverty and unemployment

## Tom Minney in Windhoek

International bond investors are betting on Namibia. In October, the government took advantage of a brief lull in the Eurozone debt crisis and launched a US\$500 million ten-year, hard-currency 5.5 percent Eurobond. The offer was five-and-a-half times oversubscribed as asset managers and others clamoured for the bonds. They were drawn by Namibia's strong record of prudent economic management, its rising diamond revenues and the big increases expected in uranium output over the coming years. There is even excitement over offshore oil, with British, Brazilian and other companies exploring, although at the time of writing there are still no commercial finds.

Namibia's economy is closely tied to the well-managed South African economy, its major trading partner, with the Namibia

**Investors have been drawn by Namibia's prudent economic management, its rising diamond revenues and the big increases currently expected in uranium output**

dollar currency linked one-for-one with the rand. Inflation and interest rates follow those of its giant neighbour, although Namibia's growth rates have generally been higher. The economy averaged 6.3 percent growth a year during 2004–08 before contracting by 0.4 percent in 2009 after the world economy collapsed and mining output was slashed, but bounced back to 6.6 percent growth in 2010. Between 2011 and 2014, finance minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila expects growth to average 5.3 percent.

Like South Africa, Namibia is still fighting poverty and unemployment. The problem is structural in that while Namibia's mines drive exports and pay taxes, they create less than 3 percent of the jobs, according to a recent government survey. At

independence, Namibia had the highest disparity of income in the world and, despite good progress, there is still far to go. In 1993/94, average income for the bottom 20 percent of the population was US\$167 compared to \$9,396 for the top 20 percent, but by 2009/10 the poorest 20 percent averaged \$1,102 and the richest \$10,557. The government has been creating jobs in the

90,000-strong civil service, but says unemployment stands at 51 percent and is spending billions to tackle it (see box).

Manufactured goods, such as processed meat and fish, beverages, copper and zinc, rose as a share of total exports from 38 percent in 2000 to 54 percent in 2010, despite some difficulties from unfair dumping by South African competitors. The NAD2.5 ▶



An exquisite and unique landscape draws in tourists, making the industry a reliable economic mainstay

## Key data

- **Population:** 2,171,000 (2009)
- **Ethnic groups:** Ovambo and Kavango constitute around 60%; other groups include Herero, Damara, Nama, Caprivians, San, Basters, Coloureds and Whites
- **Literacy:** 88 percent
- **Life expectancy:** 62 years
- **Capital:** Windhoek (pop: 306,100)
- **Land Area:** 824,269 km<sup>2</sup>
- **GNI:** US\$9.3 billion (2009)
- **GNI per capita:** US\$4,270
- **Main industries:** Mining, mineral processing, fish processing, tourism

► billion, ultra-modern Ohorongo cement plant, majority owned by Germany's Schwenk, opened in February 2011 and is able to produce 700,000 tonnes a year.

Farming in much of the country takes place on giant ranches on lands too dry for rain-fed crops, with the top-quality beef and cattle exported. Under apartheid, black farmers were forced on to marginal lands while some 4,000 whites owned commercial farms on 44 percent of the land. After independence, efforts to encourage more black Namibians into commercial farming scored some successes, but badly resourced resettlement for poor farmers has also degraded some farms. Plans to create ownership rights for at least 15,000 landowners in the northern communal areas by 2015 could transform many rural livelihoods, particularly benefiting women, bringing better management and productivity.

Transport is another route to growth. Namibia's ports are relatively efficient, closer to key markets than those further south, and less prone to theft than those in Angola. There are plans to invest NAD2 billion in transport links through Walvis Bay port and proposals for a 1,500-km Trans-Kalahari rail line (costing \$5–9 billion) to the port from South Africa's Waterberg coalfields and new mines in Botswana. Road corridors are also being upgraded and a railway will lead to the Angolan border.

Namibia is a top tourism destination and the sector offers growth and rural jobs. The Millennium Challenge Account (the US development aid fund set up by the Bush administration in 2004) is investing \$66.5 million and says tourism can increase jobs from 77,000 to 129,000. Breathtaking scenery and ease of operation and access

make Namibia a top destination for films, including documentaries and features such as *Skeleton Coast*, *10,000 BC* and *Flight of the Phoenix*.

Development indicators are improving as the HIV/AIDS pandemic is tackled. Average life expectancy at birth fell from 62 years in 1991 to 49 years in 2001, but has since climbed back to 51.6 years by 2008,

## State-owned enterprises still dominate many sectors. Some, like electricity company Nampower, are expanding their operations, but others suck taxpayers' cash

according to the government. Latest figures (2009) suggest that 180,000 Namibians are infected with HIV, and some 86,000 receive anti-retroviral therapy, about 85 percent of the adults who need the life-prolonging treatment. This is subsidised by \$100 million a year from the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) but

donor funding for HIV could reduce over 2012–2015.

State-owned enterprises still dominate many sectors. Some are doing well, such as electricity parastatal Nampower, which is successfully expanding its operations, but others, like Air Namibia, continue to suck taxpayers' cash. Government spending is increasing fast since the 2009 global crisis. After years of budget surplus and debt down to 15 percent of GDP in 2009, spending for 2011/2012 is up 38 percent compared to the previous year and the budget deficit is set to soar to 10.7 percent of GDP. By 2013/14, public debt is forecast to reach nearly 35 percent of GDP, increasing the debt service burden. An IMF mission in November warned that unless the deficit is cut in the medium term, debt will climb.

The good news is that Namibia is ranked sixth in Sub-Saharan Africa in ease of doing business, it is peaceful, crime is relatively low and the climate is very pleasant, with beautiful nature, good roads and drinkable water – factors that enhance its attraction for those enthusiastic investors. ●

Tom Minney is an economic analyst specialising in African markets

## A grand plan for new jobs

The government is promising new employment opportunities for over 100,000 Namibians – the challenge will be to make jobs sustainable

With unemployment reported at over 51 percent of Namibia's 720,000 potential workers, the Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth (TIPEEG) focuses on jobs and growth in agriculture, transport, tourism, housing, sanitation and public works. Over the next three financial years (2011/12–2013/14), it is budgeted at NAD18.7 billion, including public works and investment by state-owned enterprises.

President Hifikepune Pohamba acknowledges that previous government efforts were ineffective, saying: "The sad truth is that the unemployment rate continued to escalate." TIPEEG is expected to create 104,000 direct and indirect jobs (26,200 in agriculture, 33,200 in transport, 35,100 in housing and sanitation and 10,000 in tourism), plus another 82,000 through public works programmes.

Local economist Robin Sherbourne wonders if the government will be able to spend so much efficiently and questions the rationale. "If one looks at the projects included in the TIPEEG spending programme and asks 'Will they lead to sustainable economic and employment growth over the long term?' The answer is generally 'Not really,'" he says, "since the vast majority of projects involve government buildings and social infrastructure."

Local economists disagree on the unemployment figures. Martin Mwinga says the 51 percent unemployment rate (based on the 2008 National Labour Force survey) underestimated the number employed in subsistence farming. He puts unemployment at 28 percent, comparable to other Sub-Saharan countries, while others guess the true rate is somewhere in between.

# Mining the hotspots

Foreign investors are lured by new projects in a wide range of minerals, while China is increasingly looking to Namibia to fuel its burgeoning nuclear industry, writes **Roger Murray**

In its buoyant mining sector, Namibia tries to strike a balance between providing a conducive and competitive environment for foreign direct investment (FDI) and winning an appropriate revenue share for the government. This approach, combined with political stability since independence and the availability of good physical infrastructure, has served the country well and has helped overcome constraints such as the shortage of skilled labour.

Unlike most other resource-rich countries in Africa, Namibia has several products in its mix. Uranium and diamonds accounted for 33 percent of total exports in 2010, with a further 15 percent contributed by refined zinc, smelted copper, gold, zinc and lead concentrates, and fluorspar. FDI inflows, mainly to the mining sector, more than doubled from US\$348 million in 2005 to \$858 million in 2010, and the project pipeline is now worth over \$3billion – primarily for uranium but also for diamonds, gold, manganese, marine phosphates and rare earth elements.

Foreign ownership of mining operations continues, with China and India increasingly coming to the fore. Most mines are at present majority owned by Australian, EU and South African firms, but Anglo American sold the Skorpion zinc mine and refinery to India's Vedanta Resources at the end of 2010 and South Africa's Exxaro also has plans to sell its 50 percent stake in the Rosh Pinah lead-zinc mine.

China is looking to Namibia's new uranium mines to supply its expanding fleet of nuclear power plants and it is confident of acquiring UK-based Kalahari Minerals, which owns 43 percent of Australia's Extract Resources, the developer of the large-scale yellowcake (U3O8) project at Husab.

The Namibian government is expected to shortly grant mining licences for the planned uranium mines at Husab and Etango; the project developers envisage production starting at both sites by 2014. With the Trekkopje mine, which France's Areva currently intends to bring fully on line in 2013, these would treble Namibia's current U3O8 output to around 15,000 tonnes per year and propel it to become the second largest uranium producer in the world, be-



Namibia is rich in a wide range of different minerals

hind Kazakhstan. Despite recent setbacks in confidence in nuclear power, new reactors continue to be built and more are planned in China and other Asian countries. If all goes to plan, the Husab mine alone could provide

## The government has reached consensus with the mining industry on a planned package of new and increased taxes, deferring a new levy on mineral exports

1,100 permanent jobs and account for 20 percent of exports, with substantial contributions to government revenue as well.

In view of the strong rebound in the granting of exclusive exploration licences (EPLs) since 2009, an apparent shift in government policy towards nationalisation of the mining industry led to negative headlines in April 2011 when mines minister Isak Katali disclosed that the cabinet had declared diamonds, uranium, gold, copper, coal and rare earth elements to be “strategic

minerals” for which mining and exploration rights would be “exclusively” reserved for the state-owned Epangelo Mining Co.

The policy was clarified a month later after extensive lobbying by the Chamber of Mines, whose members include all operating mines and most exploration firms. Existing rights would follow the current procedures of the Mining Act, along with conversions of current EPLs into mining licences – with no role for Epangelo. One project involving Epangelo envisages only a 10 percent stake for the company, rising to a possible 20 percent if a mine is developed.

The government has also managed to reach a consensus with the mining industry on a planned package of new and increased taxes. A formula-based surcharge is to be introduced to capture extra revenue during better economic times, and a new levy on mineral exports was indefinitely deferred. Both sides are consulting on a new mining tax structure – designed to remain competitive and to ensure a greater and more stable revenue flow into government coffers. ●

Roger Murray reports on mining activities in Namibia and Botswana



# Namibian Institute of Mining and Technology

*Providing cost-effective and quality vocational education and training*



Head Office, Arandis



Aerial picture of NIMT

**The Namibian Institute of Mining and Technology (NIMT) is an autonomous entity governed by the NIMT Board of Trustees. NIMT is fully accredited by the Namibian Qualifications Authority (NQA) for both its vocational and theoretical tuition and training.**

Established as an independence gift to Namibia by Rössing Uranium Ltd (Rio Tinto) in 1991, NIMT was originally developed to train Namibians in the technical skills required by mining, engineering and other industries.

The objective of NIMT is to provide training in the theoretical, practical and technical skills necessary to enable Namibians to take up positions as artisans within the mining, engineering, building and civil industries.

In order to provide education and training where the majority of youth reside, NIMT has also opened the NIMT Northern Campus (NNC) in Tsumeb in 2007 and the NIMT Southern Campus (NSC) Keetmanshoop in 2009. The Main Campus and Head Office of NIMT is located in Arandis and is responsible for selection, financial and general administrative matters for all campuses. Training for the building trades, including plumbing, bricklaying, carpentry and clothing production, is provided at the third satellite campus, NIMT Building Trades (NBCT), established in 2000 on the other side of Arandis.

## Training is presently provided in:

- Fitting and Turning, including Machining: Arandis, Tsumeb and Keetmanshoop.
- Boiler/plating/welding: Arandis, Tsumeb and Keetmanshoop
- Diesel/Petrol Mechanics: Arandis, Tsumeb and Keetmanshoop
- Electrical: Arandis, Tsumeb and Keetmanshoop
- Instrumentation: Arandis

- Bricklaying/plastering: Arandis
- Carpentry/joinery: Arandis
- Plumbing/sheetmetalwork: Arandis
- Refrigeration/air-conditioning: Arandis
- Clothing production: Arandis
- Millwright (electrical): Tsumeb
- Autotronics: Tsumeb

Daily tuition – up to the Namibian Technical Certificate, Level III – is conducted in Mathematics, Engineering/Building Science, Engineering/Building/Structural Steel Drawing, Industrial Electronics and applicable Trade Theory. Supplementary subjects, which are conducted once a week, include First Aid, Safety Courses, Computer Literacy, Communications English, Entrepreneurial Skills/Business Management and Environmental Control.

Apprenticeships and Vocational Training are conducted over four years. The first through third years include a maximum of six months at NIMT and six months in the industry for on the job training and job attachment. The fourth year comprises ten months spent in the industry and two months at NIMT for final trade upgrading.



Mr EDG Mueller,  
Executive Director

[www.nimtnamibia.com](http://www.nimtnamibia.com)

# Poachers turned gamekeepers

A unique policy encouraging locals to help manage and conserve wildlife has produced good results, leading to increased animal numbers and greater revenues for communities

**Tom Minney**

When an upset cow elephant comes storming into the camp, everyone jumps for cover behind the bar. The elephant charges off again into the night with no harm done but, as we settle our nerves, the tense darkness reflects the potential for conflict as humans and wild animals learn to share territory.

Such chance encounters are becoming more frequent in Namibia: wildlife numbers have increased since independence and key species, such as rhino and elephant, are flourishing outside the game parks and regaining parts of their original ranges. Commercial farmers and subsistence herders are learning to share the habitat through a revolutionary policy of handing over control of wildlife and conservation to the local people.

Conservation has been part of Namibia since its birth in 1990. Article 95 of the independence constitution speaks of using the living natural resources on a sustainable basis, while the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act allows groups of community members to form so-called ‘conservancies’ – both for the purpose of conserving and using wildlife sustainably and as a means of earning revenues. “Conservancies are an effective way of addressing poverty in rural areas. Through them, community members have rights and duties with regard to the consumptive and non-consumptive use and sustainable management of game in conservancies,” explains Dr Kalumbi Shangula, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. “Through income generated from tourism [game watching], trophy hunting and selling of game meat, communities are in a position to distribute these benefits among themselves.”

By 2011, there were 65 registered conservancies reportedly covering 17 percent of the country, with another 15 applications pending. Donors like the World Wildlife Fund and USAID have supported the conservancies over 20 years and some are now self-sustaining.

The movement stems from the passion of pioneers like Garth Owen-Smith, who came to the arid Kunene region (then known as the Kaokoveld) in the 1970s, when local



Photo: Steve Felton

The San keep their culture and links to their environment alive. Conservancies have added business skills, modern conservation approaches and even chances to teach tourists about traditional skills.

populations and wildlife were under stress as a result of South African occupation and the ongoing liberation war. Indigenous Namibians were driven off commercial farming areas and on to marginal lands that could not support them. Hunting trips by white officials and poaching by soldiers, farmers and disenfranchised locals all combined to push many species towards extinction across the north-west.

Owen-Smith then established Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), which consulted local headmen. It turned out that communities did not want to be paid not to poach; they wanted to win back ownership of a valuable resource. In the turbulent situation, the headmen and IRDNC established de facto ownership, with traditional leaders appointing game guards who could move over hundreds of kilometres of territory and knew the ground well.

The conservancy system is part of a government-supported, nationwide conservation effort. Shangula cites some of the successes as the distribution of benefits among conservancy members and the increased numbers of game. In the 1980s, black rhi-

nos had been hunted almost to extinction but now there are more than 1,400 of them. From about 7,500 elephants in 1995, there are now at least 16,000, while cheetah numbers have doubled to 4,000.

A key challenge is building management skills, especially financial, among the rural population. “Efforts have been made to arrange skills training. Notwithstanding the challenges, most of the conservancies are performing very well,” said Shangula. Not all are yet viable, however, as some do not attract enough wildlife or tourism.

Conservancies can benefit communities by providing meat, incomes and partial compensation for wildlife damage, such as when cheetahs eat goats or elephants destroy water pipes. They also help make it easier to share space, by placing water points for elephants further from homes. Local people train for jobs in tourist resorts – as guides or making and selling traditional handicrafts – enabling them to stay in their rural areas. Conservancies also enhance skills and the enjoyment of nature, with many locals preferring to work as trackers or in conservation rather than moving to the cities. ●

# Rhythms of the city

The generation preceding the post-independence 'born-frees' is at last taking the entertainment industry seriously, giving it genuine local character while expanding its ambitions

## Denver Isaacs

It's a Friday night in Namibia's capital, Windhoek, and a packed theatre audience erupts with laughter before just as suddenly returning to silence. Pacing the stage is a well-known face with expressively bulging eyes and short, spiky dreadlocks. "Come to think of it, it must suck to be a celebrity in this place," the comedian continues into the microphone as a wave of sniggering anticipates his well-worn narrative of a famous local musician walking down a crowded Namibian street while his fellow citizens go out of their way to either avoid or whisperingly ridicule him. The audience shows their familiarity with the routine by roaring with laughter again.

It's all rather ironic, given that since initiating his regular stand-up performances in 2008, the jester himself, Slick the Dick (Onesmus Upindi), has joined the celebrity ranks of his fictitious musician and his contemporaries. Meanwhile, stand-up comedy (presented by Free Your Mind, a private company) and slam poetry performances (through Spoken Word Namibia) have become regular events.

When Namibia gained independence from its 'big brother' South Africa in 1990, the international community's hopes for the young nation were similar to those for its southern neighbour four years later. Namibia inherited the same fragmented population in the wake of apartheid and resistance – resulting in expectations that the youth of the day would usher in a new age of national identity and widespread wealth.

Fast forward to 2012, and at first glance these expectations have been reduced to little more than wishful thinking. Terms like 'future leaders' and 'youth' – which litter the ambiguous policy documents intended to steer youth development – have achieved mythical status. The government's biggest success may have been putting 95 percent of school-aged children into education but these efforts for the citizens of the future tell only half the story, given that youth unemployment now stands at 60 percent, and only 12 percent of school leavers go on to tertiary education.

It's the less credited entrepreneurs from the generation before the post-1990 'born-frees' who appear to have taken the wheel



Trial date • **04 NOV 2011** • 7.30PM for 8PM  
Venue: **National Theater of Namibia (NTN) Backstage**

Criminally funny – stand-up comedian Slick the Dick (aka Onesmus Upindi) has been drawing big crowds to his lively performances in Windhoek

in today's socialite-driven culture scene, especially in Windhoek. "Growing up, the only entertainment available was playing ball games in the location [residential neighbourhoods]," says local musician Daphne Willibard. "Or, if you were older, you may have been lucky and allowed to go to the matinee [dance clubs opened on

weekend afternoons]." As part of girl group Gal Level, Willibard has spent the last decade developing the duo's brand of Afro-pop music and collecting a host of international accolades, including Kora, MTV Base and Channel O music awards. But Gal Level is not the only success story.

The Dogg (Martin Morocky) and Gazza

## LEADING LIGHTS

### Tekla lita, aka Tequila, Afro-pop artist

Wowing local audiences with her soulful voice since 2004, songstress Tequila only released her first album, *Riding the Sunset*, in 2007. She spent the next three years collaborating with other Namibian artists and returned with solo album number two, *Golden Sunset*, in August 2011.

"I took a decision that from here on in I'm running my own ship. I've picked up that as an upcoming artist one tends to depend on others for your project to see completion. But what that means is you lose rights and end up with all types of troubles, like your mechanical royalties that you suddenly have no right to.

"I want to be around music for a long time, so I'll continue taking my time in releasing projects. I feel by rushing, I might not always be giving my best."



Credit: National Theatre of Namibia

(Lazarus Shiimi), stars of the popular African music genre Kwaito (a mix of hip-hop and garage), are considered the pioneers of the current Namibian music industry, and are regularly confronted by the media over the way their passionate fans go at each other physically. The two were recently kicked off the throne they have long fought over by the latest Namibia Annual Music Awards (NAMA) winner, hip-hop MC Jericho. The prize consisted of NAD50,000 (US\$6,000) in cash and a corporate-sponsored car, showing just how corporate Namibia is slowly beginning to buy into the music's popularity. "The perception has changed. When we started, telling a friend you planned on becoming an entertainer was like saying you've decided to become a failure," Willibard says, laughing.

The small Namibian market and the increasing numbers of youngsters who now consider entertainment a viable career choice have resulted in the established artists looking to expand their brands. Some local celebrities have become known across southern Africa, like Mr Makoya (Strausse Lunyangwe) who, in October 2011, became the first Namibian to sign a distribution deal with South Africa's Gallo Records. For oth-

ers, like The Dogg, it has meant expanding into bottled water and insurance interests.

Willibard, herself, recently took over the reins of Namibia's first entertainment magazine, *The Red Carpet*. "It's an extension of the brand, an opportunity to grow. And I think, in building this industry, it's the next

**"The perception has changed. When we started, telling a friend you planned on becoming an entertainer was like saying you've decided to become a failure."**

step," she says. "Because to be in entertainment, there's a certain lifestyle that comes with it, a certain etiquette. And I think that's what we need as an industry. It's still young. We need to educate it. Groom the ones who are coming next." ●

Denver Isaacs is a freelance journalist based in Windhoek

## LEADING LIGHTS

### Strausse Lunyangwa, aka Mr Makoya, Kwaito artist

Having been part of the local music scene since 2005 with the group Matongo Family, Mr Makoya recently launched his second studio album *Last Warning*. The recording features a remake of the Ladysmith Black Mambazo track 'Hello my baby', and in clearing the sample with Gallo Records, Lunyangwa was approached by the company for a distribution deal in South Africa.

"Based on the sales for that single ['Hello my baby'], we're looking at the possibility of signing with them for the entire project. Regardless of how it goes down, I think it's a positive for the local industry that someone is breaking through and dealing with a major. I know of those who've said their music is available elsewhere, but that's talking in shebeens [small clubs] and nightspots. I know the South African market is tough and they'll try to keep me out. But what this deal means is the possibility to increase my royalties and open the floor to more Namibian artists."



**Autogas Namibia (Pty) Ltd** is a 100% Namibian-owned company, which is currently distributing liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) at affordable prices nationwide for domestic and industrial usage through an extensive distribution network. The project has the support of the Namibian government, its major client.

### Company Objectives

- To create an LPG depot at Luderitz Port with a capacity of up to 4000 tons, importing LPG from the Middle East. Negotiations with the Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC) of Dubai are underway.
- To increase the Autogas LPG network distribution for the domestic market; and to assist the landlocked countries in southern Africa - facing a shortage of LPG - with their first phase to introduce LPG. Autogas Bulk was established to create synergy among the landlocked countries.
- To equip Namibian youth with advanced, beneficial, technical skills by developing training programmes, and hence creating employment.
- To create a hazard-free environment by eliminating fumes through the introduction of gas as an alternative fuel, putting Namibia on the world map.

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